



BOROUGH OF CHESTER HEIGHTS  
53 W Baltimore Pike 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
P. O. Box 658  
Chester Heights, PA 19017  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
April 6, 2026

President Hudak called the Executive Session to Order: In accordance with Act 84, the Sunshine Law, Council will hold an Executive Session discussing matters of litigation and personnel matters starting at 6:30PM ending at 7:05PM.

**Call to Order** President Hudak called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 7:09PM and led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call** Timothy Hudak, President  
Natalie Young, Vice President  
Jeff Durst, Pro Tem  
Marta Driscoll, Councilmember  
Jonathan Lawlor, Councilmember  
Sangeetha Patel, Councilmember  
Albert Cochrane, Councilmember  
Jeanne Montgomery, Mayor

**Officials Present** Alex Baumler, Esq., Solicitor  
Michael Kissinger, P.E., Engineer

**Approval of the March 2026 meeting minutes:**  
March 2, 2026, Regular Council Meeting Minutes

**MOTION** Upon Motion, Council (Driscoll | Young) voted and unanimously approved the March 2, 2026, Regular Council Meeting Minutes.

March 18, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes

**MOTION** Upon Motion, Council (Young | Durst) voted and unanimously approved the March 18, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes.

**Turks Head Trail Project – Presentation Summary for Meeting Minutes**  
Nick Rickards presented an overview of the proposed Turks Head Trail, a conceptual recreational rail-with-trail project extending from West Chester Borough to the Wawa Station area. The trail would utilize the existing SEPTA-



owned rail corridor, portions of which are currently used by the West Chester Railroad, though rail activity is limited within Chester Heights.

The project originated in 2020 and has since been incorporated into West Chester Borough's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. West Chester Borough has applied for a TCDI grant through the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission to fund a feasibility study for the entire trail length, with no required municipal match.

The proposed alignment has evolved to connect with the regional Circuit Trails network, including potential connections to the Chester Creek Trail and the Octoraro Trail, enhancing regional trail connectivity. A small (approximately 0.1 miles) of the trail would pass through Chester Heights.

Mr. Rickards requested future consideration of a letter of support from the Borough. While not required for the initial grant application, such support will be important for advancing the project and securing SEPTA approval. He indicated that SEPTA is seeking demonstrated support from municipalities along the corridor before providing formal endorsement.

Council discussion included questions regarding:

- Coordination with SEPTA and its trail committee
- Outreach to neighboring municipalities, including Thornbury and Middletown Townships
- The scope and location of the Chester Heights segment
- Potential impacts on private property and confirmation that the corridor is within SEPTA's right-of-way
- Assurance that the trail would not interfere with potential future rail service
- Stormwater considerations, with the Borough Engineer noting minimal to no anticipated impact

Mr. Rickards agreed to provide a template letter of support for Borough review. No formal action was taken. Council indicated interest in reviewing additional support from neighboring municipalities before further consideration. A general timeline for letters of support was noted as sometime this summer.

### **Pennsylvania State Police Presentation Summary – Trooper Nguyen**

Trooper Nguyen presented an overview of police activity statistics for the Borough of Chester Heights, comparing 2024 and 2025 data.

Total calls for service increased from 607 in 2024 to 694 in 2025, reflecting an overall rise in activity across most categories.

- **Drug-related offenses** remained minimal, with 1 incident in 2024 and none reported in 2025.
- **Crimes against society** (e.g., disorderly conduct, noise complaints, public intoxication, PFA violations) slightly decreased from 19 to 16.



- **Crimes against persons** (e.g., harassment, simple assault, threats) increased from 7 to 22. Trooper Nguyen noted this rise is largely due to increased reporting and minor incidents, such as school-related altercations, rather than a surge in serious violent crime.
- **Death investigations**, primarily natural deaths, remained consistent (6 in 2024; 7 in 2025).
- **Domestic security checks** (schools, churches, etc.) decreased from 18 to 9.
- **Motor vehicle crashes** remained steady (62 in 2024; 63 in 2025), with most incidents occurring along Route 1 and at key intersections such as Valleybrook Road and Baltimore Pike. No significant concerns were noted within interior borough roads.
- **Traffic enforcement** increased significantly from 138 to 215 stops, despite fewer troopers, reflecting proactive policing efforts. DUI-related stops in 2025 included two alcohol-related incidents and one involving drugs and alcohol.
- **Property crimes** (e.g., burglary, theft, identity theft, scams) remained unchanged at 29 incidents each year. Scams fall within this category and are often underreported, though public education efforts are ongoing.
- **Requests for service** (general calls from residents) were consistent, with 194 in 2024 and 197 in 2025.
- **Other investigations** (civil matters, landlord/tenant issues, neighbor disputes, non-violent domestic incidents, and dog law violations) slightly decreased from 105 to 98.

Trooper Nguyen emphasized that the overall increase in calls is consistent with trends across the region and is not indicative of a significant rise in serious crime locally.

Additional community outreach initiatives were highlighted, including upcoming “Coffee with a Cop” events and the Camp Cadet program, which is currently seeking participants.

**Public Comment**    **No report**

### **Approval of Cash Disbursements – 03.03.2026 through 04.06.2026**

Council reviewed the General Fund cash disbursements, initially presented in the amount of \$117,329.27, and a motion was made and seconded for approval. However, during discussion, concerns were raised regarding the accuracy of the total.

Additional discussion indicated the discrepancies may be related to mixed transaction types (ACH, checks, and credit card payments) and a possible issue with how the data was generated in the Borough’s accounting system



(QuickBooks), especially amid a recent software transition. Questions were also raised about specific expenditures, including emergency tree removal services, which were confirmed as valid.

Council determined that the report required further review. A motion was amended and approved to table the General Fund & Liquid Fuels Fund disbursements pending clarification and correction.

Council agreed to revisit the matter promptly, with the possibility of an emergency vote via email to ensure timely payment of obligations, followed by formal ratification at the next meeting.

**Secretary Report** Routine administrative work continued. Keith from Springfield Tree discussed potential creek area work ahead of Creek Day. The LSA grant for the Rachel Kohl Library was completed after receiving required documentation within 24 hours. Commercial fire inspections have begun, with most payments received. Overall, office operations remain steady.

**Solicitor Report** The Solicitor discussed potential amendments to the Borough Fire Code (Chapter 97), focusing on sprinkler requirements and the fire inspection program. He noted that certain provisions may be unenforceable due to lack of documented state approval, and that vague definitions and gaps—such as those related to townhouses—create enforcement challenges. He also reviewed a recent Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision requiring property owner consent or a warrant for residential inspections, limiting the Borough's ability to enforce its inspection program. Council referred these matters to the Public Safety and Law & Ordinance Committees for further review. The Solicitor noted upcoming zoning matters, including steep slope regulations and the Ashley's project. He will prepare a pass-through agreement for Ashley's assigning all costs and liability to the applicant. He further advised that the Borough should consider a zoning ordinance amendment addressing data centers. Given increasing development pressure, he recommended regulating such uses by conditional use rather than special exception to ensure Council oversight and avoid legal challenges. Model ordinances will be provided for review. Lastly, the historical ordinance requires a minor revision to clarify demolition language before resubmission to the Planning Commission and proceeding to advertisement and public hearing.



**Engineer Report Ashley’s Restaurant – 68 Baltimore Pike (Sewage Planning Module)**  
Motion requested and approved to authorize execution of the planning module, including all required documents and agreements. The Borough will own the sewer line, while the applicant is responsible for maintenance and liabilities.

**MOTION** Upon Motion, Council (Young | Hudak) voted and unanimously approved to authorize execution of the planning module, including all necessary transmittal documents, resolutions for plan approval, and associated agreements for 68 Baltimore Pike (Ashley’s Restaurant).

**Steep Slopes Ordinance – Update**

The Planning Commission discussed distinctions between man-made vs. natural steep slopes, disturbance limits, and protection of vegetated slopes but made no formal recommendation. The matter will return to the Planning Commission. The Borough Engineer will provide GIS-based steep slope mapping to Council and the Planning Commission.

**Road Program (Summit Lane)**

Bids received (\$44,000–\$50,000) exceeded the \$25,000 budget. The Borough Engineer recommended rejecting all bids due to high costs driven by oil prices. The road is not in poor condition and can be deferred one year. Future options include:

- Bundling additional roads
- Partnering with neighboring municipalities for cost savings

**41 Smithbridge Road – Drainage Issue**

The Borough Engineer met with the property owner regarding a deteriorated culvert causing erosion. The owner intends to pursue a permit for repairs, which is supported. Ownership of the culvert is under review.

**9 (Ivy Lane Development)**

Minor administrative activity, including an address change request. Plans are not yet recorded; monument installation is in progress.

**Smithbridge Sewer Project**

Project is progressing. Contract has been awarded and work is underway, including property acquisition and submittal review.

**INSPECTOR’S REPORTS**

**Roadmaster | EMC Routine Operations:**

The Roadmaster reported routine activity, including completion of all PA One Call notifications.



**Project Coordination:**

Utility clearances were completed for the Smithbridge Road Sewer Project and the property at 58 Ivy Lane.

**Emergency Services Discussion:**

Brief discussion regarding ambulance services clarified:

- Basic Life Support (BLS): Non-critical calls (e.g., falls, illness)
- Advanced Life Support (ALS) / Critical Care: Requires a paramedic on board

The Borough currently utilizes Concord for ambulance services, with mutual aid support from surrounding municipalities, including Aston, when needed.

**Fire Marshal**

The Fire Marshal reported that commercial fire inspection notices have been issued and responses are being received. A site visit at Ivy Lane resulted in the assignment of 58 Ivy Lane as the official address to resolve utility service issues, with a request submitted to the County for update. The Fire Marshal also provided an overview of evolving regional EMS services following the loss of Advanced Life Support coverage from Crozer, noting that Aston Township has established a subscription-based ambulance authority and that the Borough continues to rely on Concord with mutual aid support. Due to changes in dispatch and service availability, the closest unit may respond regardless of municipality, and residents may receive billing from providers; municipalities may also see future discussions regarding EMS service costs.

**Zoning Officer**

The Zoning Officer reported routine matters and requested a copy of materials related to the proposed data center discussion for review, noting that based on acreage requirements, he is not aware of a suitable location within the Borough. He also advised revisiting a prior memo regarding fire and building code considerations and will resend it for review by Council and the Solicitor due to potentially conflicting information from the Department of Labor. Additionally, the Zoning Officer disclosed an ongoing conflict of interest regarding the Conrad property on Smithbridge Road and stated he will not render any opinions on related matters.

**Mayor's Report**

The Mayor announced plans to begin holding community office hours in various neighborhoods throughout the Borough, including Darlington Woods, Village of Valleybrook, and other locations. These sessions are intended to increase accessibility by meeting residents where they are, while remaining open to all



residents regardless of location. Office hours are expected to begin the week of the 14th–18th, with additional details and locations to be announced.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Administration**     **No report**  
**Infrastructure & Public Works**

**MOTION**             Upon Motion, Council (Durst | Cochrane) voted and unanimously approved the use of the Community Park for St. Thomas’ recreation activities.

### **New Soccer Nets for the Community Park**

Community Park Soccer Nets:

It was noted that the soccer nets at Community Park were in poor condition. Darlene researched replacements, and both nets have been ordered. The expense is under the council’s approval threshold, so no formal motion was required. Discussion included that while the nets are currently usable, they appear shabby and are susceptible to wear from weather and use. Park maintenance staff will oversee the installation and care of the new nets.

### **Springfield Tree Proposal**

A proposal from Springfield Tree and Land for log jam removal in Chester Creek at Powell property (\$8,500 plus debris disposal) was received. The matter was tabled for further review and potential bidding.

## **Ordinance #224 Establishing the Borough Manager Position**

**MOTION**             Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Durst) voted and unanimously approved Ordinance #224 establishing the Borough Manager Position.

### **Amendment to Fee Schedule – Use & Occupancy Reinspection Fee**

**MOTION**             Upon Motion, Council (Driscoll | Hudak) voted and unanimously approved to amend the current fee schedule to include a reinspection fee for Use & Occupancy inspections.

**Public Safety**        Chester Heights Fire Company responded to 20 calls in March, including 7 building-related incidents, 3 gas leaks, 1 elevator rescue, and 1 brush fire. Of these, 11 calls were in Chester Heights, 6 in Concordville, and 1 each in Aston, Bethel, and Middletown.



Training activities included roof ventilation (3/9), a safety walkthrough of Westlake Plastics (3/16), forcible entry training (3/23), and ground ladder training (3/30). The Westlake Plastics walkthrough focused on identifying significant on-site hazards and emergency response protocols.

Discussion also included coordination with PECO regarding power shut-off considerations, particularly for sensitive facilities and residents with medical needs. Residents are encouraged to call 911 in power outage situations where medical equipment is required; the Fire Company can provide temporary generators.

## **Community Engagement**

### **Library Report – Debbie Miller**

Debbie Miller noted National Library Week will be observed April 13–17, recognizing libraries' role in providing free access to resources, programs, and community services, and thanked library staff for their contributions.

Appreciation was expressed to Darlene for assistance with a recent grant. It was also reported that Concord Township has reduced previously provided in-kind services due to staffing shortages. As a result, the library must now secure and fund services such as trash removal and snow clearing, which were not previously budgeted. Lawn maintenance will continue to be provided by Concord. Council was updated on these changes and potential budget impacts.

### **CRC Watershed – Mayor Montgomery**

Council received correspondence from the CRC Director thanking Chester Heights for its continued support of the watershed cleanup. The event included approximately 1,200 volunteers across 33 sites, resulting in the removal of about 35,000 pounds of debris, including tires and other large items. Appreciation was expressed for community participation and contributions. Additional events, including an upcoming focus group, will be shared in the future.

### **Focus Group - Mayor Montgomery**

Mayor Montgomery highlighted upcoming focus groups as key engagement opportunities. A Transportation focus group is scheduled for April 8 at 7:00 PM, and a Historic Resources focus group will be held April 22 at 7:00 PM. Recent sessions have been well attended with productive discussion, and residents are encouraged to participate.



**Finance – Vice President Young**

Wawa Stipulation Reimbursement A motion is requested to authorize the Borough Solicitor to initiate discussions and negotiate reimbursement options with Wawa in relation to the settlement.

**MOTION**

Upon Motion, Council (Driscoll | Young) voted and unanimously approved to authorize the Borough Solicitor to negotiate reimbursement options with Wawa in relation to the settlement.

**Iron Workers CD Maturity Discussion**

Council discussed the maturity of an Iron Workers CD with a balance of \$56,655.65 and a proposed rollover rate of 3.75%, compared to the previous 4.01%. Members suggested exploring potentially higher rates from other institutions, including Citadel and PLGIT, prior to renewing.

Due to the imminent maturity date, Council agreed to temporarily table the rollover, obtain additional rate information, and conduct an email poll to determine the best option. Final action will be ratified at the next meeting.

**Old Business**      **No report**

**New Business**      **No report**

**Public Comment**

- Angie Harchie: Noted Citadel offers CDs and a five-day grace period to adjust rates.
- Cynthia Moreno: Asked about potential sprinkler requirements and public input; expressed property value concerns. Council confirmed Public Safety Committee review and public participation.
- Eileen: Questioned ordinance enforceability; Council advised it can be updated through the proper process. Also requested clearer audio during meetings.

**ADJOURNMENT: Upon Motion, Council (Driscoll | Durst) voted to adjourn the Regular Council Meeting at 9:10PM.**

Land Development Dates:

JB Squared: Submitted Preliminary Plans 02.20.2026, DELCO PC 03.20.2026, Planning Commission 03.26.2026, Extension April 2, 2026 – July 8, 2026.