

AVONDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 17, 2025
7:00 PM

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice President Mike Essmaker, Stephanie Reichert, Janet Watts, and Lucas Ortiz. President Paul Morgan and Mayor Susan Rzcudlo were absent. Solicitor Kim Venzie, Engineer Tom Wilkes, Treasurer Joan McVaugh, and Administrator Sharon Norris were also in attendance along with 4 members of the public.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT – Marissa Paolicelli, 410 Pennsylvania Avenue, inquired about the multimodal grant and the Borough's response to PennDOT. Solicitor Venzie summarized the PennDOT situation and the Borough's response. Engineer Wilkes gave an overview of what PennDOT committed to doing at the April 15th meeting. He described how they committed to allowing the Borough to test the water; yet when they dug, they did not hit water. Ms. Venzie noted this was good news; however, according to PennDOT they still say the issue is the Borough's water system. On the Borough's behalf, the Engineer and Solicitor prepared and sent letters to PennDOT reasserting that it is not the Borough's responsibility and testing the area showed that it is not the Borough's responsibility. PennDOT said they would fix the potholes when necessary. Copies of the correspondence were provided to the Paolicelli's and resident Kate Maxwell, 401 Pennsylvania Avenue. Ms. Maxwell noted that her water pressure is low, and the recent patching did nothing to reduce the shaking and vibrations. She feels something has happened recently to intensify the vibrations and damage to her house. Ms. Paolicelli is very frustrated that nothing has been done. The Engineer noted that the Borough would continue to monitor the situation. However, the Borough's opinion is that PennDOT needs to adjust the way they fix the patches and fix them properly. He recommended residents contact their state legislators. Ms. Paolicelli also commented on paving Pennsylvania Avenue, sending a survey to residents asking what their top 5 priority projects are, water pipes and streetlighting. Both residents commented on the looks of the Borough and the condition of many properties in the Borough. The Solicitor recommended that the Borough Code Enforcement Officer step up enforcement measures.

SOUTHERN CHESTER COUNTY REGIONAL POLICE REPORT

Lieutenant Joe Versagli reported on the month's activities. He discussed the results from the traffic report generated by the speed sign on Pennsylvania Avenue, noting that although the final report is not available, residents and Council will be surprised that people aren't speeding as much as everyone thinks. He reiterated that since the SCCRPD is unable to utilize radar like the State Police can, catching speeders in the heavily congested Borough is difficult with the restraints they face. Solicitor Venzie noted that her research shows that reducing speed is helpful, but enforcement is imperative. The Lieutenant pointed out that Pennsylvania Avenue is not the busiest road in their District and they have one scale and one weighmaster. Additionally, they haven't found many overweight trucks. The Lieutenant invited everyone to join the Police for National Night Out on August 5th with a raindate of August 7th.

BUSINESS.

Sewer/Water Plant Operator Update – Plant operator Brent Hazelwood reported on the run time of the wells and his concerns regarding that situation. Fixing the leak on Chatham street decreased the amount of run time but the time is still double what it was last year at this time. He and Craig Lutz have analyzed the trends on the pumps, and it clearly showed that when the system went back to the reservoir from the bypass 8 months ago, something changed. He and Council discussed why he didn't think it was one big leak causing the problem (since that would present itself). He confirmed that the reservoir is not overflowing. They will continue to troubleshoot. Next week, he will put the Borough's water supply on the bypass system to see if that shows any signs of reduction to the well run time. Council member Janet Watts asked about hydrant flushing and whether there are any concerns about pressure. Mr. Hazelwood expects the system to have more pressure than last year. Hydrant flushing will take place on July 16 and 17th from Midnight until 6 am. There is still a significant difference in the amount of water used and the amount of water billed. Questions were taken from Mr. Paolicelli and Ms. Maxwell about water loss, water pressure and what causes low pressure. They discussed water pipes needing to be updated in houses especially those with multiple floors..

PennDOT Update – This was discussed during public comment.

Intersection of Chatham and Second Street – Ms. Watts noted that there is a safety concern with large trucks and cars parked too close to the corner blocking the site distance when coming from Chatham and trying to cross Second Street or turn onto Second Street. Council considered No Parking Signs, painting the curb and stop signs. Solicitor Venzie noted that doing any traffic change at this intersection would require an update to the Ordinance. She recommended that Council members walk through the entire Borough and note any other parking related or traffic

related change they would like and make these changes all at once. Council Member Lucas Ortiz will accompany Ms. Watts on a walk around the Borough.

Community Garden Hose Reel – Ms. Watts made a motion to authorize the purchase of a hose reel for the Community Garden at a cost not to exceed \$400. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mike Essmaker. The motion carried with a vote of 4-0.

Aluminum Welder Purchase – on a motion by Ms. Watts, seconded by Mr. Essmaker, the Council authorized the purchase of an aluminum welder attachment at a cost not to exceed \$1,000. The motion carried 4-0.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Susan was not in attendance; however, she wanted Council and members of the public to know that the railroad invited the Borough to help them partner with Toys for Tots and as part of the Santa Train, a caboose would be added to pick up all the toys collected by the municipalities on the route. The Santa Train will now arrive on Saturday, November 29th. More details will follow. Ms. Watts noted that the Fire Police should be notified if they are needed.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Wilkes stated that his team would be locating the missing curb stops and he was in the Borough prior to the meeting and found some.

MINUTES – Ms. Stephanie Reichert made a motion to approve the May 19, 2025, minutes as presented. Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Treasurer McVaugh noted that the May Treasurer's report is not available because after recent computer work, the General Fund section of QuickBooks was inadvertently deleted. Pegasus is trying to retrieve it. Ms. Paolicelli recommended a reliable backup program.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no additional public comment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next Borough Council meeting is Tuesday, July 1, 2025, at 7 PM.
- The Borough Office will be closed on Thursday, June 19th in celebration of Juneteenth.
- Mark your calendars for Bubble Palooza on Saturday, June 28th at 10:00 AM.
- 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 9 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Norris

Sharon Norris, Secretary