



BOROUGH OF WEST HAZLETON

100 SOUTH FOURTH STREET
WEST HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA 18202

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MINUTES Reorganization Meeting January 13th, 2026

1. **Call to Order by President Henry Kreisl:** Ladies and gentlemen, we're going to have a pair of meetings tonight, starting with our reorganization meeting, if I could have everyone rise for the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence and roll call.

2. Roll call of Council Members

Chura: Present, **Vercusky:** Present, **Sharkey:** Present, **Duffy:** Present, **Dutz:** Present, **Kreisl:** Present, **Verrastro:** Present.

3. CP Kreisl: The first matter of business of the reorganization meeting is the nomination and election of Council President. CM Sharkey: I make a motion to nominate Henry Kreisl for Council President. CM Verrastro: Second.

Vote

Chura: Yes, **Vercusky:** Yes, **Sharkey:** Yes, **Dutz:** Yes, **Kreisl:** Yes, **Verrastro:** Yes, **Duffy:** Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

4. CP Kreisl: Next, we will have the motion, nomination, and election of Council Vice President. CM Dutz: I nominate Thom Verrastro. CP Kreisl: Second.

Vote

Chura: Yes, **Vercusky:** Yes, **Sharkey:** Yes, **Dutz:** Yes, **Kreisl:** Yes, **Verrastro:** Yes, **Duffy:** Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

5. CP Kreisl: Our other appointments. For Borough Solicitor, Slusser Law Firm, Chris Slusser. I'll make a motion. CM Duffy: Second.

Vote

Chura: Yes, **Vercusky:** Yes, **Sharkey:** Yes, **Dutz:** Yes, **Kreisl:** Yes, **Verrastro:** Yes, **Duffy:** Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

6. CP Kreisl: Next will be a motion to appoint Zoning Solicitor, Thomas Sharkey Jr. May I have a motion? CM Chura: Motion. CM Duffy: Second.

Vote

Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Sharkey: Abstain, Dutz: Yes, Kreisl: Yes, Verrastro: Yes, Duffy: Yes.

Motion Passed 6-1.

7. CP Kreisl: Next, Zoning Officer Charles Pedri. CM Verrastro: Motion, CM Chura: Second.

Vote

Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Dutz: Yes, Kreisl: Yes, Verrastro: Yes, Duffy: Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

8. CP Kreisl: Borough Engineer, Alfred Benesch & Company. CM Verrastro: Motion, CM Duffy: Second.

Vote

Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Dutz: Yes, Kreisl: Yes, Verrastro: Yes, Duffy: Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

9. CP Kreisl: During the last meeting, we talked about Committee appointments. The only difference this year would be the addition of Mike Vercusky. He would become the Fire Chair, replacing Gene Duffy who would be moving to the Streets Chair. The co-chairs, well, I will just read them all:

10. CP Kreisl: The Committee Appointments are:

- a. **Police**:-Chair: Verrastro Co-Chair: Kreisl
- b. **Fire**:-Chair: Vercusky Co-Chair: Chura
- c. **Code and Zoning**: -Chair: Chura Co-Chair: Dutz.
- d. **Streets**:-Chair: Duffy Co-Chair: Sharkey
- e. **Finance**: -Chair: Dutz Co-Chair: Verrastro
- f. **Buildings & Grounds**: -Chair: Sharkey Co-Chair: Verrastro

CP Kreisl: May I Have Motion to accept committee appointments? CM Verrastro: Motion
CM Sharkey: Second.

Vote

**Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Duffy: Yes Dutz: Yes, Kreisl: Yes, Verrastro: Yes
Motion Passed Unanimously.**

CP Kreisl: Any comments by Council or the Mayor? I have no Announcements. Do we have a motion to close this portion of the meeting and reopen with the regular voting meeting? CM Chura: Motion CM Dutz: Second.

Vote

**Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Duffy: Yes Dutz: Yes, Kreisl: Yes, Verrastro: Yes
Motion Passed Unanimously.**

**MINUTES
Council Meeting
January 13th, 2026**

1. Call to Order by President Henry Kreisl

2. Roll call of Council Members

Chura: Present, Vercusky: Present, Sharkey: Present, Duffy: Present, Dutz: Present, Kreisl: Present, Verrastro: Present.

3. Motion to accept Meeting Minutes from Public Council meeting held on 12/9/2025 & 12/22/2025:

Motion to approve: Sharkey

Second: Chura

Vote

Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Dutz: Yes, Kreisl: Yes, Verrastro: Yes, Duffy: Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

4. Committee Reports

- a. Police:** Submitted by Sgt. Buglio, read by Chair Verrastro.
- b. Fire:** Submitted by Chief Cressman, read by Chair Vercusky.
- c. Code and Zoning:** Submitted by CEO Luis Alberto, read by Chair Chura.
- d. Streets:** Submitted by Foreman Fogarty, read by Chair Duffy.
- e. Finance:** Submitted by Borough Manager Schweitzer, read by Chair Dutz.
- f. Buildings & Grounds:** Submitted by Chair Sharkey, read by Chair Sharkey

CP Kreisl: One other thing that I wanted to mention that was along with the Fire report was the application and award of grants and fund raisers. The Chief has listed several grants that were awarded to the Fire Company in the total of \$103,000.00, excellent work. Also, fund raisers that were held in the Borough for an additional \$19,000.00 for a total of \$122,812.58. The Fire Department went out and did this on their own, so I would like to publicly thank the Chief and the Department for the work that they've put into that. Brandon wears many hats, including Quality of Life, which he had 14 tickets issued for violations throughout the Borough. Which again, is an added benefit to the Borough. I thank you, Brandon. Good job. The Committee reports have been read; do I have a motion to accept?

Motion to accept committee reports: Sharkey

Second: Dutz

Vote

**Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Duffy: Yes Dutz: Yes, Kreis: Yes, Verrastro: Yes
Motion Passed Unanimously.**

5. Public Participation

Jim Reichart, 326 Putnam Street:

JR: Good evening. Not everyone knows me, my name is James Reichart. I live on Putnam Street, below the Charity Home. On the evening of December 27th, into the morning of December 28th, we had a bit of sleet & snow. It's my fault, I fell asleep while watching television, my car was towed. Here's the receipt. I paid for everything; it cost me \$388.12. 3-4 days after that, on the evening of December 31st, into the morning of January 1st, we had another storm. Just like that one, a couple inches of snow. Late that night, trucks were going down the streets plowing. The City workers do a great job. But what I noticed was, the Snow Ban wasn't in effect. There were cars on both sides of the street. The plows went down the middle of the street. I went and looked up the street as far as I could, & down to 15 street with cars parked on both sides. Nobody was cited and nobody was towed. So, 3 days before that, I was towed and had to pay \$400.00. Why is that? Were the police on duty that night?

CP Kreis: Brian, would you like to respond to that?

Sgt Buglio: So anytime that it snows, we do enforce the Snow Ban. The second night that you mentioned, the officer just told me now that there was a burglary, and a woman in custody for assaulting an officer. At that time, they weren't enforcing Snow ban because they were the only officers on duty.

JR: I can't hear that well, I'm a Veteran who was in a war zone, I don't have my hearing aids in.SB:

Repeats previous statement louder. They do enforce it. They wrote about 180 tickets last month.

JR: Nobody follows this ban. I do, if I have to pay \$400.00, everybody should have to pay \$400.00. I've been living in this town for 61 years. It's the first time it ever happened. I'm kind of pissed off. I'd like to know if I can get some of my money back.

CP Kreis: We appreciate your comments. I'll speak with Brian and the officers to see if there's any leeway there to do what we can. Please give the Public Safety Director your phone number and we will get back to you tomorrow.

JR: Thank you all for listening to me, I appreciate it.

CP Kreis: Anyone else? Ok, on to Old Business.

6. Discussion of Work Session Actions:

a. Old Business

- i. Delinquent Garbage Report for December 2025:** Read by Council President Kreis.

b. New Business

- i. Motion to approve TNR Contract Renewal with No Nonsense Neutering.
Motion to approve: Verrastro
Second: Dutz**

Vote

Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Dutz: Yes, Kreis: Yes, Verrastro: Yes, Duffy: Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

ii. Motion to approve Business Parking Space for Sweet Home Family Daycare, 11 East Broad Street.

Motion to Approve: Chura

Second: Verrastro

Vote

Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Duffy: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Dutz: Yes, Kreis: Yes, Verrastro: Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

iii. Motion to accept 2026 Professional Engineering Consulting Agreement from Benesch Engineering.

Motion to Approve: Verrastro

Second: Sharkey

Vote

Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Duffy: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Dutz: Yes, Kreis: Yes, Verrastro: Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

iv. Motion to accept resignation of Diane Dutz as Tax Collector for West Hazleton Borough.

Motion to approve: Chura

Second: Verrastro

Vote

Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Duffy: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Dutz: Abstain, Kreis: Yes, Verrastro: Yes.

Motion Passed 6-1.

v. Motion to approve advertising and rescheduling of Public Council Meeting Dates for 2026. CP Kreis: This will be the second Thursday of every month. CM Verrastro: Just to be clear, we'll be starting in February. CP Kreis: We're going to continue with the work meetings on Tuesdays. In the event that the days happen in the same week, it doesn't? BM Schweitzer: Just to make Council aware, I reviewed the calendar for 2026. I didn't find any conflicts. There are copies of the new meeting dates in your folders. CM Verrastro: Is the start time still 6? BM Schweitzer: That is correct.

Motion to approve: Verrastro

Second: Dutz

Vote

Chura: Yes, Vercusky: Yes, Duffy: Yes, Sharkey: Yes, Dutz: Abstain, Kreis: Yes, Verrastro: Yes.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

- ii. **Comments by Council and Mayor:** CM Dutz: I'd just like to take the opportunity to welcome our new Council member Mike. CP Kreisl: Agreed, welcome Mike. I have no other announcements.

Announcements, Misc:

Announce Next Meeting:

1. **Council President Kreisl-**

The next Work Session Meeting will be Tuesday, February 3rd, and the next Public Council Meeting will be Thursday February 12th. Can I have a motion to adjourn?

iii. **Motion to Adjourn**

- a. **Motion to adjourn:** Chura

Second: Dutz

Meeting Adjourned

Attested:



James Schweitzer

Borough Manager