

Newtown Borough Council – Council Meeting Minutes
July 15, 2026

Video time: 0:38

The Council Meeting of Newtown Borough Council was called to order at 7:02 P.M. on Wednesday, July 15, 2026 at the Chancellor Center – 30 North Chancellor Street in Newtown Borough, PA.

[This meeting was recorded.](#)

President Heinz asked those in attendance to join her in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Councilors Heinz, Tognini, Bauman, Foley, Phillips, Woldorf

Solicitors Heleniak & Dorfschneider; Chief Sabath

Absent: Mayor Grunde-McLaughlin

Public to be Heard *Video time: 1:20*

Karen White, Resident, described her perspective from working in commercial real estate for 35 years and her expertise in working with land development. Ms. White noted the vacant property proposed for development over 10 years ago, now known as the Liberty Centre project, coupled with the challenges facing State Street businesses. She believes the project to be the most financially feasible as it is currently proposed and is both practical and achievable. Ms. White encouraged Council to balance their responsibility to protect the interests of the Borough with the realities of fiscally sound development and allow the property to become an attractive and productive asset to our community.

Mary Lutz, Resident, expressed gratitude for the progress in construction at 103 S. State Street. Ms. Lutz noted the importance of the street to be cleaned by August 8th for Newtown's 250th celebration.

Janet Steiner, Comcast Government Affairs Representative, described Comcast's request for an easement agreement to provide service to a State Street business, requesting that it be approved as originally presented without additional language requiring remediation of aerial wiring and equipment. Ms. Steiner stated that the Comcast Franchise Agreement with the Borough addresses the wiring and equipment concerns and ensures the implementation of corrective actions. Ms. Steiner pledged their support in working with the Borough to address these matters, noting that Comcast is currently addressing all open utility tickets in the Borough; she offered to assist with specific locations of concern. In response to Councilor Phillips, Ms. Steiner stated that she would share the locations of properties and call tickets that are outstanding.

Matt Ruple, Resident, requested that the portion of his COA that wasn't tabled at the last HARB meeting be voted on for approval this evening; he cited safety concerns. The Solicitor confirmed that Council can vote to add this matter to the agenda, given that conditions are met.

Jen Nicholl, Resident, submitted a special event application for the 3rd Annual Haunted Hustle 5K, benefiting the NR2F1 Foundation, to be held on October 17th; the application will be considered by Council in the August meeting cycle.

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to amend the agenda to include COA 2026-035, regarding the portion regarding the new railing and fence at 22 Penn Street.

Certificates of Appropriateness – Kris Bauman *Video time: 21:38*

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Tognini, and passed unanimously, to follow the recommendations of the Historic Architectural Review Board and direct the President of Council to sign the following Certificates of Appropriateness, thereby approving the historical appropriateness of the applications, with final approval by the Code Enforcement Officer.

COA 2026-020, 30 N. Chancellor Street—Alterations, Applicant: Kelsey Gibson

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for site and exterior building improvements.

Noting all requested changes were made, HARB recommended approving the application and revised plans as presented.

COA 2026-027, 125 Court Street—Chimney and Stone Wall Repointing, Applicant: Jane Peters

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for repointing the north chimney and wall.

HARB recommended approving the application as presented.

COA 2026-029, 18 Penn Street —Repointing and Porch Deck Replacement, Applicant: Gregory DeLuca

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior building improvements.

HARB recommended approving the application with wood, tongue and groove boards.

COA 2026-036, 130 N. State Street—Storm Windows, Applicants: Rachelle Kosoff and Kevin McClay

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of storm windows.

HARB recommended approving the replacement of the aluminum storm windows with new aluminum storm windows.

COA 2026-035, 22 E. Penn Street—Railing and Fence, Applicant: Matthew Ruple

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of a garage and construction of an addition and porch extension, which include a railing on the back porch and a fence along the driveway.

HARB recommended approving the railing and fence only.

- A motion was duly made and amended by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to follow the recommendation of the Historic Architectural Review Board and approve as amended the following Certificate of Appropriateness.

COA 2026-032, 144 N. Congress Street—New Fence, Applicant: Eric Petroski

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a new privacy fence at side yard and rear.

HARB recommended a 6-foot wooden shadow box fence be installed and that if the proposed wood fence is anything other than cedar, it needs to be painted.

Mr. Petroski, Resident, accepted this change to an alternative fence as recommended by HARB, noting that HARB recommended denial of his initial submission.

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to follow the recommendation of the Historic Architectural Review Board and deny the following Certificate of Appropriateness.

COA 2026-033 , 1 E. Washington Avenue—Alterations, Applicant: Verindar Kaur

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new entrance door.

HARB recommended denying the installation of a new door with the recommendation that the existing wood door be retained and modified with glass substituted for the wood panels to improve visibility while maintaining the historic materials.

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to follow the recommendation of the Historic Architectural Review Board and deny the following Certificate of Appropriateness.

COA 2026-034, 110 N. Lincoln Avenue—Porch Repairs, Applicant: Ed Deitzel

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of porch decking and stairs and possible repairs to the porch elements.

HARB recommended denying the installation of PVC porch decking with the recommendation that the porch decking be replaced with mahogany, 1 x 4 tongue and groove boards and mahogany steps and risers and that the rest of the porch be repaired as required.

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to follow the recommendation of the Historic Architectural Review Board and deny the following Certificate of Appropriateness.

COA 2026-037, 115 Washington Avenue—Window Replacement, Applicant: Remodeling Concepts

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of 11 first floor windows.

HARB recommended denying the application as presented with the recommendation that the wood windows be repaired rather than replaced.

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to follow the recommendation of the Historic Architectural Review Board and deny the following Certificate of Appropriateness.

COA 2026-039, 12 S. State Street—Siding Replacement, Applicant: Melinda Vallone

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace wood siding.

HARB recommended denying the application as presented with the recommendation that the siding be repaired rather than replaced.

Police Report – Chief Sabath Video time: 37:03

Chief Sabath reported 178 service calls in June; there were 40 traffic citations, 9 traffic accidents, 3 domestic disputes, and more.

Mayor's Report Video time: 38:26

In Mayor Grunde-McLaughlin's absence, Councilor Tognini announced the following special event requests:

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to approve the Black & White Dinner, sponsored by the Newtown Theatre on State Street between Greene & Jefferson Streets on Sunday, September 6th, 5:30-8:30pm. No rain date.
- A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to approve Movie in the Park, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, sponsored by the Recreation Board, 6:00-8:30pm at Linton Memorial Park on Friday, September 11th. No rain date.
- A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to approve the Fall Fest, sponsored by the Recreation Board, on Saturday, September 19th at Linton Memorial Park, 4:00-8:00pm. Rain date is Sunday, September 20th.
- A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to approve the Halloween Parade, sponsored by the Recreation Board, on Saturday, October 24th, 9:00am-12:00pm, on a designated route ending at Brian S. Gregg Park. No rain date.

President Heinz announced the upcoming special events as follows:

- Music on State Street, Thursdays 6:00-7:30pm through September 3rd in front of 16 South State Street, benefiting the Opus Outreach Foundation.
- The Newtown Antique and Classic Car Show on Sunday, July 26th from 10:00am-3:00pm on State Street
- Newtown Celebrates America 250 on Saturday, Aug. 8th from 9:30am-4:00pm

Solicitor's Report – Greg Heleniak - none

Engineer's Report – Michele Fountain *Video time: 41:28*

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to approve the authorization to advertise the 2026 Road Program to include base repairs on Edgeboro Drive from Jefferson Street to Frost Lane, and the mill and overlay of North Congress Street from Greene Street to Washington Avenue.

President's Report – Emily Heinz *Video time: 42:54*

President Heinz announced that an organizational reassessment is being conducted in preparation for hiring a new Borough Manager; Council plans to post the position in early August and interview in mid-August.

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to approve POL-010 Snow and Ice Incident Action Plan Policy.

Councilor Woldorf read her draft policy aloud for Council consideration. Council accepted the policy but requested lowering the threshold of snow accumulation when hauling it away, noting the decision to be at the discretion of the Borough Manager and Police Chief.

- A motion was duly made and amended by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to authorize readvertisement of bids for snow removal services contingent upon review by the Borough Solicitor.

Councilor Woldorf stated that the new bid would not place a ceiling on what the Borough would pay for snow removal and does not require the contractor to own specific vehicles.

Approval of Minutes *Video time: 55:35*

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve June 3, 2026 Work Session minutes.
- A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve the amended June 17, 2026 Council Meeting minutes.

Budget & Finance – Emily Heinz, Gail Foley, & Julia Woldorf *Video time: 56:50*

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Foley, seconded by Councilor Woldorf, and passed unanimously to accept, subject to audit, the Consolidated Expenditure Report for the month of June totaling \$169,554.70.
- A motion was duly made by Councilor Foley, seconded by Councilor Tognini, and passed unanimously, to ratify the purchase of a police vehicle at a cost of \$86,117.84 to replace a 2019 vehicle now out of commission.

President Heinz stated that this vehicle will replace a Ford Expedition; Council expressed interest in purchasing an electric vehicle (EV) next year. President Heinz stated that it would be appropriate for the Mayor to address this. In response to Councilor Bauman, Chief Sabath noted the size limitation of EVs.

Personnel/Committees of Council Update – Gina Tognini *Video time: 1:03:53*

Councilor Tognini announced two vacancies on the Human Relations Commission and one on the Recreation Board.

Councilor Tognini reported that the Borough Secretary will act as Recording Secretary for the Committees of Council; she will set up Zoom meetings using AI assistance to support the writing of meeting minutes.

Old Business *Video time: 1:04:31*

Councilor Woldorf announced she and Councilor Tognini met with ARRO Consulting to discuss the sidewalk and trails project funded by a \$30K grant; they've expanded the committee to include members of the Planning Commission and Walk Friendly Newtown.

Announcements – none

Public to be Heard *Video time: 1:05:28*

Mary Lutz, Resident, asked about communication between the Borough and Township regarding the proposed apartment development on the 600 block of Penn Street. The Solicitor advised Ms. Lutz how to remain informed regarding Township matters; Engineer Fountain added that the Township has not received revised plans from the developer.

President Heinz called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 P.M. Councilor Phillips so moved, Councilor Tognini seconded, and the motion was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy S. Musto
Borough Secretary

Attendees

Janet Steiner
Karen White
Matthew Ruple
Marta & Michael Grothman
Eric Petroski

Mary Lutz
Bob Musto
Jane Peters
Jen Nicholl
Elizabeth Bolston