

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
SEPTEMBER 21, 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 Samantha Smith, Community Development Director Ronald J. Gawlik, Township Engineer
CALL TO ORDER	Mr. Merhottein called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.
COURTESY OF THE FLOOR	
PAUL PULEO 4003 VICTORS WAY	Mr. Puleo indicated they recently received their first communication from Traditions of America and reported that work was finally moving forward. He thanked staff for their involvement in keeping on them.
TOM KEEFER 3803 CARTER RD.	Mr. Keefer reported there were three fish traps in Green Pond above water.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Upon motion (Hudak-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the September 8, 2026, regular public meeting minutes as presented.
PRESENTATION	2025 AUDIT – CAMPBELL, RAPPOLD & YURASITS CPA Paul Mack of Campbell, Rappold & Yurasits LLP reported the 2025 audit went very well. He thanked the board for bringing the company back and staff for their cooperation. Mr. Mack presented the highlights of the audit and noted that there were no internal control issues. The township received a clean opinion of the audit.
MOTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	
MOTION	MOTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER POSITION Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to accept Edward Hozza’s letter of resignation from his position of Township Manager. The motion carried 4 to 1. Mr. Hudak opposed. Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve a separation agreement between Edward Hozza and Bethlehem Township. The motion carried 4 to 1. Mr. Hudak opposed.

Upon motion (Hudak-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to appoint Doug Bruce as Interim Township Manager starting September 22, 2026.

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING GRACE INDUSTRIES, INC. APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT #1 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,769.25 FOR THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP (SR 2018) FREEMANSBURG AVENUE AND 9TH STREET EMERGENCY SIGNAL PROJECT

Upon motion (Deckman-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice approving Grace Industries, Inc. Application for Payment #1 in the amount of \$7,769.25 for the Bethlehem Township (SR 2018) Freemansburg Avenue and 9th Street Emergency Signal Project.

SUBDIVISIONS & LAND DEVELOPMENT

SKETCH PLAN – NOTRE DAME MASTER PLAN

Jaclyn Friel, Principal, said this is a very large scale, long term plan expected to be completed in 2036, which includes a new stadium, reconstructed entrances, increased parking, curb and sidewalk. She said money will be raised to improve the sports field. Chris Brown, Brown Design Corp. added that this plan proposes a full build-out including the realignment of the north drive way. The proposed development includes:

- 10,600± square foot potential building addition on the east side of the existing high school building;
- Parking area reconfiguration (additional 227 parking spaces);
- Athletic field reconfiguration (practice field, new synthetic turf track and field/football field);
- Walking/running path traversing the site;
- 2 indoor batting cages;
- Concession stand building;
- Ticket booth;
- 6 pickleball court areas;
- Stormwater management areas (1 proposed and 2 potential).

Mr. Hudak said he toured the facilities and was very impressed. He said he supports this plan. Mr. Deckman asked if the potential future changes had any impact on Church Road. Ms. Smith said the changes wouldn't affect the road. Mr. Gallagher wondered if Church Road would be able to handle game day traffic. Ms. Friel said she was open to suggestions.

No action was taken as this was a sketch plan.

MOTION

A MOTION TO APPROVE 2 RELATIVELY COMMON WAIVERS TO PLAN DESIGN/PROCESS ITEMS FOR THE PROPOSED AUTUMN ESTATES SUBDIVISION

Ms. Smith said this motion is only action on the waivers requested and not on the plan itself. She said the Geotechnical Consultant had no objections.

DENNIS BRENNAN
3834 TRENT CT.

Mr. Brennan asked why the township is considering granting these waivers after 19 years. He said he's never heard of "relatively common waivers" and thought that approval had to go through the City of Bethlehem since the frontage is on their property. Mr. Hudak said the back of the development is in Bethlehem Township. Solicitor Broughal explained to Mr. Brennan that this request is common. Mr. Brennan asked which municipality to contact for accurate information on the process. Solicitor Broughal said he could file a Right-to-Know request with either municipality.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve the following waivers relatively common to plan design/process items for the proposed Autumn Estates Subdivision:

- SALDO 230-24.D(t) - The submission of separate preliminary and final plans.
- SMO 220-27.E - To provide a minimum slope of 2% for the proposed basin bottom.

The motion carried 4 to 1. Mr. Hudak opposed.

MOTION

A MOTION TO APPROVE A WAIVER FROM THE APPROVAL PROCESS, ALLOWING THE APPLICANT TO PROCEED WITH ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW FOR THE CHASE BANK LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Ms. Smith said the applicant wants to add a dumpster enclosure. She said staff have no objections.

BARRY ROTH
4323 CHETWIN TERR.

Mr. Roth said he would like to see the fence fixed and the streetscape enhancements finished.

Upon motion (Hudak-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote approving a waiver from the approval process, allowing the applicant to proceed with administrative review for the Chase Bank Land Development Plan

MOTION

A MOTION TO APPROVE A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WITH TSV-HPIII LEHIGH VALLEY FOR THE RETAINING WALL AT 3311 FARMERSVILLE ROAD

Mr. Merhottein noted a few of the terms in the settlement agreement:

- Applicant must install and complete the Streetscape Improvements as soon as possible.
- Applicant agrees to record a revised record plan, depicting all engineering details for the extent of work described here and generally shown on Exhibit "C", within six (6) months of execution of this Agreement. Such Revised Plan shall also include a sidewalk and traffic signal easements in the vicinity of the intersection of Easton Avenue.
- Applicant shall pay to the Township the sum of Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$900,000.00).

Mr. Merhottein said the money will be used to soften the curb at Easton Avenue and Farmersville Road, the culvert on Farmersville Road and repaving roads in the township.

**GLENN KRIER
3942 KENRICK DR.**

Mr. Krier asked if the wall will remain at its current location while completing those improvements. Ms. Smith said the wall remains as it is. The right-of-way will shift away from the wall. Sidewalk will be added and the street lanes are wide enough to meet standards. Mr. Hudak added that the road won't be narrower. Mr. Deckman noted the original plan had the road wider than was required. He said they are still in compliance and the intersection will be improved by the township.

**LES WALKER
4109 BIRCH DRIVE**

Mr. Walker said the Zoning Hearing Board denied their request for variances and that this settlement seemed like a bribe. Mr. Hudak said it was their suggestion at the cost of the township giving the right-of-way. Mr. Merhottein said the township is getting a sidewalk. Mr. Walker said it will be narrow and noted they are selling the public right-of-way. Solicitor Broughal said the right-of-way was never accepted by the township. Mr. Walker said he signed the plans with that dedication and felt it was inappropriate. He also mentioned that there is still a vacancy on the Planning Commission.

**BARRY ROTH
4323 CHETWIN
TERRACE**

Mr. Roth said the wall should be moved. He agreed with Mr. Walker. They could have moved the wall. The township knew there was a problem and looked the other way. He asked what will happen when PennDOT comes in. He said this was just not right and asked for a full accounting of the money. Mr. Hudak took offence. Mr. Roth said he was very upset that the ball was dropped all the way around.

**SHADWICK YODER
3116 CHESTER AVE.**

Mr. Yoder said he was disappointed to see this on the agenda. He said the \$900,000 is a bribe and shows ordinances only matter to those who can't cut corners. Developers will come in with deeper pockets and residents will be unmatched to get around those ordinances.

**ANDREW MICKLOS
4136 BETHMAN RD.**

Mr. Micklos said it cost \$400,000 to replace the wall and didn't make sense why it wasn't. Mr. Hudak said that is how the township made out. Mr. Deckman said time was a factor as they looked for a solution that complied with the ordinances. The township engineer found a plan that would keep them compliant, leave money to pay for the culvert, improve the corner and pave roads without any exceptions. Mr. Gallagher commented that the \$500,000 could be considered a penalty charge. Mr. Merhottein said he gets complaints about the roads and once the settlement is executed they will be able to have more roads paved. Mr. Deckman said he wants to make sure the money goes to the improvements promised.

**TOM KEEFER
3803 CARTER RD.**

Mr. Keefer agreed with the previous comments; that it was what it was. Mr. Hudak said he didn't want that word repeated.

Upon motion (Hudak-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice to approve a settlement agreement with TSV-HPIII Lehigh Valley for the retaining wall at 3311 Farmersville Road.

RESOLUTION R068-26

A RESOLUTION GRANTING APPROVAL OF AMENDED ST LUKE'S MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING (MOB) LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R068-26 granting approval of amended St Luke's Medical Office Building (MOB) Land Development Plan.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION R067-26 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATIONS TO THE LOCAL SHARE ACCOUNT (NORTHAMPTON/LEHIGH COUNTIES AND MONROE COUNTY) GRANT PROGRAMS OF THE COMMONWEALTH FINANCING AUTHORITY

Upon motion (Hudak-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R067-26 authorizing applications to the Local Share Account (Northampton/Lehigh Counties and Monroe County) Grant Programs of the Commonwealth Financing Authority.

BILL AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the bill agenda of September 16, 2026.

PURCHASE ORDERS

PO 20261761 – EASTERN TIME, INC. – BTCC – \$2,300.00
PO 20261788 – BATH SUPPLY CO. INC. – PPIS – \$2,460.00
PO 20261820 – OLD DOMINION BRUSH CO. INC. – PW – \$4,763.20
PO 20261821 – STEPHENSON EQUIPMENT INC. – PW – \$7,951.90
PO 20261838 – SIGNAL SERVICE INC. – BTPD – \$5,632.00
PO 20261839 – SIGNAL SERVICE INC. – BTPD – \$5,504.00
**PO 20261879 – GLOBAL INDUSTRIES C/O STORAGE CONCEPTS –
PPIS - \$5,546.04**
PO 20261882 – PATRIOT WORKWEAR – BTPD – \$6,624.00
PO 20261891 – QWICK KURB INC. – PW – \$4,598.47
PO 20261892 – OLD DOMINION BRUSH CO. INC. – PW – \$4,763.20
PO 20261904 – RESILITE – THE MAT COMPANY – BTPD – \$6,718.00

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

TREASURER'S REPORT OF AUGUST 31, 2026

Upon motion (Hudak-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the treasurer's report of August 31, 2026, subject to audit.

ZONING HEARING BOARD MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

The following item is on the agenda:

REMAND HEARING – 4 WAY JUNCTION, LLC AND RAJWINDER NAGRA V. THE ZONING HEARING BOARD OF BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP AND THE TOWNSHIP OF BETHLEHEM

The 0.55-acre lot, upon which is situated a vacant former auto service station, exists on the West side of Pennsylvania Route 191 – Nazareth Pike opposite the Pennsylvania Route 22 interchange ramp. The appellants seek to appeal a “Zoning Determination” issued by the Bethlehem Township Zoning Administrator on September 26, 2023. Ms. Smith mentioned the Zoning Hearing Board may table the remand hearing until the October 28th meeting.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Regarding River Hill Estates on the Community Development Monthly Report, Mr. Gallagher asked if some of the trees could be planted at parks other than the municipal park. Ms. Smith agreed that there is no place left for them to be planted in the development. Mr. Hudak suggested reaching out to the Public Works Director for comments. Ms. Smith said the tree planting was done in coordination with Public Works.

All monthly reports were accepted.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary