

Council Work Session
July 2, 2025
Borough Hall

The regular monthly Work Session of Newtown Borough Council was called to order at 5:30 P.M. on Wednesday, July 2, 2025. President Heinz asked those in attendance to join her in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Councilors Heinz, Bauman, Foley, Tognini, Woldorf; Mayor Burke; Solicitors Heleniak & Steers; Engineer Fountain; Manager Totaro; Chief Sabath; Fire Chief Forsyth
Absent: Councilor Phillips

President Heinz announced that an Executive Session preceded the meeting to discuss real estate.

Public to be Heard

Keyna Crawford, Resident, questioned the status of the approval process for the stones and bricks recommended by HARB for use in the Newtown Historic Association's (NHA) Boone Garden. President Heinz responded that Borough Council didn't approve last month's motions, and they therefore cannot move forward with the project at this time. The Solicitor advised Ms. Crawford, NHA Board Member, to update the Borough Manager with how the NHA intends to proceed and the matter will be placed on a future Council agenda.

Amy Smith, Non-resident, introduced the Newtown Experience Group's (NEG) Porchstock event to be held throughout the borough on Saturday afternoon, September 27, 2025. Chief Sabath stated that the free event, where homeowners host musical performances, does not require a special event application but had requested that the NEG present it to Borough Council.

Engineer's Report – Michele Fountain

Engineer Fountain provided an update on the 110 N. State Street Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO) Project, noting that it received preliminary plan approval earlier this year; the Newtown Planning Commission will be reviewing the project at their July 7th meeting for a final plan decision by Council on July 16th. The Engineer added that the sewage facilities planning module will also need Council approval for two sewer connections.

In response to Councilor Woldorf, Engineer Fountain stated that zero EDUs remain in the Borough following the approval of this SALDO.

George Asimos, Applicant's Attorney, noted that he asked to be on tonight's agenda to address pending questions from Council. President Heinz stated that additional questions could arise after the Planning Commission meeting. In response to Councilor Foley, Mr. Asimos stated that HARB had no objection to their building addition.

Engineer Fountain announced that a Final Certificate of Completion is ready to be voted on for the SALDO project at 156 N. Congress Street and 116 Jefferson Street.

In response to President Heinz, the Engineer reported that the Frost Lane sidewalk pre-construction meeting is ready to be scheduled, and the Borough Manager has sent letters to the residents.

Mayor's Report – John Burke

Mayor Burke congratulated Glenn Forsyth, Fire Chief, on 50 years of service.

Mayor Burke announced the following special event requests to be voted on at the July 16th Council Meeting:

- Turkey Trot 5K Run, sponsored by Boss Events to benefit the Bucks County Heroes Scholarship Fund in honor of Brian S. Gregg, Thursday November 27th, 9:00-11:00 A.M., along a designated race route. No rain date.
- Display of Purple Ribbons, sponsored by A Woman's Place, September 27th – November 1st. Borough streets include State Street from Jefferson Ave. to Sterling St., Washington Ave. from Newtown Creek to Chancellor St., Centre Ave. from Newtown Creek to Norwood Ave.

President Heinz stated her preference for the ribbons to be placed only on the Borough owned decorative light poles on State Street and not in residential areas. The Solicitor agreed, noting that the Borough does not have jurisdiction over utility poles. The Manager will convey this information to the applicant.

The Mayor announced the following special event reminders:

- Movies in the Park, sponsored by the Recreation Board at Linton Memorial Park, featuring Dirty Dancing on July 9th with a rain date of July 10th. 7:00 – 10:00 P.M.
- Music on the Street, sponsored by the OPUS Outreach Foundation at 16 S. State Street, Thursdays July 10th through August 28th, 6:00-7:30 P.M. No rain dates.

Solicitor's Report – Greg Heleniak

Solicitor Heleniak announced that Ordinance #806 - Mobile Food Vendor (Food Truck) Ordinance is scheduled for a hearing on July 16th.

The Solicitor requested consideration for a Resolution to exercise the Borough's power of eminent domain to acquire 22 Liberty Street to continue as the Borough's police station, noting that it has been leased by the Newtown Fire Association (NFA) for the past 25 years. Solicitor Heleniak announced that the lease is due to expire this summer and the rent negotiations that have taken place over the past several months have not resulted in an agreement.

Solicitor Steers provided an update on the Intergovernmental Agreement with Newtown Township regarding the Pedestrian Bridge Project, noting that edits are being considered and the agreement should be ready to be voted on at the July 16th Council Meeting. Councilor Woldorf noted that the cost sharing of additional expenses that exceed grant funding are under consideration. Ms. Woldorf stated that a separate agreement with Newtown Township is needed upon completion of the bridge for ongoing maintenance.

Solicitor Heleniak reported that a confirmation motion will be placed on the next meeting agenda to approve the wooden replacement windows at 26 S. State Street.

Manager's Report – Craig Totaro

Manager Totaro reported that a Resolution to approve a 10-year PennDOT Winter Services Maintenance Agreement will be voted on at the July 16th Council meeting. The annual allotment for Newtown Borough to maintain state roads is \$7,700 in the first year and increases to \$9,200 in the final year.

Manager Totaro provided an update on the LSA grant application to install sidewalks on State Street from Jefferson Street to Frost Lane, providing connectivity to the future Pedestrian Bridge. The Manager expects to receive a response in the Fall.

Simultaneously, the Manager stated that the borough applied to receive technical assistance from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) to support a grant application for Transportation Set Aside (TASA) funding. Mr. Totaro stated that engineering assistance was provided by Michael Baker & Associates. The Manager noted that a Resolution to apply for the grant will be needed in September. Councilor Woldorf added that engineering assistance was provided free of charge from the DVRPC.

Manager Totaro reported that the 2023 Audit is now in draft form and the 2024 Audit should be completed this September or October.

Councilor Woldorf asked the Manager to request that Newtown Sewer Authority members update Council at an upcoming meeting.

President's Report – Emily Heinz

President Heinz shared her support of the Newtown Rotary Club's request for a Peace Pole to be placed in one of the Borough parks.

Paul Salvatore, Resident, suggested placing the Peace Pole in the Peaceable Kingdom Playground at Linton Park but is amenable to other locations.

Debra Porter, Former Newtown Rotary Club President, provided background information on the Rotary Club's dedication to world peace as well as this specific project that has a global presence. Ms. Porter stated that the pole is made of plastic composite material and would be installed on October 5th at 4:00 P.M. In response to President Heinz, the Solicitor stated that a vote by Council is not needed for approval. President Heinz will respond to the Rotary Club.

Environmental Advisory Council – Julia Woldorf

Councilor Woldorf reported on a Local Climate Action Program, noting that Newtown was one of six municipalities selected to participate in this free program administered by the Penn State Extension. The committee consisting of EAC Chair Tim Markey, Councilor Woldorf, and Manager Totaro will be meeting with students via Zoom, searching for ways to reduce the borough's carbon footprint.

Councilor Woldorf announced that a meeting was held regarding the design of the Newtown Creek Pedestrian Bridge; they discussed various aspects of the project.

Councilor Woldorf announced that Councilors Tognini and Foley have agreed to assist her in developing the Official Map as discussed in previous meetings.

Old Business

Councilor Bauman announced that the Peco meeting last month at the Chancellor Center was well attended. Peco will no longer be closing State Street at the train tracks during the gas main replacement project. Mr. Bauman stated that lane closures will be between 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. and no roads will be closed to traffic. Mr. Bauman noted that he and others questioned why the project hadn't been planned and communicated better and acknowledged the support from State Representative Warren and State Senator Santarsiero. Councilor Bauman requested that updates from Peco to Manager Totaro be posted on the Borough website. President Heinz requested that the flyer handed out by Peco at last month's meeting be posted on the website as well.

Councilor Bauman stated that Peco would like to encourage property owners along the affected streets to connect to the new gas line while the work is being done, noting that PennDOT will be placing a 5-year moratorium on road openings once the work is completed.

Announcements - none

Public to be Heard

In response to Judy Musto, Resident, Councilor Bauman was not sure whether property owners are being informed of the pending 5-year moratorium on road openings.

President Heinz called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 P.M. Councilor Tognini so moved, Councilor Foley seconded, and the motion was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy S. Musto
Borough Secretary
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Attendees

Warren Woldorf
Paul Salvatore
Debra Porter
Amy Smith
Carter Reehl-CGBAG Law

George Asimos
Ron Gualtieri
John Richardson
Jeff Werner
Keyna Crawford