

COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
June 3, 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, Marion McKinney and Mayor Aidsand Wright-Riggins. Kathy Costello attended via Zoom.

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

MOTION to approve the minutes from the May 6, 2026 meeting by McKinney. Seconded by Beckius.

Motion carries 7-0.

SWEARING IN OF SERGEANT ANDREW SOHL – Mayor Wright-Riggins administered the oath of office to Sergeant Andrew Sohl and congratulated him on his promotion.

PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATIONS – Mayor Wright-Riggins presented a proclamation to Dr. Barbara Russell, recognizing and celebrating her retirement and honoring her commitment and dedication to the Perkiomen Valley School District and wished her the best of luck in retirement. Mayor Wright-Riggins also presented a proclamation to the family of John David “Dave” Schrader, recognizing and celebrating the life of John David “Dave” Schrader, a pillar of our community and the lifelong proprietor of the oldest business in our Borough, who passed away on April 17, 2026, at the age of 87 and honoring his life and legacy.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR VERIZON FRANCHISE AGREEMENT – Solicitor Geiser explained this is a public hearing of the Borough Council regarding cable franchise renewal for Collegeville Borough. This public hearing is held pursuant to Section 626 of the federal Cable Act, which sets forth the process for franchise renewal. The Borough’s current franchise with Verizon is within the industry norm renewal window, and the Borough is beginning the process of renewing the franchise. She further explained this public hearing is part of the preliminary portion of franchise renewal in which the Borough reviews the cable operator’s past performance and identifies the Borough’s future cable-related community needs. As such, as part of this public hearing, we invite comments from any citizens who wish to speak regarding either or both of the aforementioned subjects. She advised the franchise renewal is the best opportunity for municipalities to assert their rights with respect to their cable operator and to obtain important benefits in return for granting the cable operator the right to use their public rights-of-way. These benefits include: (1) a state-of-the-art cable system now and in the future; (2) strong customer service standards; (3) free services to community facilities; (4) better reporting requirements from the cable operators; (5) maximized franchise fees; (6) public, educational and governmental (PEG) channel(s), (if desired); (7) PEG

capital support funding, (if desired): (8) legal protections of the Rights-of Way; and (9) better mechanisms to enforce the franchise agreement. She noted these are just some of the potential benefits available through the franchise renewal. She advised that citizens may address these items or any other cable-related items that are important to them and opened the hearing up to citizen comments. T. Twardowski advised that the current franchise fees for both Verizon and Comcast are about \$75,000-80,000 per year which has decreased as folks are cutting cable services. However, it is still a decent amount of revenue for the Borough, and noted the Borough is working with a law firm through the Montgomery County Consortium who have expertise in negotiating cable contracts. She reiterated this is a time for anyone to provide any comments or concerns they have related to cable services, other than rates which we cannot do anything about. There were no public comments so Solicitor Geiser closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Jim Traupman, 256 E. Ninth Avenue, suggested information on bicycle safety, particularly at intersections, be posted on the website as done previously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUDGET & FINANCE:

MOTION by McKinney to approve checks numbered 869-910, reflecting three payrolls, ACH transfers and payments in the amount of \$274,324.18. Seconded by Beckius.

Motion carries 7-0

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:

MSD Zoning Ordinance: C. Kernen advised that a meeting was held with the owners of the properties along Main Street who would be affected by the ordinance changes and there were several concerns expressed. She further advised that this meeting was advertised for a public hearing with a plan to vote on the matter. However, since there were several concerns, we will be postponing any vote until we can review if any further changes to the ordinance are necessary and taking only comments on the ordinance amendments tonight. Linda Nielsen, 348 E. Main Street, advised she has been an owner of the property since 1994, and is concerned with how the zoning would affect the sale of her property. T. Twardowski explained the zoning amendments are not much different from what is currently allowed under the MSC (main street commercial) district other than the changes include additional uses. The changes will also not allow any additional offices on the first floor of the buildings. T. Twardowski further explained if her property was sold as a residence, the new owner would not be able to convert the first 40 feet of the first floor into an office; the office would have to be in the rear of the first floor or on the second or third floor. In addition, the previous use of a garage at the property would not be allowed either since it's been longer than a year since the garage was used, so it's no longer a non-conforming use. However, for a business, like Schrader's, which is currently a service garage, that use could remain under the proposed zoning amendments. She also advised the changes will not affect Mrs. Nielsen from continuing to use her property as residential and that she would be glad to meet with her if she had any other concerns. T. Twardowski noted that the ordinance changes are only for the 300 and 400 block of E. Main Street, which is considered the business district.

CPVRPC:

V. Beckius advised the main topic of discussion at the meeting was data centers. The County has put out a data center guide which is designed to prepare for any data center development interest and assist in developing our own ordinance. Some of the items talked about in developing ordinances were energy use, a water feasibility study, waste water disposal, zoning, scale, aesthetics, dimensional standards, noise and benefits to communities. She noted there was discussion on certain areas in the region being built out; however, data centers can be small and do not have to be large facilities. The County is suggesting we develop our own ordinances so we can determine where we would like them located and what we would like them to look like, and it is not intended to be for or against data centers. T. Twardowski noted we do not have a specific zoning district where data centers are allowed to be located as it isn't something we needed to consider previously. However, she suggests it best fits in the M&I (manufacturing and industrial) District and suggests the Solicitor work with the County planner on a draft ordinance. V. Beckius noted the value being part of a regional planning commission is we do not have to allow for all aspects of zoning. T. Twardowski advised that is true, except that no one has agreed to take the data centers so we need to prepare for the possibility in advance.. R. Geiser advised that most municipalities are considering adopting ordinances to get ahead of the curve. M. McKinney noted she is concerned with the amount of water being used and making sure our water is not contaminated. R. Geiser explained you can require the developer to bring in the water. D. Leh advised that small power plants are also being built, not data centers, to support the data centers, and you need an ordinance to control water, noise, etc. C. Penuel advised there is one in Upper Providence that people probably aren't even aware is there since it's so small. R. Geiser advised that data centers are evolving so quickly that that some townships, like Limerick, who already had an ordinance, have advertised a new data center ordinance. Jim Traupman, 256 E. Main Street, suggested working closely with the Solicitor to make sure you have a bullet-proof ordinance as developers will come in and look for loop holes in the ordinance. The Council agree to have the Solicitor work with the County planner on a draft ordinance. V. Beckius advised the next meeting is August 17, 2026.

CTMA/PUBLIC WORKS:

Minutes dated 3/24/2026 and financial reports as of 4/27/2026 were received from both entities. M. McKinney noted that Stu brought up the financing of public works, and the committee authorized merging CTMA and public works. She further noted that Solicitor Mark Platcha was tasked with researching an individual or firm with expertise to create a municipal authority. She advised there was an item on the agenda regarding a job description and expressed concern with the language in the job description and suggested it be further reviewed. She also advised she believes that the job description would eventually need to be reviewed and approved by Council. She asked Gary or Tamara to provide an update on public works becoming an authority. G. Hoffmann advised it was recommended that an authority should be the one that borrows the money. He further advised that CTMA borrows the money and public works would pay the authority back. However, he noted that he and Tamara do not have the knowledge or authority to decide the best options.

V. Beckius noted PennVest advised the best option was for CTMA to borrow the money. In response to a question from M. McKinney, T. Twardowski advised she did not believe they would need to create an authority for public works if had CTMA to borrow the money.

LPVRSA: Nothing to report.

PARKS:

D. Brewster reported there is a concert on June 9th at 6:30 pm at Community Park, and the band performing is American Ramblers. He further reported that Trappe Parks and Recreation obtained a lot of positive feedback on the previous concert featuring the Tyson Mill Band. He noted that a new bike rack was installed at Community Park, trees along the park will be trimmed later this month, and a grant was submitted for the playground at the park.

PERSONNEL: C. Kernen advised that there is an anticipated opening on Council and resumes have been received and are being reviewed.

STREETS & PUBLIC SAFETY: G. Hoffmann advised the meeting was held on May 27th. There was discussion on the concerns with the old costume company due to two fires. It was acknowledged that there is not too much the Borough can do there, but the police department will do more patrols of the area. It was reported that most of the owners have taken care of trees on Carmen Drive. However, it still needs to be determined whether the Borough has the legal right to take down trees when repairing the sidewalks. There was also discussion on whether to switch our first ambulance service for the whole Borough to Friendship Ambulance, since they have an ambulance located in Trappe now. Friendship and Lower Providence are working together to finalize details and will probably be ready next month. It was also suggested the Borough consider incentives for fire company volunteers.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

ENGINEER:

D. Leh reported that we are still on schedule to have the micro-surfacing completed in Collegeville Crossing in August. He further reported the mill and overlay of Sixth Avenue is currently expected to occur in July.

SOLICITOR: No report

MANAGER:

Resolution 2026-26 - GTRP Grant - T. Twardowski advised a grant for \$250,000 is being submitted for Community Park playground renovations, and the grant application requires a resolution.

MOTION by McKinney to approve Resolution 2026-26 authorizing a GTRP grant application for \$250,000 for playground renovations at Community Park. Seconded by Brewster.

Motion carries 7-0.

Pension Audit: T. Twardowski advised that during the recent pension audit, it was recommended to amend the pension ordinance to change the Chief Administrative Officers to the Borough Manager and Police Chief, rather than listing individual names. That way, it doesn't require a change every time there is a new person in the positions. She further advised it was also recommended to amend the ordinance to update the length of time for the police DROP program in accordance with the most recent collective bargaining contract.

MOTION by McKinney to authorize the Solicitor to prepare the necessary pension ordinance amendments. Seconded by Brewster.

Motion carries 7-0.

POLICE:

Chief Barnshaw presented his report for the month of May. He advised the current non-emergency police phone number will no longer be in existence as of 9/1/2026, and the new phone number will be 610-635-4300. He noted that they will be creating a social media platform to get the word out to residents. In response to a question from C. Kernan, Chief Barnshaw advised that yes, the non-emergency number goes to the County EOC, the same as if you dial "911". He also noted the best number to dial is "911".

Fire Police assistance was requested from Lower Providence Township for their fireman's fair on 6/4-6/13 and for the 4th of July fireworks on 7/4 from 6:30-11:00 pm.

MOTION by McKinney to approve the Fire Police requests. Seconded by Farr.

Motion carries 7-0.

There is also a request from the Fire Company to close Main Street, between 3rd and 9th Avenues, from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm on August 9th for their annual car show.

MOTION by McKinney to approve the closure of Main Street, between 3rd and 9th Avenues on August 9th from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm. Seconded by Hoffmann.

Motion carries 7-0.

MAYOR:

Mayor Wright-Riggins reported that Ursinus College along with the Council of Independent Colleges and St. Luke's church have been working on a project on the Legacy of American Slavery over the last couple of years. He announced that the conclusion of the project will be presented at a conference at the University of the South in Tennessee on June 17-19, 2026, and he will be attending the conference.

FIRE:

Assistant Chief Penuel summarized the Fire Company's activities for May.

AMBULANCE: T Twardowski noted there was a report from Friendship Ambulance included in your meeting packet.

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

Motion carries 7-0.

JUNIOR COUNCIL:

Thomas Haywood reported that the select choir, chamber orchestra, wind ensemble and jazz band of Perkiomen Valley High School received superior ratings at their adjudication in Hershey, PA and enjoyed their visit to Hershey Park after the adjudication. He further reported that many students are unhappy with the new cell phone policies in schools being considered by our state government. He also reported another topic of concern is people not wearing helmets on electric scooters, bicycles and e-bikes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Linda Neilsen, 348 E. Main Street, expressed concern regarding the obnoxious back firing of cars and asked if there are any laws or ordinances against it. Chief Barnshaw advised there are not any laws or ordinances, but there are ordinances on how loud mufflers can be. Chip of Schrader's Service Station noted that it just needs to be a sealed system for State inspection.

R. Geiser advised that enforcement would be a problem even if there was an ordinance.

Joe Wisinski, 3 Twilight Circle, questioned if there were a data center here, how would it affect rates. G. Hoffmann explained that electric rates are regional and costs are spread across the region; therefore, rates would not be affected whether it's here or not. T. Twardowski advised the Borough has no control over electric rates.

OTHER BUSINESS:

M. McKinney questions whether the Borough needs an ordinance to provide protection with the issues surrounding electric bikes. T. Twardowski advised there are state laws stating that electric scooters are already illegal, so there really isn't a good reason to adopt an ordinance imposing restrictions on something that already isn't allowed. R. Geiser explained the Borough would likely be sued on a matter involving an electric bike regardless of laws/rules. D. Brewster suggested parents be notified when there is an issue with children on electric bikes. Chief Barnshaw advised that when children on electric bikes do stop, the parents are notified. However, the police department will not chase electric bikes as it would cause a liability if something were to happen.

M. McKinney asked how Council is going to review applications for the vacant Council seat and suggested it be done in public and voted on in public. C. Kernan advised that an email was circulated offering different options on how to handle and each Council member should respond to the email. She noted that not everyone has responded. She suggested that this matter be tabled as she is not prepared to discuss the process at tonight's meeting. T. Twardowski noted that it cannot be done in private with more than three (3) Council members at a time. Mayor

Wright-Riggins suggested honoring the process with the email, and that it be discussed at the next meeting.

C. Kerner advised the “Movie on the Lawn” scheduled for this Friday, June 5th has been moved inside Olin Hall due to the expected 92-degree heat. She further advised the movie is “Hoppers” and there will be a piano singalong from 7-8 pm, and the movie will start at 8 pm. She further advised that the Sojourn event schedule for this Saturday, June 6th down the Perkiomen Creek has been moved to Green Lane.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 7:58 p.m.