

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2026**

**SUPERVISORS PRESENT:**

Danielle A. Duckett, Chairman  
Michael Twersky, Vice Chair  
Janine Martin  
Andrea Brockway  
Jimmy Chong

**STAFF:**

Mimi Gleason, Township Manager  
Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager  
Michelle Farzetta, Office Manager  
Neil Stein, Esq., Solicitor  
Paul Kenny, Police Chief  
Fred Zollers, Director Public Works  
Melinda Haldeman, Finance Director  
John Farrell, Project Manager/Emergency Management Coordinator  
Jim Hersh, Gilmore Associates, Municipal Engineer  
Chad Dickson, Bowman, Traffic Engineer

**Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

The Chair called the hybrid meeting to order at 7:07pm at the Lower Gwynedd Township Building and virtually on Zoom and led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) met in executive session on May 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss potential litigation related to development and prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of real estate related to environmental issues, potential litigation related to building, code enforcement, emergency services, and personnel, and meeting logistics.

**Summer is almost here.** Come out to Pen-Ambler Park to see the Grundels perform on Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m., followed by Hindsight Live on June 24<sup>th</sup>. The summer concert series continues throughout the summer on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month.

**Learn about challenges faced by our volunteer fire companies and potential solutions** at a presentation about the regional fire study completed on behalf of Lower Gwynedd, Upper Gwynedd, North Wales and Ambler on Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, at 7 pm, at University Hall on the Gwynedd Mercy University campus. Community members are encouraged to attend.

**Join us for a Pride Flag Raising ceremony** on Monday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 pm at Veterans Park.

**Help shape the future of Bethlehem Pike.** Fill out the short survey on the Township's website telling us what you hope to see on Bethlehem Pike in coming years and join us at the official kickoff of the

Bethlehem Pike revitalization project on Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, at 7 pm at Harth Builders, 812 N. Bethlehem Pike.

**The Kiwanis Carnival and Fireworks** will take place every night from June 30<sup>th</sup> to July 4<sup>th</sup> at Wissahickon High School. Fireworks are set for July 2<sup>nd</sup>, with July 3<sup>rd</sup> as a rain date.

Ms. Duckett acknowledged the success of the Touch-a-Truck event held on Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at Johnson & Johnson, 1400 McKean Road. Officer Jamie Sharkey provided a brief report, noting approximately 30–35 vehicles participated at the new venue, that the event drew a very strong turnout, and that planning is underway for a larger event – targeting over 50 vehicles – on May 15<sup>th</sup> of next year. Officer Sharkey thanked Morgan High, Program Director; Santino Calrlomagno, Assistant Public Works Director; and Public Works staff for their assistance in organizing the event.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No members of the public came forward with comments on items not on the agenda.

#### **BUILDING AND ZONING**

##### **Consider Resolution #2026-10 approving an amendment to the 1616 School House Road subdivision plan to allow for additional tree disturbance on the new lot at 1622 Gypsy Hill Road**

Ms. Duckett noted that the BOS had previously authorized Mr. Stein to prepare Resolution #2026-10 at the May 12, 2026, meeting following an updated presentation related to the tree replacement plan by the applicant's engineer, Susan Rice of STA. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve Resolution #2026-10 approving the amendment to the 1616 School House Road subdivision plan to allow for additional tree disturbance on the new lot at 1622 Gypsy Hill Road. Motion passed 5-0.

##### **Consider Resolution #2026-11 approving a waiver of land development for the proposed cell tower at 900 N. Bethlehem Pike**

Mr. Twersky recused himself from this item, as the applicant is a client of his firm. Under the current Township code, cell phone tower applications are required to go through the land development process. Rise Up Towers requested a waiver from the land development due to limited site work needed for the construction on the proposed location. A comprehensive building permit and grading permit review will be completed, including a review of the compound and tower construction. There were no questions from the Board or the public. Ms. Duckett made a motion to approve Resolution #2026-11 approving a waiver of land development for the proposed cell tower at 900 N. Bethlehem Pike. Ms. Martin seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

##### **Consider Resolution #2026-12 approving a waiver of land development for the proposed cell tower at Penllyn Woods Park**

Rise Up Towers has also asked for a waiver of land development for the cell tower that will be located at Penllyn Woods Park. The reasons for the waiver are the same as those for 900 N. Bethlehem Pike. There

were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to approve Resolution #2026-12 approving a waiver of land development for the proposed cell tower at Penllyn Woods Park. Motion passed 4-0. (Mr. Twersky recused himself)

### GENERAL BUSINESS

#### **Consider authorization to proceed with engineering of the Historic Schoolhouse Memorial Play Area at Ingersoll Park and to advertise bidding to demolish McCormick House**

John Farrell presented an overview of this proposed project. Mr. Farrell reminded the Board that in March it authorized staff to explore grants and advance concept plans for recognizing the historic schoolhouse on the site where McCormick House currently stands. Prior efforts to preserve the building as a small community center had been deemed cost-prohibitive at an estimated \$2.5 million. Extensive community outreach and design work have since been conducted and documented on the Township website. Mr. Farrell outlined two components of the work: a pre-grant award phase and a grant award phase. For the pre-grant award phase, two demolition approaches were presented:

**Option 1 - Selective Demolition:** The contractor would attempt to preserve approximately 2-3 feet of the original foundation perimeter during demolition, which could be incorporated into the playground design. However, this approach carries significant uncertainties regarding foundation conditions and would require a structural engineer to assess and reinforce the retained walls for safety. This option would add an estimated \$60,000-\$70,000 to the base demolition cost of approximately \$95,000, due to repointing and structural work requirements.

**Option 2 - Regular Demolition with Historic Facade:** A standard demolition would be performed, during which the contractor would salvage and separate materials to minimize landfill waste. Original foundation stones and materials would be retained and used as a decorative facade on a new concrete play area boundary wall, achieving the visual effect of the historic foundation without the structural complications and added cost.

Ms. Martin noted that the regular demolition approach would still accomplish the project objectives of honoring the schoolhouse footprint and engaging future visitors and children with the site's history. Mr. Chong asked whether public requests to preserve the building had been received; staff confirmed that while some early concern existed, those residents had been brought into the public feedback process, and the concept plan has been well received.

Mr. Farrell stated that staff recommended option 2. He also mentioned that the pre-grant award work includes asbestos abatement required prior to demolition. The BOS agreed that the regular demolition option made the most sense. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to authorize proceeding with regular demolition for the McCormick House and to advertise bidding for demolition. Motion passed 5-0.

#### **Consider Resolution #2026-13 authorizing submission of PA DCED Greenways Trails and Recreation Program grant application for the Historic Schoolhouse Memorial Play Area**

Mr. Farrell noted that the total project estimate is approximately \$840,000. The Township intends to apply for a PA DCED Greenways Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) grant, requesting \$242,000,

just under the \$250,000 maximum – with a 15% match requirement. Additionally, approximately \$600,000 remains in a previously awarded EDCDI grant originally designated for Ingersoll Park. Together, these two funding sources would cover the full project cost, with the match requirement of approximately \$35,000 well within the available balance. Demolition and early design work would be kept outside the grant scope to allow that work to proceed independently of the grant award timeline.

A member of the public, Adam Taylor, spoke in support of the project and grant application, noting the strong community use of the park and expressing enthusiasm on behalf of the little league community.

Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve Resolution #2026-13 authorizing submission of the PA DCED Greenways Trails and Recreation Program grant application for the Historic Schoolhouse Memorial Play Area. Motion passed 5-0.

**Consider authorization to go to bid for Penllyn Pike/Trewellyn Avenue intersection improvements**  
Chad Dixon stated that the permitting process with PennDOT and Montgomery County for the traffic signal modernization project at Penllyn Pike and Trewellyn Avenue is complete. The scope of improvements includes replacement of all signal poles, the signal controller, and signal heads; installation of a new emergency preemption system and vehicle detection systems; upgrades to all pedestrian facilities including ADA-compliant ramps and new pedestrian countdown signals; reconstruction of a portion of the China Grace Christian Church sidewalk at the intersection for ADA compliance; and improvement of the turning radius for the southbound Penllyn Pike right-turn movement onto Trewellyn Avenue – an enhancement added in response to community feedback regarding the sharpness of that turn for both passenger vehicles and trucks. If authorized to go to bid, Mr. Dixon anticipated presenting a contract award recommendation at the July Board meeting, issuing a notice to proceed in August or September, and achieving project completion by approximately April 2027. The extended timeline is attributable to long lead times associated with signal pole procurement.

Ms. Duckett asked whether the intersection island would be affected; Mr. Dixon confirmed no changes would be made to the island, only the surrounding pavement markings would be refreshed.

Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to authorize advertisement for bids for the Penllyn Pike/Trewellyn Avenue intersection improvements. Motion passed 5-0.

**Consider approval of temporary construction easement and permanent traffic signal easement with China Grace Christian Church for the Penllyn Pike/Trewellyn Avenue intersection improvements**  
Mr. Dixon explained that a temporary construction easement is needed to reconstruct a portion of the sidewalk on the church property to achieve ADA compliance at the intersection corner. A permanent traffic signal easement is also required within the church's parking lot to accommodate placement of a new signal pole outside the existing legal right-of-way. He noted that the church was highly cooperative throughout the design and easement negotiation process.

Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the temporary construction easement and permanent traffic signal easement with China Grace Christian Church for the Penllyn Pike/Trewellyn Avenue intersection improvements. Motion passed 5-0.

**Consider approval of a temporary construction easement with S. Paone, Inc, AIS Trust, and Paone Office Building Condo Association for completion of the Old Bethlehem Pike culvert replacement and streambank stabilization**

Jim Hersh explained that the Old Bethlehem Pike bridge replacement and streambank stabilization project extends to an area adjacent to a pedestrian bridge owned by S. Paone, Inc. The temporary construction easement is required to perform live staking and riprap installation near that structure for streambank stabilization purposes. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the temporary construction easement with S. Paone, Inc., AIS Trust, and Paone Office Building Condo Association for the Old Bethlehem Pike culvert replacement and streambank stabilization. Motion passed 5-0.

**Consider approval of a contract with Contech, a Costars vendor, for \$58,000 to replace the driveway culvert at 446 Marion Avenue as part of the Houston Creek Flood Study implementation**

Mr. Hersh reported that one of the recommended improvements identified in the Houston Creek Flood Study is the replacement of a deteriorated driveway culvert at 446 Marion Avenue. The existing concrete structure has an insufficient opening, causing floodwater to back up onto Brookside Avenue during heavy rain events. The proposed replacement would install a larger culvert with adequate flow capacity to reduce the frequency of flooding on Brookside.

Contech Engineering Solutions was identified as the contractor through the Costars cooperative purchasing contract, eliminating the need for public bidding. Their proposal of \$58,000 covers supply and installation of the new culvert. Fred Zollers confirmed that the Public Works Department can handle the remaining work including removal, erosion and sediment controls, backfill, and site restoration, representing a significant cost saving in labor. The work is targeted for later in the summer when the creek is dry and bypass pumping demands are minimal.

Ms. Duckett made a motion to authorize Mimi Gleason, Township Manager, to enter into a contract with Contech Engineering Solutions for \$58,000 for the driveway culvert replacement at 446 Marion Avenue as part of the Houston Creek Flood Study implementation. Mr. Twersky seconded this motion. Motion passed 5-0.

**Consider authorization to release Request for Proposals for actuarial services and pension administration**

The Finance Director reported that per the schedule established by a 2023 resolution, the Township is required to periodically issue an RFP for professional services. The actuarial services contract is due for renewal through this competitive process. Staff would like to add pension administration to the selection process, a needed supplement to the Finance Department's small staff. The draft RFP was included in the board packet. Staff indicated the RFP would not be released until the Township's final 2025 audited financial statements are posted to the website, as that information is material to prospective respondents. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to authorize the

release of the Request for Proposals for actuarial services and pension administration. The motion passed 5-0.

**Consider Darchei Noam request to waive park rental fee for their use of Pen-Ambler Park**

Mimi Gleason explaining that Darchei Noam synagogue had been coordinating with Program Director Morgan High to hold a service and dinner at Pen-Ambler Park. The organization subsequently requested that the park rental fee be waived, indicating that this had been done in prior years, though that history was not documented in Township records. The applicable fee under the current fee schedule was determined to be approximately \$50. Ms. Gleason noted there is no formal policy governing fee waivers and brought the matter to the Board for direction, suggesting it also offered an opportunity to develop a more comprehensive and consistent policy.

The discussion that followed was substantive. Mr. Twersky expressed concern about treating religious uses differently from non-religious uses, emphasizing that any fee-waiver policy cannot draw distinctions based on religion without raising First Amendment concerns. He stated that the Township should either apply the fee schedule uniformly or establish a clear, content-neutral policy applicable to all users. He was not comfortable with ad hoc waivers based on informal past practices, particularly when the Board had no record of having authorized them.

Ms. Martin expressed a preference for maintaining the informal status quo for this particular event given that fees appear not to have been charged in prior years, until a formal policy could be developed. Others noted, however, that the prior practice was itself undocumented and inconsistent – with some groups apparently being charged while others were not, and with no Board-level authorization for any prior waivers.

Board members discussed the difficulty of distinguishing between nonprofit and religious uses in a fee-waiver context, the existing practice of not charging youth sports organizations, and the Township's arrangement with Lower Gwynedd Little League, which was characterized as a different financial relationship given the league's significant contribution to park facilities and maintenance. Mr. Stein noted that the decision should not be made lightly given its potential First Amendment implications.

Ms. Gleason acknowledged that several legacy practices in park administration had not been formalized and that she and the Program Director were working to organize and standardize these. The Parks and Recreation Board is expected to take up these issues over the summer and make a formal recommendation.

By the end of the discussion, a consensus emerged among most of the Board to apply the existing fee schedule without a waiver for this event. Board members emphasized this decision was not a reflection on the organization itself, but rather an acknowledgment that the Township must follow its own policies consistently and establish clear standards going forward.

No formal motion was made on this item. The Board directed staff to apply the existing fee schedule.

**Finance Report – April 2026**

The April 2026 financial report, including revenue and expense summaries along with supporting graphs and charts, was included in the board packet. Ms. Haldeman confirmed that items appearing in red were not cause for concern: the streetlight operating fund was temporarily negative due to timing of real estate tax collections and some earlier-than-usual expenses, and the capital reserve fund was in a spending phase for previously obtained project funds.

**Approval of invoice Report for May 26, 2026**

The BOS received the invoice report for checks dated May 26, 2026, totaling \$259,488.96. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the invoices dated May 26, 2026. Motion passed 5-0.

**Approval of minutes – May 12, 2026**

The BOS received the minutes from the May 12, 2026 meeting. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the minutes. Motion passed 4-0. (Ms. Brockway abstained.)

**SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORTS**

The BOS received the Liaison Report for the Park and Recreation Board. There were no questions or comments.

**STAFF UPDATES**

**Paving Update:** Fred Zollers reported that McKean Road was being milled and was expected to be completed the following day. Paving of McKean Road would follow in sequence after Parsons Lane and South Penn Oak, consistent with the milling order. Progress was proceeding well.

**Public Works Week:** Mimi Gleason acknowledged Public Works Week, thanking all Township public works employees under the leadership of Director Fred Zollers. She noted that a community scavenger hunt was held during the week, with the winner being Jack High. It was noted with good humor that the winner's connection to the Program Director was purely coincidental.

**Penllyn Station Trail:** Mr. Hersh provided an update on the Penllyn Station Trail project, which was identified among the Parks and Recreation Master Plans. The trail will connect the Septa Station to Pen-Ambler Park along Pen-Ambler Road in front of Georgetown, crossing Pen-Ambler Road from the park at the pinnacle of the hill with a rapid flashing warning crosswalk like the existing installation near the YMCA on McKean Road. Final design has been completed, a Highway Occupancy Permit application has been submitted to PennDOT, and discussions with the Georgetown HOA regarding temporary construction easements have been positive. The PennDOT permit is expected in September, at which point the Board will be asked to authorize advertisement for bids. A contract award is targeted by year-end, with construction anticipated in mid-2027 due to long lead times on signal equipment.

**Gwynedd Knoll Traffic Enforcement:** Chief Kenny reported that in response to a resident's complaint at a prior meeting regarding illegal left turns through Gwynedd Knoll from Route 202 to Route 63, the department conducted five to six directed morning enforcement patrols. Ten violations were observed during those patrols, four of which involved residents of Gwynedd Knoll. Monitoring will continue as part of ongoing daytime enforcement priorities.

**Bike/Walk to School Day:** Chief Kenny noted that Bike/Walk to School Day was scheduled for the following day, weather permitting, with police personnel to be deployed to ensure a safe route for students.

### SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

Mr. Twersky reiterated his personal appreciation for the Touch-a-Truck event, noting it was a tremendous success. He also expressed appreciation for the public works team following Public Works Week, noting he and Mr. Chong attended the appreciation barbecue.

Mr. Chong noted that the Pension Committee had met the prior week and that, during review of a submitted actuarial report, Ms. Haldeman identified several material errors in the report. As a result of those findings, she was able to negotiate the waiver of a \$10,500 invoice on behalf of the Township. Mr. Chong commended this outcome as an example of careful and capable financial stewardship.

Ms. Brockway and Ms. Martin had no additional comments beyond those already expressed during the meeting.

Ms. Duckett echoed the earlier announcements, encouraging community attendance at the regional fire study presentation on May 28<sup>th</sup>, the summer concert series beginning May 27<sup>th</sup>, the Bethlehem Pike revitalization kickoff on June 9<sup>th</sup>, and the Pride Flag Raising ceremony on June 1<sup>st</sup> at Veterans Park.

### Adjournment

Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to adjourn the meeting at 8:03pm. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

*Michelle Farzetta*

Michelle Farzetta  
Office Manger