

**NEWPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, June 3, 2026**

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, and Jamie Stoneroad present and Mayor Stephen Tice.

OTHERS PRESENT: Frank Campbell, NRPS, Devon DiBiase, Mike DiBiase, Kelly Lebo, Dave Lebo, CEO Bruce Psaras and William Sherlock. Solicitor Ghazanfari and Engineer Brath were absent.

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

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA: None

GUEST: Dennis King, concerning his sidewalk repairs, did not attend the meeting. Code Enforcement Officer Bruce Psaras spoke concerning the application Dennis King submitted to the Borough. Mr. King is applying for a grant through the PCEDA Walkways Program. Mr. King needed a borough official's signature for the application. CEO Psaras presented ordinance requirements for sidewalks in Chapter 215. The requirements for the Borough Council are in **§215-13. Conditions for construction, reconstruction or repair by property owner or owners on own initiative.** - "Any property owner or owners upon its or their own initiative and without any notice from Borough Council, may construct, maintain, reconstruct, repair and/or replace a sidewalk and/or curb on over or through such land or abutting in front of, or along any side thereof, but such owner or owners shall first make application to Borough Council for the width, line and grade thereof and in such work or construction, reconstruction, repair and/or replacement." This width, line and grade are listed in §215-11 and §215-12 of the ordinance. A copy of this ordinance will need to be provided to Mr. King. The Borough Council had nothing to approve, just provide the ordinance.

GUEST: Frank Campbell, PCEDA Grant Applications

- Frank Campbell spoke concerning the desire of Perry County Economic Development Association (PCEDA) to form a "Creative District". PCEDA has been promoting downtowns in Perry County through the Main Street program. They developed the designation for the whole county. NRPS is also involved with this initiative. The new Creative District would involve NRPS, Perry County Council of the Arts, PCEDA and the Borough of Newport in the formation. The area of the Creative District would extend in Newport from the Landis House, through to the downtown. Newport Borough has the biggest Main Street district in comparison to the other municipalities in the county. The grant for the creation of the Creative District would require the Borough of Newport to give a \$5,000 match on a \$50,000 grant and repeat that amount over a five-year period of time. Each year for the next five years the Borough of Newport would have to provide a \$5,000 match. The total of the award is \$250,000 over a five-year period of time. Newport Borough would be a pilot project. A letter of intent by the Borough Council is due by June 12th. The Borough Council held discussions on the grant. Cl'm Halstead was concerned with committing five years of Borough financing for a total of \$25,000 without a clear plan for where the money would be spent. Cl'm Zentichko felt he doesn't see that the economic impact would be enough to warrant the cost to the Borough for \$5,000 times five years for a \$25,000 match. Cl'm Bucher wanted verification that the \$5,000 is a one-time match or repeated over a five-year

period. She would also want to see a plan and what is involved. No motion was made to approve the grant application.

- Frank Campbell presented the PCEDA Community Walkways Program that could be used by the Borough for resetting the decorative bricks. PCEDA has a no match grant that would enable the Borough of Newport to reset the decorative bricks in the downtown and Market Street areas. Frank said that it is a challenge to get quotes for this type of work. He has two quotes. One quote he received is a quote per foot to reset the bricks. This grant would be submitted for under \$25,000. It is a reimbursable grant. The Borough would have to pay the invoices and submit for reimbursement. We would be getting reimbursed by PCEDA. He asked if the Borough would have the funds to do this. The Council asked what is the turnover time for reimbursement. He thought it would only be a few weeks. We would be submitting the grant with the help of PCEDA. **MOTION:** Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Stoneroad to submit a grant to PCEDA for resetting the bricks for approximately \$24,000. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: David and Kelly Lebo of 360 North 4th Street, Newport came to address a vehicle without current registration and inspection parked on a public street near their residence. He commented that the inspection is approaching being out of inspection for two years. He had a conversation with the individual who parked it there and no resolution came of the conversation. He noticed the vehicle had been ticketed by the code enforcement officer. He called the state police, and they will not do anything unless they catch him driving the vehicle. He and Kelly came to the meeting to see what could be done. President Shope would like him to come and speak privately with the code enforcement officer concerning this situation. President Shope stated there are legal processes for this situation and it takes time. They can call the office and speak with the code enforcement officer.

STREETS COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Halstead

- Paving project areas were discussed with Engineer Phillip Brath. He was measuring the following streets: 5th ST from Mulberry to the end by the District Justice Office, Mulberry from 4th ST to 5th ST, Mulberry from 3rd ST to 4th ST as option A, Locust ST from Mulberry at 5th ST to Market ST as option B. Fuel prices are high and may come down later this year. Engineer Brath will be giving us an estimate for these streets to determine our decision on what we would like to pave. These streets are in desperate need of repair.
- In April 2026, the Council approved Farhat Excavating to jet the lines and cleaning out the inlets on Mulberry Street at 4th Street and Pine Street. On June 2, 2026 we received an email from Farhat that stated that they can't clean the storm line on these boxes. They have a trap built in them because it was a combination sewer/storm line. Also, box 1 seems to be collapsing. Lastly we believe we came across a capped 10" line that was probably going to the one box. I would recommend replacing the storm boxes and line before paving your roadway. **MOTION:** Cl'm Stoneroad moved, seconded by Cl'm Leach to have Cl'm Halstead get a price from Farhat plus other quotes to repair the lines. Motion carried.

ENGINEER'S REPORT: Phillip Brath

Engineer Brath would like to resubmit the ARLE grant in the amount of \$87,000 for streets signs in the borough. He will submit the grant at no cost to the Borough. Any additional cost would be

taken from the grant for engineering when received. **MOTION:** Cl'm Zentichko moved, seconded by Cl'm Stoneroad to reauthorize the ARLE Grant submission. Motion carried.

SOLICITOR: Idan Ghazanfari, Salzmänn Hughes, P.C.-Absent-Tabled.

CODE ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Bucher

- Code Enforcement Officer Bruce Psaras gave his report to the Borough Council. He presented to Borough Council a plan he developed for Mr. Edward Carns for remediation at his property for deficiencies at 15 South 4th Street. CEO Psaras will be giving the plan to Mr. Carns and working with him. On the plan, CEO Psaras is giving Mr. Carns until December 31, 2026 to complete the form indicating the targeted plan's completion dates for deficiencies.
- Mr. Carns also understands a three-unit building is non-compliant and he will either need to combine two or more units within the building to conform with current ordinances or obtain a variance to continue as three units. The building is not compliant having three units.
- The owner of the property at 34 South 4th Street is deceased. The spouse is handling the estate. The estate should be cleared in the next 60-90 days. The spouse desires to take care of any issues the borough has with the property. **MOTION:** Cl'm Stoneroad moved, seconded by Cl'm Bucher for the continuance of the hearings for 34 South 4th Street in another thirty days. Motion carried.
- CEO Psaras presented his May 2026 monthly report to Borough Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting Minutes May 5, 2026-Assistant Secretary Halstead

MOTION: Cl'm Stoneroad moved, seconded by Cl'm Zentichko to approve the May 5, 2026 Regular Borough Council Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT FOR JUNE: Treasurer Bowers

The Newport General Fund Balance June 1, 2026, is \$227,605.98. Outstanding Bills Presented for Payment \$6,102.70. Estimated Income for the Balance of June \$23,287.01. The Estimated Expenses for the Balance of June are \$11,553.00. Estimated Balance June 30, 2026, \$244,810.29. Liquid Fuels Account Balance June 1, 2026, is \$105,410.33. Outstanding Bills Presented for Payment \$0. Estimated Balance June 30, 2026, \$105,410.33. **MOTION:** Cl'm Stoneroad moved, seconded by Cl'm Bucher to approve the June 3, 2026 Financial Report. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF JUNE BILLS TO DATE: Treasurer Bowers

MOTION: Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Stoneroad to approve the June bills as presented. Motion carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Assistant Secretary Halstead/Assistant Treasurer Bowers

Cl'm Halstead commented that we have been working on finishing a few more items to be completed from the transitioning of the past secretary resigning. We have been doing our regular duties as well.

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Zentichko

Ordinance No. 391, Amending Ordinance 348, Chapter 237 Vehicles and Traffic has been advertised and ready for adoption. **MOTION:** Cl'm Stoneroad moved, seconded by Cl'm Halstead to adopt Ordinance No. 391, Amending Ordinance 348, Chapter 237 Vehicles and Traffic. Motion carried.

PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Halstead

The Playground committee did not meet. The park is very active with baseball and softball. There is an issue with someone dispensing soap throughout the men's restroom on an ongoing basis. On occasion we remove the soap from the men's restroom for that reason.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Bucher

Finance committee did not meet.

WEBSITE/IT COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Zentichko

Cl'm Zentichko would like to look into the Borough having a digital form of payment. He will research the possibilities.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Cl'm Shope

The personnel committee did not meet. We will be doing interviews to hire new employees.

MAYORS REPORT: Mayor Tice

Mayor Tice presented the Community Service Award with a \$500 check, to Sophia Griffin on May 26, at the Newport High School. He has been speaking with business owners. Blue Buffalo is doing well. The Newport High School Faculty did work in town as a community service day on Monday, June 1. Things are going well in the Borough.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mulberry Street Project Storm & Inlets Project Update-Cl'm Zentichko commented that the sewer project on Mulberry Street should be completed in a week or two. The inlets for the Borough have not been done.

Inlet Jetting Update-Cl'm Halstead received an email from Farhat. It stated, "We can't clean the storm line on these boxes. They have a trap built in them because it was a combination sewer/storm line. Also, Box 1 seems to be collapsing. Lastly we believe we came across a capped 10" line that was probably going to the one box. I would recommend replacing the storm boxes and line before paving your roadway." Cl'm Halstead commented that it is not clear from the email if Farhat was interested in doing the work or if they were completing the sewer project and leaving the site. The infrastructure must be completed before we pave the street. The bidding requirements would have to be done properly as well. She wants to contact the Municipal Authority to determine their involvement in this. **MOTION:** Cl'm Stonerod moved, seconded by Cl'm Leach to have Cl'm Halstead reach out to Farhat for an estimate and get other quotes if needed. Motion carried.

Secretary Position Schedule Interviews-President Shope stated he was going to set up interviews with the candidates. He will contact council members to find out when they are available for the interviews.

Street Positions Schedule Interviews-President Shope stated he was going to set up interviews with the candidates. He will contact council members to find out when they are available for the interviews.

Zoning Hearing May 27, 2026 for a variance for signs at Veterans Memorial Park, Planning Commission Letter-

Cl'm Halstead presented the letter from the Newport Borough Planning Commission concerning the Zoning Hearing for a variance for signs at Veterans Memorial Park. The Newport Borough Planning Commission met on May 7, 2026, in response to the notification of the hearing requested from the Newport Youth Baseball Association, for a variance for a scoreboard at Veterans Memorial Park. The Newport Borough Planning Commission reviewed the Perry County Planning Commission's comments. Discussion was held on sign requirements in the Conservation District. The Newport Borough Planning Commission comments are the following.

1. **Zoning Chapter 250 Article II Terminology; §250-9.Definitions. SIGN** – Any structure or device for visual communication that is used for the purpose of bringing the subject thereof to the attention of the public.
 - a. The Newport Borough Planning Commission has determined that a scoreboard can be categorized as a sign.
 - b. **§250-9 L. NONCONFORMING SIGN** – Any sign lawfully existing on the effective date of an ordinance, or an amendment thereto, which renders such sign nonconforming because it does not conform to all the standards and regulations of the adopted or amended ordinance.
 - c. **ARTICLE XIII, Signs, §250-110. Signs in Conservation District (C). A** - A sign in this district shall not exceed nine square feet unless otherwise specified as a requirement for public safety or *government mandate*.
 - d. The current scoreboard located at Veterans Memorial Park is an approved nonconforming sign in the Conservation District.
 - e. The Newport Youth Baseball Association desires to move the new scoreboard to a new location and the new scoreboard size is sixty-four (64) square feet.
 - f. The Newport Borough Planning Commission recommends a variance for the size requirements or recommends that the Borough Council decides to allow it as a *government mandate*.
2. **Zoning Chapter 250 Article II Terminology. §250-9.Definitions. STRUCTURE** – Any combination of materials, other than a building, which forms a construction that is safe and stable, including but not limited to flagpoles, stadiums, platforms, towers, sheds, storage bins, fences exceeding four feet in height, *signs*, signposts, and lights and light standards for other than residential use, but excluding patios, driveways, walks and parking areas at year grade.
 - a. The Newport Borough Planning Commission has determined that a scoreboard can be categorized as a structure.
3. The Newport Borough Planning Commission reviewed the Perry County Planning Commission comments concerning the Zoning Permit Application from the Newport Youth Baseball Association. The Newport Borough Planning Commission agrees with the Perry County Planning Commission comments. The following comments the Perry County Planning Commission will point out.
 - a. Being a public property, Zoning Ordinance **§250-106. N.** indicates that this particular sign would need to be approved by Borough Council.

- b. Regarding signs in the Conservation District (C) the sign is required not to exceed 9 square feet unless there is a *government mandate* (i.e., Borough Council decides to allow it.)

The Newport Borough Planning Commission has determined the Perry County Planning Commission's comments are stating that the Borough Council has the authority to approve the scoreboard at Veterans Memorial Park. The placing of a new scoreboard is in line with the Borough's plans to continue the beautification and maintenance of the Borough. Past practices of the Borough show that signs have been approved throughout the borough that do not conform with zoning. Examples of nonconforming signs are banners, historical markers, and artwork which have been approved by the Borough Council.

NEW BUSINESS:

MORE Grant Reimburse and Closure Discussion-CI'm Halstead

CI'm Halstead commented that there is one outstanding reimbursement to be received from the MORE grant in the amount of \$3,250. She would like to see the MORE grant closed after the reimbursement is received. The grant is a study for our borough office building. There were no other items that needed evaluation in her opinion. CI'm Zentichko commented to let someone else put the remaining funds to good use. **MOTION:** CI'm Zentichko moved, seconded by CI'm Stonerod to close the MORE grant after we get the final reimbursement of \$3,250.00. Motion carried.

Handicap Permit Parking Sign Application William Sherlock 441 Mulberry ST-William

Sherlock submitted an application for a handicapped permit parking space. His application is complete and the \$25.00 fee is paid. He would like the location of the sign to be on the 5th Street side of his house, instead of the front of his house on Mulberry Street. The sign would be located the second or third parking space back from the intersection and not at the first spot behind the stop sign. **MOTION:** CI'm Halstead moved, seconded by CI'm Stonerod to approve a handicapped permit parking space for William Sherlock located at 441 Mulberry Street and the sign is to be posted in the 5th Street location. Motion carried.

Letter of Interest from Devon DiBiase for Borough Council-MOTION: CI'm Stonerod moved, seconded by CI'm Zentichko to accept the letter of interest from Devon DiBiase for Borough Council, to fill the vacancy left by Penny Frownfelter. Motion carried.

Resolution 10-26 Appointment to Borough Council-MOTION: CI'm Halstead moved, seconded by CI'm Stonerod to approve Resolution 10-26 to appoint Devon DiBiase to the Borough Council to fill the vacancy left by Penny Frownfelter, until January 1, 2028. Motion carried.

Mayor Tice swore in Devon DiBiase, and she joined Borough Council at the council table.

Greg Nye's Handicapped Permit Parking Space Relocate-CI'm Halstead commented that Greg Nye came into the office and had a complaint that multiple people were using his handicapped permit parking space for food pick up from Brother's Pizza. CI'm Halstead asked him if he would prefer his spot be moved to the other side of the street. Mr. Nye thought that could work. CI'm Halstead commented that this is a council decision as we had an in-depth conversation concerning the placement of this sign. CI'm Stonerod commented that then other people could want us to move their signs. We can move it once more and that's it. The council did not want to have back-to-back permit parking spaces, which will now be the case. **MOTION:** CI'm Stonerod moved, seconded by CI'm Leach to move Greg Nye's handicapped permit parking space to the opposite side

on 3rd Street. Motion carried. Cl'm Halstead will contact Greg Nye to see if he still wants his sign moved.

Finance and Personnel Committee Appointments-Tabled.

COMMUNICATION RECIEVED TO DATE:

1. Newport Borough Water Authority Minutes and Financial Reports
2. Newport Borough Municipal Authority Minutes and Financial Reports
3. Perry County Farm Bureau Letter Concerning Data Centers, Warehouses & Energy Infrastructure
4. Newport High School Environmental Club Storm Drain Stenciling Project
5. Entech Engineering will be submitting an NPDES renewal application to DEP for the Water Authority
6. Perry County Downtown Perception Survey Sheet

NEXT MEETING DATE: Mid-Month on June 16, 2026, at 7:00 PM with PENNDOT presentation concerning the 4th ST Bridge Project over Little Buffalo Creek.

ADJOURNMENT: Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Stonerod to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 PM. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tami Halstead,
Assistant Secretary