

COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
February 4, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Council President Cathy Kernen.

ROLL CALL:

President Cathy Kernen, VP Gary Hoffmann, PPT Craig Farr, Valarie Beckius, Damien Brewster, Kathy Costello, and Marion McKinney.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Engineer David Leh, Solicitor Rebecca Geiser, Manager Tamara Twardowski, Police Chief John Barnshaw and Junior Councilperson Thomas Hayward.

MOTION to approve the minutes from the January 5, 2026 re-organization and regular meeting by McKinney. Seconded by Farr.

Motion carries 7-0.

Detective Award and Recognition

Chief Barnshaw presented an award to Collegeville Borough Police Detective Andrew Sohl and Montgomery County Detective Sean Franchini for their work on a burglary case at Sabre's Fine Jewelry store in February 2024. The investigation led to the arrest and conviction of four suspects, with the DNA evidence collected by Detective Sohl playing a crucial role in solving the case. Detective Sohl's 25 years of service to the Collegeville Borough Police Department was also recognized.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUDGET & FINANCE:

MOTION by McKinney to approve checks numbered 682-711, reflecting two payrolls, ACH transfers and payments in the amount of \$232,424.29. Seconded by Hoffmann.

Motion carries 7-0

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:

Ms. Kernen reported that the 7Brews has opened. She and others met with Montgomery County Commission Chair Jamila Winder and Commerce Director Steve Forster and they toured three businesses in the Borough. A new business, Over Knight Games, will be opening at 50 W 3rd Avenue.

CPVRPC:

Ms. Beckius shared that the Regional Planning commission met in January and which time they re-organized. The Comprehensive Plan was discussed. The Perkiomen Creek mapping project has been completed. Upper Frederick's open space referendum was successful.

CTMA/PUBLIC WORKS:

Minutes dated 12/17/2025 and financial reports as of 1/26/2025 were received from both entities. Re-organization was not accomplished for CTMA in January and will be held at the February meeting. Mr. Farr researched different investment opportunities and changes have been made. The By-Laws will be reviewed to determine if an alternate member can be appointed.

Currently Collegeville and Trappe each send an attorney to the CTMA and PW meetings. Since both Boroughs are using the same Law Firm, it may make sense to have only one attorney attend.

Ms. McKinney discussed the interconnect project with North Penn. It is a much more cost effective to interconnect than to have the wells cleaned. This will insure good, clean water for our residents. There will be a need to secure loans and grant applications to fund the project. \$2 million of the needed \$10 million has already been secured.

LPVRSA: No report

PARKS:

Collegeville and Trappe's Park committees have scheduled a joint concert event at Water Works Park on Saturday, May 16 at 4:00pm. The Tyson Mill band will perform. American Ramblers will perform on Thursday, June 11 at 6:00 pm at the Community Park. New grant opportunities will be explored to replace playground equipment.

PERSONNEL:

A **MOTION** was made by McKinney to add a personnel matter to the agenda. Seconded by Beckius.

Motion carries 7-0.

Officer Falnes is being deployed to Texas for a year beginning on February 15. He has served in the Coast Guard Reserve for 16 years. Chief Barnshaw asked that a pay differential be paid to Officer Falnes during his deployment. Chief Barnshaw and Detective Sohl will each work "hours on the street" to help ease the workload and overtime.

MOTION by McKinney to approve the pay differential to Officer Falnes. Seconded by Costello. **Motion** carries 7-0.

STREETS & PUBLIC SAFETY:

The Committee did not meet in January.

Traffic and parking issues with 7Brews was discussed. Chief Barnshaw is working with the proprietor to address the traffic flow issues. Ms. Twardowski noted that complaints regarding parking or traffic inside the center should be addressed to the management company for the shopping center.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

ENGINEER:

The 2026 paving projects will include a micro surface overlay in Collegeville Crossing and a mill and overlay on 6th Avenue, with plans to piggyback with Upper Providence larger paving projects for better pricing. Plans for the 6th Avenue culvert project are underway.

SOLICITOR:

Ms. Geiser noted that the franchise agreement with Verizon expires on February 27, 2026. It needs to be discussed and was not listed on the agenda.

MOTION by McKinney to add this matter to the agenda. Seconded by Beckius.

Motion carries 7-0.

MANAGER:

Verizon pays a franchise fee to each municipality where their service is located. Cohen Law Group represents a consortium of municipalities for the negotiation of the franchise agreement and fees paid to each municipality.

MOTION by Beckius to contract with Cohen Law Group for this service. Seconded by Brewster.

Motion carries 7-0.

MOTION by Brewster to approve Resolution 2026-02 for Disposition of Records. Seconded by Hoffmann.

Motion carries 7-0.

MOTION by McKinney to approve Resolution 2026-03 that appoints Gretchen Lawson as Deputy Tax Collector. Seconded by Kernen.

Motion carries 7-0.

MSD Zoning Amendment

At the January Planning Commission meeting, the MSD zoning was reviewed against the Main Street Revitalization Plan that was adopted on July of 2025. The Planning Commission recommended some edits. One of the main amendments includes an increase in building height to 44 feet to accommodate 3-4 story developments while maintaining the Borough's character.

MOTION by Beckius to authorize the advertising of a public hearing on the updated ordinance.

Seconded by Brewster.

Motion carries 7-0.

The hearing will be scheduled for May. Ms. Kernen would like to notify Main Street businesses and residents of the meeting and to get their feedback.

POLICE:

Chief Barnshaw proposed changes to the Rules and Regulations for the Civil Service Commission. The changes are related to hiring practices and testing standards to make the department more competitive.

MOTION to approve the proposed changes by McKinney. Seconded by Brewster.

Motion carries 7-0.

FIRE:

Craig Penuel provided the report for January. The Fire Co. responded to 31 incidents. Two training sessions were held. One significant call was a barn fire in Upper Providence. A new reporting system is being used to track incidents, etc.

AMBULANCE: No report

JUNIOR COUNCIL:

Thomas Hayward reported on activities of the District Band, Regional Choir and the Select Ensemble Concert. He noted that many students are following current events via social media and sharing their thoughts.

MOTION by McKinney to accept all the reports. Seconded by Brewster.

Motion carries 7-0

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jan Snovel a resident of Chestnut Street, shared that she appreciated the great job that was done clearing the streets this year. She also notified the Manager of a sidewalk that was not cleared and said it is an ongoing problem.

Gary Sassaman from Eleventh Avenue mentioned that indoor percussion and color guard also both have a very strong program at Perkiomen Valley High School and they are very popular.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Ms. Kernen shared that plans for the annual Memorial Day Parade are underway. They hope to incorporate Collegeville and Trappe's history in this year's event to coincide with the Nation's 250th celebration and to include other activities on that day. Ideas and suggestions are welcomed.

MEETING ADJOURNED