

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
MARCH 17, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT John J. Merhottein, President
John K. Gallagher, Vice President
Matthew C. Deckman, Commissioner
DeAnn L. Lawrence, Commissioner
Michael D. Hudak, Commissioner

OTHERS PRESENT James L. Broughal, Township Solicitor
Doug Bruce, Township Manager
Samantha Smith, Community Development Director
Ron Gawlik, Township Engineer

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

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR There were no comments during Courtesy of the Floor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Upon motion (Deckman-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the March 3, 2025, regular public meeting minutes as presented.

SUBDIVISIONS & LAND DEVELOPMENT

RESOLUTION R023-25 A RESOLUTION GRANTING APPROVAL OF THE VICTAULIC LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN/SITE PLAN

Ms. Smith said the applicant proposes a 140-space parking lot used during shift changes at 157 Commerce Park Drive. The Planning Commission recommended approval at their February 24, 2025, meeting, subject to all the professional staff review letters. Tyler Freed, Mease Engineering, said he agreed with all thirteen of the conditions in the resolution.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R023-25 granting approval of the Victaulic Land Development Plan/Site Plan.

RESOLUTION R024-25 A RESOLUTION GRANTING APPROVAL OF THE 4444 WILLIAM PENN HIGHWAY SITE PLAN

Ms. Smith said this is a proposed limited conversion which is a permissible use in the Medium Density Residential District. The Planning Commission recommended approval at their February 24, 2025, meeting, subject to all the professional staff review letters.

**BARRY ROTH
4342 CHETWIN TERR.** Mr. Roth said there seemed to be more impervious coverage and wants to ensure that the water run-off doesn't end up in the containment system on the other side of the road.

Upon motion (Hudak-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve Resolution R024-25 granting approval of the 4444 William Penn Highway Site Plan. The motion carried 4-1. Mr. Merhottein opposed.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION R021-25 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSITION OF CERTAIN MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RECORDS PURSUANT TO THE SCHEDULES AND PROCEDURES APPROVED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPAL RECORDS ACT

Mr. Merhottein said this was a standard resolution for disposition of public records.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R021-25 authorizing the disposition of certain municipal public records pursuant to the schedules and procedures approved by the Local Government Records Committee in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipal Records Act.

RESOLUTION R022-25 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ATTENDANCE OF CORPORAL PATRICK BREHM AT BASIC CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION TRAINING, PRESENTED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE BUREAU OF FORENSIC SERVICES, MARCH 31 – APRIL 11, 2025, IN HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. Merhottein said this is a standard police training resolution.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R022-25 authorizing the attendance of Corporal Patrick Brehm at Basic Crime Scene Investigation Training, presented by the Pennsylvania State Police Bureau of Forensic Services, March 31 – April 11, 2025, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

MOTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MOTION A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND DESIGNATING COMMUNITY DAYS AS A “PUBLIC CELEBRATION”

Mr. Merhottein said this was a standard motion which waives the noise ordinance for the fireworks and the requirement for the fire company to send certified letters to nearby residents.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote designating Community Days as a “public celebration”.

MOTION A MOTION APPROVING THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY’S APPLICATION TO THE PENNSYLVANIA LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD FOR A SPECIAL OCCASION PERMIT FOR THE COMMUNITY DAYS FESTIVAL

Mr. Merhottein said the letter memorializes the board's support of the Bethlehem Township Volunteer Fire Company receiving a special occasion license for Community Days.

Upon motion (Hudak-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote approving the Bethlehem Township Volunteer Fire Company's application to the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board for a Special Occasion Permit for the Community Days Festival.

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING THE REVISED POLICY UPDATE TO THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION, MANUAL OF POLICY, AND RULES AND REGULATIONS

Mr. Merhottein explained this policy update done annually. The update was reviewed and approved the township solicitor and Chief Gottschall.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote approving the Revised Policy Update to the Bethlehem Township Police Department Organization, Manual of Policy, and Rules and Regulations.

BILL AGENDA OF MARCH 12, 2025

Upon motion (Gallagher-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the bill agenda of March 12, 2025.

PURCHASE ORDERS

PO 20250432 – GLICK FIRE CO. – BTVFC - \$1,319,837.00
PO 20250520 – STOTZ & FATZINGER OFFICE– PPIS– \$11,451.94
PO 20250521 – COMPUTING TECHNOLOGIES – PPIS – \$27,600.00
PO 20250522 – FIRST RESPONDER CHAPLAIN CORPS. – BTPD – \$10,000.00

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to untangle purchase order 20250432- Glick Fire Company.

Mr. Hudak asked if the fire company had secured estimates from two other providers, as requested by the board. Bethlehem Township Volunteer Fire Company chief C.J. Kuronya said he had sought two other estimates, but one company declined and another never responded. He said it could take up to a year to "spec out" a firetruck with another company and get a relevant cost estimate. Mr. Hudak asked if other providers would provide estimates based on the Glick specifications; Chief Kuronya said "no." He said the fire company could not wait that long to order a new truck.

Mr. Deckman added that there are also price escalations in the contract. Ms. Lawrence said they have to go through every part of the engineering process. Deputy Fire Chief Dave Stapinski said specifications must be done for each company because parts and materials differ. The specifications must be correct otherwise the companies are liable, he said.

Mr. Hudak said he wasn't opposed to replacing the truck. He was opposed to writing an open check. Mr. Merhottein said he reached out to Palmer Township, which purchased a truck from Glick Fire Company two years ago, and Palmer officials spoke very highly of the company. He said it will be four years before we even get the truck.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve purchase orders 1-4 as presented. The motion carried 4-1. Mr. Hudak opposed purchase order 20250432- Glick Fire Company.

TREASURER'S REPORT OF FEBRUARY 28, 2025

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the treasurer's report of February 28, 2025, subject to audit.

03-17-2025

**ZONING HEARING
BOARD MEETING
OF MARCH 26, 2025**

Ms. Smith said three hearings are on the agenda:

Appeal 01-2025 – Steven J. Inc. / 4011 Wilson Ave – Appeal of zoning determination issued on Oct. 22, 2024. Seeking to have determination invalidated by claiming the code is not applicable regarding a permit application and permissible uses for reconstruction of the primary home at the property due to the fire in 2022. – Continued from 1/29/25 – The Board previously voted to oppose this appeal.

Appeal 02-2025 – Steven J. Inc. / 4011 Wilson Ave – Appeal of Notice of Violation issued on Nov. 8, 2024. Seeking to have determination invalidated by claiming the code is not applicable, regarding the unpermitted use of the property as a junkyard. – Continued from 1/29/25 – The Board previously voted to oppose this appeal.

Appeal 07-2025 – Bethlehem Christian School / 5575 Green Pond Rd – Seeking special exception use of the existing dwelling as an office.

Mr. Bruce said the Zoning Hearing Board will hold a special meeting on March 19, 2025 for another continued item.

Upon motion (Hudak-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote directing the township solicitor to attend the meeting to oppose Appeal 01-2025 and Appeal 02-2025.

MONTHLY REPORTS All monthly reports were accepted.

ADJOURNMENT There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary