

Council Meeting
November 18, 2025
7:00 P.M.
Chancellor Center

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

President Heinz called the regular semi-monthly meeting of Newtown Borough Council to order at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, November 18, 2025. The President asked those in attendance to join her in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public to be Heard

Dan McCloskey, Non-resident property owner, supported the proposed Liberty Centre development, noting that it would generate a lot less traffic, attract younger people, benefit retailers, triple the outdoor public community space, add to the tax base, and replace a blighted area.

John Monaghan, Steeple View Resident, stated his approval of the Liberty Centre project and believes the walkability to State Street will help local businesses.

John Whitehead, South State Street business and property owner, also supports this project, noting that the area needs to be properly developed.

Seth Diener, Business owner, operates three businesses on South State Street and supports the Liberty Centre project. Mr. Diener expressed dissatisfaction over the condition of the property as it currently exists; he added that his young employees would benefit from the availability of additional rental properties in the Borough.

Scott Williams, Resident and Homeowner' Association President, has lived in the Steeple View development for nearly 9 years and expressed his full support of the proposed project.

Joe Lovi, Resident, stated that this project began 16 years ago; he proposed moving the police department to Borough Hall and requesting the developer to build a municipal building at the Liberty Centre, noting the acre of land given to the prior owner.

Mr. Lovi proposed an indemnification clause in the Fire Services Agreement for liability reasons, requesting that all local firefighters be board certified.

Mr. Lovi stated that the holiday parade will be double in size this year and asked that Borough Council support the volunteer efforts by allowing the organization to begin the parade earlier.

Mr. Lovi noted that residents are routinely inconvenienced by races and parades in support of community events and children.

Certificates of Appropriateness – Kris Bauman

❖ A motion was duly made and amended by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Foley, 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 2025-040, Applicant: Mark Issa, 200 E. Jefferson Street, residence

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of a rotted and damaged picture window and flanking sash, removal of screen on the porch and the restoration of the porch to its original configuration.

HARB recommended approval of the revised application and plans as submitted by October 23, 2025, noting that: the existing front porch decking and lattice will be repaired or replaced in kind, the new posts and railings will be wood and will match the porch of the attached house, the new windows in the 3rd floor shed dormer will be aluminum clad divided light, the existing aluminum siding of the dormer will be replaced with smooth Hardie Plank with an exposure to match existing, the corner boards of the dormer will be 5/4 x 4, and the new window trim will be 5/4 x 4 in Azek or Boral with a 2" architectural sill for each.

COA 2025-041, Applicants: Rachelle Kosoff & Kevin McClay, 130 N. State Street, residence

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for a 3rd floor rear addition.

HARB recommended approval of the application as submitted, noting that the eave and rake board be retained and the siding will be smooth Hardie Board with a 5" exposure.

COA 2025-043, Applicant: Nick Liberato, 101 S. State Street, Dol Nero Restaurant

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of two hanging signs for Sol Nero Restaurant.

HARB recommended approval of the application as submitted, pending Zoning approval.

In response to Jorge Ramirez, Architect, there were no comments or concerns regarding the project at 200 Jefferson Street.

Police Report – Chief Sabbath

The Chief reported 174 service calls in October and continuation of pedestrian safety and aggressive driving campaigns, both supported through grants. There were 34 traffic citations, primarily for speeding and red-light violations and 2 traffic accidents. The Newtown Borough Police Department (NBPD) was very active providing services throughout the month for approximately 10 special events.

Chief Sabbath reported that 6 boxes of prescription drugs were collected on Drug Takeback Day, amounting to 124 pounds added to the 30 pounds collected in the NBPD's permanent box.

Mayor's Report – President Heinz for Mayor Burke

President Heinz shared the following special event request:

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Foley, seconded by Councilor Tognini, and passed unanimously, to approve the Alcoholic Beverage Application made by Boss Events for Thursday November 27th, 9:00-11:00 A.M. in Brian S. Gregg Park, waiving the Ordinance requirement start time from 11:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M., subject to execution of the indemnity agreement.

Councilor Woldorf expressed reluctance to support morning events that involve alcohol.

Carly Bovell, Event Organizer, stated that the indemnity agreement is under review. Ms. Bovell stated that the Turkey Trot 5K has received great support from the business community and runners and invited everyone to attend.

Solicitor's Report – Greg Heleniak & Shaina Bethala

Solicitor Heleniak received no questions regarding their report.

Manager's Report – Craig Totaro

Manager Totaro reported that PECO road restoration on State St., Centre Ave., and Penn St. will not take place until early Spring. PECO will tighten up the trenching before winter.

President's Report – Emily Heinz

Topics Advanced from previous meetings:

President Heinz noted that the following action items have been discussed at Council Work Sessions and recordings are available on the Borough website calendar.

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve and advertise the 2026 Meeting Schedule for Borough Council Meetings and Boards, Committees, and Commissions.

President Heinz announced that the 2026 meeting schedule will be placed on the Borough website calendar.

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Foley, seconded by Councilor Woldorf, and passed unanimously, to advertise the 2026 Budget.
- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to advertise Ordinance #807 setting the 2026 Real Estate Tax millage.
- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to advertise Ordinance #808 regarding the Fire Code in the Borough.

President Heinz announced that the budget and both ordinances will be placed on the Borough website, and a hard copy will be available at Borough Hall, prior to voting in December.

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Bauman, seconded by Councilor Tognini, and passed unanimously, to authorize issuance of letter to State Representatives supporting HB 825 regarding double utility poles.

Joe Lovi, Resident, questioned ownership of the poles and asked whether poles without wires could be removed. Councilor Woldorf and Solicitor Heleniak explained that the purpose of the letter is to put constraints on the utilities to remove poles in a timely manner.

Approval of Minutes

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve the October 8, 2025 Work Session minutes.
- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Tognini, and passed unanimously, to approve the October 15, 2025 Council Meeting minutes.
- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve the October 23, 2025 Special Budget 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 October totaling \$343,950.54.

Personnel/Committees of Council Appointments – Gina Tognini

Councilor Tognini announced the current vacancies along with vacancies occurring in January as committee terms end; she hopes volunteers will consider seeking reappointment and noted that anyone is welcome to visit the borough website to apply for open positions.

Presentation of final Newtown Creek Pedestrian Bridge Design – Jeremy Madaras of Howell Engineering

Councilor Woldorf shared that efforts to construct a pedestrian bridge in the location of the old trolley bridge has been a goal of the Newtown Creek Coalition for 15 years. This joint municipal project was made possible through a \$1 million state grant; Councilor Woldorf thanked state elected government officials, and neighboring property owners who granted easements, for making this project possible. Ms. Woldorf shared additional information regarding the bridge's history, location, and support within the Open Space and Comprehensive Plans.

Jeremy Madaras, Design Consultant, provided a detailed presentation of the pedestrian bridge design elements that included the asphalt path, locations of entry, easements, horizontal and vertical constraints, topography concerns, piers, bridge deck, railings, bump out areas, benches, fencing, timbers, privacy plantings, Creekside pad, educational signage, bollard lighting, and more.

Mr. Madaras responded to several design questions from Council, noting that the design should be finalized by the end of the year followed by contract documentation, plans, and specifications including exact materials. Howell Engineering is in the process of applying for permits and plans to put the project out for bid in Spring 2026 with construction beginning shortly thereafter. Construction is expected to last for 6-9 months.

Old Business - none

Announcements - none

Public to be Heard

Scott Williams, Resident and Walk Friendly Newtown Member, asked that a crosswalk be added at the end of the pedestrian bridge trail; he questioned whether e-bikes and scooters would be allowed on the bridge and how bridge maintenance would be addressed. Councilor

Woldorf stated that there will be a mutual agreement between Newtown Borough and Newtown Township to address maintenance.

Chief Sabath added to his earlier report, stating that a road rage incident recently occurred on the Newtown bypass resulting in a woman being shot by another motorist. The Chief commended Corporal James Warunek who was the police officer to locate and follow the gunman's vehicle and, having received back up support from additional law enforcement officers, took the gunman into custody without further incident.

Joe Lovi, Resident, requested further consideration to allow the holiday parade to begin earlier in the day for children. Mr. Lovi commended those who organize and manage events and projects, such as the pedestrian bridge, that benefit the community. Councilor Bauman stated that it would be too late to change the start time of this year's parade.

President Heinz called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 P.M. Councilor Woldorf so moved, Councilor Tognini seconded, and the motion was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy S. Musto
Borough Secretary

Attendees

TJ Butler
Scott Williams
Mike Sellers
Tara Grunde-McLaughlin
Warren Woldorf
Seth Diener
John Monaghan
Jorge Ramirez

Dan McCloskey
Bob Musto
Joe Lovi
Carly Bovell
Pat Foster
John Whitehead
Kevin McClay