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# **MINUTES**

**January 12, 2026**  
**Regular Public Meeting**

**Board of Commissioners**

**Township of Whitehall**

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**A. CALL TO ORDER**

- 1) The Regular Public Meeting of the Whitehall Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 12, 2026 held at the Whitehall Township Public Meeting Room, with the following in attendance:

**COMMISSIONERS**

Jeffrey J. Warren, President  
Thomas Slonaker, Vice President  
Randy Atiyeh, Secretary  
Ken Snyder  
Elizabeth J. Fox  
Lee A. Christman  
Taylor A. Stakes

**TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL**

Joseph J. Marx, Jr., Mayor  
John D. Meyers, Deputy Mayor  
Jack Gross, Esq., Township Solicitor  
Michael Marks, Police Chief  
Mark Bilder, Fire Chief  
Elisa Highly, Township Engineer - KCE  
Lee Rackus, PZ&D  
Tina J. Koren, Tax Collector  
Larissa Bruder, Executive Assistant

The meeting was formally opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a moment of silence.

President WARREN read the statement on fair housing as required.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner ATIYEH moved, seconded by Commissioner SNYDER to approve the Minutes of the following meeting:

Regular Public Meeting – December 8, 2025

Seven Commissioners were present and five voted “yes” with two amendments and two abstentions.  
Motion carried.

**B. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

Joni Todesko of 424 4<sup>th</sup> Street voiced her concern with a vehicle that does not belong to anyone in the neighborhood that has not moved on her street for 3 months and suggested an ordinance be put in place to address same.

Bruce Charles of 76 Madison Lane stated his suggestions to avoid a tax increase.

Patricia Keenan of 3061 Birch Circle explained a situation that occurred in regards to the construction on an adjacent parcel by which trees and hedges were removed without notification. Her statement is attached for reference. Lee Rackus explained that the work that is being done on the developers parcel is remediation work that is required by the LCCD and is being monitored by KCE.

Karen Yonney of 4332 Belmont Circle asked that the Board of Commissioners find a way to correct the monetary injustice the residents of the development are facing.

Dennis Malast and Anita Malast for their mother Frances Malast of 3065 Birch Street asked questions in regards to the Whitehall Farms subdivision.

Andrew Kopeck of 3763 Dogwood Drive stated the concerns with businesses not removing snow/ice from public sidewalks.

Tonya Bielak of 3078 N. Birch Street raised a concern of a rather large pothole that recently opened up. Mayor MARX advised it will be taken care of.

Susan Barthol of 3046 Birch Street gave kudos to Chief Marks for receiving an award from Lehigh County and the Police Dept on Shop with the Cop Event. She also had concerns with the proposed Range Road warehouse.

LoriAnn Fehnel of 3157 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street stated concerns with property owners not maintaining sidewalks during the winter and also an abandoned vehicle near the Hokey Church.

**C. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON ORDINANCES**

**1. BILL NO. 1-2026**

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL PROVIDING FOR THE VACATION OF AN UNOPENED ALLEY EXTENDING FROM THIRD STREET AND ENDING AT WINT LANE, AN UNOPENED PAPER STREET LOCATED WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP, LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

President WARREN read Bill No. 1-2026 to the Board.

Commissioner STAKES moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner SNYDER

President WARREN stated that this item was posted and advertised as required.

Attorney Corkery was present representing the applicant and explained that this alley strattles two properties that are owned by the applicant. President WARREN verified that there is no public value to the land.

SEVEN Commissioners were present and seven voting "yes". Bill No 1-2026 was approved.

**D. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS**

1. RESOLUTION NO. 3411

TITLE: A RESOLUTION FOR SEWAGE FACILITIES PLAN REVISION FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT FOR 2150 MACARTHUR ROAD (DEVELOP)

President WARREN read Resolution No. 3411 to the Board.

Commissioner SLONAKER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner SNYDER

Lee Rackus explained due to the significant change in use is the reason why a new planning module is required. President WARREN noted he would like to have a discussion regarding sidewalks.

SEVEN Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3411 was approved.

2. RESOLUTION NO. 3412

TITLE: A RESOLUTION FOR SEWAGE FACILITIES PLAN REVISION FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT FOR 5173 WASHINGTON AVENUE (DEVELOP)

President WARREN read Resolution No. 3412 to the Board.

Commissioner STAKES moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner FOX

SEVEN Commissioners were present and four voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3412 was approved.

3. RESOLUTION NO. 3413

TITLE: A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING JOHN GULYCZ TO SERVE ON THE WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP BUILDING CODE BOARD OF APPEALS. (BOC)

President WARREN read Resolution No. 3413 to the Board.

Commissioner FOX moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner SNYDER

SEVEN Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3413 was approved.

4. RESOLUTION NO. 3414

TITLE: A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING ALLEN SANDT JR. TO SERVE ON THE WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP BUILDING CODE BOARD OF APPEALS. (BOC)

President WARREN read Resolution No. 3414 to the Board.

Commissioner SLONAKER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner STAKES

SEVEN Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3414 was approved

5. RESOLUTION NO. 3415

TITLE: A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING ROGER REICHARD TO SERVE ON THE WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP ZONING HEARING BOARD. (BOC)

President WARREN read Resolution No. 3415 to the Board.

Commissioner FOX moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner CHRISTMAN

SEVEN Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3415 was approved.

**E. OTHER**

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

1. Private Enterprise Partnership with Schadt Avenue Park & Playground  
Commissioner SNYDER stated that there have been numerous meetings with Sports Factory and in these discussions it was determined that the Township will contract with them for six months (a copy of the proposal was provided) whereby they will pay us a flat fee and they will provide community projects, sports (baseball, flag football and soccer), as well as maintenance items. Tri Boro, who was using this facility, has been moved to Fullerton. Details regarding parking issues are being worked out. Attorney Gross will be working on a draft contract that will come back before the Board for approval.
2. Lehigh Valley Hospital Zoning Amendment Petition to Permit Healthcare Campus in R3 District  
Dan Quay of Lehigh Valley Hospital Network and Attorney Graham Simmons were present. Mr. Quay explained that they had been before the Board a few years ago and modifications were suggested and in meeting with Township Staff they are here tonight to ask for permission to forward the zoning amendment request to Legal & Legislative Committee. Attorney Simmons further explained that this is a lengthy review process. If the L&L Committee would come to a decision, possibly after numerous meetings which would include Township Staff, it will then proceed to be advertised and go to Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, as well as the Township Planning Commission and after making any changes to address comments it would then come back to Board of Commissioners. At this time, Commissioner CHRISTMAN wants to be transparent and advised that he works for Lehigh Valley Hospital but is not connected in anyway to this proposal and would not benefit from it. Commissioner SNYDER verified that it is his understanding the proposal before the Board is to rezone the entire parcel to R3 with an addition of health care facility. He then stated that if this was approved it would apply to any R3 districts in the Township. Attorney Simmons clarified that it would do so only if it met all the regulations. Commissioner SNYDER questioned if there is any other avenue available to get this approved. Attorney Simmons acknowledged that the applicant could go before the Zoning Hearing Board with a use variance, but the applicant would need to prove that no other use could be utilized on this parcel. Commissioner SNYDER also questioned how alignment of certain roads will be addressed. Attorney Simmons stated that they are collaborating with a local developer in reference to the residential parcel and they would be better answering that question. Commissioner SNYDER asked what type of hospital is being planned. Dan Quay advised that they are preserving enough land for a hospital and medical offices. As to what type of hospital, that has not yet been determined. Mr. Quay did note that, as previously explored on the original submission, it will not be a behavioral health center. That ended up being built on Schoenersville Road. Commissioner SNYDER then asked why R3 was chosen and how many residential units compared to R2. Attorney Simmons offered that under R2 zoning 170 residential homes could be built and with R3 it would be 190 units. Commissioner SNYDER also asked if any further studies were done regarding the “exit road” onto Mechanicsville. Attorney Simmons stated that it was studied very heavily by the Piddcock Company.

Commissioner STAKES asked if this type of request was Whitehall specific – would they request the same in another municipality. Attorney Simmons noted that Whitehall does not have a district for healthcare and that is why they submitted for a zoning amendment.

Commissioner CHRISTMAN asked what percentage residential vs. healthcare would be. Attorney Simmons noted there are approximately 40-45 acres marked for healthcare and the remainder would be residential.

Commissioner STAKES stated that he has concerns with approving this as it would then be a given in any other R3 district for a hospital. Attorney Simmons noted that what has been submitted is a starting point and anything can be refined to what makes the Township comfortable.

President WARREN stated that he feels the northern part of the Township and County deserves a hospital and wants to see it developed that will serve the residents well now as well into the future.

Commissioner CHRISTMAN asked if this site is still proposing the use of a helicopter.

Mr. Quay stated that it would be for emergency purposes only, whereby if a major route was shut down, a trauma patient could be life-flighted to a trauma center.

Joanie Todesko of 424 4<sup>th</sup> Street feels that Whitehall needs a hospital and supports it.

Anthony Kopack of 3763 Dogwood Drive verified that this proposed plan will still support a buffer between the facility and the residential homes. He also verified that the hospital's frontage will be on MacArthur Road.

The Board unanimously agreed to move the plan to Legal & Legislative.

## **MOTIONS**

1. MOTION – to approve the reappointment of Joseph Bonshak to serve as a member of the Coplay-Whitehall Sewer Authority, with term expiration of December 31, 2030.

Six Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Motion was approved.

2. MOTION - to approve the reappointment of Jonathan Bolton to serve as a member of the Whitehall Township Planning Commission.

Six Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Motion was approved.

3. MOTION - to approve the reappointment of Jeffrey Warren to serve as a member of the Whitehall Township Industrial Commercial Development Authority, with term expiration of December 31, 2030

\*\*Lengthy discussion ensued regarding Commissioner SNYDER's request that President WARREN withdraw his name for reappointment to this Board as he did not agree with how President WARREN voted on an item, as well as being a voting member on the Authority while being President of the Board of Commissioners.

Seven Commissioners were present and five voting “yes” and one voting “no” (SNYDER) and one abstention (WARREN). Motion was approved.

4. MOTION - to approve the reappointment of Janet Minnick to serve as a member of the Whitehall Township Shade Tree Committee, with term expiration of December 31, 2028

President WARREN commended Janet on her attendance at meetings and her projects.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Motion was approved.

5. MOTION - to approve the reappointment of Boyd Kreglow to serve as a member of the Whitehall Township Tax Appeals Board, with term expiration of December 31, 2028

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Motion was approved.

6. MOTION - to approve the reappointment of Douglas Sammak to serve as a member of the Whitehall Water Authority, with term expiration of December 31, 2030

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Motion was approved.

**F. REPORTS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

Commissioner STAKES stated that he is interested in getting information about live streaming meetings as he feels it would help citizens become more aware and engaged.

He would also like to see the Township’s Christmas Tree Lighting Event get bigger by getting the Chamber involved.

Next he would like an update on the Township’s comprehensive plan as the State Senator has provided funding for same. Mayor MARX stated that the funding has not been appropriated as of yet, but he has been discussing it with Lee Rackus. Commissioner STAKES added that he feels the plan needs updating since the last time it was done was in 2005 and he feels issues need to be addressed such as data centers and hospitals.

Lastly, he would like to see legislation put into place prohibiting police working with ICE unless it’s under a warrant or federal law. President WARREN added that he would suggest asking the County for guidance so that we are not putting our taxpayers in any legal liability. Commission SNYDER would rather see discussions held with Chief Marks and the Mayor before spending money with having the Solicitor do research and formulate an ordinance.

Commissioner ATIYEH congratulated and welcomed the new Board members and is looking forward to working with them. Next, he verified with the Mayor that student government day will take place and Mayor Marx advised he will be reaching out to the school.

Commissioner CHRISTMAN stated he will be the liaison on the Zoning Hearing Board and asked that people volunteer as this Board is in need of members. He is also the Public Works liaison and encourages residents to email him with any concerns regarding pot holes etc. and he get it addressed.

Commissioner SNYDER advised that the Rec Comprehensive Plan will be before the Board next month. At that time, he would also like to discuss a possible recreation center and also the Fullerton building needing a hvac system.

President WARREN thanked Commissioner SLONAKER for his service as Board President and for his guidance, and also appreciates the Board members who are passionate about their issues.

Next, he advised that the roof on the Parkway Firehouse is almost complete and is mostly funded by the Ironton Rail Trail.

The Comprehensive Plan should be considered to be done since there are funds available and would suggest getting public input.

Treasurer KOREN stated that she submitted her close out reports to the Board. Tax bills will be coming out the end of February/beginning of March. Next, she advised that last year there were 741 unpaid garbage bills and this year there were 873 which amounts to \$293,000 not received and would like to find innovative ways to get those paid before going to Portnoff. One thing she would like to do is go from three installments to four. She also noted that there was a loss of \$293,000 of business privilege collected by

Berkheimer vs when the tax office collected it. President WARREN asked Deputy Mayor MEYERS to explain why the numbers are down. He has spoken with Berkheimer and they have indicated that there has been a 10% increase in the number of licenses and there was an increase in \$93,000. There were approximately 180 businesses that had licenses that did not file a return and added to that there were 100 businesses that didn't get a license and did not file a return as well. Berkheimer is trying to get that revenue as they have sent out second notices in November. Deputy Mayor MEYERS is waiting to get a report from them after they go through their files and if necessary, matters will then be taken to the next level as they do have an in-house legal department that can file citations. On another note, Commissioner STAKES questioned Treasurer KOREN whether information he saw was correct that the Tax Office was closed before the holiday closure. Treasurer KOREN stated that they were not closed at all this past year.

Mayor MARX gave kudos to the Police Department for the One Maryland Circle fire. They did a phenomenal job in getting the residents out of the building safely. Great job to the Fire Department personnel who got the fire under control quickly and without a major catastrophe. He also thanked all the outside agencies that played a role in this matter. Special thanks to Deputy Chief Bilder as he also works for the school district and was able to gain access to the school to set up a Red Cross Shelter. Also, thanks to the Townships Public Works Department who also played a roll as they took care of providing salt since it was a cold snowy evening and also helped get the evacuees to the high school safely and EMA EMA played an important roll as well.

Next, Mayor MARX advised that the surveying work is near completion on Water Street. It will be given to the Traffic Engineer to come up with a plan.

Mayor then announced that the Cementon vandalism that occurred last year has been solved. The Township Detectives extracted prints and found that they matched a person already in custody at Lehigh County Prison and are seeking full restitution. Mayor gave thanks to Senator Miller and Representative McNeill for the following: a \$500,000 LSA grant which will purchase a paver for our Public Works Department; a \$300,000 grant for the MacArthur Road Southern Corridor study; a \$20,000 grant was also obtained to continue the Fullerton Rec Center study. DNCR also granted \$272,300 for the paving of the IRT. Chestnut Street barn in complete and a fresh repaint will be done in spring.

Lastly, he thanked the men and woman of the Police & Fire Departments for all the thankless things they do. They put themselves in harms way everyday and is eternally grateful.

President WARREN congratulated Chief Marks on his award and also clarified that he does support the police department and it's good to have healthy discussions and he does rely on the Chief's input. We stand by our police and fire departments.

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION – Commissioner ATIYEH moved, seconded by Commissioner SNYDER to adjourn the meeting at 9:38 PM.