

AVONDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
July 1, 2025
7:00 PM

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: President Paul Morgan, Vice President Mike Essmaker, Stephanie Reichert, Janet Watts, and Lucas Ortiz. Also in attendance were Mayor Susan Rzcudlo, Solicitor Kim Venzie, Treasurer Joan McVaugh, and Administrator Sharon Norris. There was 1 member of the public in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER – Mr. Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Morgan announced an Executive Session after tonight’s meeting to discuss legal issues.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Marissa Paolicelli, 410 Pennsylvania Avenue, inquired about the status of the survey asking residents to list their top priorities in the Borough. Council discussed and Ms. Watts volunteered to develop a Google survey in both English and Spanish. After more discussion, a committee was formed with Ms. Watts, Ms. Stephanie Reichert, and Ms. Norris to assist in development of the survey. Ms. Paolicelli thanked the Borough for getting the new “Welcome to Avondale” sign and wondered when it would be put up. She also asked about PennDOT coming back to fix the patch as the shaking in her house and her neighbors houses is getting worse. Mayor Susan explained that she sent a letter to the higher up elected officials, but the State is in the middle of budget season which means we won’t hear back from them until that is resolved. She reiterated that the Borough would be a partner with PennDOT, but it is PennDOT’s road to repair. She will reach back out to the electeds in two weeks. Ms. Paolicelli asked about the well pump run time and stated she sent correspondence to Gov. Shapiro’s office. Everyone agreed that if PennDOT fixed the road properly it would improve the situation. It was recommended that Ms. Paolicelli and the rest of the residents continue to call PennDOT. The Mayor said she will continue to do that too. Ms. Paolicelli said she would send another letter. Ms. McVaugh suggested having the next meeting with PennDOT inside of the Paolicelli’s residence so they can witness the damage and vibrations. A closed door meeting was again suggested, as was enforcement of speed.

BUSINESS.

Intersection of Chatham and Second Street – Ms. Watts and Mr. Ortiz walked through a portion of the Borough and determined that adding two new stop signs on Chatham Street at Second Street would increase safety at that intersection. The Council and Mayor discussed painting the curbs, adding a “No Parking from here to curb” sign and police enforcement requirements. The Solicitor advised that whatever the Council decides regarding painting the curbs, they should be consistent. Solicitor Venzie requested a diagram of the area showing the stop signs and recommended showing this suggestion to the SCCRPD.

Borough Hall Use – The Council and Mayor discussed implementing a Policy regarding after-hours use of the Borough Hall. They discussed whether to implement a fee for the use of the building and what the liability issues are. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that only nonprofit organizations will be able to use the building. There would be no cost for them. This policy will go into effect on September 15th. Council will vote on this at the next meeting.

White Clay Creek Flood Study – Ms. Reichert reported that she met with members of the White Clay Watershed Flood Committee. A grant was received to perform a flood study in the Watershed. This study will help identify real solutions to flooding issues across the watershed and support future funding applications to put those solutions into action. This Committee is working with Dr. Franco Montalto and the Sustainable Water Resource Engineering Lab at Drexel University. They’ll be developing a computer model to simulate flooding scenarios using data collected from across the watershed. A technical steering committee is helping guide the process and includes representatives from:

- Chester County Water Resources Authority
- Brandywine Conservancy
- UD Water Resources Center
- Stroud Water Research Center
- The Water Center at Penn

Topics of discussion included stormwater management requirements, flooding on Chatham and Second Street as well as at the apartments. The Borough will provide the Committee with pictures of flooding events as they occur.

Tree Work at Sewer Plant – Mr. DiFillippo has identified four dead trees close to the well house at the plant. If they were to fall, they would damage the well house roof. He recommends getting them removed. He received an estimate from Tom Brooks not to exceed \$4,500. Mr. Brooks will try to line up other work in the area that requires a crane to help keep the cost down. The council was in favor of this work and will vote on it at the next meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Mr. Essmaker made a motion to approve the June 17, 2025, minutes as presented. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. The vote carried 5-0.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT/UPDATE – Ms. Venzie reported there is evidence in the Borough that some houses are being used as rooming houses in Zoning Districts where this activity is not permitted. The Council has asked Ms. Venzie for advice on how to stop this from happening and how to deal with houses where this suspected use is taking place. Ms. Venzie explained the process that the Code officials would use to combat this. The thinking is that if the Borough is proactive about stopping this use, the same landlords will stop buying up properties in the Borough. Some of the issues are about safety. When landlords develop rooming houses the proper way they must install safety protocols like fire suppression and egress in closed off areas. The Council and Mayor discussed this with the Solicitor and made it clear they want to be very restrictive by allowing rooming houses only in Districts where they are allowed.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor Susan Rzucidlo reported on the following:

She and the Engineer are working on the multi modal grant. She reiterated that she does as much of the grant work as she can to keep the engineering costs down. This grant application is due July 31st.

She continues to look for grants for security cameras. Ms. Paolicelli questioned whether any grant money is going toward fixing the water on Pennsylvania Avenue; she noted that Senator Kane recently confirmed that Avondale’s pipes needed repair; Mayor Susan said that if the grant were awarded, it would go to sidewalk restoration on Pennsylvania Avenue. She opined that PennDOT may have told Senator Kane that the pipes need repair.

Bubble Palooza was a fun time for the over 100 kids that participated.

The Mayor met a native plant seller who has donated a lot of plants to the Borough which the Mayor has been busy planting around town.

PennDOT worked on the swale at Third Street; however, the recent rain washed all the hay away. The Mayor extended thanks to PennDOT for coming down to do the work.

The Santa Train is scheduled for November 29th. The Mayor is collaborating with members of the railroad and Toys for Tots. Santa and a few Marines will be on the train this year. The train will start at Oxford.

The ribbon cutting for the new hospital is July 25th from 4:30 pm – 6 pm

OLD BUSINESS

The Council and Mayor continued to talk about the Survey that Ms. Watts and Ms. Reichert will be developing and added this topic to be included under the “Vision” section of the agenda.

OTHER

Council discussed National Night Out and decided they do not want to host a table that evening.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no additional public comment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next Borough Council meeting is Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 7 PM.
- National Night out is Tuesday, August 5th. Come out and have fun with the Regional Police and your community. The Borough Council meeting has been changed to Monday, August 4th.
- The Borough needs help creating trails in the Webb Preserve. Sign up at the Borough office to be a part of the fun!

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Norris

Sharon Norris, Secretary