

**Penbrook Borough  
Caucus Meeting  
Minutes  
July 21, 2025  
6:30 PM**

1. Call to order and roll call: VP Newcomer called the public meeting to order at 6:31 pm. Present were the Mayor, Newcomer, Dry, Stokes, Shaw, Burdine, Moore and Armbruster. Deardorff was absent. Kern and Hogarth were also present.
2. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items – N/A
3. Discussion and Action Items
  - A. Susquehanna Twp E.M.S. Executive Dir. Don Kunst presented Council with a brief on their proposed County LSA grant application to help purchase cardiac monitors. Kunst commented that Susquehanna Twp already voted to approve sponsorship of the application but is asking Council for a letter supporting the proposal. Kern suggested, based on past practice, that an action item be placed on the Aug 4 agenda for Council to consider. Kunst also reviewed some statistics of their responses in the Borough as well as briefing Council on the 4-Minute City initiative which puts AED's in the hands of community residents who would then be notified and given the chance to respond to cardiac emergencies. Cumberland and Dauphin counties are the only two counties participating in this program according to Kunst.
  - B. A discussion regarding IT vendors. Shaw led by saying it makes sense to look into what other vendors can provide. However, he believes that Council needs to agree on what services are needed before asking for proposals. Dry asked what we are looking for, that MIS isn't currently doing. Shaw said we have access and are paying for things we're not using, and MIS admits are not familiar with. The Mayor asked who Shaw has in mind. Shaw responded with no one in particular, but allowing the request for services process to identify those vendors and a decision can be made from there. Newcomer would like to add an IT Committee to examine these issues. Moore asked if there was a timeline for the project. Shaw commented that there's a lot of work in putting this together there needs to be follow-thru. Armbruster suggested sending requests to IT vendors prior to a formal RFP. Newcomer asked Hogarth to poll other municipalities for who they may use as potential vendors.

Policies were not discussed.

Newcomer led the discussion regarding Microsoft SharePoint as a medium to store shared documents such as policies. We currently pay for this as part of our MS365. An additional \$36/year would be needed to back up the data. Newcomer and Shaw believe that this is a better alternative than MS Teams.

- C. Local Share Grant Application Project Proposals. Newcomer asked Hogarth to explain the two funding sources. Hogarth explained that the State LSA has a 1-million-dollar limit with no match. Applications are highly politicized and suggest getting state elected official support for any applications. The Borough was awarded a State LSA grant two years ago for televising the sanitary and storm sewer lines. In contrast, Dauphin Co LSA has a \$150k limit and the board does not award based on

the grant fully funding a project. The municipality has to put forth a significant amount toward the project. In the past the Borough has been awarded monies to help pay on the Asylum Run debt payment and just this past year was awarded \$37,500 for the Community Park master plan which is half of the project estimate. Newcomer asked for ideas for both upcoming grant applications but for the State LSA he was considering money for sidewalk replacement which may include financial assistance for residents to replace theirs. Armbruster disagrees and thinks everyone should pay for their own sidewalks and if they don't the borough should fix them and lien the property. Dry said she agrees with Armbruster. Newcomer asked how everyone thought about paving the parking lot of the borough building. Stokes and Dry commented that it was not a priority. Shaw and Moore commented that streets need paved, there was no dissent to that idea. It was agreed that the State LSA application should be for borough owned sidewalk repair and street paving. Hogarth said he would contact the borough engineer so Rettew can get involved in the cost estimates and application process.

Newcomer suggested for the upcoming County LSA application that it should be for a phase 4 Little Valley Park project. Newcomer said in addition to what's already been done he'd like to consider a large shed, picnic tables and signage.

- D. Newcomer shared a proposed Community Park Pavilion Rental form and a discussion ensued regarding fees and deposits. It was decided that a proposal will be on the Aug 4 agenda with the solicitor preparing a resolution which includes no fees for residents and less than 100 people, a fee and deposit requirement for residents with more than 100 people and separate fees and deposits for non-residents for groups of less than and more than 100 people.
- E. Prior to the discussion about pavilion rentals there was a request from Great Outreach Destiny Church to use the CP pavilion and area on Aug 22 through the 24<sup>th</sup>. Council suggested a \$500 refundable security deposit and a certificate of insurance. Stokes made a motion to approve that request and Burdine seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Hogarth commented that the deposit and COI were received already.
- F. Council was provided the favorable response letter sent by the county planning commission to the borough's proposed zoning ordinance changes. Kern said an action item should be placed on the August 4 agenda for Council to vote to have the proposed changes advertised.
- G. Regarding rental property inspections Moore and Newcomer advised they were at an event at which two municipalities responded favorably to using a third party for rental inspections. It was agreed that one should be invited to the August Caucus meeting and the other to the September Council meeting so Council can hear how the inspections are done in their respective municipalities. Newcomer asked Hogarth if there were any other issues involving codes enforcement. Hogarth stated that some ordinances make it difficult to enforce because of ambiguity, subjectiveness or one ordinance contradicts another. Hogarth gave two examples. He suggested Council consider having a third party that specializes in codes and zoning ordinance drafting evaluate and propose changes. Newcomer suggested making it a part of our STMP evaluation with Keystone Municipal Solutions but for immediate needs, have the BCO send recommended changes to the codes committee for possible changes.

- H. A concern is how does curb painting get done and should it be done. The Mayor said he's received complaints from residents wanting it done. Others have had the same complaint. Armbruster said it's a courtesy and doesn't agree with doing it. Moore said we've been talking about it for months and nothing has happened. Newcomer said since Council has discussed this, two of the three public works employees have left. It is a concern that it might be a collective bargaining issue if the work is contracted out. Hogarth will ask PW employee Goff if he's ok with it and until staffing returns to normal it shouldn't be an issue. Hogarth said several years ago Council removed curb painting from the budget and shifted monies to thermoplastic stop lines. The only curb painting done since has been done by volunteers.
- I. Newcomer would like to spend \$360/year on a survey monkey account and spoke of the benefits of the platform. Stokes made a motion to approve the expense and Burdine seconded the motion not to exceed \$400. The motion carried six to one with Armbruster voting against.
- J. There have been several newsletter issues since the change, one being several publishing errors and the other being mailing issues. Most elected official report not receiving one. Armbruster reviewed the list of addresses which were sent to the printer. Newcomer asked if his address was listed because he didn't get one. It was listed. A comment was made about the possibility with the USPS. Newcomer asked who was going to take ownership of the newsletter production going forward. Dry volunteered. The Teams app set up by Shaw will still be used for a repository of news articles for submission. Dry to send out submission deadline and publication dates for future newsletters. Hogarth suggested having a sign up for those who want a printed copy and only deliver to those people. Everyone else could get a digital copy from the webpage. Burdine suggested MailChimp especially if we're going to invest in the survey monkey platform.

#### 4. Citizen Comments

- A. Tyler Moore read two prepared statements (one on behalf of her sister) regarding the recent arrest of her mother and alleged police misconduct.
- B. Joe Wenger commented on the IT vendor discussion and offered to be a part of a committee, if formed. He also suggested using the survey monkey platform to get ideas on grant projects. Lastly, he advised to consider deportation issues when putting together a rental inspection program.

#### 5. Council Comments

- A. Moore read a prepared statement regarding her recent arrest and alleged police misconduct.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Joseph Hogarth, Borough Secretary