

**Penbrook Borough  
Caucus Meeting  
Minutes  
March 16, 2026  
6:30 PM**

1. Call to order and roll call: Newcomer called the public meeting to order at 6:30pm. Present were Newcomer, Shaw, Burdine, Seaman, Dry, Stokes and Lovejoy. The solicitor joined via Teams.
2. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items: N/A
3. Discussion and Action Items
  - A. Newcomer reviewed the next steps for the peer review program through DCED and asked if the Resolution should be acted on without receiving the scope of work from DCED. Hogarth said the Resolution doesn't lock us into the scope of work but it could be put off until the letter is received. The solicitor concurred. Seaman made a motion to approve the Resolution and Stokes seconded. The motion carried unanimously.
  - B. Sam Meckly and Jeremy Smith were in attendance to submit the draft drawing of the Community Park upgrades. There is an April 30 deadline for the next round of DCNR grants. The next step, if the draft concept drawing is approved, would be to complete a site development drawing and break the project in the phases with cost estimates for each.

There were several questions about the draft: The concrete bleachers are to remain and the space allows for other bleachers to be installed if the demand is there. The only restrooms, other than porta-johns, will be attached to the pavilion at the southeast section of the park. Stormwater improvements will likely be necessary because of the addition of impervious surfaces

Burdine made a motion to accept the concept drawing so a site development plan could be prepared. Seaman seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
  - C. Hogarth briefed Council on the cost estimate for repairs to both sanitary and storm infrastructure at Hoffers Ln near Walnut. The cost estimate is for \$47,468.86 and the contractor estimates 60% of that estimate to be for the sanitary sewer work so Council would need to approve the project for roughly \$28,000 to be paid from the sewer fund. Lovejoy asked if there was an RFP sent out. Hogarth said there was not. The contractor is a costars vendor and has worked on many projects throughout the borough and makes every attempt to save money. One such example is allowing the borough to purchase materials tax exempt. Newcomer asked if it was an emergency. Both Hogarth and the engineer said no. The issue is the close proximity of the storm box to the manhole. If the manhole is further damaged while working on the storm box, the project would be delayed while the manhole structure is ordered. All the while the manhole will have to be bypassed with a pump that will cause the roadway to be closed for an extended period of time. Hogarth also explained that the Storm Water Authority will be meeting in two days and will also have to take action on this project estimate. Shaw suggested Council make a motion contingent on the SWA decision. Stokes made a motion to approve the cost estimate

contingent on the SWA approving their portion of the project. Shaw seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

- D. Hogarth provided Council with the cost estimate to pave Sherman and Earley streets as a result of a complaint from a resident at Sherman and Penbrook Av that their house was getting water during heavy storms because of runoff. This has been discussed at previous Council and SWA meetings. The cost to pave both roadways is roughly \$60,000.00. Hogarth commented that the roads are not on the Type 10 map so liquid fuels money cannot be used. Newcomer asked about the grant. Hogarth said the State LSA grant was put in for a million dollars for paving primary roads in the Borough so if that money, if awarded, was to be used there would be primary roadways that would have to be taken off the list. Another thing to consider is we might not get the amount we've asked for. The engineer commented that Highspire Borough applied for 1 million for paving last year and was only awarded 500k. This is also a discussion item for the SWA at their next meeting. Shaw suggested that the property owned changed the property which may be a cause for the runoff and flooding. Seaman asked the engineer if he evaluated the property. Smith said he was not asked to do that. No action was taken by Council with no immediate plans to reconsider.
- E. The fire department recently submitted an invoice to the borough asking for payment for a Ford F550 chassis in the amount of \$81,105.00. This is so a mini pumper can be built to support fire department operations. Newcomer asked that this be on the agenda for discussion because he thought the FD should have sought permission to spend the tax dollars before moving forward with the project. The borough provided council with an agreement from 2007 outlining the obligations of both parties. The solicitor reviewed the agreement and found nothing that would require Council to pay for the invoice. Newcomer also suggested a review of the agreement and a discussion with the FD to make any changes either party felt necessary. It was asked if the FD requested approval during the budget meeting. Hogarth said they had not, but did provide the letter that was sent to council last spring outlining the mini-pumper project. Newcomer told Hogarth to hold the invoice and request the FD attend an upcoming meeting with Council.
- F. As a follow-up to the goals and objectives slide deck presented to everyone last month, Newcomer took the information from the slide and put them on a spreadsheet for tracking purposes. The spreadsheet was reviewed.
- G. The tech committee reviewed a questionnaire that will be sent to a list of IT vendors including our current vendor. The purpose is to evaluate IT services for the borough's future taking into consideration security, vulnerability issues and AI considerations and policies. The timeline for this is to have vendors respond by the end of March with action items at both April meetings.

4. Citizen Comments

- A. Joe Wenger, reference the goals and objectives spreadsheet, would offer his services for the digital communication project.

5. Council Comments

- A. Lovejoy had comments about areas of the borough that had trash scattered about.
  - B. Seaman also made comments about property upkeep and is open to finding ways to have property owners more responsible for the appearance of their properties.
  - C. Newcomer has a consulting job in Massachusetts for several months and will have to attend a lot of meeting via Teams.
6. The meeting was adjourned to the public for an executive session to discuss a legal matter at 9:03pm and the executive session ended adjourning all at 9:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph Hogarth, Borough Secretary