



1. Pledge of Allegiance Recited

2. Roll Call

Elected Officials:

Helen Hlahol, President
Scott Robinson, Vice President
Deborah Colgan
Marie Kelso (via phone)
Diane Lanahan
Anna Langer
Shawn Ratti
Peggy Walsh
Gary Wallace, Mayor

Borough Admin/Officials:

Jim Dillon, Interim Borough Manager
Scott Holbert, Solicitor
Rich Ciampa, Chief of Police
Virginia Cyphers, Assist. Borough Secretary

Mr. Holbert reported prior to tonight’s meeting Council met in executive session where two items of litigation were discussed, and the police collective bargaining agreement negotiations were discussed.

3. Community Announcements/Presentations

- a. The Borough received a grant in the amount of \$400,000 through the DCED Local Share Account for the Morrisville Fire Department Light Rescue/High Water Vehicle.

4. Community Outreach

Board Openings:

- a. Nominations: **Morrisville Municipal Authority** - (1) 5-year appointment, expiring 12/31/30.
Letters of interest: Roy Snare (re-appointment) and William A. Foote III
Nomination of Roy Snare made by Ms. Colgan.
Nomination of William A. Foote III made by Ms. Kelso.
Motion to appoint William A. Foote III passes by roll call vote 4-4 with the mayor breaking the tie.
(Votes for William A. Foote III: Ms. Hlahol, Ms. Kelso, Ms. Lanahan and Mr. Robinson. Votes for Roy Snare: Ms. Colgan, Ms. Langer, Mr. Ratti and Ms. Walsh)
- b. Nominations: **Civil Service Commission** – (1) 6-year alternate appointment, expiring 12/31/31.
Letter of interest: Rebecca Guzman
Nomination of Rebecca Guzman was made by Ms. Walsh.
Motion to appoint Rebecca Guzman passes by voice vote 8-0.

5. Council Discussion Items

Mr. Ratti stated he sent an email to council regarding adding items to the agenda tonight. He does not see the (4) additional motions.

Motion for an amendment to add action items E to H to tonight’s agenda. Item E, motion to post and advertise the position of part-time head librarian for the Morrisville Free Library. Item F, motion to establish a consistent procedure for nomination of expiring committee items and sufficient timeline for residents to submit their letters of interest. Item G, motion to move public comment for non-agenda items to the beginning of the meeting after special presentation for all borough council meetings. Item H, motion to establish a committee and search for a borough manager.

Motion made by Mr. Ratti and seconded by Ms. Walsh. *Discussion took place.*



Motion passes by roll call vote 5-3. (Nay votes: Ms. Hlahol, Ms. Kelso, and Mr. Robinson)

Mr. Ratti spoke about appointment of special counsel. Can I make a motion to add appointment of special solicitor to the February meeting?

Mr. Holbert stated we cannot do that for that; it is a future meeting.

Ms. Colgan spoke about the validity of the EDC appointments last month, they were made for four years, EDC terms are three years. They were also appointed very early; these appointments expire in January and normally are made on the month that they expire - confused and doesn't know how you can appoint them to a four-year term when they are only three.

Mr. Holbert stated we can correct term years. Appointments being done in December are appropriate. Spoke about other municipalities and the County appoint in December. Spoke about correcting issues with term dates (also discussed in November or December meeting). They should all be annual appointments with an expiration date of either the last day of the year (December 31st) or the day before the first Monday of the year and appointments should be calendar year. *Discussion took place regarding appointments.*

6. **Engineer Report/Gilmore & Associates, Jacob Rigg** –DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund grants awarded to Morrisville Borough. The first is for the **N. Pennsylvania Ave and Trenton Ave traffic signal** modification project (\$182,686 – no match) in addition to the PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund has (\$377,805 has a \$113,342 match) covering the \$600,000 project cost. The second project that was awarded is for the **S. Pennsylvania Ave Traffic Calming Improvements** anticipated award is \$813,472 with no match requirement and proceeding with design and construction. **2026 Road Program** bids are due January 30th estimated cost \$2,000,000 for 6.39 miles of road in Wards 3 and 4. The **Manor Park Senior Center Parking Lot**; joint project with the County bids due February 9th. Grant funding is a total of \$706,421; (Community Development Block Grant \$415,700 and \$290,000.00 is from the county's funds). **Police Sallyport Project** wrapping up some punch list items and cameras. *Discussion took place.*
7. **Borough Manager Report/Mr. James Dillon** – no report.
8. **Solicitor Report/Scott Holbert** – spoke about motion earlier to add a few things to the agenda that I was going to talk about why they were not put on the agenda. Pursuant to the **borough code, Borough Manager is responsible for creating the agenda**, he determines the order, he determines the items on there. With regard to some of the specific items, there's issues with it. **For the first one, part-time head librarian. Your borough manager outside of the police and himself is responsible for hiring all borough employees** other than the police department, the police chief, and the borough manager, which is the only involvement employment council has. It is his decision whether that be a part-time or a full-time position, he is exploring that right now. It is not included on the agenda because it is not in your purview to direct him to hire someone specifically or advertise this. Some past managers have put advertisements on. We have recommended to them that it was not necessary because again, it was in their purview. There are other municipalities where the manager is not the hiring authority council is, the board of supervisors are. So that is why there's different things in different places. But in this case, this one was not included because it is **the manager who creates the agenda and it is his prerogative to hire this position.**

Ms. Hlahol stated borough code states that council does not get involved in hiring or firing of individuals.



Mr. Holbert continued outside of the police department. **Motion to establish a consistent procedure.** We have that policy now; you might not like it; you establish a consistent procedure. The concern with that is you are going to talk about it, but what is that procedure going to be? If you are going to vote on it, you need that written down how that is going to come about. **For the third one, manager sets the agenda,** it is his responsibility to create it. So, if you wanted to change the order that he is doing and have him do a specific order, you would need an ordinance amendment to do that, it cannot just be a simple motion. **The last one, again, in your purview, but we just appointed a manager last week,** two weeks ago. If you choose to move forward with it, that is your prerogative.

Ms. Hlahol stated we do not do committees to hire; all eight people are involved and make the decision on the hiring process. Having a committee to search for a borough manager, not really quite sure how because as Scott Holbert said, we just appointed the borough manager and as far as I know, he did not put in a letter of resignation, correct? Are you going to fire him? What are you going to do because he has been appointed? These items were not included because they should not have been.

9. **Police Chief's Report/Chief Ciampa** spoke about the five successful truck details. Code Blue, if overnight shelter needed accommodations available at Woodside Church in Yardley. 2025 was a challenging but successful year. 2026 focus: things we could not do last year like training and some new ideas, community outreach and programs that are going to be very beneficial to the community and police department. One officer is CPR certified and first aid instruction, in-house courses and become more efficient and cost effective. Focus on our policy manual review. *Discussion took place.*

10. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Council Meeting Minutes from 12/16/25.
- b. Approval of Bill List from 12/01 to 12/31/25 in the amount of \$545,606.30.
- c. Approval of the Borough to co-sponsor and waive event fees in lieu of tree planting for Earth Day festivities with iKalpulli Tlalhuiztilli (Tlal-wui-zilli), Hummingbirds of the Earth. The event takes place on Saturday, April 18 from 10am to 4pm at Colvin's Ferry Park. John Later to coordinate tree planting.
- d. Approval of reappointing Curtin & Heefner, LLP as Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor at a rate of \$165.00 per hour.

Motion made by Mr. Robinson and seconded by Ms. Lanahan.

Discussion took place. **Motion** carried by voice vote 8-0.

11. Action Items

- a. Motion to Adopt Robert's Rules of Order as the governing rules of all Morrisville Borough Council Meetings.
Motion made by Ms. Walsh and seconded by Mr. Ratti.
Don Rice - Stockham Ave stated a conflict between Robert's Rules of Order and the Sunshine Act. He proposed the motion to use Robert's Rules of Order be amended to include phrasing that the Sunshine Act will always supersede Robert's Rules of Order procedures.
Jane Burger - W. Maple Ave stated Robert's Rules of Order have been the parliamentary procedures for this borough council at least 40 years. Borough code and other state laws always take precedence where there is a conflict with Robert's Rules.
No discussion took place. **Motion** carried by voice vote 8-0.
- b. Motion to reopen the 2026 budget.
Discussion between Ms. Walsh and Solicitor regarding motion procedure.



Motion made by Ms. Colgan and seconded by Ms. Langer.

Ms. Walsh: Motion to amend the motion to read Motion to amend the 2026 borough budget per section 1311 of the borough code so that the required 10-day inspection of proposed amended budget be provided to the public and to enable adoption of the amended budget by February 15th 2026.

Motion made by Ms. Walsh and seconded by Ms. Colgan.

Discussion took place. **Motion** to amend carried by voice vote 7-1. (Nay vote being Ms. Lanahan)

Kathy Panzitta – Hillcrest Ave spoke about items on the agendas that happen out of order. Spoke about her request for the Borough Budget and inquired about the sinking fund.

Rebecca Guzman – Resident spoke about concerns with the 2026 budget focus on Police Department. Spoke about crime in her complex asked council to reopen and discuss the 2026 budget.

Jane Burger – W. Maple Ave spoke about budget and having a balanced budget. This is a balanced budget, you have the revenues needed to cover all of the costs and do not reopen the budget. Lot for new people to learn about budgeting.

Gary Taylor – Hamilton Blvd spoke about police officers' salary is lower than surrounding areas. He does not see any problem reopening the budget for discussion. He asked about interest rates and 3% and wants more aggressive way to invest – there are ways.

Discussion took place. **Motion** to reopen the 2026 budget failed by roll call vote 4-4 with the mayor breaking the tie. (Nay votes: Ms. Hlahol, Ms. Kelso, Ms. Lanahan, Mr. Robinson, Mayor Wallace)

- c. Motion to renew the 2026 service agreement with Tom Josiah Consulting, LLC to assist with Borough Accounting at a rate of \$135 per hour.

Motion made by Mr. Robinson and seconded by Ms. Lanahan.

No discussion took place. **Motion** carried by voice vote 8-0.

- d. Motion to approve the Application for Payment #2 for the Borough Police Sallyport Construction project, in the amount of \$33,222.96, to R&S General Contractors, Inc. as recommended by the Borough Engineer.

Motion made by Mr. Ratti and seconded by Ms. Langer.

No discussion took place. **Motion** carried by voice vote 8-0.

- e. Motion to post and advertise the position of part-time head librarian for the Morrisville Free Library.

Motion made by Mr. Ratti and seconded by Ms. Lanahan.

Solicitor explained this motion is against Borough Code and means nothing. *Discussion took place.*

Connie Beadle – Resident asked everyone to use their microphone and spoke about hiring a new librarian and questions why need a study. Sorry the vote went against opening the budget.

Don Rice – Resident spoke again about adding a motion where residents don't have the opportunity to come in for public comment – violating Sunshine Act.

Further discussion took place. **Motion** failed by roll call vote 4-4 with the mayor breaking the tie. (Nay votes: Ms. Hlahol, Ms. Kelso, Ms. Lanahan, Mr. Robinson, Mayor Wallace)

- f. Motion to establish a consistent procedure for notification of expiring committee terms and sufficient time for residents to submit letters of interest.

Motion made by Ms. Hlahol and seconded by Mr. Robinson.

Discussion took place. **Motion** failed by roll call vote 4-4 with the mayor breaking the tie. (Nay votes: Ms. Hlahol, Ms. Kelso, Ms. Lanahan, Mr. Robinson, Mayor Wallace)

- g. Motion to move public comment period on non-agenda items to the beginning of the meeting after special presentations at all borough council meetings.

Motion made by Ms. Hlahol and seconded by Mr. Robinson. *Discussion took place.*

Solicitor reiterated Borough Manager who works with Council President on agenda.

Gary Taylor – Hamilton Blvd stated the reason this is being asked is because for years the public comment was always at the beginning of the meeting. People have to wait until 9:00 to speak.



Don Rice – Crown St. talked about public comment so I can make my comment and go home. I shouldn't have to wait to make my comment.

Asher Roth – Stockham Ave stated a lot of the responsibility is doled to Mr. Dillon. Feels council should discuss the budget. His family goes to the library every Wednesday. Asked if there was a vision for Morrisville to move forward, let us work together on a vision.

Discussion took place. Motion failed by roll call vote 4-4 with the mayor breaking the tie. (Nay votes: Ms. Hlahol, Ms. Kelso, Ms. Lanahan, Mr. Robinson, Mayor Wallace)

- h. Motion to establish a committee to search for a borough manager.

Motion made by Ms. Hlahol and seconded by Ms. Walsh.

Discussion took place. Motion failed by roll call vote 4-4 with the mayor breaking the tie. (Nay votes: Ms. Hlahol, Ms. Kelso, Ms. Lanahan, Mr. Robinson, Mayor Wallace)

12. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

1. Christopher Zawodniak – Chambers St. spoke about America's 250th anniversary this year, our nation's semi quincentennial. Morrisville Historical Society has several activities planned this year in honor of this anniversary with a kickoff on January 31st at 2:00 pm at Summerseat. Asked council to assist the Historic Society with approval to use Patriots Park in the celebration and for other community events and to observe and implement the 250th directive established by Congress.
2. Margaret Zawodniak – Chambers St. thanked Helen, Mr. Dillon, and the mayor for their visit to Summerseat. Talked about events and received funding from the Bucks County Tourism and a mini grant from the Bucks 250th to help.
3. Linda Myer – Resident thanked council for adding her to the library board. Spoke about a grant for a summer program for early childhood and early readers called Play and Grow. Spoke about employee who applied for grants and asks borough assistance from the borough.
4. Don Rice – Crown St. stated he wanted to set a personal record of four comments in one meeting. He thanked everyone for listening and he appreciates it. It has been a long meeting, and he is looking forward for the motion to adjourn.
5. Gary Lee Taylor – Hamilton Blvd. congratulations to the newly elected Council members. Spoke about the December 9th, 2025 Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania Borough of Pottstown ruling and Ordinance #1019.

Scott Holbert spoke about the Pottstown case. The courts ruled on the procedure in which Pottstown was operating its rental inspection ordinance. We are not in the same position that Pottstown was, this was based off not the Fourth Amendment, but the Pennsylvania Constitution, said it was legal under citing other cases, legal under the Fourth Amendment, but the Pennsylvania Constitution allows for stricter protections. They were improperly getting administrative search warrants. We do not do that and will not be doing, but there are some minor changes that we are looking at as this case, I would expect, goes to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Just know the rental ordinance, the inspection program was constitutional, it was the way Pottstown was enforcing it and getting into homes. We are only doing ours with the permission obviously.

6. Mary Hrenda – Resident spoke about the unpleasant council meeting and council is supposed to work together. She thinks it is refreshing there are new council members because previous council secretive and not open with the residents. Stated we do not need a study for the library.

13. **Mayor Comments** – spoke about when he was a resident at a council meeting, hopes we can get over this hump and work together. I am willing to do it, but it cannot be one-sided, has to come together completely.



Spoke about the cold and storms, looking out for one another, especially elderly residents, ensure sidewalks are cleared for safety. New council members, welcome aboard; important to understand the complexities of governance. Spoke about the tax reduction of ten mils providing relief to our residents. It was suggested to reopen the budget and increase taxes with concerns about funding and loans. Our current loans have favorable interest rates and managing debt responsibility can benefit the borough's growth. Our goal is to keep Morrisville affordable while ensuring long-term sustainability. Let us continue to work together, keep an open dialogue, and keep the best interest of our residents at heart.

14. Council Member Comments

Ms. Hlahol: the easter egg committee met and looking for candy donations. The Easter Egg Hunt will be on April 4th. You can bring candy donations to Borough Hall, and the staff will give them to the committee.

Ms. Lanahan: reiterate what the mayor said about the snow. People are lucky our borough does not enforce code because a lot of sidewalks still have snow. We are a walking district; our children walk to school and sidewalks do not have a shovel-width wide cleared. We need to do better, help our neighbors who are older who cannot get out. I shoveled snow today and the sun melted what was left that I could not get up. Let us be mindful and try to help people that really need help.

Mr. Ratti: thanked the Mayor and Diane for their comments about the snow. Spoke about importance of snow shoveling and sidewalks. There is a lot going on up here and new things and there is always going to be a rough patch in the beginning. Do not presume we do not know a thing or two because we are new, a lot of us have taken training beforehand. Know deep down we are fully committed to wanting to do what is best for the town. We might have different ideas on how but the intention and objective are the same.

Ms. Walsh: gave a shout out to public works, walked their dog on the levy and amazed at what a great job shoveling the steps along the levy, keeping the borough streets plowed. They are doing a fabulous job.

Ms. Lanahan: are we going to have a snow emergency this weekend?

Mayor Wallace: Something I am reviewing, especially after snow totals. We will probably know more tomorrow, and I will get with the Chief and Mr. Dillon and put a message out just like last year.

Ms. Lanahan: If you need a place to get cars off the street, I have a long driveway people are welcome to park there. It helps me not shovel as much; it's a dual purpose.

Ms. Colgan: Knows this is a business meeting; wants to work together and spoke about opportunities to discuss items and what we are hearing from the public. Spoke about needing time to discuss, maybe special meeting. Additional items we thought were important even though we do not want to add items at the last minute. When is that opportunity if this is our only opportunity every month?

Ms. Hlahol: stated there is an item five, council discussion items.

Ms. Colgan: asked but if we want to vote on it?

Ms. Hlahol: stated then it waits until the next month.

Ms. Colgan: good if we had committee meetings where people talked, so we can learn to work together and understand each other. This setting is not going to get us anywhere, 4-4- and the mayor is breaks tie.

Ms. Hlahol: Debby, you want to work with us, but we had a three and a half hour meeting with Mr. Dillon, you asked the same questions, executive session you asked the same questions, then you come here and ask the same questions it seems no matter what the answer is, you just want to push your agenda. We were going to discuss the items Shawn had asked for in the email because they had to do with borough code, but you guys put it on Facebook "we were shut down". When I see that on Facebook, how do you expect us to work together as one big group? Meeting adjourned.

15. Adjournment at 9:45 p.m.