JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION
December 4, 2025
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President Greg Strubinger with the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for the armed forces, first responders, and their families and veterans in honor of Veteran's Day.

Roll Call of Members

Police Chief Schatz
Borough Manager Sterner
Borough Secretary Klotz
Solicitor Nanovic-absent
Mayor Cinicola
Joanne Klitsch
Mike Yeastedt
Tom Chapman
Ted LaRizzio
Sydney Wernett
Connor Rodgers
Gregory Strubinger

Announcements

The Borough is accepting letters of interest for two (2) vacancies on the Shade Tree Committee, terms ending December 31, 2028 and December 31, 2025. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

There is a vacancy on the International Property Maintenance Board, term ending December 31, 2029. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

A reminder for residents – pertinent information can be found on the Borough's website and Facebook page. Residents are encouraged to sign up for the All-Call system to receive information as well.

Mayor's Report

NONE

Public Comment

Dave Gasker – He discussed the Veteran's Dinner that took place in November and thanked Borough Council for use of the Hall.

Kristie Fach – She discussed the Silk Mill Restoration Construction Phase Bid Specs. She shared the timeline with Borough Council and gave a background of the project up until this point. Wildlands Conservancy and the Borough entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2021. Wildlands wrote four (4) grant applications on behalf of the Borough and all four (4) grants were awarded. Mike Yeastedt asked about the schedule of values for the project. Kristie explained Wildlands will ask for a schedule once the project is awarded. The contractor will bill for work completed on a monthly basis. Construction should take place over a three (3) month period. Manager Sterner asked about the engineering and Wildland's fees, as well as bidding fees and if they were included in the grant application. Kristie explained all of that was. Greg Strubinger asked if the grant funding will be enough to cover the entire project. Kristie explained it would be. Greg Strubinger asked when the last time Wildlands handled a dam removal. Kristie explained last year was the last one Wildlands handled. They have managed thirty-five (35) total dam removals and have lots of on-site experience. Mike Yeastedt asked if the contractor would be given the sequence of how the dams should be removed. Kristie explained they would. Connor Rodgers explained he and two (2) other Council Members had a meeting with the County on the Open Space Program and the subject property was discussed. He asked if the area will still continue to be private. Kristie explained the property would be and it will be restored as close to it was prior to the construction.

Joseph Nalesnik – He explained he submitted a Request for Action to purchase the property next to his that the Borough owns. If Borough Council does not wish to sell the property, he requested an easement to be able to continue parking there. Greg Strubinger explained the Borough's Solicitor would need to answer about the easement. The Borough would most likely want to rent it due enforcing that with other Borough properties with parking. If the Borough were to sell the property, it would need to go to public bidding.

Manager Sterner explained there was an America 250 PA announcement that didn't make the agenda in time. There will be kick off events. The one in Philadelphia is being held on January 18th. Carbon County's is being held on January 18th in Memorial Hall.

SALDO (Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance)

Bielicki Lot Line Adjustment dated July 29, 2025 (revised September 12, 2025) acknowledgement – Secretary Klotz explained the property is in both the Borough and Mahoning Township. There will be no development on the Borough portion of the properties. The property owner is adjusting the lot lines to the adjoining properties for them to have an even amount of acreage.

Action

The following items were reviewed:

JTTA Winterfest – James Dougher explained this year's Winterfest is exactly the same as in previous years. There will be a mug walk, shopping trail, music, and ice sculptures. There will be no craft or food

vendors, no additional parking, and no Police services are needed. Greg Strubinger asked if a steam train is scheduled for that weekend. James Dougher explained JTTA does not have an official schedule, but based on previous years, there will be one. He explained Olde Time Christmas starts this weekend.

JTTA Fall Foliage & ICC Fall Foliage – James Dougher and Trish Spillman presented checks to the Borough on behalf of JTTA ($4,000.00) and Immaculate Conception Church ($1,500.00), to help offset the cost of Fall Foliage.

America 250PA -JTSQC Committee Update – Dave Gasker discussed the timeline of the celebration from July 2nd through July 5th with the various organizations. He discussed the passports and how the Committee is getting High School students involved. Greg Strubinger explained the History Club at the High School would most likely want to get involved. Dave Gasker explained the next Committee meeting is on December 29th at 7:00 p.m.

Silk Mill Restoration Construction Phase Bid Specs – This was discussed during Public Comment.

Council Budget Meeting Minutes from November 5, 2025

Council Work Session Meeting Minutes from November 6, 2025

Council Budget Meeting Minutes from November 12, 2025

Council Meeting Minutes from November 13, 2025

Expenditures from all Funds as presented

Treasurer's Report

2026 Budgets – Greg Strubinger explained there will be an increase in the General Fund and a decrease in the Sanitation Fund. They will offset each other for the average property owner.

Ordinance 2025-09 Tax Levy – This authorizes a 2.25 tax mill increase for 2026.

Ordinance 2025-10 Water & Sewer Ordinance Amendment-Keystone Study & Tapping Fees – Manager Sterner explained EDU's were only in the Sewer Ordinance. This amendment will add EDU's to the Water Ordinance and update to the newest studies.

Ordinance 2025-11 Fire Department Amendment-Additional Officer Positions – This adds a Fire Commissioner position and an additional Deputy Chief position.

Resolution 2025-31 Thomas R Highland Community Room – This resolution dedicates the Police Community Room to former Councilman Thomas Highland in his memory.

Resolution 2025-32 Emergency Purchase of HVAC for Memorial Hall – This authorizes the emergency purchase of a new HVAC unit for Memorial Hall to ensure the safety and welfare of workers and residents utilizing the building.

Memorial Hall Purchase Order-$27,376.53 HVAC Unit – Greg Strubinger and Connor Rodgers explained they didn't feel this purchase is an emergency and would like to see additional quotes obtained,

Waste Water Treatment Plant Purchase Order-$23,260.00 Submersible Mixers (2) – These are to be spares for when the remaining submersible mixers break.

Facilities Project
Public Works Building
KMZurawa Invoice #1110-17 $1,020.00 – This is for site visits and administrative work completed during September.

Eckert Seamans Bond Counsel-$23,256.28 – This is for participation in negotiations and structuring the financing, preparing Bonds, Debt Ordinances, and Resolutions for the Borough, as well as other appropriate documents in connection with the project.

Nanovic Law Legal-$10,250.00 – This is for preparation for and furnishing advice and assistance to Borough Council in connection with the project.

Requisition #24-$34,796.28 – This will be final requisition for the project. This includes KMZurawa Invoice #1110-17, Eckert Seamans Bond Counsel, and Nanovic Law Legal.

Memorial Hall
KMZurawa Invoice #1111-16 $2,890.00 – This is for site visits and administrative work completed during September.

Eckert Seamans Bond Counsel-$23,217.44 – This is for participation in negotiations and structuring the financing, preparing Bonds, Debt Ordinances, and Resolutions for the Borough, as well as other appropriate documents in connection with the project.

Nanovic Law Legal-$10,250.00 – This is for preparation for and furnishing advice and assistance to Borough Council in connection with the project.

Bognet Payment Application #18 $30,406.30 – This will be the final payment application. Secretary Klotz explained Bognet has not yet submitted the required paperwork.

Requisition #20 – This will be the final requisition. This includes KMZurawa Invoice #1111-16, Eckert Seamans Bod Counsel, Nanovic Law Legal, and Bognet Payment Application #18.

JBM Mechanical Change Order #5 (USDA #2) $11,041.64 decrease-Building Permit Fee & Incomplete Items (ratify) – This change order decreases the contract price for JBM Mechanical due to not paying for their building permit fees and not completing work as required by their contract.

Bureau Veritas Building Permit Fees – This authorizes paying the building permit fees in the amount of $5,921.92 that JBM Mechanical should have paid for the Memorial Hall project.

Memorial Park Project – Nothing has been submitted to date for this project.
Phase I

Phase II

Center Avenue Water Main Project
Entech Invoice #99443 $35,132.75 – This is for services during construction and administrative work from September 27, 2025 through October 31, 2025.

PACT One Payment Application #4 $788,806.17 – This includes work completed and materials purchased through November 21, 2025.

January Meetings-Schedule & Advertise – The Reorganizational Meeting and Work Session Meeting will be held on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 6:30. The Regular Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 8, 2026.

Catholic Churches of JT Request-Parking Spaces for Dumpster – Greg Strubinger explained Father Minner has decided to withdraw the request for a guaranteed parking space for a dumpster.

James RFA-Elimination of Two Parking Spaces – The Administrative office is still waiting for the design plans to see the dimensions of the door and the width of the entrance. Bureau Veritas still is maintaining the plans.

Nalesnik RFA-Purchase of Borough Property – This was discussed during Public Comment.

Long RFA-Dead End/No Through Sign – August Long submitted a request for a No Through road sign at Poplar and South Avenue. South Avenue dead ends to his driveway and people are driving through his driveway to get to Center Avenue. Connor Rodgers explained he thinks there is one other additional intersection in the Heights with the same issue.

Fulks RFA-Hall Rental LB Morris Staff – Paula Fulks is requesting use of Memorial Hall on Friday, December 12, 2025 for LB Morris's staff holiday celebration.

Hibbler RFA-Hall Rental MCT Training – Jill Hibbler is requesting use of Memorial Hall on Thursday, January 22, 2026 for Mauch Chunk Trust Company on-site training. Use of the A/V system has also been requested.

Newton RFA-Hall Rental Wedding Reception – Sallianne Newton is requesting use of Memorial Hall on Friday, September 4, 2026 for her son's wedding reception.

Cook RFA-Hall Rental Knights of Columbus 100th Anniversary Celebration – Jordan Cook is requesting use of Memorial Hall on Saturday, August 15, 2026 for the Knights of Columbus 100th Anniversary celebration.

Utility Lien Report (2)

Utility Rate Change Report (1)

Exoneration Request
Monthly Report (0)

Committees
Shade Tree Commission Letters of Interest – The Borough received two (2) letters of interest. One from Jill Williams and one from Kevin Ruch. Manager Sterner said she will reach out to Jill and Kevin to see which term they would be interested in

JTB Organizational Chart – The updated chart includes the Fire Commissioner and Fire Chief.

Colonial Life Voluntary Benefits – A representative from Colonial Life is looking to speak with Borough employees to see if they would be interested in signing up for voluntary benefits.

Rental Inspections – Manager Sterner reminded Council to review the Rental Inspection list that was provided to them in September.

Data Centers – Secretary Klotz explained Solicitor Nanovic will provide a draft Zoning Ordinance Amendment in time for next week's meeting.

Civic Plus – Manager Sterner explained Civic Plus informed the Borough the current website platform will no longer be available after August 2026 when the three (3) year contract expires. The new proposal is higher than what the Borough currently pays for and cannot put the live stream of meetings up without YouTube. She explained the office will look in to other platforms.

Administration
NONE

Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)
Tapping Fees – Sewer Tapping Fees will be increased to $7,000.00 in 2026, as per the Sewer Committee's previous request.

Police

Buildings/Parks
9/11 Memorial Trail Update Teams Meeting-December 9, 2025 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. – This will be a virtual update meeting.

Memorial Hall Rental/Use Policy & Fees – The Administrative Committee discussed pricing and what would be included with renting Memorial Hall. Some additional details need to be worked out prior to next week's meeting.

101 East 10th Street Building – Manager Sterner explained she still has not received an updated lease agreement.

Various Building Items Purchases – Manager Sterner explained she reviewed the budget and will be able to accomplish getting all of the items needed for Memorial Hall and Public Works Garage. The Public Works Garage is in need of additional IT work and a Gate Operator. Memorial Hall is in need of an additional Hot Water Heater for the kitchen and a new Roof Top Unit, as discussed earlier.

Asa Packer Mansion

Emergency Services
Additional Officer Positions – This will be discussed during Executive Session.

Planning Commission
Resignation Letter – Ted LaRizzio submitted his resignation letter from Planning Commission due to his Borough Council term ending at the end of this year.

Old Business

Executive Session

Adjourn
MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Joanne Connor Rodgers to **adjourn the meeting.** There were no comments. Motion carries 7-0. The meeting ended at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Assistant Borough Manager/Secretary