

The stated meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Thursday, November 13, 2025 via webinar and in-person at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA, with President Hecker presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Commissioners BRODSKY, ROTHMAN, DiPLACIDO, LANEY-MARTIN, WINEGRAD, HENRY, ZAPPONE, YOUNG-GERTZ, SPIEGELMAN, BOLE, SCHREIBER, BOWMAN, VAHEY, HECKER
Excused: Commissioner BROWNE

Also Present: Township Manager Christman
Township Solicitor Clarke

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

BOARD VICE PRESIDENT ANNOUCEMENTS:

President Hecker announced that the Board of Commissioners held an Executive Session to discuss a real estate matter on November 5, 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Lora Lehmann, resident, expressed concern about the transparency of the budget and workshops were eliminated where residents could ask questions and do research, and they should be set up. She was also concerned about a tax increase.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to approve Items a. – e. as listed under the Consent Agenda as follows:

To approve the minutes from the Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting of October 9, 2025 and the Special Meeting of October 16, 2025.

To authorize advertisement of Traffic Safety Ordinance amending Chapter 156 “Vehicles and Traffic,” Article II “Traffic Regulations” – Section 14 “Stop Intersections,” to add the follow “Stop” sign on Stonewall Court, at the intersection of Meinel Road., Stop signs on Spruce Ave. east and west at the intersection of Cricket Ave. Article III “Parking Regulations,” at Section 25 “Parking Prohibited At All Times, No Parking Between Signs; No Parking Here To Corner, Parking Prohibited Except Certain Hours, No Stopping or Standing” to add “No Parking Here To Corner” on Rockwell Rd. west side 30’ south of Grovania Ave., on Abington Ave. east side 30’ north and south of Kenmore, on Sylvania Ave. east side 30’ north of Keswick Ave. and west side 30’ south of Keswick Ave.

To appoint Tiffany Delgado-Bickley to the Human Relations Commission to fill the term ending on 12/31/2025 as recommended by the Human Relations Commission.

To adopt Ordinance No. 2238 amending Chapter 155 – “Traffic Control” Article I “Automated Red Light Enforcement Systems” – Section 155-17 “Expiration” and authorize the Township Manager to enter into an agreement.

To authorize an application for the PECO Green Region Grant Program in the amount of \$10,000 for the purposes of planning and design of Phase 3 of the Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary and adopt Resolution No. 25-027.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Item BOC-06-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to advertise the Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-07-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to adopt Resolution 25-028 an update to the Fund Balance Policy.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Winegrad said he is trying to be convinced this is a good idea. It's great there is fluidity being able to move things around; however, there are certain percentages that will go to certain funds at the end of the year.

Manager Christman said GFOA recommends putting three months of expenses aside in the event of an emergency and this Township has done that for many years. It is a great tool to have and a positive attribute for the Township. The second level of the Fund Balance Policy predefines where the remaining balance goes such as OPEB, capital projects and fund equity where those dollars are used to offset any shortfall in the general fund.

In the 2026 budget as proposed, we know there is a 0.25 mill tax increase and there is a need to use the fund balance to offset that increase. OPEB is funded at 125% and the Township's actuary indicated that overfunding it may not be the best use of our dollars. The recommendation for the new Fund Balance Policy is to take the second tier of dollars and give the Board of Commissioners flexibility through the budgeting process to determine how those dollars should be assigned, which is a policy decision by the Board.

Commissioner Winegrad said the Fund Balance Policy has served the Township very well over the years, is it best to change it?

Commissioner Spiegelman said we have earned the right to have this flexibility including flexibility to offset any future tax increases as well as alter the policy in the future, if necessary. This is a prudent move.

Commissioner Bowman agreed with Commissioner Spiegelman.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-08-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to approve Resolution 25-029 for the Inclusive Park and Playground for the American Rescue Plan Act funding.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-09111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to approve the Purchase Agreement for property located at 1170-1180 Easton Road.

Solicitor Clarke said the Township attempted to purchase this property about 12-13 years ago and it went through a series of “shenanigans,” so we never moved forward with it. The property was subsequently sold and within the last year or so it went back on the market. We had a few meetings in the past few months, and the property owner has agreed to sell the property to the Township. It will be done through a process known as “deed-in-lieu-of-condemnation,” also referred to as a “friendly condemnation.” The Township will be filing a Declaration of Taking in the Montgomery Court of Common Pleas, and it will need to be approved by a judge. It is not adversarial and the property owner is in full agreement, and there will be a purchase agreement, which is not normally part of a proceeding of condemnation.

The advantage of doing a deed-in-lieu-of-condemnation is that it can be done more quickly and there are some savings for the property owner, so that is why we were able to purchase the property at about \$330,000 less than the listing price.

The resolution will authorize the Township to file the declaration of taking and the condemnation and then there is the approval of proposal for \$9,877.10 from Trusted Land Transfer and Brennan Title Abstract who will do the deed-in-lieu-of-condemnation and all the title work.

Commissioner Schreiber said she is excited that we are once again considering the purchase of property located at 1170-1180 Easton Road in Roslyn. This property has long been envisioned as a centerpiece for revitalizing the Easton Road Corridor, and she believes approving this acquisition could finally spark the progress our community has been waiting for.

Her files include emails and writings dating back to 2008 and 2009, and even then, this location was a key part to the Roslyn Revitalization Plans. At that time, we had numerous town hall meetings and planning sessions, and the response was overwhelmingly positive.

The main building had already been vacant for more than 20 years at that time and residents were excited to support the purchase of this property for public use. Now it has been nearly 17 years since our first look at the site, and she believes it is even more important that we remain committed to creating a vibrant community resource on the Easton Road Corridor in Roslyn.

The current owners are willing to sell it at a fair price, and she urged her colleagues to support this purchase with their vote tonight. Thank you.

President Hecker recognized Commissioner Schreiber for her tireless efforts in this regard as she has been steadfast. If it was not for her being a champion, we would not have gotten to this stage. This is a credible opportunity for the Township, and because of Lori's leadership, here we are.

Commissioner Bowman urged everyone to support this as it will be great for both Abington and certainly for Roslyn. It has been vacant for too long, so please endorse it as it is a good move.

Vice President Vahey commended Commissioner Schreiber as this has been a long and arduous process. Many people would have given up a decade ago, but Lori never stopped. She always fights for what is in the best interest of her residents and this is what good leadership looks like and what good government looks like, so thank you for setting a good example.

Commissioner Spiegelman said back in the day, 2009-2010, he remembers sitting in the audience when he was thinking of running for commissioner and watching his then new friend Commissioner Lori Schreiber fighting for this on behalf of the people of Roslyn Valley, all of Roslyn, and our entire Township as well as fighting for the nondiscrimination ordinance, and that was some of the impetus for his decision to run for commissioner as it is a noble undertaking. Thank you for the inspiration. It is a beautiful thing to see this finally moving towards fruition.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-10-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to adopt Resolution No. 25-032 authorizing the acquisition of property located at 1170-1180 Easton Road through the exercise of eminent domain.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-11-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to approve the proposal from Trusted Land Transfer and Brennan Title Abstract for services related to the acquisition of 1170-1180 Easton Road.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-12-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to authorize the Township Manager to work with Raymond James & Associates, as Underwriter, and McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC, as Bond Counsel, to proceed with the issuance of General Obligation Bonds, Series of 2026, the proceeds of which will be used towards land acquisition and various capital projects within the Township.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Winegrad questioned whether there are any projects in mind.

Manager Christman replied that as the Township acquires land of this parcel that was just approved, there is a huge need for the Township in that area, so we would look to use those dollars toward some form of public project on that site. Additionally, if the Township would consider floating bonds in the future, those dollars could be set aside to fund a myriad of different things.

In December, we will bring forward a reimbursement resolution for the Board to consider, so the Township will acknowledge there will be some spending in the future of some dollar amount thereby reimbursing the Township for costs associated with the purchase of the particular parcel.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-13-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Zappone to approve a 217-day lease extension between the Township of Abington and the Abington School District for the property located at 2828 Spear Avenue, Ardsley, PA 19038.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Zappone said this is the jewel of Ardsley. Numerous organizations rent this property and the seniors and scouts use it too. He held many events there as well, so it is a good thing not only for Ardsley, but for Abington. Thank you.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-14-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to authorize an application for the Keystone Grant for Public Library Facilities in the amount of \$750,000 for the purchase of demolition, site preparation, planning and design for the purpose of creating a new Abington Free Library location and adopt Resolution No. 25-030.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Spiegelman said much like the Roslyn Library, which he calls the “Little Trailer That Could,” this library is where the old department store was and what the generations of library leadership and staff have done to keep that building standing, making it into the amazing library that it is, and he has a debt of gratitude. Liz Fitzgerald, our Library Director, has taken things to a whole new level and that has helped us face the reality that the building has gone as far as it can go. He hopes everyone continues to vote in favor of true investments for our future.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-15-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to authorize an application for the Statewide Local Share Account grant in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 for the purpose of planning and design associated with 1170-1180 Easton Road and adopt Resolution No. 25-031.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-16-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to reapprove a five-year lease agreement for 1220 Huntingdon Road between the Abington School District and Abington Township.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-17-111325:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Bole to reject all bids for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Park Improvements and authorize advertisement to rebid the project.

Manager Christman said bids came in substantially over budget where we anticipated the project cost to be. We recommend rejecting all bids and authorizing readvertisement, so we can solicit new bids and re-evaluate the scope and make sure the ARPA dollars set aside for this purpose can be maximized to its fullest potential.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Item FC-01-111325:

Commissioner Winegrad made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to approve the September 2025 expenditures in the amount of \$4,932,526.33 and salaries and wages in the amount of \$2,493,569.23 and authorize the proper officials to sign and approve invoices and supporting documentation in payment of bills and contracts as they mature through the month of December 2025.

Roll call resulted in motion being passed 14-0. Commissioner Browne was absent during roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ross Abel, resident, thanked the Township for the separated bike lanes' work as it really matters that Abington plans for safer riding on key corridors, and he appreciates the time and energy that has gone into that effort.

He hopes that everyone can agree that a Townshipwide approach to traffic calming is dearly needed, and since 2016, PennDOT recorded 236 crashes involving people walking or biking just in Abington.

Nearby townships and boroughs are starting to put real traffic calming tools on the ground from speed cushions and raised crosswalks to curb extensions and lane narrowing. Our own Public Works team is fully capable of building these kinds of projects and he does not want Abington to fall behind in protecting people from reckless or distracting driving.

He understands the Police Department drafted a Traffic Calming Policy and shared it with the Township Manager some months ago and residents have been asking about it since then, and we would really value some clear next steps.

He requested to please release the current draft traffic calming policy to the public within the next 30 days on the Township website; schedule a public meeting or work session on the draft within the next 60-90 days, so residents can provide input and help improve it; and set a goal to adopt the traffic calming policy next year with a simple process for neighbors to request changes in their neighborhood.

He knows there are many demands on staff time, and he appreciates the work already being done on safety, but these steps would give residents confidence that traffic calming measures are moving forward in a real time, and he would be glad to support the Township in any way that is helpful.

Connie Briggs, resident, commented that several residents on her Nextdoor post would like to have back and forth discussions with Township officials. She has seen the budget documents online; however, the online budget book is cumbersome to use, and she would prefer a PDF file. She is concerned about having an operating reserve fund without clear reporting on inflows and outflows for residents to understand. Also, lower property values are a big concern, and she would like to have a report or public presentation from the EDC about what type of development they are planning and how it would impact property values in the Township.

President Hecker replied there are no additional specific plans as the EDC has focused on Keswick as an initial starting point. We can help shape that with some of the things that took place here tonight and that is something we will focus on.

Lora Lehmann, resident, questioned whether the Patane sale went to any committee meeting.

President Hecker replied no, it was not in front of any committee meeting. It was voted on at a public meeting, and we acted on it this evening.

Ms. Lehmann continued that we do need a PDF, so we can oversee what is being done in the budget, and workshops should be scheduled so we can participate. Also, the EDC allows speaking at the beginning of the meetings, but not at the time of the agenda items or at the end of the meeting.

Amelia Garbisch, resident, commented that she and her son are here tonight to support Ross in his requests to release the draft traffic calming policy followed by holding a public meeting sometime in the next few months, and please set a goal to adopt a real traffic calming policy next year.

Her street is used as a cut-thru to go from the shopping area and to cut off traffic from Susquehanna Road, which makes it unsafe for her children to ride their bikes and walk her dog. She is hopeful that as a community we can create a plan to make our streets safer not only for adult residents but for our children. Is there a policy being worked on and what would be the timeline for it?

President Hecker replied there is a policy, and we will report back on the timeline of the next steps.

Paul Noto, resident, commented that he has lived on Pepper Road for almost nine years and has young children. He encouraged the Board to release the draft traffic policy, and he supports the additional steps his neighbor Ross has outlined. We feel it is not safe for bike riding and walking around. Traffic not only has increased but so has speed, and traffic cuts through our roads to connect between Rydal to Washington.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Recording Secretary

The following ordinance and resolutions were adopted by the Board of Commissioners on November 13, 2025:

Ordinance No. 2238
Resolution No. 25-027
Resolution No. 25-028
Resolution No. 25-029
Resolution No. 25-030
Resolution No. 25-031
Resolution No. 25-032