

**NEWPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 16, 2026-Draft**

CALL TO ORDER: President Gregory Shope called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with Borough Council Members Mary Bucher, Tami Halstead, Jacob Zentichko, Barbara Leach, Devon DiBiase, and Jamie Stonerod present.

OTHERS PRESENT: Frank Campbell, NRPS; John Kerstetter, PennDOT; Gabrielle Vicari, NTM Engineering; Chris McKee, PennDOT; Jeanie Bowers; Angie Howell; Rob Miller, WRA; Abigail Brulo, WRA; Veronica Martin, PennDOT; and Tyra Guyton, PennDOT. Solicitor Ghazanfari and Engineer Brath were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Cl'm Stonerod led us in the Pledge of Allegiance

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA: None

GUEST: PENNDOT presentation concerning the 4th ST Bridge Project over the Little Buffalo Creek. Veronica Martin presented the 4th ST Bridge Project over the Little Buffalo Creek. She introduced Chris McKee, PennDOT Project Manager, Rob Miller, WRA, Gabrielle Vicari, NTM Engineering, John Kerstetter, PennDOT Planner, Tyra Guyton, PennDOT and Abigail Brulo, WRA. The National Historic Preservation of 1966, section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of projects they carry out. Historic properties are defined as those that are listed in or eligible for listing in the Nation Register of Historic Places. The bridge carrying SR 0034 over Little Buffalo Creek was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. A Historic Bridge Rehabilitation Analysis Report was created in August 2025 for a project overview of the bridge.

The bridge in Newport Borough is an unusual example of multi-span stone construction among the nominated bridges. Most builders of stone multi-span bridges cease using short spans by the mid-nineteenth century and advanced to using considerably longer spans. This bridge, however, represents a 1929 throwback to much earlier bridge engineering. Its three very small spans are typical of 18th and 19th century stone construction rather than early 20th century bridges.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation of 1966, review process initiates the process to identify historic properties, assess adverse effects, resolve adverse effects and to follow federal standards. These standards require replacing the structure with similar materials. Newport Borough has PATH on their website to filter questions. This bridge has been damaged and repaired eight times between 2009 and 2024. The bridge is seventy feet long and 22.6 feet wide. There are two ten-foot lanes for traffic to cross the bridge with roughly one-foot shoulders.

In 1968 there was a sidewalk added. Some of the character defining features are the arch barrels and stone voussoirs and spandrel walls. There are stone piers, abutments and wing walls. The Borough is in the 1817-1944 period within the APE Historic District. The bridge width is very narrow for tractor trailer trucks. It is extremely difficult for two tractor trailers to cross at the same time. This bridge should be 32.5 wide with ten-foot shoulders. The bridge currently has one-foot shoulders. One of the original bridge stone barriers is now replaced by a concrete barrier. The SHPO did not determine that the concrete barrier was an adverse effect.

The Historic Bridge Rehabilitation Analysis Report was developed to create plans for reconstruction. Problems with the bridge were sited. The first deficiency is the general deterioration of the existing bridge. The second deficiency is the misalignment between the bridge and the approaching roadway. The third deficiency is the current lane widths which only meet the minimum requirements with minimal shoulders. And finally, there are safety concerns with the existing sidewalk and with the stone barriers which do not meet current design standards.

Three alternatives were presented. The first alternative is to leave the existing bridge as-is without any rehabilitation. This will lead to continued deterioration and ultimately lead to its closure. This is not a reasonable solution. A second alternative is to rehabilitate the bridge. The third option is to widen and correct the alignment. The rehabilitation must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation to maintain the character-defining features. A large portion of the spandrel walls would need to be dismantled and reconstructed to remove the bulged and displaced sections, as well as to replace cracked stones, misplaced stone and mortar. The misalignment correction would need to occur approximately one hundred feet further north and people will lose their parking spaces. The bridge width would need to be expanded and shoulders widened. There are safety issues with the sidewalk on the bridge. It is feasible to improve the pedestrian access that will not affect the character defining features of the bridge.

Of the three alternatives which are no build, bridge rehabilitation, with widening and replacement of alignment, none are able to fully address the purpose and need of this project, particularly the need for a wider roadway section to accommodate current vehicle and truck volumes, while also meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Although there are feasible options to meet four of the five needs while maintaining the character defining features of the bridge, ultimately the most pressing need cannot be met which is width.

The SHPO guidance notes that without the bridge's original stone arch constructed in 1929, it would be unable to convey its historical and technological significance for which the bridge is eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The purpose of the project is to provide a safe and reliable vehicle and pedestrian link between the north and south sides of Little Buffalo Creek in the Borough of Newport. They may not be able to resolve the adverse effect and so it will move into mitigation. A second consulting party meeting will be held in late 2026 or early 2027 to discuss the 106 effects and address the needs.

No plans were presented that would provide a solution to keeping the 4th Street Bridge over the Little Buffalo Creek as a historical bridge and meet current bridge standard if rehabilitated with the current options were done.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mulberry Street Inlet and Storm Line Repairs Update-Borough Council approved inlet jetting on Mulberry Street at the April 7, 2026 Regular Council Meeting. The situation with the inlets has become complicated. The storm lines were tested with dye. The findings revealed that the two inlets on the north side are flowing into the old sanitary storm line where they should be. The inlets have traps in them from the combined system and need new inlets. The two inlets on the south side are collapsing, and one line is capped or blocked. The south side inlets need to be piped into the old sanitary storm line, and it is not clear where the lines are exiting those inlets. The estimated cost from the contractor on the project, who is Farhat, for replacing the four inlets and piping two of them to the old sanitary storm line is \$24,500. These findings were unanticipated

problems with the storm systems that were found during the reconstruction of the infrastructure with the sewer project in Mulberry Street. These are necessary repairs to complete the project, and the project is approaching completion. The condition of the storm system with the inlets left in their existing condition will create stormwater issues if they are not replaced and the storm line connections are not made. All work is generally consistent with the materials and components with the existing size and type currently at each location. This is not an upgrade but an in-kind replacement. The Borough Council has determined this to be an emergency repair with the work being completed before the project can be finished. Cl'm Halstead called Kirby Kitner Excavating for a quote and he was unable to do any work at this time to give a quote. **MOTION:** Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Zentichko to approve the emergency repairs to the infrastructure of storm water line replacement in Mulberry Street discovered in the sewer project, by Farhat Excavating LLC for the proposal of \$24,500. Motion carried. **Resolution No. 06-26** for emergency repairs to the infrastructure in Mulberry Street. **MOTION:** Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Zentichko to approve Resolution No. 011-26 for emergency storm water line and inlet replacements and repairs in Mulberry Street. Motion carried.

Street Locations and Costs for the 2026 Paving Project

STREET	DIRECTION	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT
Mulberry ST	3 rd ST -4 th ST	\$45,600	Liquid Fuels	\$45,600
Mulberry ST	4 TH ST -5 TH ST	\$54,200	Reimbursement Dirt, Gravel, Low Volume Roads in July 2026 - \$57,057	\$54,200
Mulberry ST	5 th ST-Locust ST	\$9,000	Reimbursement Dirt, Gravel, Low Volume Roads in July 2026 - \$57,057 use the remaining balance of \$2,857 General Fund	\$ 2,857 \$ 6,143
5 th ST	Mulberry ST - to the end of 5 th ST by DJ's Office	\$31,800	PIB	\$31,800
		TOTAL:		\$140,600

OPTION A

Locust ST	5 th ST-Market ST	\$25,000	General Fund	\$25,000
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General Fund money for the paving areas would be \$31,143. The total project cost is \$165,600.

Cl'm Halstead is recommending not to do Locust Street on this paving project and use the \$24,500 to replace the inlets and storm lines on Mulberry with this money. These streets presented will be put into a bid document for the July meeting for review and for approval to advertise. Locust Street will be added as option A.

Interviews Times and Dates-Borough Council discussed dates and times they were available to conduct interviews for the streets positions. Assistant Secretary Halstead will set up the interviews and provide the Council with a schedule.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mulberry Street from 3rd ST to 2nd ST being jetted and splitting the cost with the Newport Borough Municipal Authority 50/50, for an estimated total cost of between \$2,400-\$4,000. –

The storm line in Mulberry Street between 2nd Street and 3rd Street is completely blocked. Currently this is causing storm water to go directly into the sewer treatment plant. When the sewer project on Mulberry Street is completed the storm water will be diverted into this storm line. The storm line must be cleared to prevent the storm water from backing up onto the street. **MOTION:** Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Stonerod to approve the jetting of the Mulberry Street storm line from 3rd Street to 2nd Street and splitting the cost with the Sewer Authority 50/50, for an estimated total cost of \$2,400-\$4,000. Motion carried.

Purchasing a hammer drill for the Borough's Streets Department for \$350 and a concrete bit for \$165, for a total cost of \$510. – The Borough's Streets Department rents a hammer drill for \$60 each time they need one. It would be more cost-effective to have one and not rent one.

MOTION: Cl'm Stonerod moved, seconded by Cl'm Halstead to approve the purchase of a hammer drill for Borough's Streets Department for \$350 and a concrete bit for \$165, for a total cost of \$510. Motion carried.

Approval to apply to Tri-County Regional Planning Commission for another \$100,000 for the SR 0849 Sidewalk project with a \$25,000 match. – Cl'm Halstead commented on the SR 0849 Sidewalk Project. The estimated cost of having a full-time PENNDOT Certified Inspector (CI) on site for the project is \$134,000. This cost was not known when the grant was applied for. Additionally, it was not specified that PENNDOT was administering and lead on the project. She has been disputing them with having a full-time PENNDOT Certified Inspector. The research indicates that the Borough does not need a PENNDOT Certified Inspector and any engineer can do the inspections. Also, with the limited scope of the project, it is debatable if full-time verses part-time inspections are needed. This would save costs if only part-time inspections are needed. More than \$200,000 are being used for engineering and inspection costs. This has significantly reduced the project's construction of sidewalks. The extra \$125,000 would be used by the Borough to go towards construction of more sidewalks. The Borough will have to match \$25,000. The extra funds still may not be enough to do all we wanted to do but would help. **MOTION:** Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Stonerod to approve applying to Tri-County Regional Planning Commission for another \$100,000 for the SR 0849 Sidewalk project with a \$25,000 match. Motion carried.

Resignation Letter. – Code Enforcement Officer, Bruce Psaras submitted his letter of resignation to the Borough Council. The effective date of the resignation is August 4, 2026. **MOTION:** Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Bucher to accept CEO Psaras resignation and to advertise for the position. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Tuesday, July 7, 2026 at 7:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT: Cl'm Stonerod moved, seconded by Cl'm Leach to adjourn at 9:36 PM. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tami Halstead,
Assistant Secretary