

**MINUTES
BOROUGH COUNCIL
March 2, 2026
7 P.M.**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – The Council Meeting was held in-person at Borough Hall. Council members present were Ms. Johnson, Mr. Noble, Ms. Ireland, Mr. McCandless, Mr. Blatt, Mr. Trabel and Mayor Johnson. Also in attendance was Borough Manager Amy Burkhart, Solicitor David Berger & Mrs. Alysia Romulus.

Mr. Trotter was absent from the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – President McCandless called the meeting to order and asked everyone to rise for the Pledge to the Flag.

MINUTES –

Council reviewed the minutes from the February 18, 2025 meeting. It was noted by Ms. Ireland that Ms. Annemarie Jordan was listed on the last page. Mr. Noble's name was misspelled, and the voting block for the final motion also needed the names to be amended. There were no further changes. There was a motion to approve the amended Minutes of February 18, 2025 – The motion was passed.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Joanna Ireland			X			
Jamie Johnson			X			
Mark Noble		X	X			
Doug Trotter						X
Philip Trabel	X		X			
Stew McCandless			X			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			X			
Mayor Johnson						

PUBLIC HEARING – STREET VACATION – Mr. Berger called the public hearing to order regarding the proposed vacation of an unopened portion of Reservoir Avenue, as previously advertised and scheduled. He stated the hearing was held in accordance with the Pennsylvania Borough Code governing the alteration, opening, and vacation of Borough streets. Mr. Berger explained that the purpose of the hearing was to receive public comment and testimony prior to any action by Borough Council. He also confirmed that, in accordance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act, proper notice of the hearing had been published and all affected property owners were notified.

Mr. Berger explained that the Borough received a request to vacate an approximately 40-foot-wide unopened portion of Reservoir Avenue that abuts and separates property owned by James and Jessica Bobal. If approved, the Borough would relinquish its interest in that portion of the

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right-of-way and the land would revert to the adjoining property owners in accordance with Pennsylvania law.

Mr. Berger noted that documentation related to the request was submitted by the Bobal's legal representative, Mr. Thomas J. Turczyn, on September 18, 2025. The submission included the application, a copy of the petition, correspondence to neighboring property owners, and proof of advertisement of the public hearing in the Bethlehem Press.

Mr. Turczyn approached the podium and provided an overview of the request, stating that his clients have lived at the property for over 40 years. He explained that Council previously abandoned a portion of the street opening to an alley behind their property, and the remaining strip of unopened street now borders another property owned by the Bobals. He noted the area is a steep hill that does not lead anywhere and has been maintained by the Bobals. Mr. Turczyn further stated that, as the Borough has effectively abandoned the street for over 21 years, the property owners believe their request is reasonable.

Council had no initial questions.

Dominic Velani, 930 Watford Lane, Bethlehem, PA 18017, approached the podium and asked whether the Borough Engineer was present and if the engineer had reviewed the plan changes. Mr. Berger stated the Borough Engineer was not present but confirmed the plans had been reviewed. Mr. Velani stated he had no objections to the proposed change.

Mr. Turczyn reiterated that the Borough's because the Borough had not opened the street prior to for 21 years the Borough lost its right open the street. If the Borough had wanted to open it, the Borough would need to take the land back to do so. Council President asked if the unopened portion of the street terminated on Bobal's property; Mr. Turczyn confirmed that it did.

With no further comments, Mr. Berger closed the public hearing.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR/ PRE-SCHEDULED - Nothing to report

NEW BUSINESS -

- Borough Manager Burkhart explained that Broughal Middle School will be fielding a softball team for the first time in several years. Historically, the school has utilized Borough fields for practice and games. The field requested by the middle school is located off Stanley Road and had previously been used as a softball field. However, since the middle school last used the field, changes have been made, including its current use as a baseball field, the addition of a pitcher's mound, and longer baselines. Borough Manager Burkhart stated that she connected the middle school with the Fountain Hill Little League, as the days requested by the school may create scheduling conflicts with Little League practices. In the meantime, the middle school has submitted the necessary

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documentation, including a certificate of insurance up to \$1,000,000. Borough Manager Burkhart presented the request to Council for approval at tonight's meeting, contingent upon coordinated scheduling between the Fountain Hill Little League and the middle school.

- 1336 Russell AVE. LLC Update – Borough Manager Burkhart reported that demolition has begun at the Hosey property. She emphasized to the newer Council members the importance of this project, noting that it has been a process spanning several years. Borough Manager Burkhart clarified that the main building has not yet been demolished; however, the exterior pavilion has been removed. She expressed hope that additional progress will hopefully be made over the next week. She noted that the property has been problematic for the Borough, and while this is a small step, it is still considered a victory.
- Audit Underway - Borough Manager Burkhart reported that the Borough's audit is currently underway and is progressing quickly. She noted that in previous year the process had been slower due to frequent staff transitions. Borough Manager Burkhart stated that it is encouraging to see improved productivity and accuracy within the Finance Department and overall, Borough operations.

Council President McCandless noted that there is an upper field in the park that has not been utilized. He stated that this presents an opportunity for both the Fountain Hill Little League and the middle school to make greater use of the Borough's available field space. Council President McCandless added that the return of a middle school softball team after several years is a positive development and could have a meaningful impact on the community, particularly by providing opportunities for everyone.

OLD BUSINESS -

- Rental Inspections – Update – Borough Manager Burkhart reported that work is still underway regarding rental registrations and inspections.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT -

• **MCOCA Act – Occupancy Inspection Update** – Mr. Berger explained that, for Council's awareness, the Borough was contacted several weeks ago by the Greater Lehigh Valley Association of Realtors regarding an Act referred to as "MCOCA." He stated that the Act relates to occupancy inspections and requires municipalities to allow property closings to proceed, meaning a municipality cannot prevent a buyer from purchasing a home due to the results of a pre-closing inspection. Mr. Berger explained that the Borough of Fountain Hill currently requires a pre-closing sewer lateral inspection. Under the Act, regardless of the outcome of the inspection, the purchaser would have one calendar year to correct any issues. He noted that this would align with state statute and differs from the Borough's current policy, which requires corrections within 30 days.

MAYOR'S REPORT -

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Mr. Johnson thanked Officer Wood, Officer Krasley, and Officer Penn for taking time out of their day to take photos with the new police cruiser so they could be shared with the online community shortly. Other than that, he noted that there was nothing further to report.

BOROUGH MANAGER’S REPORT –

- **Parking Space Holders Reminder** – Borough Manager Burkhart reported that a reminder was sent to residents via Facebook regarding the placement of chairs and other miscellaneous objects in the street to hold parking spaces after snowfall. She stated that this practice is not permitted under Borough Ordinance. Beginning March 2, Borough employees have been and will continue removing any remaining chairs or objects left in the street. Borough Manager Burkhart reminded residents to remove their property, or the Borough will remove it.
- **Summer Employment Opportunities** – Borough Manager Burkhart announced that the Borough is currently accepting applications for upcoming summer staffing positions. Positions include, but are not limited to, concession stand staff, lifeguards, and recreation facility employees, noting all employees must be at least 15 years of age to apply.
- **Outstanding Collections List** – Borough Manager Burkhart brought the outstanding collections list to Council’s attention for their review and noted that it will be discussed further at the next mid-month meeting.

RESOLUTIONS – none

ORDINANCES –

Ordinance No. 889 – An Ordinance of the Borough of Fountain Hill, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, Pursuant to section of the Borough code, Vacating and Abandoning the unopened Reservoir Avenue located within the Borough of Fountain Hill, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. The motion was passed.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Joanna Ireland			X			
Jamie Johnson		X	X			
Mark Noble			X			
Doug Trotter						X
Philip Trabel			X			
Stew McCandless			X			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.	X		X			
Mayor Johnson						

MOTIONS –

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Request Council approve the request from Broughal Middle School use of the ballfield at Stanley AVE. Park, conditioned on the development of a schedule amenable to the Borough. The motion passed.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Joanna Ireland			X			
Jamie Johnson	X		X			
Mark Noble		X	X			
Doug Trotter	,					X
Philip Trabel			X			
Stew McCandless			X			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			X			
Mayor Johnson						

Request Council approve the Letter of Understanding for the Technical Assistance to Review Fire. The motion passed.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Joanna Ireland			X			
Jamie Johnson	X		X			
Mark Noble			X			
Doug Trotter						X
Philip Trabel		X	X			
Stew McCandless			X			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			X			
Mayor Johnson						

COMMITTEE REPORTS -

A. **Finance** – Borough Manager Burkhart reviewed the financial reports and expenses paid for the month of February. A motion was made and approved to pay the bills as presented.

- a. General Fund - \$297581.26
- b. Health & Sanitation Fund - \$63,534.39
- c. Fire Fund - \$0.00
- d. Liquid Fuel Fund - \$7,928.28
- e. Capital Find - \$0.00
- f. Library Fund - \$8,053.25

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Joanna Ireland			X			
Jamie Johnson	X		X			
Mark Noble			X			
Doug Trotter						X
Philip Trabel		X	X			

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Stew McCandless			X			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			X			
Mayor Johnson						

- B. **Public Works** – President McCandless stated there was nothing further to report beyond what Borough Manager Burkhart had previously mentioned regarding obstruction collection. He added that the Public Works team is also preparing the park and pool for the upcoming season.
- C. **Police** – Council Member Blatt reported that a Police Committee Meeting was held on March 2nd prior to the General Meeting to discuss various topics. He highlighted the upcoming Drug Drop-Off Program, which will take place on April 25th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., allowing residents to safely drop off expired medications and drugs at the police station.
- D. **House & Ordinance** – Council Member Ireland had nothing to report. Council President McCandless stated that the codification process is currently underway and that assignments have been distributed to members.
- E. **Fire** – Council Member Trabel reported that there were 21 calls for service in February, with an average of 4.48 members responding to each call.
- F. **Recreation** – Council Member Johnson reported that a meeting was held in February to discuss plans for the upcoming summer season, noting that staffing is currently underway. He stated that a new administrative position is being created to oversee both programs, and applications will be accepted for this role. Council Member Johnson also reminded everyone of the upcoming Easter Egg Hunt and mentioned that Arbor Day and Memorial Day plans are forthcoming and to be determined.
- G. **Health & Sanitation** – Council member Noble had nothing to report
- H. **Personnel** – nothing to report
- I. **IT Committee** – Council Member Ireland reported that there was no IT Committee meeting this month, but one is scheduled soon. He also noted ongoing work on the Borough newsletter.

SPECIAL OR SELECT COMMITTEES –

- I. **Library Report** – nothing to report

COUNCIL PRESIDENT’S REPORT –

Council President McCandless reminded residents of the upcoming Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 28th, at 10:00 a.m., with check-in beginning at 9:00 a.m. Donations are being accepted at Borough Hall. Registration is highly recommended and is available at Borough Hall from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Fire Department during their training; however, no one will be turned away on the day of the event. Council President McCandless also noted that Arbor Day will be observed on April 24th at 1:00 p.m., with the location to be determined. Memorial Day will be held at the Triangle on Friday, May 22nd, with Broughal participating. He encouraged veterans interested in speaking on that

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day to contact the Borough Administration Office, which will forward the information to him, or to reach out to him directly via email, as listed on the Borough website.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR: Discussion of a non-agenda item- nothing to report

ADJOURNMENT - ADJOURNMENT

Council President entertained a motion to adjourn. Ms. Johnson made the motion, seconded by Mr. Trabel and the motion was unanimously approved.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Joanna Ireland			X			
Jamie Johnson	X		X			
Mark Noble			X			
Doug Trotter			X			
Philip Trabel		X	X			
Stew McCandless			X			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			X			
Mayor Johnson						

BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL
LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
By:

Stewart McCandless - President of Council

ATTESTED

BY: _____
Amy Burkhart, Borough Manager

SUBMITTED

BY: _____
Alysia Velez, Finance Clerk