

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING

Regular Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2025 - 7:30 p.m.

301 N. Spring Street, 1st Floor, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania 16823

www.bellefonte.net

*VIEW RECORDING OF WORK SESSIONS and BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETINGS:
Recordings can be viewed on CNET, Comcast's Government Education Channel 7, or at*

www.cnet1.org

ATTEND IN PERSON: The meeting room is open with normal occupancy limits.

I. CALL TO ORDER (Council President Barbara Dann) The November 17, 2025 meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. *Council met for an executive session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel and real estate issues.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Kent Bernier
Mr. Randall Brachbill
Ms. Deborah Cleeton, *Pro Tempore*
Ms. Barbara Dann, *President*
Mr. Douglas Johnson, *Vice President*
Ms. Shawna McKean
Ms. Rita Purnell
Ms. Johanna Sedgwick
Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey
Ms. Jalyn Meckley, *Jr. Council Member*
Mayor Buddy Johnson

STAFF PRESENT

Bill Witmer, Police Chief
David Pribulka, Interim Borough Manager
Alyssa Doherty, Assistant to the Borough Manager
Gina Thompson, Planning, Zoning & HARB Administrator

IV. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

In accordance with Act 65 of 2021, If a matter is not on the Agenda, Council cannot take official action on it with some exceptions. The Council can act on matters relating to potential or real emergencies. Council may add a matter of agency business to its agenda through a majority vote. The Council should state the reason why the action item is being added to the agenda. Council may vote to add an action item(s) to the agenda.

NONE

V. PUBLIC COMMENT (Oral)

Borough Council intends to take public comment related to the motion that is on the floor after it has been duly made and seconded. The order of comment will be public comment and then council

comment including, proposed amendments by council members. If amendments are proposed to the original motion, the public will then only comment on the amendment(s) before final votes are taken. You must be a Bellefonte resident, non-profit representative, business owner, or an official representative of another governmental agency. Speakers shall identify themselves by name and street, municipality, if outside of the Borough of Bellefonte. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes.

NONE

VI. COMMUNICATIONS (Written)

Additional funding information for the Beaver Farmhouse. No council action is requested.

Congressman Glenn “GT” Thompson's letter of support to restore the Beaver Farmhouse. No council action is requested.

Historic House by Bellefonte Elementary School. No council action is requested.

Old Stone Farmhouse on the proposed new elementary school site. No council action is requested.

Structural Review of Beaver Farmhouse at 1002 Airport Road, Bellefonte. No council action is requested.

The Gamble Mill is the best example of preservation. No council action is requested.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA (will be acted upon by a single motion unless otherwise noted)

All items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and will be acted upon by a single motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless members of the Council request specific items to be removed for separate action.

Consent Agenda includes the following items:

1. Finance	Campbell Durrant Legal Invoice October 2025 Report
2. General	DRAFT Council Meeting Minutes November 3rd, 2025
3. Finance	Stover McGlaughlin Legal Invoice October 2025 Report

McKean motioned and Cleeton seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion carried. Motion carried unanimously.

VII. REPORTS

Mayor Johnson

Proclamation-Small Business Saturday November 29, 2025.

- Small business Saturday was established in 2010

Police (Chief Witmer)

October 2025 report. The department was able to purchase a new police vehicle.

Office of Community Affairs (OCA)/Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB)
(Ms. Thompson)

Recommended for approval:

Call for a motion/2nd to approve the Planning Commission's recommendation to approve the subdivision of Tax Parcel 32-301-300 (SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority), contingent upon revising the plan in accordance with the review comments from the County Planning Office. *Brachbill motioned and Tosti-Vasey seconded to approve the Planning Commission's recommendation to approve the subdivision of Tax Parcel 32-301-300 (SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority), contingent upon revising the plan in accordance with the review comments from the County Planning Office. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion carried. Motion carried unanimously.*

Call for a motion/2nd to approve the appointment of Jean Gerber to the Planning Commission. She will fill the vacancy created by Chris Morelli's move away. Her term will expire on 12/31/2026. *Johnson motioned and Tosti-Vasey seconded to approve the appointment of Jean Gerber to the Planning Commission. She will fill the vacancy created by Chris Morelli's move away. Her term will expire on 12/31/2026. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion carried. Motion carried unanimously.*

The Nittany Valley Joint Planning Commission will meet on Thursday, November 20, at 6:00 pm at the Benner Township building.

The next HARB meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 25, at 8:30 am, however this meeting is cancelled as there are no projects for HARB to review.

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 8, at 5:00 pm.

Interim Borough Manager (Mr. Pribulka)

October 2025 Report

Mr. Pribulka welcomed several new employees to the Borough, including a new part time code enforcement official, a new admin assistant in the police department, a new mechanic in the public works department, and a new operator in the wastewater treatment plant.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Elected Official Committee Reports)

Environmental & Parks Committee/ Ordinance ad hoc Committee (Submitted)

- The committee met on November 12, 2025. A report will be provided for the Council meeting in December.

Finance & Administration Committee (Verbal)
October 2025 Report

Infrastructure & Public Works Committee (Submitted)

October 2025 Report

- Mr. Brachbill reported on several projects that are in the works.

Streets Committee (Verbal and included in the meeting packet)

October 2025 Report

- Mr. Johnson reported on several projects that the streets committee is considering.
- No meeting scheduled for December. Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday January 13th at 4pm in the Oak Room.

Public Transport Task Force Committee (Verbal)

October 2025 Report

IX. LIASON REPORTS

Reports will be submitted in writing for inclusion in the council meeting materials. Reports may include draft meeting minutes, notes, memos, etc. No verbal report is to be given unless there is a question regarding the report. If council action is requested, please clearly indicate it, including the wording, so that it can be stated on the council meeting agenda.

Centre County Library Board - Ms. Cleeton (Submitted)

Centre Region Council of Governments (COG) Public Safety Committee - Mr. Brachbill
(Submitted)

X. CURRENT and OLD BUSINESS

Nittany Valley Joint Recreation Authority Match Request. Council may take action.

- Funding report: The Authority was awarded a grant for \$1.475M (DCNR C2P2 Match Grant). The Authority has raised \$1,077,171.00. The Authority is approximately \$398,000 short. The Authority is asking each sharing municipality to contribute a portion of the deficit based on population. Bellefonte Borough's share would be approximately 26% or \$103,650 to be paid over a 3-year period (June 30th 2028). This is to help fund phase 1 of the project in the amount of \$2.9M.
 - Benner township has already pledged \$79,731
 - Spring township has pledged \$135,542
 - Walker township has been asked to consider pledging \$79,731
 - The 2 grants will expire if the Authority is not able to be raise the needed funds.

Johnson motioned and Brachbill seconded to approve a pledge of \$104,650 to be paid as needed to the Nittany Valley Joint Recreational Authority to support the public pool renovation project over a 3-year period, \$34,550 per year, with an end date of June 30th, 2028. Discussion included clarification that the Authority will continue to raise funds via grants and other fundraising efforts, which could significantly reduce the amount that each municipality would contribute. Roll call vote. Motion carried. Motion carried unanimously.

Council Chambers Improvements.

Bernier motioned and Brachbill seconded to approve the quote provided for tables and panels. Discussion included Johnson commenting that he is not in favor of this purchase at this time as he feels this option is not the best option at this time. Roll call vote. Motion FAILED with 3 YES and 6 NO votes.

Mr. Kent Bernier	yes	Ms. Shawna McKean	no
Mr. Randy Brachbill	yes	Ms. Rita Purnell	no
Ms. Deb Cleeton	yes	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	no
Ms. Barbara Dann	no	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	no
Mr. Doug Johnson	no		

Armory Building front steps improvement. (\$650)

Kent motioned and Johnson seconded to approve the quote for \$650 provided by Gary Horner to repair the steps on the Spring Street side of the Armory Building. Discussion included clarification of the parameters of the project. Roll call vote. Motion carried. Motion carried unanimously.

2025 Goals update-November 2025. No council action requested.

Council may consider joining the Pennsylvania Municipal League and allocate funds in the 2026 budget for the membership fee. Member Benefit information has been provided in the packet. Council may take action.

Tosti-Vasey motioned and there was second to remove from the table. Motion to remove from the table failed.

Exception to Section 404.3 of the Centre Region Building Safety & Property Maintenance Code for 107 S. Ridge Street.

Bernier motioned and Johnson seconded to remove from the table. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion to remove from the table carried with 8 YES votes and 1 NO vote.

Mr. Kent Bernier	yes	Ms. Shawna McKean	yes
Mr. Randy Brachbill	yes	Ms. Rita Purnell	yes
Ms. Deb Cleeton	yes	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	yes
Ms. Barbara Dann	yes	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	no
Mr. Doug Johnson	yes		

Bernier motioned and Johnson seconded to direct staff to advertise for Chapter 425 Ordinance Amendment. Discussion included comments by Walt Schneider, Agency Director for Centre Region Code and Building Code Official. Mr. Schneider commented regarding the ceiling height restriction for rental housing. He commented that higher ceiling height is important for mental health and fire safety. Roll call vote. Motion to advertise for the ordinance amendment FAILED with 1 yes and 8 NO votes.

Mr. Kent Bernier	yes	Ms. Shawna McKean	no
Mr. Randy Brachbill	no	Ms. Rita Purnell	no
Ms. Deb Cleeton	no	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	no
Ms. Barbara Dann	no	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	no

Mr. Doug Johnson	<i>no</i>	
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Demolition Permit Application requested by Bellefonte Area School District for the Beaver Farmhouse, 1002 Airport Road.

Bernier motioned and McKean seconded to remove from the table. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion carried. Motion to remove from the table carried unanimously.

Bernier motioned and Cleeton seconded to approve the demolition of the Beaver Farmhouse at 1002 Airport Road, requested by the Bellefonte Area School District. Discussion included public comments regarding this demolition. The superintendent of the Bellefonte Area School District spoke to express the districts position on the issue. He stated that the district’s main duty is to use taxpayer dollars in a fiscally responsible manner and to provide educationally appropriate buildings that are accessible to all students and staff. The farmhouse is not part of the district’s educational program and it is costing the district money each year, and the district is facing potential fines from the Borough for a building that they are not being permitted to demolish. He further stated that donating the house and land is not a feasible option for the district, as that tract of land is the site for all stormwater runoff. Several other community members expressed their opinions regarding the demolition. Below is a summary of those comments.

Joseph Griffin, a borough resident, spoke in favor of preserving the farmhouse. He requested a 1 year stay of demolition to give community members time to find a solution and raise funds.

Tim Gardner, a borough resident, spoke in favor of preserving the farmhouse for historical and educational purposes.

Sadie Belsky, a borough resident, spoke in favor of preserving the farmhouse for historical and educational purposes.

Matt Maris, a borough resident, spoke in favor of preserving the farmhouse for historical and educational purposes. He mentioned the Gamble Mill as a good example of successful historical preservation.

Walt Schneider also spoke to clarify the fines that Centre Region Code has threatened. He stated that the building must be made weather-tight or the district will face fines.

Tosti-Vasey moved to amend the motion to table approving the demolition for one year to gather more information and options. Brachbill seconded the amendment. Roll call vote on the amendment. Motion to approve the amended motion FAILED with 7 no and 2 yes votes.

Mr. Kent Bernier	<i>no</i>	Ms. Shawna McKean	<i>no</i>
Mr. Randy Brachbill	<i>no</i>	Ms. Rita Purnell	<i>no</i>
Ms. Deb Cleeton	<i>no</i>	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	<i>yes</i>
Ms. Barbara Dann	<i>no</i>	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	<i>yes</i>
Mr. Doug Johnson	<i>no</i>		

Roll call vote for the original motion. Motion to approve the demolition permit FAILED with 1 yes and 8 NO votes.

Mr. Kent Bernier	<i>yes</i>	Ms. Shawna McKean	<i>no</i>
Mr. Randy Brachbill	<i>no</i>	Ms. Rita Purnell	<i>no</i>
Ms. Deb Cleeton	<i>no</i>	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	<i>no</i>
Ms. Barbara Dann	<i>no</i>	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	<i>no</i>

Mr. Doug Johnson	no
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X. NEW BUSINESS

Bellefonte Lamb McErlane P.C. engagement letter to retain Christopher Gerber as Special Counsel with respect to labor and employment matters for the Bellefonte Borough Police Department.

Brachbill motioned and Cleeton seconded to accept the engagement letter from Lamb McErlane, P.C. to retain Christopher Gerber as Special Counsel with respect to labor and employment matters for the Bellefonte Borough Police Department. Roll call vote. Motion carried. Motion carried unanimously.

List of items to be auctioned on Municibid.

Cleeton motioned and McKean seconded to approve the provided list to be auctioned on Municibid. Roll call vote. Motion carried. Motion carried unanimously.

The last day for Brush/Grass Curbside Pick-Up will be Wednesday, November 19th. The final Saturday opening of the Borough Compost Facility on Musser Lane will be Saturday, November 22nd. No council action requested.

Borough Offices will be closed on Thursday, November 27th for Thanksgiving. No council action is requested.

At the Bellefonte Borough Council meeting held on January 20, 2025, Council approved the Courtesy Parking Program for the 2025 Holiday Season. Under this program, the first time the Parking Enforcement Officer observes a vehicle with no time on the meter, the officer will issue a complimentary two-hour pass. On the officer’s second pass-through that same day, if no time remains on the meter and the two hours have expired, a parking ticket will be issued. Courtesy parking begins on Thursday, November 27, 2025 (Thanksgiving Day), and continues through Thursday, January 1, 2026 (New Year’s Day). We encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity to do some holiday shopping in beautiful Downtown Bellefonte—and have a Happy Holiday Season! No council action is requested.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ISSUES NOT ON THE AGENDA

This Public Comment period is for oral comments regarding items not listed on this meeting agenda. Speakers shall identify themselves by name, street, municipality, if outside of the Borough of Bellefonte. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes maximum.

NONE

XII. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS/FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Please try to limit all comments/rebuttals to three minutes maximum.

Several council members made comments on various issues.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15PM.