

FLEETWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

BOROUGH COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Date: October 14, 2025 In-person meeting, held in Café
Council meeting is recorded and posted on website after meeting

Roll Call:

| | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ralph Touch (President) - Virtual | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suzanne Pittella Touch, Mayor |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pete Merkel (Vice-President) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Young, Borough Manager |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Meals | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doreen O'Neil, Recording Secretary |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark Watkins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joan London, Esq. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Rothenberger | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dale Ulshafer, Police Chief |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Mayer | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig Conrad, Public Works Director |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nancy Wunderly | |

Also Present:

John Manmiller, Fleetwood Fire Company Chief
 Barry Isett & Associates (Matthew Rieger)

The borough council meeting was held at 110 West Arch Street, in the cafeteria. Meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Pete Merkel.

Recording of Borough Meeting

A public notice sign was posted at the cafeteria entrance to notify attendees that the Fleetwood Borough Council meeting was being recorded.

Public Statements – Agenda Items (Limit 3 minutes/person)

- No comments

Emergency Services

Police Department

The September 2025 police report was provided to Council prior to meeting.

Chief Ulshafer provide the following updates

- Summary of the September 2025 police activity report
- Transition to new 9mm firearms has been completed
- New 2025 Ford Explorer is being outfitted and will be replacing the silver Tahoe.

Limit Bikes in Fleetwood Park

Discussion of complaints received at borough hall regarding juveniles on bikes being disrespectful, harassing adults. Unsure if bikes are electric/gas powered or regular bikes. Park Committee will discuss with Chief Ulshafer and compile possible options. Tabled until next meeting

Topton, Ruscombmanor, and Richmond Police Service Update

- Topton Borough – police contract for coverage by Fleetwood police ends on 12-31-2025
- Ruscombmanor Township - police contract for coverage by Fleetwood police – contract will include an additional 40 hours of coverage effective 01-01-2026
 - Chris Young and Chief Ulshafer met with Ruscombmanor Township regarding other updates
- Richmond Township – There was discussion with Richmond Township supervisors regarding an additional police officer. Feedback from them was positive. They will discuss at their next budget meeting later this week.

Hire New Police Officer

Chief Ulshafer requested approval to start hiring process for police officer. The hiring process takes about 4-5 months. There was mention of an officer retiring in approximately one year.

Motion to authorize Chief Ulshafer to start advertising for police officer applicants with the understanding it's contingent on Richmond Township agreeing with additional cost that is up for approval that their budget meeting later this week.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Nancy Wunderly

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Barry Isett & Associates (BIA)

BIA Report (Codes/Engineering)

Report was provided to council prior to meeting.

Entech

Entech Report (Water/Sewer)

Report was provided to council prior to meeting.

Fluoride in Water

HRG representative, Rebecca Mason mentioned her report was presented to Council prior to meeting and she discussed the following regarding fluoride in borough water system.

- Fluoride helps to reduce cavities, thus a savings of \$28-\$32 per person for dental work
- Pros of fluoride outweigh the cons
- Con – currently Fleetwood borough public works uses a powder fluoride which requires proper PPE when working with the powder. Requires eye protection, respirator.
- DEP has set a 7mg/liter as an optimal level of fluoride
- Fleetwood borough is within the range
- Fleetwood current fluoride system/equipment needs to be replaced if the borough chooses to continue adding fluoride to the water system
- If equipment is upgraded could do away with the powder fluoride and switch to liquid. Delivery of liquid is in bulk capacity and more cost efficient. Liquid is the most common form of fluoride.

Council asked Rebecca to work with Craig Conrad to compile spec of upgrade equipment and their cost, along with cost for liquid fluoride.

Council member suggested a note be included in next water bill to make residents aware of special meeting to discuss fluoride in the borough water system and get their feedback. Possibly have meeting during a workshop session or start at 6pm prior to regular monthly borough meeting.

HRG

HRG Report (Stormwater)

No report.

Legal – Joan London, Esq.

Rental and Commercial Ordinance Update

Paper copies and electronic versions of revised ordinance were distributed to Council prior to meeting. Joan London, Esq. reviewed final updates of the Rental and Commercial ordinance. Two existing ordinances were combined into one ordinance for Business License instead of Business and Rental Inspections. Licenses will be based on building number address (even starts Jan. 2026, odd starts 2027).

Motion to authorize Joan London, Esq. to advertise new ordinance.

Made by: Pete Merkel

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

X Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Berks EIT Alternate Delegate

Joan London, Esq. reviewed resolution for Berks County Tax Collection Committee (TCC) for appointing individuals for primary and alternate delegates. Resolution lists Jim Meals as Primary and Eric Bauman as Alternate.

Motion to approve resolution with Jim Meals as primary delegate, and Eric Bauman as alternate delegate.

Resolution: 2025-10-14-01

Made by: Mark Watkins

Seconded by: John Rothenberger

X Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Streets – Jim Meals

Parking on North Richmond Street/High School Parking

Jim mentioned a meeting was held to discuss; take-away is that not as much of a problem this year as in prior years. Streets committee will provide bullet items and address numbers on North Richmond Street that would be eligible for permit parking. Next step would be for Kozloff and Stoudt to prepare ordinance draft for permit parking.

Motion to authorize Kozloff and Stoudt to prepare ordinance draft for permit parking.

Made by: Jim Meals

Seconded by: Nancy Wunderly

X Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Borough Managers Report – Chris Young

2026 General Budget

Chris provided Council with detail/summary versions of 2026 budget prior to meeting. Provided overview of budget noting that 2025 was \$3,566,903.43 and for 2026 is \$3,986,867.09. Electric savings of approximately \$40,000 for borough owned properties due to solar panels, increases with personnel, Public Works, and police force; reference notes listed on budget document. Tax increase will be .5mil (.3mil general and .2mil EMS tax). The EMS tax may require at least three advertisements by end of year. Joan will investigate this further. County needs information by mid-December for tax bills. When taxes increase need to submit to county.

Motion to advertise preliminary budget for adopting and publishing in November 2025 for tax increase.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Motion to advertise with .3 mill property tax increase and .2mil EMS tax for 2026 budget.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Animal Control Contract 2026

Review animal control agreement with Safety Net Sanctuary is the same for 2026.

Motion to adopt and sign animal contract agreement for 2026, contingent on Andy George, Esq. review of agreement.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Tiger at Triangle Park (Beech and Fleetwood Avenue)

Chris mentioned a private citizen would like to purchase a tiger and have it installed at the Triangle Park located at Beech Street and Fleetwood Avenue. The borough would put in cement slab, citizen purchase tiger. Location would be near clock tower. Council members suggested a military based design(s) on tiger. Chris will notify Carin Cornman (Tiger Nation Committee) and ask that tiger design be shared with Council for final approval.

Motion to authorize approval for tiger at Triangle park, citizen to purchase tiger, and Public Works to pour cement slab.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

DCED Fire Study Phase 2 Update

Meeting being held end of October 2025 with DCED consultant, Fleetwood Council President Ralph Touch, and Richmond Township Supervisor Brian Wanner to review more specific details from first fire study findings.

Plaque for Bench in Fleetwood Park

Chris mentioned a Fleetwood resident and family would like to dedicate a bench in Fleetwood Park by purchasing a plaque to be mounted on bench. Plaque is in memory of David Gift who was president of Friends of Fleetwood Park.

Motion to approve memorial plaque for David Gift to be mounted on park bench.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Joint Comprehensive Committee – Mayor Touch / Nancy Wunderly

Update

Suzanne Touch, Nancy Wunderly, and Russell Anderson attended meeting where discussion focused on agricultural and ways for people to retain property. A business survey was emailed to businesses (Fleetwood Borough, Richmond Township, and Maiden creek Township).

Reminder there is public meeting on October 15th at 7pm, in cafeteria of Fleetwood Community Center to discuss planning and implementation of recent input from Berks Planning Commission. Pete Laucks reviewed items on document and drawing renditions. Listing what is found as favorable suggestions (Barta bus stop, Crosswalk at Pearl Alley and Main Street, Franklin and Main Street plantings) and non-favorable suggestions (trees along Main Street, grass median w/ tiger in middle of Main Street). At the October 15th meeting an overview will be presented to public – meeting be run by Berks County Planning Commission.

Nancy mentioned they have not seen results of initial survey that was taken by residents in Fleetwood Borough, Richmond Township, and Maiden creek earlier this year.

Main Street Improvements – Pete Merkel, Mark Watkins, Mike Mayer

New Committee

No update.

Public Works Report – Craig Conrad

Craig Conrad provided Council with the Public Works report prior to meeting.

HRG Proposal

Chris Young mentioned Craig Conrad would like approval to have HRG evaluate the storm water system and have HRG do MS4 reporting and actions related to MS4. Borough payment to HRG would be \$15,750.

Motion to approve and authorize HRG to handle MS4 reporting at cost of \$15,750.

Made by: Pete Merkel

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Updated Safety Manual

Chris mentioned there was a safety audit. Review of the safety manual for respiratory guidance was recommended to be removed. John mentioned can't remove respirator section give Public Works wears respirators when handling/administering fluoride to the water system. Tabled until Craig Conrad can review.

Trailer from Richmond Township

Chris reviewed that Craig would like to purchase a trailer from Richmond Township. Trailer has lift gate and can carry skid loader. Cost of trailer from Richmond Township is \$6,000. The existing Fleetwood Public Works trailer would be sold. The cost of trailer \$6,000 will be covered by this years' budget.

Motion to approve Craig Conrad to purchase trailer from Richmond Township for \$6,000.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Nancy Wunderly

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Guests: See attached list.

No comments

Bills

Ratify September 22nd Invoices

Motion to ratify invoices paid September 22, 2025.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Ratify September 29th Invoices

Motion to ratify invoices paid September 29, 2025.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Nancy Wunderly

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Approve October 14th Invoices

Motion to pay October 14, 2025 invoices.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Minutes

Motion to approve the September 8, 2025 borough council meeting minutes.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

Motion Carried

Motion to approve the September 22, 2025 borough council workshop meeting minutes.

Made by: Mark Watkins

Seconded by: John Rothenberger

Motion Carried

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn borough meeting at 8:05pm

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Submitted by:

Doreen O'Neil, Borough Recording Secretary