

Mercersburg Borough Council Meeting
Borough Hall, 113 S. Main St., Mercersburg, PA
September 28, 2026
MINUTES

Attending: Council Vice-President Jacob Morgan, Member Dusty Stoner, Member Tom Heefner, Member Anthony Frisby, Member Don Palesky, Borough Manager Matthew Moxley, Administrative Professional Angela Alleman

Absent: Council President Kelani Craig, Member Tobey Banks, Mayor Michael Pedersen

Guest(s)/Press:

See sign in sheets.

Council Vice-President Jacob Morgan started the meeting at 7:00 pm with the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dan Chayes – Questioned the need for additional rental regulations, expressing concern that they could increase rental costs and impact local property ownership. He also questioned why certain requirements would apply to rental properties but not owner-occupied properties. He supported basic safety requirements, including smoke detectors, multiple exits, property maintenance, and inspected fire extinguishers, but questioned the need for additional regulations when existing ordinances and landlord-tenant responsibilities already address these matters.

Ross Smith – Questioned the proposed fee structure, including inspection costs, when registration would be required, and whether an additional fee would apply when a new tenant moves into an already registered rental property. He questioned the need for the proposed ordinance. He expressed concern that additional requirements and costs could make it more difficult for local property owners to remain landlords and could lead some to sell their properties.

Brent Smith – Questioned the need for the proposed rental ordinance. He stated that he has lived in the Borough for more than 50 years and has observed rental properties improve over time. He questioned whether the proposed nuisance provisions would duplicate existing ordinances addressing weeds, abandoned or junk vehicles, noise, barking dogs, garbage, and tires, and asked how nuisance determinations would be made. He noted that similar issues can also occur at owner-occupied properties. He agreed that tenant-landlord matters should generally be addressed between the parties and stated that most landlords already maintain basic safety measures, such as smoke detectors. He questioned whether the proposed ordinance addresses an existing need in the Borough.

Abby Anderson – Expressed concerns with the proposed rental ordinance, stating that portions were unclear, duplicative of the recently adopted nuisance ordinance, or incomplete. She questioned the definitions, fee structure, inspection responsibilities, and consistency of the proposed compliance and penalty provisions. She expressed concern that recurring registration and inspection fees could place an additional financial burden on rental property owners and potentially increase costs for other property owners. She acknowledged that some rental properties may require oversight but stated that she believed the proposed ordinance was overly restrictive. She expressed concern that the ordinance could affect owners' decisions to continue renting their properties and stated that, if adopted without significant changes, she may consider relocating or discontinuing the rental of her property.

Jessica Beeler – Stated that she is considering selling her rental property due to the additional costs associated with the proposed ordinance. She noted that she already pays a property manager to inspect the property and expressed concern that additional fees, combined with existing expenses and high tenant water bills, would be difficult to absorb or pass on to tenants. She also expressed concern that the sale of multiple rental properties could affect local property values and create additional costs for future property owners.

Justin Smith – Inquired as to when the proposed rental ordinance was drafted, who prepared it, and whether residents or a citizen subcommittee had been involved in its development. He questioned why community collaboration could not have occurred before the ordinance was drafted and asked whether Council had the authority to establish such a process.

Tiffany Black – Commented that she has a specific question for Member Tobey Banks and will address it with him at the next meeting.

MINUTES

MOTION: To approve September 14, 2026 Meeting Minutes was made by Heefner, seconded by Stoner, all ayes, motion carried.

TREASURER'S/BILLS PAYABLE REPORT

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

MAYOR'S REPORT

Not present.

POLICE REPORT

Member copy available upon request.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Not Scheduled to be present

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT

No formal report was given. Manager Moxley reported on Old and New Business Items.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Act 537 - No meeting

Communications – No meeting

Finance – No update

Fire Board – No meeting

HARB – No meeting

Personnel – No meeting

Planning – No meeting.

Property/Streets – No meeting

Steering Committee - No meeting

Zoning Hearing Board - No meeting

OLD BUSINESS

Members discussed Proposed Ordinance 10-16 – Regulations on Rental Properties, including options to table, rescind, or restructure the ordinance. Members considered public comments and questions. Manager Moxley explained that the proposed ordinance originated from a disputed tenant situation. He recommended restructuring the ordinance to address life-safety issues only and operate on a complaint-based system.

MOTION: To rescind the current Proposed Ordinance 10-16 for revision was made by Heefner, seconded by Frisby, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: To authorize scheduling of future workshops to continue discussion of the Proposed Ordinance 10-16 was made by Palesky, seconded by Heefner, all ayes, motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION: To approve Patriot Disposal Contract Extension was made by Stoner, seconded by Palesky, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: To approve Cumberland Valley Tree Service Quote (\$1,300.00) for 3 Center Square (Irwin House) was made by Heefner, seconded by Palesky, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: To approve Resolution 34-26 Appointing Matthew Moxley to Franklin County Council of Governments was made by Heefner, seconded by Frisby, all ayes, motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

Members received information regarding an opportunity to place an advertisement in the James Buchanan High School yearbook.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:47PM was made by Heefner, seconded by Frisby, all ayes, motion carried.

Date: 10/12/2026

Motion: Heefner

Seconded: Stoner



Borough Manager

SEAL

