

Council Meeting
August 20, 2025
7:00 P.M.
Chancellor Center

Present: Councilors Heinz, Bauman, Foley, Phillips, Tognini, Woldorf; Mayor Burke; Manager Totaro; Solicitor Heleniak; Police Chief Sabath; Fire Chief Forsyth

President Heinz called the regular semi-monthly meeting of Newtown Borough Council to order at 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, August 20, 2025. The President asked those in attendance to join her for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public to be Heard

Chuck Machion, Resident, thanked Council for the recent pothole repairs and requested a street audit to assess the entrance to the Jefferson Street bridge along with additional problem areas in the Borough; Mr. Machion questioned whether this bridge is the responsibility of the state or the Borough.

Mr. Machion also commented on the encroachment of plants and flowers on N. State Street between Washington Avenue and Borough Hall, noting the need to walk single file in certain sections. Mr. Machion strongly objected to displaying merchandise within the War Memorial area which honors deceased veterans, stating that this was not intended to be a marketplace. He feels this is a safety violation as well as an act of desecration.

Certificates of Appropriateness – Kris Bauman

❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Phillips, 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 2025-025, Applicants: Mike & Jenny Current, 235 Court Street, residence

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the repair/restoration of original windows.

HARB recommended approval of the application as submitted.

COA 2025-026, Applicant: Charles Catalfano, 241 S. Chancellor Street, Abrahamson residence

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of the 2nd floor flat roof in the rear of the house.

HARB recommended approval of the application as submitted.

COA 2025-027A, Applicant: Maritza Barrantes, 111 Mercer Street, Pugh residence

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for a full roof replacement.

HARB recommended approval of the application for the replacement of the roof, as submitted.

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

COA 2025-027B, Applicant: Maritza Barrantes, 111 Mercer Street, Pugh residence

The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of an existing chimney.

HARB recommended denial of the application for removal of the chimney as submitted, with the recommendation that the chimney be repaired and repointed if necessary and flashed with flashing that matches the material and size of the flashing on the existing chimney.

Fire Report – Chief Forsyth

Chief Forsyth shared the July report, announcing 19 service calls and 23 fire safety inspections in the Borough. The Chief announced the hiring of two additional firefighters and advised the public to have heaters and chimneys inspected in preparation for the colder weather.

Police Report – Chief Sabath

The Chief reported 297 service calls in July. While participating in a county funded aggressive driving campaign, the Newtown Borough Police Department (NBPD) issued 124 traffic citations resulting from 176 traffic stops. Chief Sabath reported 8 traffic accidents and several juvenile e-bike complaints which are being addressed with parents and yielding positive results. The Chief described additional police activity which involved public intoxication, theft, a wanted individual taken into custody for terroristic threats, and special events. The NBPD will participate in Drug Take-back Day on October 25th.

In response to Council, Chief Sabath described the legal limitations for e-bikes, pedicycles, and e-scooters; educational efforts will be made in schools as student return from summer break.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Burke announced the following special event applications:

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve Fall Fest, sponsored by the Newtown Recreation Board, on Saturday, September 13th, 4:00 -8:00P.M. at Linton Memorial Park, including DJ, food trucks and alcoholic beverages. Rain date is September 20th.
- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips and seconded by Councilor Bauman, to approve the Newtown Holiday Parade, sponsored by the Newtown Business Association, on Sunday, December 7th, 8:00 A.M.-5:00P.M., along a designated route with no rain date. A motion was then made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed with President Heinz opposing, to table the motion.

President Heinz described the questions that were raised by Council when discussing this parade at the last Work Session. Given additional questions and concerns, and the absence of the Newtown Business Association (NBA) organizer at tonight's meeting, the organizer will be asked to attend the September 3rd Work Session to speak with Borough Council. Council will share the questions they would like the NBA to answer in advance of the meeting.

Solicitor's Report – Greg Heleniak

Solicitor Heleniak reported that the Pedestrian Bridge Inter-Governmental Agreement with Newtown Township is not ready for a vote this evening.

Manager's Report – Craig Totaro

Manager Totaro reported the completion of Liquid Fuels audits for years 2022-2024, as well as the 2023 annual audit, with no findings; the 2024 annual audit is still active.

The Manager announced that the Frost Lane sidewalk and bicycle sharrow project is scheduled to begin by mid-September and he is in communication with the property owners.

President's Report – Emily Heinz

President Heinz shared the request from Amy Smith, Newtown Historic Association (NHA) Member, to grandfather the NHA from complying with the new Mobile Food Vendor Ordinance to allow for additional food trucks on Market Day. President Heinz gained consensus from Council to allow for this.

Solicitor Heleniak noted that the NHA Market Day event was approved by Council prior to the adoption of this Ordinance which allows for Council's approval without taking a vote.

In response to Councilor Woldorf's concerns regarding insurance for the event, as well as for food trucks, the Solicitor advised Manager Totaro to discuss the matter with the organizer and have the Borough listed as an additional insured.

Topics Advanced from previous Work Sessions

- ❖ A motion was duly made and amended by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to adopt Resolution #8-20-2025A to authorize the pre-payment of routine Borough obligations and expenses, subject to ratification by Borough Council.

In response to Councilor Foley, Solicitor Heleniak advised that an initial authorization is being made for the Manager/Treasurer to pay certain bills, and therefore the monthly approval by Council will be to ratify those expenditures as opposed to approving them.

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve the 348 S. Lincoln Ave. sidewalk permit.
- ❖ A motion was duly made and amended by Councilor Foley, seconded by Councilor Tognini, and passed unanimously, to approve POL-009 Performance Review Policy.

In response to Councilor Phillips' concerns regarding the form, that performance standards don't include enough distinction between not meeting and failing expectations, Council agreed to include an additional category to reflect sometimes meets expectations.

In response to Councilor Woldorf, the Solicitor advised that the Borough Manager should not revise the form since it will be used to evaluate his job performance. Council agreed to remove the pass/fail questions on the form to simplify the scoring.

Approval of Minutes

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve July 2, 2025 Work Session minutes.
- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve July 16, 2025 Council Meeting minutes.

Budget & Finance –Emily Heinz, Gail Foley, & Julia Woldorf

- ❖ 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 July totaling \$245,528.81.

Personnel/Committees of Council Appointments – Gina Tognini

Councilor Tognini announced the following appointments resulting from Andrew Northup's promotion from Zoning Hearing Board Alternate to Member, and the resignations of Marvin Cohen, Jenna Ball and Sean Irwin due to relocation.

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to approve the appointment of Randi Lawrie to the *Joint Historic Commission* for the remainder of a four-year term through December 31, 2026.
- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to approve the appointment of Elen Pasquale to the *Recreation Board* for the remainder of a five-year term through December 31, 2028.

President Heinz announced that Jenna Ball was instrumental in running the Halloween Parade and will be missed.

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to adopt Resolution #8-20-2025B, appointing Louis Fancher as a *Zoning Hearing Board Alternate* for the remainder of a three-year term through December 31, 2027.
- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to adopt Resolution #8-20-2025C, appointing Mark Craig as a *Zoning Hearing Board Alternate* for the remainder of a three-year term through December 31, 2026.

Old Business - none

Announcements

President Heinz notified Council Liaisons of the October 1st deadline to submit printed content for the 2025 Fall/Winter Newsletter.

President Heinz announced that next month's Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 16th.

Public to be Heard - none

President Heinz called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 P.M. Councilor Phillips so moved, Councilor Tognini seconded, and the motion was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy S. Musto
Borough Secretary

Attendees

Charles Machion
Randi Lawrie

Amy Smith
Warren Woldorf