

## **Mercersburg Borough Council Meeting**

**Borough Hall, 113 S. Main St., Mercersburg, PA**

**Held at James Buchanan Middle School**

**February 9, 2026**

**MINUTES**

**Attending:** Council President Kelani Craig, Council Vice-President Jacob Morgan, Mayor Michael Pedersen, Member Tom Heefner, Member Dusty Stoner, Member Tobey Banks, Member Don Palesky, Borough Manager Connie Creighton, and Administrative Professional Angela Alleman

**Absent:** None

**Guest(s)/Press:**

See sign in sheets.

Council President started the meeting at 7:00 pm with the pledge of allegiance.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Donnie Graham* – expressed concern regarding MWA's decision to discontinue the use of certain fire hydrants, noting that this reflects a lack of support for MMP&W and the community.

*Brenda Hahn* – noted that although she does not reside within the Borough, she regularly patronizes businesses here and believes that access to quality drinking water for everyone is important.

*Ben Dugas* – stated that the water situation is frustrating for all involved and encouraged residents to attend MWA meetings to better understand the infrastructure concerns and planned corrective actions. He further encouraged residents to assist in offering solutions.

*Derek Martin* – shared concerns about billing issues and the timeliness of responses.

*Emily Moore* – shared concerns regarding the accuracy of meter readings and billing issues. She feels that we are in a state of emergency and need additional help from federal and state funding.

*Kendra DeGrange* – presented a petition addressing concerns related to MWA leadership, ongoing water service issues, increased costs, and the removal of fire hydrant access for MMP&W. Residents are requesting that Borough Council acknowledge these concerns and take appropriate action.

*Lisa Glacken* – she reported ongoing water meter and billing issues and expressed concern about her ability to continue affording her water bill, despite consistent water conservation.

*Eugene Beecher* – shared concerns about ongoing billing issues on multiple properties and noted that the current water situation is the result of issues spanning several years.

*Randy Brake* – representing Bear Valley Water, he shared that BVW had proposed supplying water to the Borough in early 2025 and stated that they remain willing to work with the Borough if desired.

*Nelson King* – requested the financial records for the MWA be shared with the community.

Council President Craig reported that financial audits are accessible on the Borough website as well as at the Borough Office. She thanked residents for attending the meeting and sharing their concerns, encouraged continued participation, and assured everyone that Borough Council will continue to address residents' concerns.

## **MINUTES**

**MOTION:** To approve January 5, 2026 Meeting Minutes was made by Frisby, seconded by Stoner, all ayes, motion carried.

## **TREASURER'S/BILLS PAYABLE REPORT**

**MOTION:** To approve January 2026 Treasurer's Report was made by Morgan, seconded by Heefner, all ayes, motion carried.

**MOTION:** To approve January 2026 Bills Payable Report was made by Stoner, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

## **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Pedersen expressed his agreement that Mercersburg deserves better and that communication needs to be improved. He stated that he stands with the residents and asked them to let him know if there is anything he can do to help.

Mayor Pedersen also expressed thanks to Deputy Foy and K9 Moose of the Franklin County Sheriff's Department for their attendance.

## **POLICE REPORT**

Not scheduled to be present. Member copy available upon request.

## **SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

No Solicitor's report was given; however, Zachary Rice provided input during Old and New Business.

## **BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT**

Manager Creighton addressed topics during Old and New Business.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Act 537** - No meeting

**Finance** - No meeting

**Fire Board** - Tom Heefner shared that a proposal has been made between MMP&W and MWA to work out a solution for the existing situation.

**HARB** - No meeting

**Nominating Committee** - No meeting

**Personnel** - No Update

**Planning** - No Update

**Property/Technology** - No Update

**Steering Committee** - No meeting

**Streets** - No Update

**Summer Playground** - No meeting

**Zoning Hearing Board** - No meeting

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Manager Creighton reported on the proposed zoning ordinance amendment and explained that Borough residents would be permitted to own chickens, subject to specific requirements.

**MOTION:** To authorize staff to schedule a public hearing to adopt the Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment to Permit the Keeping of Chickens as Pets was made by Frisby, seconded by Stoner, all ayes, motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**MOTION:** To make a recommendation to the MWA that Ed Twine tender his resignation effective immediately was made by Frisby, seconded by Banks, five ayes, two nays (Jacob Morgan, Tom Heefner), motion carried.

**MOTION:** To make a recommendation to reorganize the MWA was made by Frisby, seconded by Banks, all ayes, motion carried.

**MOTION:** To adopt Resolution 17-26 Declaring a State of Emergency Due to Water System Conditions was made by Stoner, seconded by Frisby, all ayes, motion carried.

Fire Chief Sanders presented a statement regarding recent communications. He acknowledged Council President Kelani Craig and MWA Vice Chairman Jason Frey for prioritizing a meeting with MMP&W in an attempt to de-escalate the situation. He also expressed thanks to Chris Ardinger for facilitating meetings and to Senator Doug Mastriano for reaching out promptly to offer his support for public safety. It was assumed that statements made by MWA Chairman Ed Twine represented the entire MWA; therefore, once those statements were made, remaining silent was not an option for MMP&W. The issue raised by MMP&W was not the removal of the Park Avenue hydrant from service, but rather the lack of notification that the hydrant had been taken out of service. MMP&W, Borough Council, and the MWA have resolved to improve communication and collaboration moving forward to maintain the water system. MMP&W emphasized that public safety should remain a top priority in all decisions.

President Craig announced the following additions to committee appointments:

Finance Committee – Kelani Craig

Property Committee – Jacob Morgan

Streets Committee – Jacob Morgan and Tobey Banks

**MOTION:** To dissolve the Nominating Committee which has not met since 2011 was made by Morgan, seconded by Palesky, all ayes, motion carried.

Appointments to the Summer/Playground Committee have been tabled until the March 9, 2026 Council Meeting.

**MOTION:** To create a Communication Committee was made by Stoner, seconded by Palesky, all ayes, motion carried.

The Communication Committee's primary purpose is to identify and discuss methods to improve transparency and efficiency in communication with Borough residents. Serving on this committee will be Don Palesky as Chairman, Kelani Craig, and Jacob Morgan.

President Craig is requesting that two members of the public volunteer to serve on the Communication Committee. This committee will plan to meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of every month. If you are interested, please contact the Borough Office by February 28, 2026.

**MOTION:** To authorize staff to develop an RFP for Salt Shed Building Construction as recommended during the 1/7/26 Property Committee Meeting was made by Stoner, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

**MOTION:** To authorize staff to develop an RFP for an IT Service Agreement as recommended during the 1/7/26 Property Committee Meeting was made by Frisby, seconded by Palesky, all ayes, motion carried.

**MOTION:** To approve the Franklin County Conservative District - Johnston Run Project was made by Frisby, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

**MOTION:** To approve the purchase and use of an AI powered voice recording device for note taking was made by Palesky, seconded by Frisby, all ayes, motion carried.

**MOTION:** To enter Executive Session at 8pm was made by Stoner, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

Regular session resumed at 8:27pm.

**MOTION:** To approve the Franklin County Area Tax Bureau's 2026 Budget was made by Palesky, seconded by Frisby, five ayes, one nay (Donald Stoner, Jr.), motion carried.

**MOTION:** To separate from the current Billing Clerk Position was made by Stoner, seconded by Palesky, all ayes, motion carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

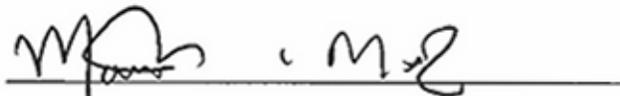
None

**MOTION:** To adjourn the meeting at 8:31 pm made by Stoner, seconded by Frisby, all ayes, motion carried.

Date: 2-23-26

Motion: *Banks*

Seconded: *Palesky*



Borough Manager / Secretary / Treasurer

**SEAL**

