JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION
September 4, 2025
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:31 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.

Roll Call of Members

Police Chief Schatz
Borough Manager Sterner
Borough Secretary Klotz
Solicitor Nanovic-absent
Mayor Cinicola-absent
Joanne Klitsch-absent
Mike Yeastedt
Tom Chapman-absent
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.

There is a vacancy on the Zoning Hearing Board. The Alternate seat is a three-year term expiring December 31, 2027. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

This year's Victorian House Tour benefiting the Dimmick Memorial Library includes the Asa Packer Mansion. The tour is taking place on September 14th from 12:00 p.m. through 5:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased through the library.

This year's Halloween Parade will be on Saturday, October 25th starting at 2:00 p.m. The rain date is Sunday the 26th.

Leaf Collection is taking place from October 29th through November 19th.

The Fall Tire & Electronics Recycling Event is taking place on Saturday, November 1st from 7:00 a.m. through 11:30 p.m. Greg Strubinger explained the Borough would like to move the fall event to the Memorial Hall parking lot. A few details need to be worked out before confirming the change in location.

A reminder for residents: pertinent information for residents can be found and received through the Borough's All-Call, website, and Facebook page. Residents can sign up for the All-Calls through the Borough's website; just click on the Civic Ready button on the homepage to sign up.

Mayor's Report

NONE

Public Comment

Jay Llewellen – He spoke on behalf of the Mauch Chunk Charity Foundation. The Heritage Festival is scheduled for September 20th with a $7.00 entry fee. There are music and various vendors. The event may not happen because of the cost of health inspection fees. Greg Strubinger and Manager Sterner explained the fee for a transient merchant license is $30.00 and $60.00 for the health license. Non-Profits are exempt from the transient merchant license fees.

Bruce Fritz – He explained he had an issue paying his utility bill online and received a late fee. He thought if he had this problem, then other residents probably did as well. Greg Strubinger explained there

are various ways to pay the utility bill – ACH, dropping payment off at the office, at MCTC, at JTNB, and online.

Public Hearing
NONE

SALDO (Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance)
NONE

Action
The following items were reviewed:

Timber Harvesting – Cody from Keystone was in attendance to answer any additional questions in regards to the email correspondence and prospectus. Mike Yeastedt asked who has to get the permits. Cody explained the harvester is required to get any permits that are needed. Mike Yeasted asked if the E&S plans costs were on the harvester. Cody explained an E&S Plan is required in Pennsylvania for any timber harvest for 25 or more acres. This harvest will not exceed more than 20 acres. No streams will be crossed and wetlands preserved. Mike Yeastedt asked about Keystone's payment for their services. Cody explained payment is requested in percentages by a certain date. Mike Yeastedt explained he was concerned the harvesters may not be finished gathering the wood before payment must be 100% made. Mike Yeastedt asked who makes the determination of a reasonable bid. Cody explained Keystone advises based on the market value. Mike Yeastedt asked what happens if the wood cut down turns out to be bad; does the harvester has an escape clause to the contract. Cody explained the harvester does not. The harvester takes the risk when placing their bid and the Borough accepts the bid. Manager Sterner asked about the performance deposit. Cody explained the deposit is only for cleanup that isn't completed as expected. Manager Sterner explained how municipalities have projects that go out to bid require bid bonds, performance bonds, and payment bond and is concerned that their performance deposit won't cover the costs if they don't complete the harvest. Cody explained its different because regardless if they cut the wood or not, once they sign their contract they are required to pay before work commences. Council requested Cody return to next week's meeting to discuss this further. Connor Rodgers asked if they plan on continuing with the tract that was initially selected on the West Side of town. Cody explained Keystone is no longer interested in that tract, just the one on the East Side of town. He explained there will be a total of around 1,700 trees marked to be harvested. Connor Rodgers explained he is concerned about the wear and tear on the roads around the Borough from the trucks and equipment that will be used for harvesting. Greg Strubinger asked how the harvest will affect the Silk Mill Dam Project. Cody explained the harvest will not be by the stream and asked for a map of the area the dam project. Greg Strubinger asked if the harvest will affect the timing of the Silk Mill Dam Project. Secretary Klotz explained the Dam Project will take place next year.

Council Meeting Minutes from August 7, 2025

Council Meeting Minutes from August 14, 2025

Expenditures from all Funds as presented

Treasurer's Report

Facilities Project – Manager Sterner explained items may be added now that the projects are ending.
Public Works Building

Reading Mechanical Certificate of Substantial Completion - This officially declares their portion of the project sufficiently completed.

Reading Mechanical Payment Application #11 - $35,705.88 – This is work completed and materials purchased through August 19, 2025.

Bracy Certificate of Substantial Completion – This officially declares their portion of the project sufficiently completed.

Project Management Inspection Services Cost Adjustment Request – This is a request to USDA to include all Zurawa Invoices with the funding available for the project.

Requisition #21 – This includes Reading Mechanical Payment Application #11 and Zurawa Invoices.

Interim Loan Modification-Time – The Borough is requesting the interim loan through JTNB be extended through December 31, 2025 due to project delays.

Project Closeout Documents-Ordinance, Resolution, and USDA Closing Documents Package – These documents are part of the loan closing as required by USDA.

Memorial Hall

JBM Mechanical Certificate of Substantial Completion – Secretary Klotz explained she is still waiting for the certificate from Spillman Farmer Architects. JBM Mechanical must submit additional items in order for the architect to sign off on the certificate.

Reading Mechanical Payment Application #13-$37,965.38 – This is their final payment application for work completed and materials purchased through August 19, 2025.

GR Noto Payment Application #18-$9,323.30 – This is for work completed and materials purchased through August 20, 2025.

Requisition #19 – This includes Reading Mechanical Payment Application #13 and GR Noto Payment Application #18.

Interim Loan Modification-Time – The Borough is requesting the interim loan through MCTC be extended through December 31, 2025 due to project delays.

Project Closeout Documents-Ordinance, Resolution, and USDA Closing Documents Package – These documents are part of the loan closing as required by USDA.

Memorial Park Project
Phase I

DCNR Extension Request Letter – The grant is set to expire at the end of this year and are requesting a 1-year extension. Manager Sterner explained there may be additional items for next week's meeting pertaining to the Memorial Park Project.

Center Avenue Water Main Project
PACT One Payment Application #1-$799,690.08 – This is for work completed and materials purchased through August 22, 2025. There may be additional items for next week's meeting pertaining to the Center Avenue Water Main Project.

High Street Wall Project – There may be items for next week's meeting.

2025 LSA Monroe Grant
Resolution 2025-___ 2025 LSA Monroe Lehighton Ambulance – This authorizes the Borough to apply for the 2025 LSA Monroe Grant on behalf of the Lehighton Ambulance. Lehighton Ambulance is seeking $168,429.00 to be used towards the purchase of a new ambulance. They will match $100,700.00 in cash and installation of equipment needed in the new ambulance.

Lehighton Ambulance Grant Authorization Letter – This letter notifies DCED that the Borough supports the submission of the grant application.

Resolution 2025-___ 2025 LSA Monroe Police Department Drone – This authorizes the Borough to apply for the 2025 LSA Monroe Grant for a drone totaling $21,196.00 for law enforcement use.

Police Grant Authorization Letter – This letter notifies DCED that the Borough approves the submission of the grant application.

Asa Packer Mansion HVAC – Secretary Klotz explained she is waiting for additional information from Barry Isett. The original cost estimate has items listed that she and Mike Yeastedt felt were not needed for the HVAC system.

2026 Police Pension Plan Minimum Obligation $161,445.00 – This is an annual item.

Resolution 2025-___ Eliminating Police Officer Pension Contribution

2026 Non-Uniform Minimum Municipal Obligation $147,004.00 – This is an annual item.

Resolution 2025-___ PMRS Pension Contribution – The amount to go into the Pension Plan is $3.70 per each hour worked in 2026.

Utility Lien Report (12)

Utility Rate Changes (3)

Exoneration Request

Monthly Report (7) – This report was submitted for review.

Committees

Zoning Map Update – Manager Sterner explained when the new Zoning Ordinance was approved, the language changed for the Zoning Boundaries to be property lines, roads, and/or geographical landmarks such as streams and rivers. Planning Commission generally reviews the map and makes recommendations. A Public Hearing would take place due to a change in the Zoning Ordinance. Connor Rodgers explained he shared with Council 3 areas on the current map he felt should be reviewed and asked to budget money for next year to complete this.

Zoning Hearing Board Alternate Letter of Interest – Council received a letter of interest from Mike Letourneau. He was in the audience and explained he has been a resident of Jim Thorpe since 2023 and he would like to get more involved in the community.

Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Non-Residential Parking Lots – The Ordinance has been drafted. The remaining Ordinance on the agenda were not advertised as requested at last month's meeting.

2026 Budget and End of Year Meetings – The 2026 Budget Work Session meetings will be scheduled on October 29th, November 5th, November 12th, and November 19th at 6:30pm (as needed).
There will be a public meeting on December 11th to consider the adoption of the 2026 Budget.
There will be a public meeting being held on December 30th to close out the 2025 year, pay outstanding invoices for 2025, and any other business which may come before the board

Carbon County Open Space Program-Fall 2025 Round – Manager Sterner asked Council who would like to meet with Anna Shiago to discuss the upcoming Fall round for the Carbon County Open Space Program. Mike Yeastedt and Connor Rodgers agreed to meet with her.

Borough Railroad Group – Manager Sterner asked if any members of Council would like to participate in this group besides Mike and Mayor Cinicola. Greg Strubinger said it makes no sense for him to be part of the group since his term ends at the end of the year. Mike Yeastedt volunteered Tom Chapman and Joanne Klitch since they were not at the Work Session meeting.

Line Item Transfers – Manager Sterner explained there will be some updates to what was distributed to Council. Some of the functions did not work properly in excel. She explained she asked Treasurer Sebelin and Secretary Klotz to review for any other adjustments they felt were necessary.

Tourism Improvement Meeting – This is an item that was not originally on the agenda. There will be a Tourism Improvement Meeting on September 29th at 1:30 p.m.

Administration
NONE

Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)
Roberts 57 High Street Water/Sewer Fees-attending September 11th meeting – Greg Strubinger asked what this was in regards to. Mike Yeastedt explained this is in regards to EDU's and actual water usage Andrew Roberts' restaurant will actually use. Greg Strubinger asked how Anrew would know the actual usage. Mike Yeastedt explained Andrew did some research and discovered how much water some of the restaurants and breweries use in town. Manager Sterner explained Council has to consider the EDUs on the treatment plant end, which toes into the next topic on the agenda. She explained she spoke with the Borough's Engineer and he said restaurants a heavier use for the treatment plant. She requested one of Entech's engineers come to next week's meeting to explain this further. Mike Yeastedt explained one of the other local municipalities figure out their EDUs by average of the three highest months of the first year's usage. Manager Sterner explained that still does not take into consideration the treatment plant's EDUs. Ed Gula, who is the past Sewer Supervisor, explained Council never raised tapping fees previously when it was recommended by the Borough's Engineer. The Plant was upgraded about 8 years ago and these tapping fees are to cover these upgrades when needed. Manager Sterner explained when a property changes their usage, the property owner should be paying for the increase of EDUs with the tapping fee charge. This practice hasn't been done for some time, but was done at one point and does not know why it was stopped. Connor Rodgers explained the Borough paid money for these studies to be completed and the numbers were not picked out of thin air. Mike Yeastedt explained this is the first business tapping into the Borough's systems paying the new fees. No one could have imagined it would cost $180,000.00 to tap into both systems.

Water & Sewer Fees New Customers; Change of Use; EDU's

Streets Department F550 Financing – Financing for the new Streets truck will be through Mauch Chunk Trust Company at 4.2% for 5 years. The annual payment is $25,374.00.

Past Due Utilities Garbage – Secretary Klotz explained the last time this was discussed was on July 2023. She said she spoke with Officer Long about placing levies and garnishing checking accounts, but she would like to discuss this with Solicitor Nanovic further. Manager Sterner said Solicitor Nanovic explained previously if Council would place a levy on property, the Borough would end up with junk. Greg Strubinger explained it would be a health issue if garbage collection was stopped due to nonpayment.

Lead Line Replacement Loan Program – Manager Sterner explained office staff needs to investigate further if the Borough is legally allowed to offer this program by borrowing money from Pennvest and loaning it out to residents. Secretary Klotz discussed this with the Borough's Auditor and he explained it would be a tracking nightmare. Council received a draft application, loan agreement, and some questions for them to answer. Mike Yeastedt requested galvanized lines be included with this program. Manager Sterner explained it's a small amount of money that is allowed for the replacement. If legally allowed, it would be first come, first served for those that live along the Center Avenue Water Main Project. There are some residents that have expressed interest already in this program.

Employment-WTP Operator Trainee – No one from any of the Public Works departments would like to switch to the open position, so the position will be advertised to the public to apply.

Municibid Items-Approval to Sell – The Streets department is looking to sell a pallet of used C-Channel posts on Municibid.

Police

Ordinance 2025-___ Vehicle & Traffic Amendment – One-Way Streets, Stop Signs, 15-Minute Parking Space – This is one of the Ordinance that was not advertised. There are typos on the first page and the number of days needs to be changed from 6 to 7.

Ordinance 2025-___ Police Department Amendment-Update of Staff Positions – This is one of the Ordinances that was not advertised. This will add the corporal position to the Ordinance.

Employment-Officer – Chief Schatz explained there is a candidate for the position and they passed the civil service test.

Ted LaRizzio asked if the one-way direction implemented during fall foliage on Center Avenue be implements year-round. Chief Schatz explained PennDOT will not approve it other than for special events.

Employment-Parking & Code Enforcement – Chief Schatz explained recently there were interviews and a candidate has been selected.

Employment-Officer Probationary Period – Officer Rich has successfully completed his probationary period. He is an asset to the Police Department. His anniversary date is August 25th.

Municibid Items-Bids Received – Chief Schatz explained the bids received are fair. The polaroid camera did not sell.

Municibid Items-Approval to Sell – Chief Schatz explained the new digital radios have been installed in all police vehicles and they are looking to sell the old vehicles.

Buildings/Parks

Kemmerer Park Board Appointment – Jack Sterling, who is President of the Board, sent in a request to appoint someone to replace Edie Lukasevitch. Her seat is through the remainder of the year. She has not been coming to board meetings.

People, Parks, and Community Grant-not awarded

T-Mobile Hometown Grant-Memorial Hall Kitchen Equipment – Manager Sterner explained Barry Isett engineers are looking into the T-Mobile Hometown Grant for new kitchen equipment. Most of the equipment cannot be fixed and would need to be replaced. A company came in and fixed whatever equipment they could. The grant funding is up to $50,000.00, but the cost of the equipment would be well less than maximum amount awarded. The Borough had applied for this grant a few cycles ago for the audiovisual system in Memorial Hall, but was not awarded the funding. The hope is with Barry Isett's engineers writing the grant application, the Borough will have a better chance in being awarded.

Hall Chairs $6,402.16 – The chairs presented to Council are for events only. Greg Strubinger and Ted LaRizzio were concerned the chairs will break easily and not be worth the cost.

Meeting Chairs $3,445.00 – These chairs presented to Council will be for Borough Council and audience members.

Sports Marketing & Tourism Account-Tourism Management Sports Grant – This grant requires a partnership with AAU or the Olympic Committee. Secretary Klotz met with Charlie Sgrillo who is

Treasurer of the Mid-Atlantic division of AAU. They reviewed the old Public Works Garage and he felt it would be a great building to convert into a training facility.

Asa Packer Mansion
Kunsman Roof Maintenance Agreement – The service agreement will cost $1,750.00 per bi-annual visit. Kunsman will inspect and provide maintenance to the new roof at the Asa Packer Mansion.

Employment-Guides – There will not be interviews completed in time for next week's meeting.

Emergency Services
Ordinance 2025-___ Fire Department Amendment-Membership Residency Requirement – This is one of the Ordinances that were not advertised. This extends the residency requirement to a 5-mile radius outside of the Borough limits to be an officer and adds an additional deputy.

Diligent Bay Window Repair/Replacement Quote – There is money in the Fire Equipment reserve account. It took years to obtain 3 quotes.

Planning Commission
Safety Inspections for all Rental Housing Units – Planning Commission presented a safety inspection checklist for all rental housing units in the Borough. Council had advised Planning Commission they would like to see a checklist that all rentals would be inspected for. Connor Rodgers asked if there is a Long-Term Rental Ordinance in place. There currently is not. Upon further review of the list, Manager Sterner explained some of these items could fall under property maintenance or building codes. Greg Strubinger asked if this will include bed and breakfasts. Manager Sterner said it could if Council wishes. She explained she will send to Council other local municipalities Long-Term Rental Ordinances to review. Council said they will accept the checklist to review and advise. Connor Rodgers asked who asked for this checklist. Secretary Klotz explained Planning Commission felt this was something needed in the Borough. Mike Yeastedt explained when the Short-Term Rental Ordinance was first put in place, there was a discussion on safety reviews on the rentals for life safety. Ed Gula explained when a property owner receives renal money through HUD, they require a strict annual inspection of the property. Greg Strubinger asked where this list originated from. Secretary Klotz explained the safety checklist came from other municipalities Short-Term Rental Ordinances. Manager Sterner and Council discussed each item from the checklist.

Old Business

Executive Session

Adjourn
MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Sydney Wernett to **adjourn the meeting.** There were no comments. Motion carries 5-0. The meeting ended at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Assistant Borough Manager/Secretary