

FLEETWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

 X BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

 BOROUGH COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Date: September 14, 2026 - In-person meeting, held in Room 113

Council meeting is recorded and posted on website after meeting

Roll Call:

 x **Ralph Touch (President) - Virtual**

 x **Pete Merkel (Vice-President)**

 x **Jim Meals**

 x **Mark Watkins**

 x **John Rothenberger**

 Mike Mayer

 x **Nancy Wunderly**

 x **Suzanne Pittella Touch, Mayor - Virtual**

 x **Chris Young, Borough Manager**

 x **Doreen O'Neil, Recording Secretary - Virtual**

 x **Andy George, Esq.**

 x **Dale Ulshafer, Police Chief**

Also Present:

 x **John Manmiller, Fleetwood Fire Company Chief**

 Barry Isett & Associates

The public hearing and borough council meeting were held at 110 West Arch Street in room 113.

Andrew George, Esq. called the Public Hearing meeting to order at 6:15pm. Public hearing is to discuss the adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan.

Public Hearing

Joint Comprehensive Plan

Andy George, Esq. reviewed the multiple exhibit items that were part of the public hearing. Stenographer was present for the Public Hearing. Public hearing notice was published in the Reading Eagle on Sept. 3rd and 7th of 2026. Public hearing notice was posted at the Fleetwood Borough office on September 2, 2026. Andy provided a summary of the full Joint Comprehensive Plan document that was available to the public to review prior to meeting. The Joint Comprehensive Plan document was shared to Fleetwood Boro, Richmond Township, and Maidencreek Township. Each municipality must perform their own adoption of the plan. The Joint Comprehensive Plan is updated every 10 years and covers topics of education, housing, sharing services, guidelines for commercial areas, highway systems, safe travel routes for students to schools, preserving the history and resources of municipalities, etc. Guest, Russell Anderson is on the Joint Comprehensive Committee. He mentioned the committee has worked on revising the plan for 2 years and recommends the borough adopt the plan. Nancy Wunderly is also on the Joint Comprehensive Committee and mentioned the group sent out surveys to residents in the 3 municipalities. There were 462 survey responses received across the municipalities. Andy George, Esq. closed the public hearing at 6:27pm., and the resolution will be voted on later during the borough council meeting.

The September borough council meeting was called to order at 6:28pm Vice President Pete Merkel and recording was started for the council meeting.

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

No Comments.

Police Department

Police Report -

Chief Ulshafer provided overview of the August 2026 police report that was sent to Council.

Police Personnel

New full-time hire, Joshua Klouser to start at the end of September/ early October.

Police Equipment

Chief mentioned a local business is looking to donate a car to the Fleetwood Police Department. Discussions are in progress.

Fleetwood Fire Company – Fire Report

Fire Tax

Fire Chief John Manmiller provided update to Council. For 2026 there have been 504 calls, not all in Fleetwood, but did span 20 different municipalities to provide aid. Chief Manmiller provided update on the request to increase the fire tax each for the next 5 years. Fire tax started in 2012 at 1 mil and has not been raised in the past 14 years. The funds received, approximately \$154,000 covered truck payments, new equipment/gear, etc. With expenses increasing and new ladder truck (approx. \$1.6million). Increased expenses over the next few years will not be covered by the current .1 mil fire tax.

Chief Manmiller asked Council for a .1 mil increase each year for the next 5 years. This .1 mil increase will net the fire company 15k in year 1, 30k in year 2, 45k in year 3, 60k in year 4 and 75k in year 5 and subsequent. 15k a year spread throughout all the properties in town should be minor compared to the service residents are receiving.

Chief noted that current fundraisers held by the fire company/volunteers earn more funds than the current fire tax.

Fundraisers held are hoagie sales, calendar sales, \$20 ticket events, and yearly carnival proceeds. There are 45 active fire members. John noted there are 12-14 members on average that go out on calls.

Chief Manmiller mentioned that the current 2003 Tower truck cost \$760,000 – today if this same truck was purchased, it would cost \$2.1 million. The new truck that is on order for 2027 is a Straight Ladder truck at cost of \$1.6 million.

Pete Merkel thanked Chief Manmiller and fire company members for the services they provide to the community. Chief Manmiller thanked Council for allowing the Public Works workers who are fire fighters leave their job to take fire calls during their work shift.

Chris Young and John Manmiller are attending a meeting on 09-15-26 regarding new radios that are coming in May 2027. The radios are not broken but are required by county to be replaced – the fire company will be looking to apply for a grant to cover cost of radios.

Chris Young noted that the Public Safety committee members should review when General Budget is started October/November 2026.

Ralph Touch commented on the outside consultant that had done study on Fleetwood Fire Company; they were impressed and commented that it's financially being managed and run well.

Motion to approve increasing the fire tax .1 mil for 2027. Then each year an additional .1 mill for the next 5 years.

Made by: Ralph Touch

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

X Motion Carried

Motion Failed

LSA Fire Grant

Fire Chief John Manmiller mentioned the fire company currently has a 1981 battery powered golf cart that was given to them in 1990's. The utility golf cart has been used hard over the years, functions, carnival, parades, and car shows. It is no longer good. Looking to apply for grant to purchase a Utility side-by-side vehicle similar to what the borough purchased this year for Public Works department. Chief Manmiller mentioned this utility vehicle could be used as a rescue unit; example trails at Fleetwood Reservoir. Chief noted he spoke with Ruscombmanor Fire Chief John Blessing who felt this would be good addition to Fleetwood Fire Company to use for rescues. Chief has put together estimates of about \$50,000 for unit. There would be no cost to the Fleetwood borough.

Motion to approve Fire Chief John Manmiller to apply for grant to fund new Utility side-by-side unit, and authorize Chris Young to sign.

Resolution: 2026-09-14-01

Made by: Mark Watkins

Seconded by: Nancy Wunderly

X Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Independent Fire Consultant – Scott Little

Chris Young mentioned Scott Little was part of DCED Fire Study, but is no longer with DCED. Richmond Township and Fleetwood Borough would like to contract Scott Little as an independent fire consult. Cost not exceed a combined cost of \$2,500.

Motion to approve contracting Scott Little as an independent fire consultant with Fleetwood Borough with cost not to exceed \$2,500 as a combined cost with Richmond Township.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

X Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Barry Isett & Associates (BIA – Codes/Engineering)

Engineering report was sent out to Council prior to meeting.

Entech (Water/Sewer)

Report was sent out to Council prior to meeting.

HRG (Storm Sewer)

Report was sent out to Council prior to meeting.

Legal – Andrew George Esq.

Comprehensive Joint Agreement Plan

Motion to adopt the Comprehensive Joint Agreement that was presented at the public hearing this evening.

Resolution: 2026-09-14-02

Made by: Nancy Wunderly

☒ Motion Carried

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

☐ Motion Failed

Willow Crest Water line dedication

Andy mentioned this is tabled.

Point-of-sale Inspection Ordinance

Andy mentioned this is tabled.

Zoning Ordinance Version #5

There have been revisions to the zoning ordinance by previous amendments. These are now summarized in version 5 of the Zoning ordinance.

Motion to approved version #5 of the Zoning ordinance.

Resolution: 2026-09-14-03

Made by: John Rothenberger

☒ Motion Carried

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

☐ Motion Failed

LTL as Borough Zoning Officer and LTL Fee Schedule

Motion to approve LTL as the Fleetwood Borough Zoning officer and adopt the LTL fee schedule.

Resolution: 2026-09-14-04

Made by: John Rothenberger

☒ Motion Carried

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

☐ Motion Failed

Inspection Checklist

Motion to adopt the official inspection checklist

Resolution: 2026-09-14-05

Made by: Jim Meals

☒ Motion Carried

Seconded by: Pete Merkel

☐ Motion Failed

Parking

Permit Parking – Municipal lot on Pearl Alley

Discussion on permit parking on the borough municipal parking lot that currently has signage for 2-hour parking between 7am and 9pm. Discussion included changing times on current signage to be 8am-6pm. This was suggestion to help rental property owner of 23-29 West Main Street to have possibility for more open spaces for their tenants; there is no off-street parking for these units. It was stated that those time changes mean someone could start parking there at 4pm thru the overnight. John Rothenberger stated concerns that it could decrease the volume of open spaces for businesses that have evening hours. It was suggested that the Parking Committee (Jim, Nancy, Mike) survey businesses and see what the impact to them would be, and compile solutions.

Borough Managers Report – Chris Young

Municibid

Chris mentioned the 2 Municibid items ended today (09-14-26). The Public Works dump truck sold for \$42,100 to Rillscon. The police car sold for \$6,000 to Rickbern.

Motion to accept both bids for the dump truck and police car.

Made by: John Rothenberger

☒ Motion Carried

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

☐ Motion Failed

Sewer Plant Phase Reversal Insurance Settlement

Chris mentioned damage to equipment was ~\$150,000. The insurance company of the electric company wants settlement of ~\$109,000 leaving the borough to pay ~\$40,000 of damages. The electrician is looking at their insurance for additional coverage. The insurance settlement is on hold.

Borough Managers Report – Chris Young (Continued)

Senator Fetterman Staff Visit

Chris stated last week Senator Fetterman's staff met with Chris and Pete Merkel along with Entech representatives to discuss financial aid for replacing the 1.5-million-gallon water tank at the Fleetwood Reservoir. The visit included trip to the reservoir to see water tank, tour of the Fleetwood borough and highlights of the town (parks, schools, solar field, Sunsweet, sewer plant) and some historical landmarks. This is not a grant – but Senator Fetterman's discretionary funds. Applied for \$1-million dollars to replace the water tank.

2027 Budget Status

Chris mentioned there will be a tentative 2027 budget for the October 2026 borough council meeting.

Community Center

Chris provided update on the recent AC and water leak at the Community Center which impacted the Historical Society are in the basement. Berks Water and Fire Restoration was out to clean up. Cost was \$12,000 for AC and \$5,000 for Berks Water and Fire restoration for clean-up and interior repairs.

Guests –

No Comments or discussion.

Bills

Ratify Invoices Paid August 19th

Motion to ratify invoices paid August, 19, 2026.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Nancy Wunderly

☒ **Motion Carried**

☐ **Motion Failed**

Ratify Invoices Paid August 31st

Motion to ratify invoices paid August, 31, 2026.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

☒ **Motion Carried**

☐ **Motion Failed**

Approve September 14th Invoices

Motion to pay September 14, 2026 invoices.

Made by: John Rothenberger

Seconded by: Ralph Touch

☒ **Motion Carried**

☐ **Motion Failed**

Minutes

Motion to approve the August 11, 2026 borough council minutes.

Made by: Pete Merkel

Seconded by: Nancy Wunderly

☒ **Motion Carried**

☐ **Motion Failed**

Executive Session

Regular borough meeting ended at 7:19pm and recording was stopped.

Executive session started at 7:21pm to discuss Personnel updates.

Executive session ended at 7:51pm.

No actions taken.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:51pm.

Made by: Pete Merkel

Seconded by: Mark Watkins

☒ **Motion Carried**

☐ **Motion Failed**

Submitted by:

Doreen O'Neil, Borough Recording Secretary