

**Newtown Borough Council -- Work Session Minutes
December 3, 2025**

Video time: 1:22

The regular monthly Work Session of Newtown Borough Council was called to order at 5:30 P.M. on Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at Borough Hall – 23 North State Street in Newtown Borough, PA.

[This meeting was recorded.](#)

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

Public to be Heard - none

Engineer's Report – Michele Fountain - *Video time: 2:15*

Newtown Bucks County Joint Municipal Authority (NBCJMA) Update – Chris Gusty

Mr. Gusty, NBCJMA Member, provided an update on the sewer authority's current operations. He reported that the NBCJMA has concluded all planning related to the previously proposed sewage treatment plant in Newtown Township, noting that the authority's board formally voted to discontinue the project. He also stated that the authority recently contacted the former landowner of the property acquired for the project to determine whether there was interest in repurchasing the parcel.

In response to a question from Councilor Woldorf regarding potential impacts on ratepayers, Mr. Gusty summarized several long-term cost considerations facing the authority. He referenced the projected expenses associated with continued reliance on the Neshaminy Interceptor and noted that previous estimates from 2023 placed needed upgrades in the range of \$180–\$200 million. He also cited historical and projected annual increases from the Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority (BCWSA) as factors the authority monitors in its financial planning.

Additional topics discussed included interest obligations related to the land acquisition, regional limitations on available EDUs, and ongoing Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) reduction efforts. Engineer Fountain confirmed that continued I&I mitigation supports the release of additional EDUs under current guidance from Bucks County and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). He also provided context on the DEP's Connection Management Plan (CMP), noting that municipalities and authorities were required to implement updated Act 537 plans and I&I programs to obtain sewer connection approvals. He stated that the NBCJMA had already been undertaking I&I reduction work before these requirements were formalized.

Further discussion occurred regarding routine and long-term sewer line maintenance activities.

Mayor's Report – Emily Heinz for John Burke

In the Mayors absence, President Heinz reminded Council of upcoming special events:

- Tree Lighting, sponsored by the Newtown Experience Group, on Friday, December 5th, 6:30 – 8:30 P.M., at the Newtown Fire Association on Liberty Street. No rain date.
- Newtown Holiday Parade, sponsored by the Newtown Business Association, on Sunday, December 7th, 8:00 A.M.-5:00P.M., along a designated route. No rain date.

Solicitor's Report – Greg Heleniak - Video time: 21:19

Solicitor Heleniak reported that his monthly written report will be submitted. He reviewed two forthcoming Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) matters and asked whether Council wished to take any formal positions.

Council reviewed a variance request for a fence height increase at 110 N. Lincoln Avenue. The fence had been constructed without prior HARB or zoning approvals. Council directed the Solicitor to appear at the December 18 ZHB meeting to oppose the variance application.

Council reviewed an application for an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and related variances at 417 E. Centre Avenue. The proposal was determined not to meet applicable zoning and parking requirements. Council directed the Solicitor to attend the next ZHB meeting to oppose the application.

Fire Services Agreement Discussion – Video time: 29:40

Council discussed a proposed one-year fire services agreement with Newtown Township. Following discussion, Council approved the following action:

- A motion was made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Foley, and approved unanimously, authorizing the Solicitor to send a letter to Newtown Township proposing a one-year fire services agreement in the amount of \$275,000.

Solicitor Heleniak will also prepare a Sunshine Act memorandum.

Manager's Report – Craig Totaro - Video time: 35:27

Comcast Easement Request

Council reviewed Comcast's request for an easement to install an underground cable in the municipal parking lot located between Washington and Centre Avenues. Council identified conditions for considering approval, including the removal of unused Comcast wires and poles within the borough

and the complete restoration of any areas disturbed by the work. Manager Totaro will relay these conditions to Comcast.

President's Report – Emily Heinz - Video time: 41:35

President Heinz announced that an Executive Session was held prior to the meeting to discuss personnel matters.

President Heinz noted the need to review the Food Truck Ordinance, with particular attention to provisions concerning special event exemptions. She will circulate prior draft versions and request vendor information from the Market Day organizers in preparation for Council's discussion in January.

Review of December 17, 2025 Council Meeting Agenda Items — Video time: 44:00

President Heinz reported that the proposed 2026 Budget has been properly advertised for consideration and adoption in two weeks.

She also stated that Ordinance #807, establishing the 2026 real estate tax millage, has been advertised. The ordinance proposes a 5% millage increase, consisting of 3 mills for fire services, 0.25 mills for ambulance services, and 1.75 mills for the general fund.

Manager Totaro and Solicitor Heleniak reported that Ordinance #808, updating the Borough's Fire Code to align with the 2021 International Fire Code as enforced by the Fire Marshal, has been advertised and will appear on the next agenda for adoption.

Manager Totaro stated that he will review the existing Fee Schedule and advance any changes to a future agenda for adoption. The Solicitor added that the fee schedule was amended several times in 2025 and may be adopted by Resolution if Council prefers.

Personnel/Committees of Council Appointments – Gina Tognini - Video time: 48:13

Councilor Tognini summarized the following as we approach the end of December.

- Current Vacancies include:
 - Civil Service Commission – Recording Secretary
 - Human Relations Commission – 3 Members

- Vacancies as of January 2026 include:
 - Civil Service Commission – 1 member
 - Environmental Advisory Council – 2 members
 - HARB – 1 member
 - Human Relations Commission – 1 member
 - Joint Historic Commission - 1 member
 - Planning Commission - 1 member
 - Recreation Board - 2 members

- Shade Tree Commission - 1 member
- Zoning Hearing Board - 1 member
- Board of Appeals: UCC & IFC – 1 member
- Vacancy Board - 1 member

Councilor Tognini reported that an application has been received for the open, paid Civil Service Commission (CSC) Secretary position. She noted that the role may be filled either by the applicant or by a current CSC member, at the Commission's discretion. She also stated that she is receiving positive responses from volunteers regarding reappointments and is advising them of the December 15 response deadline.

Old Business - none

Announcements - none

Public to be Heard - none

President Heinz called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:18 P.M. Councilor Phillips so moved, Councilor Tognini seconded, and the motion was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy S. Musto
Borough Secretary

Attendees

Chris Gusty
Warren Dallas
Tara Grunde-McLaughlin
Jeff Werner
Diane LeBas-Zoom

Kathy Kovacs-Zoom
Jeanne Haeckel-Zoom
Karen White-Zoom
Warren Woldorf-Zoom