

Council Work Session
October 8, 2025
Borough Hall

The regular monthly Work Session of Newtown Borough Council was called to order at 5:35 P.M. on Wednesday, October 8, 2025. President Heinz asked those in attendance to join her in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

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

Public to be Heard

Andy Smith, Newtown Theater, reported that someone had approached him about a unanimous donation to enhance Patriots Park with granite steppingstones inscribed with important dates in Newtown Borough history. The dates would be vetted by the Newtown Historic Association. Ms. Heinz said it was a good idea and that a process to proceed with the request could be investigated. Ms. Woldorf said the idea needed to be considered. Councilor Tognini suggested that the stones could be installed at the Boone Garden.

Nathan Torok, for Court & State LLC, presented a plan indicating that they wish to eliminate the fence on top of the brick wall that was previously approved, as it impeded work on the garden behind the wall. He said that residents approved this proposal. Ms. Fountain said she had advised him that Council approval was needed for the change and said that she was comfortable with the site condition. It was clarified that there was no code requirement for the fence on the wall. Council will review the request and vote at their October 15 meeting.

Engineer's Report – Michele Fountain

Engineer Fountain reported that there are two matters to be forwarded to the Council meeting: approval as recommended for the escrow release for Friends Meeting, and consideration for the request for a brick sidewalk at 35 S Chancellor Street. Councilor Woldorf asked about the variety of materials at the property on Chancellor Street. Engineer Fountain said that she would review the materials.

Engineer Fountain noted that the restoration work on the sidewalk at Frost Lane is going well and that the on-street parking has been working satisfactorily.

Newtown Emergency Medical Services Presentation – Evan Resnikoff

Chief Resnikoff presented information about Newtown Emergency Medical Services, formerly known as the Ambulance Squad. He noted upcoming needs of the organization which include a new ambulance that will take 2 years to receive; the required replacement of two new cardiac monitors in 2028, HVAC upgrades, and funding for increased health insurance costs. He said that the state voted last year to raise the limit for millage from 2 to 5 mills and had lifted the

requirement for a referendum. Chief Resnikoff said that they will request an increase in millage from the Borough from ½ mil to 1 mil next year. He will send a copy of the 2023 recent audit to the Borough Manager. Councilor Heinz said that they would discuss the request at their upcoming budget meeting on October 23rd.

Sustainable Landscape Survey Presentation – Environmental Advisory Council

Bob Mirales reviewed the results of the Sustainable Landscape Survey gathered by the EAC. He said that they are continuing to evaluate the findings, but they just wanted to present their findings to date to Council. Councilor Foley asked if anyone has had success with controlling noise pollution. Mr. Mirales said that Princeton has used ordinances successfully.

Councilor Phillips said that sustainable plantings were being utilized at the parks and native plants are being encouraged. Councilor Heinz said that the Borough is always discussing changes in landscape services, such as gas v. electric, with the consideration of noise and environmental impact. Councilor Phillips suggested holding workshops for the public on more environmentally friendly landscape practices.

Mayor's Report – Emily Heinz for John Burke

Special Event Requests:

The Haunted Hustle 5K Run

Councilor Heinz said that race organizer Jen Nicholl had approached her regarding amending their event application to include use of the municipal parking lot for post-race activities. She said that Council had discussed the issue last month and consensus seemed to be for approving, but there had been no vote.

Ms. Nicholl said that some activities will be at the Chancellor Center, but they wanted to expand the space for after-race refreshments overflow to the parking lot. Councilor Heinz said that if alcohol was to be consumed, they would have to go through another approval process for an alcohol permit. She said that her concern was that it would be difficult to control people leaving the parking lot with alcohol unless someone was standing at the door. Ms. Nicholl said that it was her understanding that she would have had to submit an application for an alcohol permit within 60 days prior to the event date but would like to allow alcohol if it were still an option. Councilor Heinz said that the 60-day limit could be waived by Council. She suggested that Council proceed with a waiver to cover the Borough for liability.

Councilor Woldorf said that the Borough parking lot is heavily used on Saturdays and suggested that, since the race begins and ends at the Chancellor Center, the post-race activities be there. She said that there would be a playground there for children and an asphalt area for gathering, parking is available, and the area is contained. Ms. Nicholl said that there may as many as 50 people that would utilize the parking lot after the race. Councilor Phillips suggested that both areas could be utilized. Chief Sabath said that the municipal parking lot would be closed for the event.

Councilor Phillips questioned the utilization of the parking lot by a business (Second Sin Brewing). Borough resident Tara Grunde-McLaughlin said that the non-profit sponsor of the race would be using the parking lot contingent with their event, not the brewing company.

Councilor Bauman said that attendees gathering at the parking lot might also like to utilize services and businesses in the Borough as well.

Solicitor Heleniak said that an alcohol permit could be voted on at the next Council meeting. Councilor Woldorf said she questioned the use of the parking lot as a precedent and the use of the lot on a Saturday.

- ❖ Councilor Bauman made a motion to approve the Haunted Hustle 5K Run, as amended to include use of the municipal parking lot adjacent to Borough Hall, sponsored by the NR2F1 Foundation, Saturday October 18th, 8:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M., on a designated course, with a caveat that an alcohol permit is approved before the event. No rain date. The motion was seconded by Councilor Foley and approved with Councilors Woldorf and Phillips opposing.

President Heinz requested that Ms. Nicholl send the additional alcohol permit application to the Borough Manager tomorrow in the Secretary's absence. Ms. Nicholl said that she would notify the Glazier Center that the parking lot will be closed on Saturday.

Newtown Holiday Parade

Councilor Heinz noted that Council had approved a start time for the Newtown Holiday Parade of 12:30 P.M. and the Newtown Business Association (NBA) has requested an earlier time of 12:15 P.M. She said that there had been concern with the earlier time presenting difficulty for Friends Meeting since they are located near the parade route and worship in silence. At the suggestion of Council, the NBA had met with the Friends, and they had no objection to 12:15.

Councilors Phillips and Woldorf were concerned with the impact on other religious services in addition to the Friends, and Councilor Woldorf was concerned with a start time earlier than the previous 2:00 P.M. start time. Councilor Phillips noted that the earlier time does not allow much time for religious services attendees to leave the borough, with streets being closed. Chief Sabath noted that traffic is allowed through until the parade proceeds.

Dan Petty, NBA Member, said that the parade continues to grow and that they wanted the earlier start time to allow for the parade to proceed during daylight hours.

- ❖ Councilor Bauman made a motion to amend the approval of the Newtown Holiday Parade, sponsored by the Newtown Business Association, on Sunday, December 7th, 9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M. with a revised start time of 12:15 P.M., along a designated route. No rain date. Councilor Foley seconded the motion. The motion failed with Councilors Heinz and Foley voting in favor.

Special Event Reminders:

Councilor Phillips announced the following:

- 125th Anniversary of Friends Village Fundraising Event, sponsored by Friends Village at 50 S. Congress Street, Saturday, October 11th, 5:00-9:00 P.M. No rain date.
- Torah Dancing, sponsored by Lubavitch of Bucks County, on Tuesday, October 14th, 7:45 – 8:45 P.M., on State Street between Greene Street and Washington Avenue. No rain date.

- Light the Night Pink, sponsored by the Main Street Breast Cancer Non-Profit, Thursday October 16th, 6:00-9:00 P.M., on State St. from Washington Ave. to Centre Ave. No rain date.
- Halloween Movie in the Park-Ghostbusters, sponsored by the Newtown Recreation Board, on Friday, October 17th, 6:00-9:00 P.M., at Linton Memorial Park. No rain date.
- Haunted Hustle 5K Run, sponsored by the NR2F1 Foundation, on Saturday, October 18th 8:00 – 11:00 A.M. on a designated race route beginning and ending at Brian S. Gregg Park. No rain date.
- Halloween Parade, sponsored by the Newtown Recreation Board, on Saturday, October 25th, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M., on a designated parade route ending at Brian S. Gregg Park. No rain date.

Solicitor's Report – Greg Heleniak

Solicitor Heleniak said that he had submitted his report; there were no questions from Council.

Manager's Report – Craig Totaro

Manager Totaro said he is getting the 2026 general budget spreadsheet together and is looking at this year's spending relative to what was budgeted. He said that there are still a few outstanding issues, including negotiations for fire and police services. He said that anyone who wants information in advance of the October 23rd budget meeting should contact him. He will circulate a final draft of the budget in the next few days. Councilor Heinz said that a meeting of the finance committee would be scheduled prior to the budget meeting.

Manager Totaro reported that Comcast is proposing an easement agreement to run an underground conduit through the municipal property behind the bank. The Manager responded to several questions from Council and will submit the draft agreement to the Solicitor for review.

Manager Totaro said that the Borough has no ordinance related to electric vehicle charging stations. He said that guidelines from the Bucks County Planning Commission and a sample ordinance from Lititz had been posted in ShareFile. Presently, the Borough can only consider individual cases, and there is no means by which to approve charging stations at developments or residences. Manager Totaro said that installation of a charging station at an individual residence would require an electrical permit. The Solicitor said he has worked with other municipalities on this issue, and that he could present additional information as well. He recommended that there be an agreement with a property owner applying for a charging station and stated that an ordinance would be appropriate to establish a uniform process for review and approval of a charging station that would consider issues such as Zoning, HARB regulations, safety, aesthetics, etc. The Solicitor addressed the charging station currently installed on Washington Ave. with Council.

President Heinz stated that Council needs to approve the cost and timing to pursue this ordinance, noting her ambivalence in moving forward. Councilor Woldorf volunteered to put

together a questionnaire to discover concerns and gather feedback as a basis for further discussion.

Manager Totaro reported that the PECO Green Region grant resolution will be on the agenda for Council consideration at the next meeting. He noted that it would be a \$20,000 grant to be used at 110 N. State St. along the Newtown Creek, with the Borough contributing \$10,000 for the hiring of an engineer.

Manager Totaro presented a draft of a license agreement with the Newtown Experience Group (NEG) as the next steps to consider decorative poles and banners. The Solicitor said that the use of public property for messaging requires a cooperation agreement, and the law requires that the Borough is a part of the approval process. This agreement would give the Borough the right to review, comment, and approve the messaging. The Solicitor recommended that the Manager be the ultimate person to oversee the process, which could be elevated to Council. He said that this would protect the Borough if a request were to be made for a message that was deemed to not be in the best interest of the Borough.

Councilor Phillips said that the proposed NEG banners include a QR code which would lead someone to another place. Councilor Heinz noted that QR codes are not allowed in the draft agreement. The Solicitor said that a QR code that refers someone to another site may not be in the best interest of the Borough. He said that an agreement could be structured with various parameters and that it was important to coordinate with any entity applying to display banners. He said that they are currently looking into what arrangements, if any, had been made regarding the veterans' banners already displayed. He noted that the Borough has no control over utility poles.

Nicole Rodowicz, NEG Member, said that the group is dedicated to being the one space for posting events in the Borough, with a goal for banners to drive people to the website. She said that they hope that the Borough would partner with them in promoting the events similar to neighboring municipalities. Councilor Heinz said that the Borough has supported the NEG with funding but does have legal considerations and liabilities to be considered. Councilor Tognini said that the public are finding the NEG site without the QR code. Councilor Woldorf said that the Borough needs to be sure they are following the Supreme Court regarding QR codes.

Councilor Bauman noted that the letters that had been sent to some residents about the imposition of fines for not taking care of their hedges had come from Code Enforcement. Councilor Heinz said that the issue should be handled lightly.

President's Report – Emily Heinz

Councilor Heinz asked that Council again approve the waiving of parking restrictions during the holiday season this year from Friday, November 28 through Wednesday, December 31. The waiver does not include 30-minute parking spaces. The issue will be on the Oct 15 meeting agenda.

Councilor Heinz noted that the fee schedule for food trucks had not been approved with the food truck ordinance. Councilor Woldorf reviewed a proposed food truck fee schedule, which includes host and mobile food unit fees, noting that the mobile unit is already required to pay an annual fee as well. Solicitor Heleniak said that the fees should reflect the administrative

costs as well as the cost for permit reviews; fees of \$225-\$250 are usual in other municipalities. There was a suggestion that the fee for personal hosts be lower than that of business hosts, as less review would be required. Councilor Heinz said that she would like to see the mobile truck ordinance opened to discuss exemptions for special events. The Solicitor will put together the amended fee schedule.

Councilor Heinz said that there has been a request for a banner to be hung over Washington Avenue to promote the Turkey Trot 5K, to be displayed a month before the race date; such a banner is presently prohibited. She noted that Council had discretion to approve a banner for special events. She said she has some concerns with this banner, including the size of the proposed banner, which is longer than the permitted 8 feet, its location over a pedestrian walkway, and the legal responsibility of the Borough. Councilor Woldorf said there is already publicity for the event circulating. Carly Bonell, race organizer, said that the size of the banner could be decreased and that they propose hanging the banner on the only poles that are located directly across from one another, at Congress Street. She said that they have a resolution prepared for PennDOT for permission to use the utility poles which the Borough needs to sign off on. Councilor Heinz noted that currently the sign ordinance prohibits hanging banners. Chief Sabath said that the resolution needs to go to PennDOT for use of the poles. Solicitor Heleniak said that an agreement could be made with the race sponsor that they would assume the Borough's responsibility for the banner, including its hanging and removal. It was suggested that the race organizer reach out to area neighbors if the resolution is approved. It was clarified that the resolution was developed by Chief Sabath from a template from PennDOT. The issue will be moved to the Council meeting for a vote. Ms. Bonell said that they want to have maximum exposure, as the event has special meaning honoring fallen police officer Brian Gregg and benefitting the scholarship fund.

Personnel/Committees of Council Appointments – Gina Tognini

Councilor Tognini announced the following Committees of Council Vacancies:

- Civil Service Commission - Secretary
- Human Relations Commission – 3 Members
- Newtown Bucks County Joint Municipal Authority (NBCJMA) – 1 Member

Councilor Tognini said that there are 3 applicants for the NBCJMA: Bernie Sauer, Julia Woldorf, and John Duggan. Councilor Heinz noted that Mr. Duggan was well qualified but expressed her preference for Councilor Woldorf to be involved to represent the Borough at this time. The appointment will be voted upon at the Council meeting next week.

Streets Lights & Properties – Emily Heinz & Julia Woldorf

Councilor Heinz said that there are concerns about sight lines at various locations, including people parking too close to corners, a lack of corner signs, and a lack of yellow painted curbs. She said that the areas that need to be addressed need to be identified. Chief Sabath said that signs should be sufficient, but that yellow painted curbs couldn't hurt.

Chief Sabath said he had spoken with Walk Friendly Newtown, who suggested that a 4-way stop and a crosswalk be added at Frost Lane and Edgeboro Drive once the pedestrian bridge is completed. Engineer Fountain said it is not currently part of the plan, which she said she would be reviewing.

Public to be Heard – none

Announcements - none

President Heinz called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 P.M. Councilor Phillips so moved, Councilor Tognini seconded, and the motion was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leslie P. Dunleavy
Recording Secretary

Attendees

Warren Woldorf
Carly Bovell
Tara Grunde-McLaughlin
Marcia Lincoln-Heinz
Bob Mirales
Dan Petty

Jen Nicholl
Nicole Rodowicz
Andy Smith
Katherine Borish
Evan Resnikoff
Nathan Torok