

**NEWPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
October 7, 2025**

President Greg Shope called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the following Borough Council Members present: Barbara Leach, Christian Fickes, Jacob Zentichko, Mary Bucher, and Tami Halstead.

OTHERS PRESENT: Newport Borough Secretary Shelly Damiano
Idan Ghazanfari, Municipal Solicitor of Salzman Hughes, P.C.; Mayor Stephen Tice
Bruce Psaras, Code Enforcement Officer; Borough Engineer Phil Brath
Luke Roman, Perry County Times, Frank Campbell, Newport Revitalization Preservation Society (NRPS)

ABSENT: Penny Frownfelter

President Shope requested Cl'm Fickes to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Shope announced that the meeting was being recorded.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

None

GUEST: Frank Campbell, Newport Revitalization Preservation Society (NRPS)
The borough received a Thank You for all the support of Canal Day that was held on October 4, 2025. A good crowd with great weather made the annual event a success.

Upcoming events for Remainder of 2025

November 7, 2025	Ladies Night
November 28-29, 2025	Black Friday/Small Business Saturday
December 6, 2025	Tree Lighting

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

STREETS COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Fickes

Streets Department Supervisor, Cody Harris, submitted a Streets Report for council to review.

- Fall Cleanup on Saturday, September 27, 2025 had the dumpster full around 9:30 am.
- Cl'm Halstead, along with Frank Campbell, had the 2 Streets employees collect couches from 2 properties that then had to be taken to Mifflin County Solid Waste Authority, Lewistown, for a fee of \$25.00.
- Scrap metal collected from Fall Cleanup brought in \$142.10.
- A big Thank You to Cl'm Fickes and his wife, Dawn, who were a huge help during Fall Cleanup.
- Leaf pick-up is almost daily.
- Under Playground Committee, there is a quote by Charles H. Burns, Inc. for winterizing the playground bathrooms.

Cl'm Fickes expressed the idea to purchase mums for the planters in town from the proceeds from the scrap.
(Note: Scrap proceeds were deposited into the General Fund.)

Auger repair on F550: The auger was welded.

Walnut & 3rd Street Inlet Replacement: As approved at the September 16, 2025 council meeting, Cl'm Halstead informed council that Kirby Kitner will begin the repairs next week.

New Sweeper Attachment: Discussion with Rick Levan, Municipal Service Specialist, PennDOT District 8, was had on being able to use Liquid Fuels funds to purchase the new sweeper attachment and using the PA COSTARS Cooperative Purchasing Program.

Towing Enforcement: Code Enforcement Officer Bruce Psaras is researching the ordinances and towing enforcement.

Brush Pickup: Will end brush pick up the end of November, weather dependent.

GMC: brake pads, calipers, & hoses: As approved September 16, 2025 Council Meeting, Installed in-house. Calipers were returned for core charge credit. Parts = \$269.75; DOT 3 brake fluid = \$5.89: Total Cost = \$275.64

ENGINEER’S REPORT: Phil Brath, Municipal Engineer

PennDOT Automated Red Light Enforcement Transportation Enhancements Grant Program (ARLE)

Street Signs: *The ARLE Grant application had been submitted for \$83,000.00 for street signs, which includes \$15,000.00 in design, engineering, and bidding.* Still awaiting grant award results.

Request For Proposal (RFP’s) for Curbs and Sidewalks SR 849 Engineering: #7 New Business: Cl’m Halstead

Funding Sources:

2022 Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS)

2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Needs to be spent by 2026

CDBG funding is requiring RFP’s to be done with additional requirements with a short time frame for completion.

5 Proposals received.

- \$ 72,950.00 Gibson-Thomas Engineering Co., Inc.
- \$ 73,400.00 Peters Consultants, Inc.
- \$106,495.00 Barry Isett & Associates, Inc.
- \$223,560.00 Stahl Sheaffer Engineering
- \$311,982.00 Wallace, Montgomery & Associates, LLP

Includes: Project design, specification, required meeting attendance, bidding, and other engineering services.

Lowest Bid: **\$72,950.00**

Gibson-Thomas Engineering Co., Inc., 3552 Gettysburg Road, Suite 201, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Total Lump Sum, \$192,950.00, is needed for Project Construction Supervision and Inspection. PennDOT is requiring a full-time inspector be on site and will be paid through the borough’s grant (HATS or CDBG)

MOTION: Cl’m Halstead moved, seconded by Cl’m Fickes to Approve the Lowest Bidder, Gibson-Thomas, at \$72,950.00 for Curbs and Sidewalks SR 849 Engineering. Motion carried.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT: Idan Ghazanfari; Salzman Hughes, P.C.

The new solicitor introduced himself to the council.

Sunnova Energy International Inc. Chapter 11 Bankruptcy Case: Newport Borough “party in interest”

Received additional communications. No response required at this time.

Morgan & Morgan Certified Mail: The borough can keep the mailed notice for their records. No action needed.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

September 2, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes; September 16, 2025 Mid-Month Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Cl’m Fickes moved, seconded by Cl’m Halstead to Approve both September 2, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes and September 16, 2025 Mid-Month Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT FOR OCTOBER: Treasurer Damiano

The October Financial Report was read by Treasurer Damiano. The treasurer also noted that along with the September 2025 Budget Sheet, a supplemental Financial Tally Sheet for the Front Street Project 2025 was included to collaborate with the additional Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Roads Grant Deposit of 54,529.50 on September 10, 2025 with a total received thus far of \$145,412.00. The remainder of the grant funds will be paid to the borough July, 2026 in the amount of \$57,057.60.

MOTION: Cl’m Bucher moved, seconded by Cl’m Fickes to Approve the October Financial Report. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER BILLS TO DATE: Treasurer Damiano

MOTION: Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Bucher to pay the bills presented for payment in the amount of \$9,754.89. Motion carried.

General Municipal Pension System State Aid: \$9,687.71

On September 24, 2025 General Municipal Pension System State Aid was received in the amount of \$9,687.71, calculated by Act 205 of 1984 and is solely used to defray the municipality's pension costs. The allocation is required to be deposited in the pension plan within 30 days of receipt. Treasurer Damiano is requesting approval of the Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) payment to Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS) in the amount of \$9,687.71.

MOTION: Cl'm Fickes moved, seconded by Cl'm Halstead to Approve the MMO payment of \$9,687.71 to Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS). Motion carried.

Municipal Benefits Services Employer Open Enrollment closed on October 3, 2025

The Employer Open Enrollment for health plan selections from Municipal Benefits Services closed on October 3, 2025. The current plan will automatically renew in 2026:

Highmark Traditional PPO 1000 – Rx \$15/\$40/\$75; Premium Dental; Platinum VBA Enhanced

Employee Open Enrollment is October 13, 2025 – November 3, 2025 and all selections/changes are to be made on the Member Portal.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Secretary Damiano

1. No update on Unclaimed Property for the borough from Johnson Controls Inc.
2. As approved at the September 2, 2025 council meeting,
 - a. WEX gas card ordered for Code Enforcement Officer Bruce Psaras.
 - b. Submitted the 2026 MMO to PMRS for Non-Uniform & Police Pensions.
 - c. Submitted Resolution #10-25 Waiver of 2026 Non-Uniform Contributions.
 - d. Submitted Resolution #11-25 Waiver of 2026 Uniform Police Contributions
3. Submitted Special Event Permit on 9/3/25 to PennDOT for Annual Halloween Parade sponsored by the Lions' Club that will be held on Wednesday, October 22, 2025.
4. Submitted Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) Municipal Statistics 706B Form, Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association (VFRA) 9/25/25 that confirms distribution of payment to Newport Volunteer Fire Relief Association.

Isolved Labor Law Compliance: Free trial. Need to opt-out by October 27, 2025 before a \$25 monthly fee is charged.

MOTION: Cl'm Fickes moved, seconded by Cl'm Bucher to Approve to Opt-Out of the Isolved Labor Law Compliance program. Motion carried.

2026 PSAB Plus Training Program Subscription Renewal: \$450.00 subscription allows anyone in the borough to take a webinar with a PSAB Plus Membership either for no charge or a reduced cost.

MOTION: Cl'm Fickes moved, seconded by Cl'm Leach to Approve \$450.00 for the 2026 PSAB Plus Training Program Subscription. Motion carried.

CODE ENFORCEMENT: Bruce Psaras

Code Enforcement reported the statistics for September.

Discussion was had on different towing companies in the area for use in towing enforcement, the state requirements including a secured lot and proper insurance. No expenses would be incurred by the borough as the towing expenses would be paid by the owner of the vehicle. A contract/agreement would be necessary with the towing company.

MOTION: Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Leach to Approve looking into Fuller & Son Towing, 51 Paradise Road, Duncannon, PA 17020 as the towing company for towing enforcement, pending approval from the solicitor's review on contract and final council approval. Motion carried.

Resolution for Establishing Fees for Correcting and Abating Violations

Cl'm Halstead presented a preliminary resolution for establishing fees for correcting and abating violations. This would be the mechanism to charge the owner. Council will do research on fees. The solicitor suggested a fee schedule for all fees charged by the borough to be approved in one document at the beginning of each year.

CODE ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE: Cl'm Bucher

1. The Health Department was contacted by the Code Enforcement Officer in response to the September 16, 2025 disclosure of the amount of mold in an apartment in the borough. The tenants have since moved out.
2. Phantom Fireworks inquired about the borough ordinances concerning selling novelty items at the Weis Grocery Store.
3. Code Enforcement Officer ORI # compliance requirements for license plates.

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE: Cl'm Zentichko

Chapter 166: Peddling and Soliciting Ordinance revision options discussed. A resolution with Daily/Weekly/Monthly fees would correspond with the Peddling and Soliciting ordinance. Cl'm Fickes stressed that there should be a Business fee structure for corporations as the ordinance is not being enforced now.

Trinity Solar 4-Day Peddler's Permit: New Business #6

In conjunction with discussion of the Peddling and Soliciting Ordinance, a request from Trinity Solar for a 4-day soliciting permit was received. The secretary, seeking clarification from council, needed confirmation on who approves the permit and, in response, the current ordinance was read out loud, and thus interpreted that the secretary issues the license.

PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Halstead

A quote of \$775.00 for winterizing Veterans Memorial Park from Charles H. Burns, Inc, 79 N. Market Street, Millerstown, PA 17062 was presented to council for consideration. The company has the proper equipment. The quote included 30 gallons of RV Antifreeze. He would be able to winterize the park on October 27, 2025.

MOTION: Cl'm Fickes moved, seconded by Cl'm Halstead to Approve \$750.00 for Charles H. Burns, Inc to winterize the park. Motion carried.

The Halloween Parade is Wednesday, October 22, 2025 with a rain-date of Thursday, October 23, 2025. The park restrooms will close the day after the Halloween Parade. The water in the park will be turned off on Monday, October 27, 2025.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Frownfelter not present.

As previously presented under the Treasurer's Report, the Open Enrollment for Employers closed on October 3, and the Open Enrollment for Employees will be open October 13 – November 3, 2025.

Council will need to decide at the October 21, 2025 council meeting the percentage the employee will pay towards the medical benefits in order for the employee to make an informed decision on coverage cost.

WEBSITE/IT COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Fickes

The Selectech Annual Support Agreement, which is a flat rate support for the computers, network, Microsoft 365, etc., but does not include upgrades or new installations, is due for renewal. Currently, the agreement costs \$3,150.00 and includes website updates, but the new agreement of \$3,150.00 would not cover website updates. To include website updates, the cost would be \$9,450.00 and any billable hourly rate items would still be billed at a reduced rate of \$105.00 per hour. This increase was due to the large number of website changes requested without first consulting the Website/IT Committee to see if the changes could be done in-house.

Cl'm Halstead suggested checking into other service companies, but the Website/IT Committee tabled a decision until the October 21, 2025 Mid-Month Budget meeting.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: Cl'm Shope

Working on the Drug and Alcohol Policy.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Tice

Canal Day had a good turnout and the weather was great. The Newport mural that is next door to the borough office was dedicated during the Canal Day festivities, but the mayor would have liked to have seen more council participation. In the future the mayor would like to see Canal Day stretch from the bridge to the park.

Cl'm Leach spoke about the days when the merchants association had promotions, but the mayor explained that to stay relevant, the need and ways (such as social media) to draw people in is different than in the past. The inconvenience of parking for residents for the 4 hours of an event for the benefit of the town, and under the discretion of borough use, as necessary, is a small price to pay for Newport's growth.

OLD BUSINESS

MORE Grant (Municipal Opportunities for Retrofits and Energy Efficiency): Secretary Damiano

AEI completed the ASHRAE Level II Energy Audit for \$5,500.00 and the Facility Conditions Assessment for \$3,500.00 on Wednesday, February 19, 2025.

Phase 2: Project Design is covered under the grant. A proposal from Huth Consulting Engineers, LLC, 1015 Apache Trail, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, was distributed to council for review. Discussion will take place at a future meeting.

Assistant Treasurer Bond Renewal

The Assistant Treasurer Bond renewal, \$443.75, is due by November 5, 2025. The Assistant Treasurer has not worked since February, 2024. The question arose on how long it would take to get a bond, if needed, and consensus was that it would take less than a week.

MOTION: Cl'm Fickes moved Cl'm Bucher seconded to Not Renew the Assistant Treasurer Bond. Motion carried.

Mulberry Street Project Storm & Inlets: Small Water & Sewer Grant: Cl'm Zentichko

Bids are going out next month, the latest, with work expected to begin April, 2026.

Borough Public Officials Program (life insurance): Cl'm Halstead: No update.

2026 Budget Worksheet

The 2026 Budget Worksheet will be updated for the October 21, 2025 Mid-Month meeting.

State Workers Insurance Fund (SWIF) Safety Survey for fire company

SWIF is requesting a Safety Survey be performed by Mummert Environmental Consulting, Inc. The meeting will take place on Monday, October 20, 2025 at 11 am. This will consist of an entrance conference, a physical inspection of the facility and an exit interview. The information concerning the fire company will be provided by the fire chief, fire company trustees, and the fire company president. Cl'm Fickes informed council that the secretary should attend the Safety Survey as a representative of the borough and, thus, may be off premises to accompany the safety inspection at the firehouse.

NEW BUSINESS

General Municipal Pension System State Aid: \$9,687.71

Approved under Treasurer's Report.

SEK Engagement Letter: 2025 Audit

Smith Elliott Kearns & Company, LLC (SEK) is the auditor who has performed the borough's audits in previous years. The 2025 Audit SEK Engagement Letter, once approved and signed, would authorize SEK to perform the 2025 audit for Newport Borough. The fee for services will be \$11,550.00 plus any out-of-pocket costs associated with band charges for confirmations.

MOTION: Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Zentichko to Approve the SEK Engagement Letter specifying SEK as the auditors for the 2025 Newport Borough audit. Motion carried.

Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads Grant Application for 3rd Street Extension: Cl'm Halstead

Cl'm Halstead would like to submit a grant application to Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads for the 3rd Street Extension. Cl'm Fickes, Streets Committee chair, stressed that the Streets Committee was not contacted concerning input on any paving grant projects and with the grant submission due by October 31, 2025, there was no input provided by other councilmembers.

MOTION: Cl'm Zentichko moved, seconded by Cl'm Bucher to Approve submitting a Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads Grant Application for 3rd Street Extension. Motion carried.

Animal Control Donation: Perry County Animal Rescue

The 2025 Budget included \$500.00 under "Animal Control Donation", but with uncertainty if the animal rescue organization was to continue in 2025, the donation was not released.

Perry-Juniata County Animal Rescue, 379 Sugar Run Road, Millerstown, PA 17062 is active.

Animal Control Donation will be re-named to state Animal Rescue Donation.

MOTION: Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Fickes to Approve a \$500.00 Donation to Perry County Animal Rescue for 2025. Motion carried.

Newport Public Library Donation Request

The Newport Public Library is requesting library funding as a line item in the budget to keep the library eligible for state aid. The letter was distributed to council for 2026 budget consideration.

New Business

#6 Trinity Solar 4-Day Peddler's Permit

#7 RFP's for Curbs and Sidewalks for SR 849 Engineering were discussed earlier in the meeting.

Communications

1. Newport Borough Water Authority Minutes and Financial Reports: August 11, 2025
2. Newport Borough Municipal Authority Minutes: Not Available
3. PPL Notice of Proposed Rate Change

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 Mid-Month Meeting at 7 pm

ADJOURNMENT: Cl'm Fickes moved, seconded by Cl'm Halstead to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelly Damiano,
Secretary/Treasurer