

Mercersburg Borough Council Meeting
Borough Hall, 113 S. Main St., Mercersburg, PA
August 24, 2026
MINUTES

Attending: Council President Kelani Craig, Council Vice-President Jacob Morgan, Mayor Michael Pedersen, Member Tom Heefner, Member Tobey Banks, Member Don Palesky, Member Anthony Frisby, Borough Manager Matthew Moxley, Administrative Professional Angela Alleman

Absent: Member Dusty Stoner

Guest(s)/Press:

See sign in sheets.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mary Frisby - Expressed concern regarding the condition of Zion Lane due to numerous downed branches.

Andy Frey - Expressed strong opposition to the proposed Flock cameras, stating that residents have repeatedly voiced concerns regarding privacy, surveillance, and potential misuse. She urged Council to listen to residents' concerns before proceeding and suggested placing cameras at the Mercersburg Moose property or near a Council member's residence. She stated that she intends to continue researching the issue, submitting Right-to-Know requests, and bringing public attention to the matter if Council proceeds with implementation.

Sahand Miraminy - Expressed support for residents' concerns regarding the proposed Flock cameras. He stated that the issue has brought residents together across political and ideological differences and emphasized the importance of Council listening to constituents and putting residents' concerns first. He urged Council to pause the project, further consider residents' concerns, and allow additional time for discussion before proceeding.

Justin Smith - Expressed opposition to the proposed Flock cameras and urged Council to pause the project and allow further discussion and a community vote. Drawing on his military and law enforcement experience, Mr. Smith expressed concerns regarding the potential misuse and expansion of surveillance technology and the handling of information collected by such systems. He questioned whether the funds offered for the cameras could instead be directed toward other community needs, including water-related issues. Mr. Smith encouraged Council and residents to work together, address concerns, and seek meaningful community input before proceeding with the project.

Eugene Beecher - Addressed Council regarding recent nuisance violation notices. He acknowledged the deferred maintenance at his properties and apologized for any inconvenience but expressed concern about the amount of time and money spent preparing and mailing the notices, including multiple color photographs, property information, envelopes, postage, and newly printed ticket books. He felt the previous single-page notices were sufficient. Mr. Beecher also raised concerns about vehicles frequently parking along Constitution Avenue near his properties and blocking a right-of-way. He stated that he would remove remaining debris from his property and noted the community spirit among Fayette Street residents, particularly neighbors assisting elderly residents. He expressed appreciation for the Fayette Street community but questioned the Borough's

expenditures related to nuisance notices. He also stated his opposition to the proposed Flock cameras and indicated that he planned to return to a future meeting to discuss the matter further.

Vincent McCullough - Inquired about obtaining a residential trash container. He stated that Patriot Disposal advised that the Borough is no longer allowing residents to receive the larger containers. He noted that he had seen new containers delivered to California Street and asked Council to clarify the Borough's policy and determine whether he could obtain one.

Austin McDannell - (Antrim Township) Addressed Council regarding the proposed Flock Safety cameras. He stated that he was representing approximately 340 individuals associated with DeFlock Franklin County, including some Mercersburg constituents. He questioned Council's decision to proceed with the Flock cameras, potential replacement costs if the cameras were damaged or removed, and whether publicly posted camera locations would limit their effectiveness. He also expressed concerns regarding ALPR technology and stated that he believed support for the cameras primarily came from government and law enforcement personnel. During the comment period, he questioned whether limiting public comment would constitute a violation of the Sunshine Act. Council clarified that public comment was being taken and that comments were generally limited to Borough residents and taxpayers. Mr. McDannell continued his comments and used profanity after being asked several times to refrain from doing so. Council President Craig directed Mr. McDannell to leave the meeting, and he exited the meeting while continuing to make profane remarks.

MINUTES

MOTION: To approve July 13, 2026 Meeting Minutes was made by Heefner, seconded by Banks, all ayes, motion carried.

TREASURER'S/BILLS PAYABLE REPORT

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

MOTION: To approve July 2026 Bills Payable Report was made by Heefner, seconded by Banks, all ayes, motion carried.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Pedersen thanked the Lions Club, the community, and Public Works for their support of the recent Mercersburg Fair and commended the turnout. He also thanked Public Works for assisting with the event on short notice and noted the new dog waste stations. He reported that Officer Matthews is now serving full-time, bringing the department to two full-time officers, although staffing may change in the future. Regarding the proposed Flock cameras, he expressed concerns that the project is moving too quickly and stated that the community's concerns should be further considered before proceeding. He questioned the need for the cameras, particularly given the presence of cameras in neighboring communities, and raised concerns regarding their potential removal or vandalism. He recommended that Council postpone selecting camera locations and further evaluate the project.

POLICE REPORT

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

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Steve Coccorese reported that Lydia, the summer law clerk with Salzmann Hughes enjoyed attending the last meeting and plans to return next summer.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT

No report given, Manager Moxley provided updates on Business Items.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Act 537 - No meeting

Communications – Don Palesky reported on the upcoming Town Hall Meeting and stated that he posted the Borough Council agenda on the Communications Facebook page.

Finance – No update

Fire Board – Budget to be presented

HARB – No meeting

Personnel – No update

Planning – No meeting.

Property/Technology – No meeting

Steering Committee – No meeting

Streets – Updates during Business Items

Zoning Hearing Board - No meeting

BUSINESS ITEMS

Mark Sanders, MMP&W Fire Chief, presented the proposed 2027 budget, totaling approximately \$2.45 million, with a projected \$1.18 million funding gap. He attributed the increase primarily to \$500,000 in apparatus and facility capital improvements, potential increased staffing, and the addition of a business manager. Chief Sanders stated that MMP&W is not requesting funding at this time but is working with municipal partners to form a committee to evaluate the future of emergency services, staffing needs, service levels, and associated costs. He noted recent success in recruiting volunteers while emphasizing the need to plan for increasing career staffing as volunteerism declines.

Manager Moxley reported that a link to the new Borough website was sent to all members for their review and comments prior to the website going live.

Brad Otto, Director of Facilities at Mercersburg Academy, introduced the Central Plant Replacement Project. He explained that the project will provide major improvements to the Academy's central plant system. The project includes construction of a new central plant building and associated utility improvements throughout the site. The project has received preliminary review and is scheduled for consideration by the Planning Commission in September.

MOTION: To adopt Resolution 32-26 Appointing Jason Frey to the Personnel Committee as a Water Authority Representative was made by Morgan, seconded by Heefner, all ayes, motion carried.

President Craig announced that the Streets & Property Committees have been consolidated and will follow the Property Committee schedule, meeting on the first Wednesday of each month.

MOTION: To approve transition from QuickBooks to gWorks Accounting Software was made by Heefner, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: To table Business Item 7 (Proposed Flock camera locations) pending additional research was made by Frisby, seconded by Morgan, four ayes, two nays (Craig and Banks), motion carried.

Mayor Pedersen reported that plans to remove the presumed dead trees from the West side of the Square have been postponed until spring to allow time to determine whether they rebud.

Melissa Lanford (Irwin House Ice Cream Shoppe) requested that the tree on the square in front of her business be trimmed due to issues it is causing on her property.

MOTION: To approve Fayette St. Duplex Connections Land Use Permit contingent on following MWA and MSA requirements was made by Frisby, seconded by Heefner, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: To adopt Resolution 31-26 Appointing Borough Manager as Code Enforcement Officer was made by Heefner, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: To authorize Staff to Advertise Proposed Ordinance No. 10-16 Creation of Regulations on Rental Properties was made by Morgan, seconded by Heefner, all ayes, motion carried.

A Town Hall Meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, September 19, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the MMP&W Activity Center, located at 20 Veterans' Way, Mercersburg, PA 17236.

MOTION: To approve Light the Night Proposal Request from Franklin/Fulton Drug and Alcohol Program was made by Heefner, seconded by Frisby, all ayes, motion carried.

Member Morgan reported that the tax rate on the Mercersburg Library Association Library Tax request letter does not match the tax rate approved by Council. Staff will research.

MOTION: To approve Mercersburg Library Association Library Tax request at the rate of 1.05 mills was made by Heefner, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

Members discussed the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation event scheduled for Saturday, September 5, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. President Craig offered to personally donate a few cases of bottled water for the participants. Staff will coordinate with Chief Zechman regarding a police escort through the Borough.

MOTION: To approve Disabled Parking Space Applications (218 S. Park Avenue and 32 W. California Street) was made by Heefner, seconded by Banks, all ayes, motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

Member Palesky reported an update on the Franklin County High Voltage Transmission Line.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM was made by Heefner, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

Date: 9-14-2026

Motion: *Heefner*

Seconded: *Morgan*



Borough Manager

SEAL

