

Newtown Borough Council – Council Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2026

Video time: 0:00

The Council Meeting of Newtown Borough Council was called to order at 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, April 15, 2026 at the Chancellor Center – 30 North Chancellor 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, Tognini, Foley, Phillips, Woldorf; Mayor Grunde-McLaughlin
Solicitors Heleniak & Passero; Manager Totaro; Chief Sabath

Remote: Councilor Bauman

President Heinz announced that an executive session preceded the meeting to discuss real estate.

Public to be Heard *Video time: 1:03*

Terry Kiely, Resident, expressed concern over unmarked potholes on Borough streets and asked if a comprehensive plan is in place to address them; she asked where responsibility lies in reporting them. Ms. Kiely added that Penn Street and Elm Avenue do not have sidewalks, which make potholes on those streets more dangerous for pedestrians.

Mary Gonzalez, Resident, addressed Borough Council regarding the proposed Liberty Centre development and the potential quality of life impact on the community. Ms. Gonzalez expressed her concern that the Borough is losing its identity as quaint and historic and noted the inconveniences that will occur during construction.

Local Climate Action Program (LCAP) Presentation *Video time: 12:47*

Tim Markey, Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) Chair, introduced the LCAP group whose mission is to improve the Borough environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Mr. Markey shared that this presentation marks the final step for the Penn State students involved in the program and a starting point for the Borough.

Sanaa Hall-Geiger and Natalie Kitts, Penn State Students, presented the program they've been working on and acknowledged the people who they've collaborated with which include Manager Totaro, Councilor Woldorf, Tim Markey and Summer Bound, EAC Members. The presentation covered topics pertaining to greenhouse gas inventory, energy and transportation action areas that include solar cooperatives, HARB, a solar ordinance, ground-source heat pumps, electric vehicles (EV) and EV charging infrastructure.

The presenters, including Peter Buck, Penn State Professor, responded to several questions from Borough Council and advised them of potential next steps.

Certificates of Appropriateness – Kris Bauman *Video time: 47:30*

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Foley, to follow the recommendation of the Historic Architectural Review Board and approve the following Certificate of Appropriateness. A second motion followed, made by Councilor Woldorf to withdraw the motion, which was seconded by Councilor Foley. A final motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to deny the recommendation of the Historic Architectural Review Board, deny the following Certificate of Appropriateness, and recommend that the applicant redesign their addition, specifically the size of the garage, to be more sensitive to the historic location.

COA 2026-004, 159 N. State Street—Additions, Applicant: Mike Hutchinson

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for porch repairs at the existing building and the construction of additions behind it.

HARB recommended to approve the application subject to the garage doors being replaced with simpler “barnlike” doors.

Council stated that the proposed garage was too large in relation to the house on this historic corner property.

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Tognini, and passed unanimously, to follow the recommendation of the Historic Architectural Review Board and direct the President of Council to sign the following Certificate of Appropriateness, thereby approving the historical appropriateness of the application, with final approval by the Code Enforcement Officer.

COA 2026-011, 422 Washington Avenue—Fence, Applicant: Dianne Zide

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of an existing fence.

-HARB recommended approving the application as presented reiterating that the finish side of the fence must be on the outside.

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to follow the recommendation of the Historic Architectural Review Board and direct the President of Council to sign the following Certificate of Appropriateness, thereby approving the historical appropriateness of the application, with final approval by the Code Enforcement Officer.

COA 2026-012, 222 S. Chancellor Street—Construction of a new garage, Applicant: Joel Petty

The applicant was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new 1 ½ story frame garage/studio.

-HARB recommended approving the application as presented.

Police Report – Chief Sabath *Video time: 1:00:55*

Chief Sabath reported 223 service calls in March, a grant funded highway safety aggressive driving campaign, special event activity, and the upcoming Drug Takeback Day on April 25th.

Mayor's Report – Tara Grunde-McLaughlin *Video time: 1:02:01*

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to approve the Native Plant Container Workshop at Patriots Park, on Saturday, May 16, 2026, 11:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.
- A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to authorize a \$15 participation fee for the May 16th Native Plant Container Workshop.

Mayor Grunde-McLaughlin announced the following special event reminder:

- Arbor Day, sponsored by the Recreation Board, on Friday, April 17, 2026, 9:00 – 11:30 A.M. at Brian S. Gregg Park. Rain date is April 24, 2026.

Solicitor's Report – Greg Heleniak - none

Manager's Report – Craig Totaro *Video time: 1:04:07*

Manager Totaro addressed Terry Kiely's earlier comments, offering assurance that funds are available in the budget to properly address potholes which are scheduled to be filled this Friday. The Manager noted that there is not one specific communication channel for reporting potholes.

The Manager read a statement from PECO regarding the gas main project on State Street, which explained why the project was not completed by the end of 2025. The letter stated that PECO has permits to resume construction which is targeted for completion at the end of June 2026. Information will be provided on the Borough website with a link to PECO's website for updates.

President's Report – Emily Heinz - none

Topics Advanced from previous meetings: *Video time: 1:10:30*

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Tognini, and passed unanimously, to adopt Ordinance #809 amending the Mobile Food Vendor Ordinance.
- A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to award a landscape services contract to Realty Landscaping.
- A motion was duly made by Councilor Tognini, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to ratify a Letter of Agreement with the Council Rock School District regarding a Facility Improvements Grant Application rendering the Borough as applicant and awardee.

Terry Kiely, Resident, questioned the source and amount of the grant. Manager Totaro responded that the approximate \$7.3 million federal grant was applied for through Congressman Fitzpatrick's office. Ms. Kiely stated that, from knowledge obtained through attendance at Council Rock School District (CRSD) Board meetings, the school board does not believe the grant to be viable.

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Phillips, and passed unanimously, to authorize the advertisement of bids for paving of N. Congress Street (Washington Avenue to Jefferson Street) and Edgeboro Drive (Frost Lane to Jefferson Street as necessary).

Approval of Minutes *Video time: 1:15:00*

- A motion was duly made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Tognini, and passed unanimously, to approve the March 4, 2026 Work Session minutes.
- A motion was duly made by Councilor Woldorf, seconded by Councilor Foley, and passed unanimously, to approve the March 10, 2026 Council Meeting minutes as amended by Councilor Woldorf.

Budget & Finance – Emily Heinz, Gail Foley, & Julia Woldorf *Video time: 1:17:21*

- A motion was duly made and amended by Councilor Foley, seconded by Councilor Woldorf, and passed unanimously, to accept, subject to audit, the Consolidated Expenditure Report for the month of March totaling \$356,085.87.

Old Business - none

Announcements - none

Public to be Heard - none

President Heinz called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 P.M. Councilor Phillips so moved, Councilor Tognini seconded, and the motion was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy S. Musto
Borough Secretary

Attendees

Summer Bound
Tim Markey
Sanaa Hall-Geiger
Peter Buck
Warren Woldorf
Mary Gonzalez

Pat Foster
Terry Kiely
Natalie Kitts
Joe Lovi
Jane Scopelitte
Diane Zide