



BOROUGH OF CHESTER HEIGHTS
53 W Baltimore Pike 2nd floor
P. O. Box 658
Chester Heights, PA 19017
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
November 3, 2025

Executive Session: 6:45 PM – 7:08 PM Council met in Executive Session in accordance with Act 84 – the Sunshine Law to discuss matters of potential litigation and personnel.

Call to Order President Young called the Regular Council Meeting to Order at 7:09pm and led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call Natalie Young, President
Jeanne Montgomery, Vice President
Drew Baum, Member of Council
Philip Block, Member of Council
Albert Cochrane, Member of Council
Tim Hudak, Member of Council
Ginamarie Ellis, Mayor

Members Absent Marta Driscoll, Member of Council

Officials Present Alex Baumler, Esq., Solicitor
Kyle Miller, Esq., Solicitor
Megan Todaro, P.E., Engineer

Eagle Scout Recognition – Office of the Mayor

Mayor Ellis reported that a congratulatory letter was sent on behalf of the Borough to Akshay M. Rasal of Glen Mills in recognition of his achievement of the Eagle Scout rank, the highest honor in Scouting. His Eagle Scout Project involved the design and construction of a Flag Retirement Box at the Rachel Kohl Community Library, completed with over 148 volunteer hours. The Mayor commended Akshay's leadership, community service, and dedication, noting his multiple leadership roles within Troop 260 of Concordville and his recent graduation from Garnet Valley High School, Class of 2025.

PSP Report: Trooper David Nguyen

Public Safety and Crime Statistics:

The Pennsylvania State Police reported a slight overall increase in incidents in Chester Heights Borough, rising from 527 (Jan–Oct 2024) to 557 (same period 2025). Property crimes declined slightly (26 to 24), while crimes against persons rose from 7 to 18,



mainly due to more reports of harassment and simple assaults. Traffic stops increased significantly from 125 to 175, driven by DUI and drug possession enforcement despite staffing at under 30% capacity. Trooper David Nguyen noted that state and federal overtime grants supported proactive patrols. The closure of Crozer Hospital has shifted mental health commitment cases to Riddle Hospital, increasing police resource demands. Troopers also shared holiday safety reminders and continue coordination with PennDOT on hazardous intersection data, particularly at Valleybrook and Baltimore Pike, to guide safety improvements.

Public Comment: No Report

Approval of the Regular Council Meeting Minutes 10.06.2025.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Baum | Hudak) voted and approved the Regular Council Meeting Minutes from October 6, 2025.

Approval of the General Meeting Minutes from 10.20.2025.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Baum) voted and approved the General Meeting Minutes from October 20, 2025.

Cash Disbursements from October 7th through November 3rd, 2025.

General Fund Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$-78,176.62.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Montgomery) voted and approved the General Fund Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$-78,176.62.

Liquid Fuels Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$-79.13.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Montgomery) voted and approved the Liquid Fuels Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$-79.13.

Chester Heights Fire Company – Balance Sheet Review Only

ARPA Fund Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$-85,568.07.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Baum) voted and approved the ARPA Fund Cash Disbursements in the amount of \$-85.568.07.



Solicitor's Report

- Most matters have been routine. Two ordinances will be discussed later in the meeting.
- **11 Smithbridge Road:** Borough Engineer conducted a site visit to assess potential code compliance and violations; awaiting report for next steps.
- **19 Smithbridge Road:** Zoning appeal matter — solicitor contacted property owner's counsel to confirm the prior settlement is off and intends to reactivate the appeal in the Court of Common Pleas. The Borough will file an entry of appearance to intervene and request the court to resume proceedings.
- **279 Llewellyn Road:** Vacant and overgrown property. A second certified letter was sent to an alternate address after the first mailing was returned. If no response or action is taken, the Borough will issue a formal nuisance violation under the existing ordinance and post notice on the property. Noncompliance after 10 days will result in citation and possible fines filed with the magisterial district court.

Engineer's Report

Resolution #2025.11.A 156 Logtown Road Sewage Planning

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Baum | Hudak) voted and approved Resolution#2025.11.A – 156 Logtown Road Sewage Planning to go to DEP for Approval.

Consider Motion to Authorize the signatures on the planning module and maintenance agreement for 156 Logtown Road.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Baum) voted and approved to Authorize the signatures on the planning module and maintenance agreement for 156 Logtown Road.

Consider Motion to Authorize Michael J. Ciocco to sign as SEO for 156 Logtown Road.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Baum) voted and approved to Authorize Michael J. Ciocco to sign as SEO for 156 Logtown Road.

Consider Motion – Rose Hill Financial Security Release No. 9 in the amount of \$41,857.13.

MOTION Upon Motion, Council (Baum | Hudak) voted and approved Rose Hill Financial Security Release No. 9 in the amount of \$41,857.13.



Consider Motion – Rose Hill Financial Security Release No. 10 in the amount of \$29,497.50.

MOTION

Upon Motion, Council (Baum | Hudak) voted and approved the Rose Hill Financial Security Release No. 10 in the amount of \$29,497.50.

Consider Motion – 8 Smithbridge Road Financial Security Release No. 2 in the amount of \$79,340.00.

MOTION

Upon Motion, Council (Block | Hudak) voted and approved the 8 Smithbridge Road Financial Security Release No. 2 in the amount of \$79,340.00. Council Member Baum Abstained.

Application for Payment Valleybrook Storm Sewer - This is the final payment for this project and largely comes from the ARPA funds. There is a small amount from the general fund. This will exhaust the ARPA funds. This was approved already and is ready to process.

11 Smithbridge Road – Update – Pennoni performed a site walk with the owner and their engineer. Discussed the stormwater design, and it is feasible for them to comply. They will prepare plans accordingly.

Powell Park – Update – Signage & ScapeWorx – Pennoni will paint a location for the signs and obtain updated bids from ScapeWorx to stay within the bidding requirements. A lesser amount of work is needed than originally proposed.

Mattson Road Bridge – Update – The County is going through PennDOT reviews and PennDOT is requesting that the guiderail connect on both ends eliminating the gaps. The current guiderail is painted brown and the new would be galvanized. Does the Borough prefer the new guiderail be painted brown as well. The County has visibility concerns of a painted brown guiderail so it would require reflectors and stickers if Brown is selected.

The County will stripe in their limit of work and Concord has striped to Willits Way, there will be a gap in the stripes and that will need to be filled by the Borough after the projects end.

Road Program

Megan will walk through a presentation but overall, the goal will be to take the monies from the 2025 budget and move to the 2026 budget for repaving Summit Lane of 25K.



Roadmaster | EMC No Report

Zoning Officer Report – Routine Matters

Fire Marshal Report

- Residents were reminded to use caution during the holiday season — particularly with candles, Christmas decorations, and heating systems.
- Residents are encouraged to have furnaces inspected and chimneys cleaned, as there has been an increase in recent calls for carbon monoxide incidents and chimney-related issues.
- A recent fire call occurred at Coventry where a chimney repair company accidentally covered several chimney caps with a tarp, causing smoke buildup when a resident used their fireplace. Fortunately, the situation was contained before it escalated.

Conditional Use & Property Compliance Issue

- The Code Official reported that a conditional Use and Occupancy (U&O) permit was issued for a borough property requiring extensive electrical, plumbing, and structural repairs prior to reinspection.
- Despite the conditional terms, the new owner has moved into the property without completing required repairs or obtaining reinspection.
- Observed issues included lack of heat, uncertified fireplace, damaged sewer lines, and incomplete drywall.
- The property may now present safety and code compliance risks.
- The Code Official plans to reinspect the property and has requested input from the borough engineer (Catania Engineering).
- Discussion followed regarding the borough's limited authority to prevent property transfers; under statute, new owners have one year to bring properties into compliance.
- The Solicitor will review options for enforcement and follow-up once the inspection and engineering feedback are received.
- The Zoning Code Official clarified that he had no prior involvement with the property owner and wanted to address rumors suggesting otherwise.

Mayor's Report

History Report – Celebrating 80 Years

As part of the ongoing “History Highlights” series, the presenter shared findings from the borough's historical drawer.

- Two notable discoveries were highlighted:
- 2008 Chester Heights Haunted History Tour: Featured actors, including one portraying “Sandy Flash,” at the historic Maltrous House on Old Chester Heights



Road. Despite heavy rain earlier in the day, the event proceeded successfully with about 40 attendees. Tickets were \$10 for adults and free for children under 16.

- “Magical History Tour of Chester Heights” (2008): An online photo tour originally created by the now-defunct Chester Heights Historical Society. The presenter shared photographs of notable local sites, including:
 - 101 Valleybrook Road and the former camp meeting grounds.
 - The old Chester Heights School (now a daycare center).
 - The Wilson Farm (now Rolling Heights).
 - The Wawa train station and turnaround.
 - Blossom Hill (now the Wawa-owned Graham Wood Center).
 - Hill of Skye property, historically noted for hosting Babe Ruth after a car accident on Valley Brook Road.
- Discussion followed regarding the status of the Chester Heights Historical Society, which is no longer active. Former members Glenn Mon and Ken Frederick have passed away, and the associated website is no longer maintained. The historical materials are now stored in the borough’s archive drawer.
- Council discussed whether a new historical society should be reestablished and whether it should operate independently or as part of the borough.
- The presenter also shared a historic “Battle of Brandywine” flag found in the archive, matching the one depicted on the borough’s blue Logtown Road historical marker. The flag represents early American history tied to local artifacts found near the Logtown area, believed to be from soldiers who stopped there following the 1777 battle.
- The presentation concluded with appreciation for the borough’s preserved historical materials and the personal contributions made by former residents to Chester Heights’ heritage.

Discussion – Boy Scouts Use of Powell Park for Early Morning Fishing

- A troop leader inquired about the possibility of Boy Scouts spending the night at Powell Park to fish early in the morning, noting trout season starts in March.
- Questions raised included logistics for overnight stay, renting porta-potties, potential fees, and park safety.
- The group noted uncertainty regarding the safety and suitability of the park for overnight scouting activities in March.
- Alternative fishing locations were mentioned, including the corner of Mattson and Valleybrook Roads.
- It was acknowledged that permission for overnight camping would require discussion regarding legal, insurance, and operational considerations.
- Solicitor input will be needed to determine legality and liability; Eagle Scout chaperones may be involved.
- Tentative interest noted for March 28 as a major fishing day for Greg Chestnut’s troop.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Administration

- Finance committee is slightly behind on the budget due to recent personnel changes.
- A meeting was held with Sue to begin budget preparations.
- Liquid Fuels Budget: Draft reviewed; mirrors last year's budget with a \$10,000 increase for snow removal.
 - Income: \$57,960.72 from PennDOT allocation and \$2,400 interest.
 - Carryover from previous year: \$30,000, bringing total budget to \$90,360.72.
- Street light expenses discussed; primarily due to electricity costs across the borough, not maintenance.
- Summit Lane carryover of \$25,000 confirmed for work deferred from last year.
- Snow removal budget includes placeholder \$10,000 to cover potential additional costs, reflecting higher ice-related expenses last year.
- Next steps: finalize draft budget, schedule additional committee meeting for review and approval.

Community Engagement

1. Upcoming Events
 - The final event of the year is the Holiday Christmas/Santa event on December 7.
 - Advertising for the event will be displayed on the board and promoted through usual channels.
 - Discussion noted that the Fire Department's Santa/Candy Cane event will also be advertised.
2. E-Scooter Safety Roundtable
 - Attended by [Name], Senator Tim Carney, Representative Wayans, and Kane.
 - Topic focused on E-Scooter safety due to recent injuries and fatalities.
 - Roundtable was informational; no immediate actions required but statistics and current laws for scooters, bicycles, and E-bikes will be available for public reference.
3. Library Update – Rachel Cole Community Library
 - Recent fundraiser was successful; annual appeal letters will be sent for funding.
 - Roof replacement needed due to prior poor installation; seeking LSA grant (estimated \$200,000) to cover roof replacement and solar panel installation.
 - LSA grant requires borough sponsorship/resolution; no federal funds or matching funds needed.



- Grant writer has prepared the application; Chester Heights' resolution required for endorsement.
- Timeline: Application deadline is November 30; resolution to be drafted for potential approval at the November 17 meeting.
- Solar panel installation discussed; coordination with local Fire Department necessary to ensure safety for firefighters accessing the roof.

Public Safety

Amending Zoning Ordinance Proposed #222

Discussion on Draft Swimming Pool Ordinance

- Topic: Proposed zoning ordinance for swimming pools in the borough.
- Background: Borough identified a gap in regulations regarding pool safety barriers and fencing. Residents had suggested alternatives, but stricter regulations were deemed necessary.
- Key Points of Draft Ordinance:
 - Requires fencing around all swimming pools (minimum 4-foot fence, any type allowed).
 - Pools cannot be located in front yards, side yards, under electrical wires, or interfere with public sewer systems.
 - A site plan and engineered drainage system must be submitted and reviewed by the zoning officer in consultation with the borough engineer before a permit is issued.
 - Overall, the ordinance addresses all aspects of pool safety and installation.
- Next Steps:
 - Authorization sought to advertise and send ordinance for review to the borough and county planning commissions.
 - Public hearing planned for December 15th.
- Additional Discussion:
 - Concern raised about potential HOA conflicts on proposed snow removal; it was noted that borough law takes precedence over HOA rules.
 - Recommendation to notify HOAs of the ordinance once adopted.
 - Council acknowledged the possibility of lawsuits despite precautions.

MOTION

Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Block) voted and approved to advertise the DRAFT Zoning Ordinance Amendment.

Historical Ordinance Proposed #223

- Purpose: Establish a Historical Resources Committee and a historical preservation inventory of historic properties and resources within the borough.
- Key Features:
 - Categorizes identified historic resources as Class 1 or Class 2.



- Class 1 resources (St. Thomas Church, Chester High School, Stonehaven) require a historical impact permit for exterior alterations.
- Class 2 resources are incentive-based; property owners may opt-in to preserve historical features but are not required to undergo a permit process for modifications.
- Ordinance applies primarily to exterior features visible to the public; interior alterations are generally not regulated.
- Establishes a 3–5 member Historical Commission to review permit applications and provide recommendations to Borough Council. Council retains final decision-making authority.
- Discussion Highlights:
 - Council emphasized importance of preserving borough history and protecting key resources while balancing property owners’ rights.
 - Some members questioned the enforceability of the ordinance, noting it primarily provides recommendations rather than strict mandates, with most “teeth” focused on demolition or major exterior changes.
 - Ordinance intended to prevent loss of significant historic structures while avoiding excessive regulation on owners.

MOTION

Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Baum) voted to approve to advertise the DRAFT Historical Ordinance.

Fire Company Report October 2025

Chester Heights Fire Company responded to 33 calls in October: 21 in Chester Heights, 7 in Concord Township, and 3 in other municipalities.

- Notable incidents included a brush fire on Wawa Road caused by a fallen tree that brought down wires.
- Upcoming events and training:
 - Company meeting: November 6
 - Air pack training: Following week
 - Live-fire training: At Westchester Training Center, simulating real-life scenarios for both volunteer and professional firefighters.
- Community engagement:
 - Brookhaven Holiday Parade: November 22
 - Merrill Gardens appreciation lunch: Recognition for responding to over 370 calls per year.

Infrastructure and Public Works – No Report

Old Business: 2026 Calendar Meeting Dates – Consider Motion to Advertise



MOTION

Upon Motion, Council (Baum | Hudak) voted and approved to advertise the 2026 Calendar Meeting dates.

New Business:

Pop-Up Food Bank

- Council Member Hudak proposed hosting a pop-up food bank at the Borough Office during the holiday season through January, collecting non-perishable food items to assist residents experiencing shortages.
- Council discussed coordination with existing local food banks (St. Thomas, Garnet Valley) and donation drives, noting potential overlap.
- Suggestions included placing a donation bin in the Borough Office lobby for public access and using media or the communications committee to publicize the effort.
- Councilmember Hudak offered to manage the collection on weekends if needed.
- Council agreed to consider the proposal and explore logistics for a convenient, accessible collection setup.

Public Comment:

- Residents expressed concern over potential conflicts of interest on the Historic Commission, particularly regarding property owners serving on the committee. It was noted that the ordinance prohibits property owners from voting on issues affecting their own historic assets, but there was debate on whether they should be allowed to serve on the commission at all.
- Emphasis was placed on appointing committee members with genuine interest in preserving history, rather than those with self-interest.
- Speakers highlighted the historical significance of St. Thomas Parish, including the church and associated structures, and the need to protect these assets for educational and cultural value.
- Concerns were raised about recent demolitions and planned construction projects, emphasizing the importance of an ordinance to provide time for review and potential preservation.
- Comparisons were made to nearby townships with historic preservation codes, showing how they work with property owners to maintain historic structures.

Community Events and Resources

- Tours of historic sites, including the old 1852 church, carriage house, horse shed, and Wilcox St. Mary's Chapel, were announced for November 9th (12:30–3:00 PM).
- Discussion on food collections and community support: residents suggested organized collections through established organizations like Delaware County Services, St. Agnes, and the Knights of Columbus to ensure food reaches those in need.
- Residents noted a strong local need for community support and coordination due to broader funding gaps and ongoing challenges.



Adjournment

Upon Motion, Council (Hudak | Baum) voted and adjourned the Regular Council Meeting at 9:06PM.