

AVONDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 19, 2025
7:00 PM

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: President, Paul Morgan, Stephanie Reichert, and Janet Watts, were in attendance.. Mayor Susan Rzuclidlo, Solicitor Kim Venzie (via phone), Engineer Tom Wilkes, Treasurer Joan McVaugh and Administrator Sharon Norris were also in attendance along with 7 members of the public.

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 there will be an Executive Session after tonight's meeting to discuss personnel and real estate issues.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Marissa Paolicelli, 410 Pennsylvania Avenue, asked about the results of PennDOT's digging at the pothole on Pennsylvania. There was no water found and PennDOT dug below the rebar. PennDOT sent an email to the Borough that in a nutshell said that although no water was found they do think the disrepair to the road is caused by a leak in the Borough's water main. Mr. Wilkes said that he and other borough attendees were on site at the dig ready to test the water to see if it was chlorinated. Since no water was found and PennDOT dug in multiple locations, the Borough does not agree with this assessment. Mr. Wilkes and Ms. Venzie will both prepare response letters to PennDOT telling them that the Borough's position that it is a PennDOT issue and not a Borough issue. Once completed, PennDOT will send their report to the Borough. The Mayor asked Ms. Venzie what information can be shared with the public. Ms. Venzie said that at this time the Borough can share PennDOT's email and that we would keep Ms. Paolicelli and all interested residents informed of new developments. Ms. Paolicelli asked what they should do if their houses continue to shake or if there are problems and she was directed to contact PennDOT. The Borough will provide her with contact information. Solicitor Venzie recommended calling the state rep and senator. Senator Kane recommended Ms. Paolicelli, contact him if needed. Kim recommended waiting for the Borough to issue its official response.

Chris Christenson from the Chester County Hazard Mitigation Planning Department and his colleagues were in attendance to ensure that the Borough is working on its Hazard Mitigation Plan. They have tried to contact the Borough without success, so they decided to come in person to offer assistance to get this plan completed. For the Borough to get reimbursement or assistance from FEMA and PEMA, the Plan must be updated by June. The Department is happy to help, and the Borough will work with the Emergency management coordinator to get this completed.

John Langile 302 Pennsylvania commented on cement and water leaks. When the recent repair on Pennsylvania was completed, the contractor did not put cement down as far as he could tell; therefore, there is no cement everywhere on Route 41/Pennsylvania Avenue. This may be the case, but in the area where the recent digging took place, there was a layer of concrete

The Mayor reported that a resident spoke to her that visibility is limited at the intersection of Chatham and Second Street because sometimes work trucks are parked in a way that blocks the sight distance. Second Street doesn't have a stop sign. The Mayor and Council member Janet Watts are in favor of painting a no parking space and putting up signs that say no parking here to corner.

AVONDALE FIRE AND EMS FIRST QUARTER REPORT – Guy Swift was in attendance to review the first quarter 2025 report. During 1Q25, there were 477 total EMS calls, 9 from the Borough. They are still delivering patients to Christiana and Chester County. Although the wait times are improving, they are still very long. Fire Calls were also 9 for the Borough. Mr. Swift noted that one item in the budget may stand out and that is due to a failed power unit for a rescue tool. They had to temporarily borrow one from West Grove, but they were able to purchase what they needed, which changed the budget numbers. Training has been going well with the new unit, and they were able to use it at an event on Route 926. The Fire Company received a \$5,000 mushroom grant which they used to replace outdated AEDs. They also received additional funding from Guizzetti Mushroom to make improvements to their TV room to accommodate overnight volunteer workers who staff the overnight hours. Unfortunately, they are losing two full time employees – one was hired by Homeland Security and the other is moving to a full time job with the Wilmington Fire Department whose benefits and pay far exceed what AFC can pay. When asked, Mr. Swift reported that the new Medic 94 building does not affect the Advanced Life Support coverage at the Fire Company. Ms. Watts discussed the fundraiser/shredding event with Serv Pro in October and once the date is set, Mr. Swift will forward that information so the Borough can share it with the residents. Mr. Swift discussed that merger talks are still in the works. The sub committees are actively working on things. Mr. Swift said there will be a meeting on June 7th. and a date will be chosen

to update all of municipalities on the merger at that time. They haven't made a lot of reportable progress, but things are moving along. Ms. Reichert noted that AFC covered for Paoli and Mr. Swift confirmed that those providing coverage were volunteers or non-career staff. The Fire company had agreed to provide this coverage. Some volunteers worked until midnight; others from 5 PM to 6 AM. This situation needs to be addressed. The Fire Marshall received a complaint about a fire on Minor Street and the fire pit fire behind the apartments. Both issues are resolved..

BUSINESS.

White Clay Flood Study – The White Clay Creek Flood Study is underway. Shane Morgan, Program Director of the White Clay Wild and Scenic River, would like to schedule a kickoff meeting with a member of Borough Council and a staff member. Ms. Reichert will be able to attend.

Security Camera Updates – Treasurer McVaugh met with a representative from Schneider Communications. He visited the Borough and provided a proposal for installation of Wi-Fi, solar and cameras for security at the Veterans Memorial Park, the new wells, and the reservoir at a cost of \$19,400. Ms. McVaugh recommends securing a grant for this work. It is below the bidding threshold. She will continue to research other security options and report back with new information when available.

Multimodal Grant Discussion – Mayor Susan would like the Road Committee to work with Engineer Wilkes to submit an application for a multi modal grant for road work. The Committee will look at the paving study, meet with Tom and determine the best way to move forward. The grant is due in July. The grant award could be up to \$3 million. It could include roads, sidewalks, and traffic calming. Best of all, there is no match. Tom will provide a scope of work.

Other Grant Opportunities – This topic was tabled since Mr. Essmaker was absent.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor Susan reported on the following:

- The new playground equipment has shipped – this is a swing set on 3rd street and a climbing apparatus on Second Street. The Longwood Rotary is willing to meet with the Mayor to discuss installing the equipment at little to no cost.
- Christmas Holiday Festivities Discussion – The Mayor put out a notice on Facebook looking for help to make the Borough Christmas decorations similar to the Lenape Christmas lights. known as “Lenape Lights.” Someone suggested focusing only on the Santa train since lots of municipalities do a Christmas tree lighting celebration. The Council discussed how much they enjoyed the Christm.” Tree Lighting tradition, especially the KMC dancers; however, this year the borough could only get the dancers in the late afternoon which would make it difficult to incorporate that with tree lighting. So instead of hosting two functions in two weeks, the Council decided to focus on the Santa Train. This event is the 2nd Saturday in December. We will notify the fire police that they are not needed the first Saturday in December.

ENGINEER’S REPORT

Mr. Wilkes had no new information to report.

SOLICITOR REPORT - Solicitor Venzie reported on the progress of the lien against the apartments and explained the story of the vacant property at 306 E. Third Street and connecting with the deceased owner’s son.

MINUTES – Ms. Watts made a motion to approve the May 6, 2025, minutes as presented. Ms. Reichert seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Ms. Reichert made a motion to approve the April 2025 treasurer’s report with the following deposits and disbursements. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion.

General Fund:	\$153,200.01
Sewer Service	\$ 67,599.92
Water Service	\$ 45,549.51
Parks & Recreation	\$ 1,492.37
Street Lithing	\$ 772.69
ARPA Funds	\$ 3,668.75
Sewer & Water	\$ 6,000.00
Total in all funds	\$313,413.88

motion carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Vision 2030: Mapping our Vision for Tomorrow – this was tabled until the next meeting.

Memorial Dedication – Mayor Susan noted everything is ready to go – the only outstanding items are the color guard and guarantees from mother nature that the weather will cooperate.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chad Davis, 132 Pennsylvania Avenue asked about the Hero Flags, noting that many are missing and those that remain are in disrepair. Mr. Morgan explained that the flags were not meant to hang for extended periods of time, and they have been up for more than 4 years. The Council discussed taking them down and presenting the remaining flags that are in decent or better condition to the families they represent. In their place the Borough can purchase a banner from the same company that made the Hero Flags that has all the pictures of the veterans. This banner can be displayed for an event and then taken down until needed again. This will be discussed at the next workshop meeting.

Mr. Davis asked when the new brewery would be opening, the speed sign on Route 41 and its effectiveness. He was told that the police will prepare a report for the Borough which outlines the results. Ms. Paolicelli asked if the state police could control speed in the Borough; however, this is not their jurisdiction.

Mr. Langile, 302 Pennsylvania Avenue asked about the Noise Ordinance and can it control cars with loud mufflers and accessory noisemakers on them. He also discussed jake brakes. He was directed to contact the Southern Chester County Regional Police although warned that the police have explained that jake brake usage is difficult to control as would be accessory noise makers on cars. The uptick in traffic due to summer was also discussed. The Borough will reach out to the Police Chief.

Mr. Joseph VanLoon, property on Pennsylvania Avenue asked if the Borough could stop truck traffic in the Borough. Mr. Morgan noted that everyone would like that but since 41 is a state-owned and managed road, we have no control over it. Mayor Susan further noted that this traffic has been an issue since Joe Pitts was a senator and now he is retired, and it still hasn't changed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next Borough Council meeting is Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at 7 PM.
- The Veterans Memorial Park dedication is Saturday, May 31, 2025, at 10 AM.
- Mark your calendars for Bubble Palooza on Saturday, June 28th at 10:30 AM

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:25

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Norris

Sharon Norris, Secretary

