



BOROUGH OF CHESTER HEIGHTS
53 W Baltimore Pike 2nd floor
P. O. Box 658
Chester Heights, PA 19017
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2025

Call to Order President Young called the meeting or order at 7:00 pm and led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call Natalie Young, President
Jeanne Montgomery, Vice President
Drew Baum, Councilmember
Philip Block, Councilmember
Albert Cochrane, Councilmember
Marta Driscoll, Councilmember
Tim Hudak, Councilmember
Ginamarie Ellis, Mayor

Officials Present Kyle Miller, Esq., Solicitor
Michael Kissinger, P.E., Engineer

Public Comment: Bill said the election ran smoothly overall, but long lines formed because only six privacy booths were provided, and the courthouse has agreed to supply at least six more to speed up voting in the future.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for November 2025

Regular Council Meeting Minutes November 3, 2025.

MOTION Council Upon Motion, Council (Baum | Hudak) voted and unanimously approved the Regular Meeting Minutes from November 3, 2025.

General Council Meeting Minutes November 17, 2025.

MOTION Council Upon Motion, Council (Montgomery | Baum) voted and approved the General Council Meeting Minutes from November 17, 2025. Council Member Hudak abstained.

Approval of the Cash Disbursements from November 4, 2025 through December 1, 2025.

General Fund Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$66,925.19.



MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Montgomery | Hudak) voted and unanimously approved the General Fund Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$66,925.19.

Liquid Fuels Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$1,784.67.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Montgomery | Block) voted and unanimously approved the Liquid Fuels Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$1,784.67.

Fire Protection Fund Cash Disbursement in the amount of \$14,351.91.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Block | Hudak) voted and unanimously approved the Fire Protections Fund Cash Disbursement in the amount of \$14,351.91.

ARPA Fund – Balance Sheet only – No Motion Needed.

Secretary's Report:

Administrative/Staff Report Summary

- Sewage Facilities Planning Module (Ashley Project):
Documentation was received. Planning Commission representative Mr. Schroeder has completed his required section and the materials were circulated to Council.
- Permits & Public Works:
 - Minimal activity in HVAC permits due to the season.
 - One emergency roof permit was issued.
 - A downed tree on Wawa Road was reported and resolved.
 - Reminder to residents: If Xfinity/Comcast service lines are down, residents should contact their service provider directly rather than the Borough office.
- Meetings & Inspections:
 - Routine MS4 check-in scheduled for Wednesday at 10:00 AM.
 - DCNR/Track project final inspection with Jeanne Ortiz scheduled for December 5th at 10:00 AM; meeting will take place at the park with a walkthrough.
- Office Notice:
The office has been temporarily closed during staff appointments. Notices are posted on the door. Staff is open to guidance on alternative notification preferences.
- Public Safety Inquiry:
A question was raised about reports of gunshots near Cow Park. One report was received by Cathy; no others were confirmed.



Solicitor's Report:

The Solicitor reported receiving new markups from Walnut Hill on the sewer offset agreement; key terms— including Walnut Hill's request to cap the escrow at \$90,000 after three years—remain unresolved. Additional financial information and further negotiation are required before any recommendation to Council.

The Solicitor also summarized the proposed 2026 permit fee schedule overhaul. Updates include: integrating zoning fees into the schedule, stylistic improvements to subdivision/land development sections, expanded building permit guidance, and simplified construction/demolition fees based on a percentage of construction cost, with the BCO and borough consultants reviewing estimates that appear inconsistent. Miscellaneous permit categories (e.g., signs, fences, sheds) were added, and existing plumbing, mechanical, electrical, U&O, inspection, and fire marshal fees remain generally consistent.

Council discussed timing for adoption, noting it must be finalized before January and that early adoption may assist with pending permits. A motion to table the resolution to the next meeting was made, seconded, and ultimately failed.

Resolution#2025.12.A Permit Fee Schedule

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Baum | Block) voted and approved Resolution #2025.12.A adopting the new Permit Fee Schedule. Council Member Driscoll voted Nay.

HVAC Permit – Fee Review for 82 Baltimore Pike has been tabled till the General Meeting on December 15th.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Block) voted and unanimously approved to table the review of permit fees for 82 Baltimore Pike – HVAC Permit application.

2025.2027 Winter Services Contract

Two bids received:

1. Dan Kelly's Landscaping
 - Rate per hour \$150.00
 - Cost of Road Salt \$150.00
2. MOR Construction Services, Inc.
 - Rate per hour \$225.00
 - Cost of Road Salt \$225.00
3. The Borough received two bids for a two-year winter services contract. Kelly Landscaping submitted the lowest bid and confirmed it has sufficient trucks (3–5 dedicated to the Borough, with 30 total in operation) and an on-site salt supply. The company previously provided satisfactory winter services.



4. Council discussed cost comparisons and service times but agreed that Kelly's bid was the lowest responsible. A motion was made to ratify awarding the contract to Kelly Landscaping.

RATIFY MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Driscoll | Hudak) voted and unanimously approved to award Dan Kelly's Landscaping the two-year contract for the 2025.2027 Winter Services Two Year Contract.

Engineer's Report:

Escrow Release – Rose Hill

- Final paving completed.
- Request to release \$50,770.50 from escrow for the top coat paving.
- Remaining escrow balance: approx. \$126,000 for other items (grading, topsoil, E&S).
- HOA still has concerns on unrelated items; road work is complete.
- Not connected to Hackline claims.
- Road remains private (HOA).
- Vote postponed to December 15 meeting.

Smith Bridge Sewer Project

- One Smith Bridge will proceed separately with Southwest.
- Borough project remains separate but slightly behind.
- Borough will go out to bid in January.
- Work must be completed by September (\approx 9-month schedule).
- If One Smith Bridge negotiations fail, Borough may need to cancel bids.
- Bid documents being prepared with a cancellation clause.

Roadmaster Report:

All PA1 call requests have been submitted.

- One PA1 call raised a question: a preliminary plan for a property on Valleybrook Road between Heather and Smithbridge, possibly involving Wilson's Auction. No further details yet.
- Roadmaster will attend an EMC meeting at the county next Thursday.
- Routine matters otherwise.

Weather / Winter Services

- Discussed the potential weather event overnight.
- Expect temperatures to rise above freezing by 6–7 PM.
- Roadmaster will monitor conditions; if temperatures do not rise, Kelly Landscaping will go out to salt.
- Materials and equipment are already prepared.



Zoning Officer Report: No Report

Fire Marshal Report:

• Llewellyn Road

- Permits and inspections required for electrical/plumbing.
- Drywall and deck issues being reviewed.
- Owner has 30–60 days to comply.

• Darlington Woods Complaint

- Interior condition reported.
- Borough cannot enforce interior repairs.
- HOA advised to handle through its own rules.

• Mailing Address/Post Office

- Ongoing address inconsistencies causing insurance and mail delivery issues.
- Borough pursuing meeting with USPS and legislators for Chester Heights home delivery.
- Mail now returned if not addressed to P.O. box; residents paying fees despite no delivery.
- Residents with deed/address conflicts advised to consult title company.

Mayor's Report:

Historic Highlight – Powell Property Preservation

- Recounted recent article from *The Philadelphia Inquirer* noting the borough's acquisition of 40.2 acres on Valleybrook and Smith Bridge Roads for \$3.4 million with grant support and private donations.
- The land was preserved as public open space, honoring the late Mayor Fred Wood, who originated the idea.
- Funding included a \$1.9M federal grant, county/state support, and \$750,000 in anonymous donations.
- Natural Lands assisted with grant applications, negotiations, and conservation planning.
- Future plans include low-impact trails, with timeline dependent on funding.
- The property provides environmental benefits including stormwater absorption, flood reduction, and improving water quality.
- Newsletter Recognition
- Natural Lands' annual newsletter highlighted the Powell property project and recognized Chester Heights Borough and key partners.



Reflection on Eight Years of Service

Mayor Ellis reflected on accomplishments during her two terms:

- Redesigned borough website and logo.
- Initiated community events and communications, including over 200 informational emails.
- Promoted and celebrated local businesses.
- Assisted in rescuing stray dogs with the animal control officer.
- Worked alongside former Mayors Stacy Smith and Fred Wood, both of whom have passed.

Key Achievements

- Secured a permanent borough office space at no renovation cost to the borough.
- Polling location returned to within borough limits, now considered one of the best sites in the county.
- Forged strong relationships with landowners and Natural Lands, which later enabled the success of the Powell property acquisition.

Powell Property Purchase

- The purchase evolved from a conversation with Fred Wood and became a central goal.
- Required grant applications, negotiations, and patience from the property owners.
- The acquisition ensures permanent preservation of the largest public open space in the borough.
- Trails and recreation activities will be available to the public in the future.

Closing Remarks

- Mayor Ellis expressed pride in the borough's progress and gratitude for the opportunity to serve.
- Encouraged the incoming council and mayor to: Value institutional knowledge and history, and make bipartisan, community-focused appointments.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Administration

Consider Motion to authorize the Secretary to advertise the Fire Tax Ordinance.

MOTION

Upon Motion, Council (Block | Driscoll) voted and approved the authorization of the Secretary to advertise the Fire Tax Ordinance.

Community Engagement

Library Report: Debbie thanked Darlene for her assistance with the LSA grant, noting appreciation for her time and responsiveness. An additional roof leak occurred at the library; temporary patching is ongoing while awaiting potential grant funding or determining if further action is required. The annual appeal letter has been sent, and slightly more than half of the expected funds have been received. The annual appeal and other fundraising efforts account for approximately 40% of the library's budget, with the remaining 60% funded by the county and participating boroughs.

Councilmember Montgomery reminded the public that Cookies and Cocoa with Santa was going to be this coming Sunday, December 7th at 1:30pm.

Public Safety

- **Fire Company Report:** Chester Heights Fire Company responded to 25 calls in November, with 16 occurring within Chester Heights. The fire company holds meetings on Thursday evenings and welcomes community attendance.
- **Candy Cane / Santa Event:** Santa will be taken around the borough by the fire company on December 13, starting at approximately 2:30 p.m. A tracker may be available, though it does not always function; residents will hear the siren as Santa approaches.
- **County Radio System Upgrade:** Delaware County has implemented a new ultra-high-frequency radio system, effective December 15. The \$58 million county-funded project provides new radios for all fire companies and police officers, improving inter-municipal communication and 911 capabilities, including enhanced caller location tracking. Public scanner traffic will no longer be available. The county is covering the cost of the radios with a five-year maintenance/replacement contract; local agencies were responsible only for installation, resulting in cost savings.
- **PSP Report (November):** Pennsylvania State Police reported 86 requests for service. There were a few property crimes reported in Middletown Township, prompting reminders to residents to secure doors and vehicles and consider alarm systems and security cameras. Two days of targeted U-turn enforcement were conducted at Darlington Woods and Route 1, resulting in 24 citations issued, all for illegal U-turns. Residents were advised to avoid making U-turns at that location.



Old Business: **No Report**

New Business: Councilmember Block proposed an idea of purchasing dinner for the CHFC in lieu of the Santa Ride around the Borough to be considered for the next year.

Public Comment: Cynthia Morano – Concerns included the permits for the Darlington Woods fire and fees paid.

Bob introduced himself as Walnut Hill Utility’s new board president.

Eileen Lehmann – Concerns about other property owners and living conditions.

ADJOURNMENT: Upon Motion, Council (Baum | Hudak) voted and approved to adjourn the Regular Council Meeting at 8:34PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darlene Kurten