

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING  
MARCH 16, 2026**

**MEMBERS PRESENT** John Merhottein, President  
John Gallagher, Vice President  
Matthew Deckman, Commissioner  
Michael Hudak, Commissioner  
DeAnn Lawrence, Commissioner

**OTHERS PRESENT** James L. Broughal, Township Solicitor  
Doug Bruce, Township Manager  
Aaron Stasiw, Zoning Officer  
Ronald J. Gawlik, Township Engineer  
Gregory Gottschall, Police Chief  
Shaun Powell, Police Captain

**CALL TO ORDER** Mr. Merhottein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT** Solicitor Broughal said the Board of Commissioners met on Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am to 5pm and again on March 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm to approximately 6:50pm to discuss personnel matters pursuant to Section 708a of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

**TOM KEEFER  
3803 CARTER RD.** Mr. Keefer asked for a status on the retaining wall of the medical office building located on Easton Avenue and Farmersville Road. Mr. Merhottein said the developer is appealing the decision of the Zoning Hearing Board.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve the February 16, 2026 and March 2, 2026, meeting minutes as presented.

**PRESENTATION** **SANITARY SEWER SERVICE REQUEST: LOWER NAZARETH TOWNSHIP, JAINDL STEUBEN ROAD DEVELOPMENT, 227 RESIDENTIAL UNITS – STEVE HUNSBERGER, MANAGING AGENT, BTMA**

Mr. Hunsberger said Lower Nazareth Township and the Jaindl development group requested sanitary sewer service from the Bethlehem Township Municipal Authority for a proposed 227-unit single-family subdivision located approximately one mile outside Bethlehem Township's boundary.

Mr. Hunsberger said providing the service would generate one-time tapping fee revenue of approximately \$580,000 and annual sewer fees of approximately \$120,000. He said the board would have to determine if it wanted to provide this sewage conveyance to a development in another municipality, and if so, whether BTMA or the developer/homeowner's association (HOA) should own and maintain the conveyance lines.

Mr. Merhottein asked if the agreement could be made between the township instead of an HOA; Mr. Hunsberger said yes. Mr. Hudak said he was concerned about adding more sewage capacity to the township. Mr. Gallagher asked if there was a potential for other developments to tap in; Mr. Hunsberger said yes, which is why he suggested a master agreement. Mr. Merhottein asked what would stop Lower Nazareth Township from tapping in for other projects. Mr. Hunsberger said they wouldn't be able to do so without an intermunicipal agreement.

**DENNIS BRENNAN  
3834 TRENT CT.**

Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Hunsberger how he knew about the project. Mr. Hunsberger said the developer approached him as the Managing Agent for the BTMA. Mr. Brennan was concerned that this could be a conflict of interest. He also believes this is Lower Nazareth Township's problem and disagreed with the proposal.

**BARRY ROTH  
4323 CHETWIN TERR.**

Mr. Roth also disagreed with the proposal and added the more land that gets developed, the more traffic.

No action was taken.

**SUBDIVISIONS  
& LAND  
DEVELOPMENT**

**RESOLUTION R029-26 A RESOLUTION GRANTING CONDITIONAL SITE PLAN APPROVAL FOR PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS OF THE BETHLEHEM AREA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL**

Mr. Gallagher noted that the Planning Commission recommended denying the requested waivers. The township geotechnical consultant agreed.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R029-26 granting conditional site plan approval for parking lot improvements of the Bethlehem Area Vocational Technical School.

**MOTION**

**A MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO MOVE THE PROPOSED GENERAL ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT FOR ADOPTION, AND AUTHORIZE ADVERTISEMENT OF A PUBLIC HEARING RELATED HERETO**

Mr. Gallagher said he would like to table the motion so that the Environmental Advisory Council could review it and provide recommendations. Their next meeting is Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Bruce said Luke Verdes is a member and provided a detailed list of recommendations.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to table this motion. The motion carried 4-1. Mr. Hudak opposed.

**RESOLUTIONS OF  
THE BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS**

**RESOLUTION R028-26 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A COMMUNITY PROJECT FUND GRANT APPLICATION**

Mr. Merhottein said the township received a very short notice invitation from Congressman Mackenzie's office to apply for this grant for the purchase of a police patrol supervisor's vehicle/command center for a cost not to exceed \$125,043. The deadline for the application was March 9<sup>th</sup> and was filed timely. The vehicle will be included in the 2027 budget.

Upon motion (Hudak-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote adopt Resolution R028-26 authorizing a Community Project Fund grant application.

**RESOLUTION R030-26 A RESOLUTION APPOINTING A MEMBER TO THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP RECREATION COMMISSION**

Mr. Gallagher nominated Shadwick Yoder.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote adopt Resolution R030-26 appointing Shadwick Yoder to the Bethlehem Township Recreation Commission.

**RESOLUTION R031-26 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO UTILIZE MUNICIBID ON-LINE GOVERNMENT AUCTION SERVICE FOR THE SALE OF TOWNSHIP-OWNED PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Mr. Merhottein said the county is no longer interested in purchasing or renting the portable bathroom and will be placed for auction on Municibid.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote adopt Resolution R031-26 authorizing the township manager to utilize Municibid on-line government auction service for the sale of township-owned personal property.

**MOTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**MOTION**

**A MOTION APPROVING AN ACCESS AND HOLD HARMLESS INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP AND NORTHAMPTON COUNTY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ATTACHING AN AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READER CAMERA TO A TRAFFIC SIGNAL POLE. (TABLED)**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to untable this motion.

Mr. Gallagher said all his concerns were addressed to his satisfaction.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote approving an access and hold harmless indemnification agreement between Bethlehem Township and Northampton County for the purpose of attaching an Automated License Plate Reader Camera to a traffic signal pole.

**MOTION**

**A MOTION TO ACCEPT A PROPOSAL FROM WHITESTONE ASSOCIATES, INC. TO CONDUCT A HAZARDOUS BUILDING MATERIALS SURVEY FOR THE ARCHIBALD JOHNSTON MANSION SITE IMPROVEMENTS. (TABLED)**

Upon motion (Hudak-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to untable this motion.

Mr. Bruce said the proposal went back to Whitestone Associates with the board's comments. The reevaluated and reduced the proposal by \$2,000.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to accept a proposal from Whitestone Associates, Inc. to conduct a hazardous building materials survey for the Archibald Johnston Mansion Site Improvements.

**BILL AGENDA OF  
MARCH 11, 2026**

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the bill agenda of March 11, 2026.

**PURCHASE ORDERS**

**PO 20260497 – METZ AMUSEMENTS & CONC. LLC – BTCC – \$2,972.00**  
**PO 20260502 – AMUSEMENT RESTORATION CO., LLC – BTCC – \$2,500.00**  
**PO 20260518 – SIGNAL SERVICE INC. – BTPD – \$3,972.16**  
**PO 20260519 – TRANSEdge TRUCK CENTERS – PW – \$6,391.71**  
**PO 20260520 – NORTH EAST PARTS GROUP – PW – \$2,184.67**  
**PO 20260521 – ASSOCIATED FASTENERS – PW – \$2,537.30**  
**PO 20260522 – TRIUS INC. – PW – \$3,118.22**  
**PO 20260523 – DALE KOEHLER & SONS FARM – PW – \$10,054.80**  
**PO 20260524 – M&J OUTDOOR SERVICE – PW – \$16,587.00**  
**PO 20260590 – FIRST RESPONDER CHAPLAIN CORPS – BTPD – \$10,000.00**  
**PO 20260596 – INDUSTRIAL COMMUNICATIONS – BTPD – \$38,671.50**  
**PO 20260597 – ADVANTAGE SPORT & FITNESS – BTCC – \$6,999.00**  
**PO 20260607 – SINGER EQUIPMENT CO. – PW – \$7,618.01**  
**PO 20260608 – GEORGE ELY ASSOCIATES, INC. – PW – \$2,133.00**  
**PO 20260609 – INDUSTRIAL COMMUNICATIONS – BTPD – \$9,300.75**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve all purchase orders as presented.

**TREASURER'S  
REPORT OF  
FEBRUARY 28, 2026**

Upon motion (Hudak-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the treasurer's report of February 28, 2026, subject to audit.

**ZONING HEARING  
BOARD MEETING  
OF MARCH 25, 2026**

Appeal 01-2026 – Julie Fogt, Stephen Fogt & Teresa Fogt / 3399 Darien Road (continued) – Appeal of zoning determination that first 20 feet of driveway from Darien Road be no more than 7% slope. Alternatively seeking variance allowing an 11% grade for the first 20 feet.

The board voted at its February 16, 2026 meeting to send the solicitor to advise staff and oppose the appeal.

**MONTHLY REPORTS**

All monthly reports were accepted.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**NAZARETH PIKE AT  
HIGHFIELD DRIVE  
SAFETY  
IMPROVEMENTS**

Chief Gottschall said they have been trying to address the number of accidents for years at the intersection of Highfield Drive and SR 191 and want to prohibit left turns to and from. Mr. Gawlik said PennDOT had suggested "flexible delineators" be added to the intersection to prohibit left turns from and to Highfield Drive.

Mr. Merhottein asked why a traffic light couldn't be installed at that intersection. Mr. Gawlik said there wasn't enough traffic on Highfield Drive to meet the warrants for a traffic light. Mr. Hudak said he would support closing the road. Ms. Lawrence said it would create more traffic cutting through the shopping center. Mr. Gallagher said the installation of the light would be an improvement. Mr. Gawlik said the infrastructure would be very costly. Mr. Deckman asked if the curb could be extended. Mr. Gawlik said he would check with PennDOT. Mr. Merhottein said he would like to see another traffic count done after implementing the installation of flexible delineators.

**SHADWICK YODER**  
**3116 CHESTER AVE.**

Mr. Yoder said his concern is that people will find other places to make U-turns which would increase the chances for more accidents.

**BARRY ROTH**  
**4323 CHETWIN TERR.**

Mr. Roth said a physical barrier is needed to get the motorists attention.

**DENNIS BRENNAN**  
**3834 TRENT CT.**

Mr. Brennan said he lives by Highfield Drive and the people in his neighborhood have no problem going the other way around the shopping center.

By consensus, the board directed staff and township professionals to proceed to implement, as suggested by PennDOT, the installation of flexible delineators to essentially close the median at Highfield Drive to eliminate all left turn movements.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata  
Recording Secretary