

PHOENIXVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

7:00 PM

MINUTES

(Minutes approved by Borough Council on July 8, 2025)

I. Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence

II. Roll Call – Borough Manager

Mr. Ewald, President	Present
Ms. Burckley, Vice President	Present
Mr. Carminito	Present
Ms. Dugan	Present
Mr. Kirkner	Present
Mr. Moore	Present
Mr. Strenfel	Present
Mr. Weiss	Present
Mayor Urscheler	Present
Mr. Krack, Borough Manager	Present
Ms. Getzfread, Asst. Borough Manager	Present
Chief Marshall, Police Chief	Present
Mr. Denlinger, Solicitor	Present

III. Public Comment

Barbara Cohen, President of the Schuylkill River Heritage Center (SRHC). She provided her background and explained the programs available at Schuylkill River Heritage Center in the Foundry. She provided the history of the Phoenix Wheel and how the wheel was returned to the SRHC. She is hopeful the Council will agree to move forward with the wheel installation by June of 2026.

Josh Gould, resident. He stated this Saturday, June 14, 2025, grand reopening of the Historical Society of Phoenixville’s Museum and the Annual Strawberry Festival.

Chris DeVol, resident. He stated it has been amazing to sit on the Board of the SRHC and voting to purchase the wheel to return it to Phoenixville. He thanked the Council for getting the reconstruction to this point. He stated he thought the project was dead in the water and he feels there is no better place than at the French Creek Trail and right next to Borough Hall.

Mike Kajak, property owner. He shared his excitement in knowing that we are on the cusp of erecting the oldest Phoenix Wheel, and he thanked the Council, Borough Staff and the Board Members for their hard work and dedication to the Phoenix Wheel project.

Jan Swarr, resident. She stated that as a tour guide at the Foundry they have been discussing the Wheel project with visitors and students. She stated the location of the Wheel, and its height makes you realize everyone who comes into Phoenixville is going to see the wheel in all its glory.

IV. Presentations

A. 2024 Audit – Dale Umbenhauer, Maille, LLP.

Mr. Dale Umbenhauer, Audit Principle for Maille, LLP. presented the 2024 Audit of the Borough's Financial position.

B. Motion to accept the 2024 Audit as presented.

Ms. Burckley made a Motion to accept 2024 Audit as presented. Seconded by Ms. Dugan.

Motion Approved 8-0.

V. Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of May 13, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes.

B. Items from Historical and Architectural Review Board.

1. Motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for signage at 16 Gay Street.

2. Motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for signage at 28 S. Main Street.

C. Items from Personnel and Public Safety Committee.

1. Motion to reappoint Jennifer Chandler to the Tree Advisory Commission for a new term expiring June 30, 2030.

2. Motion to appoint Heidi Warning to the Tree Advisory Commission for a term expiring June 30, 2029.

3. Motion to authorize the Civil Service Commission to begin the process of developing an Eligibility List for Full-Time and Part-Time Fire Fighter for the Phoenixville Fire Department.

D. Items from Parks and Recreation Committee.

1. Motion to approve a Temporary Community Event Application for the Blobfest 5K, 10K, and Half Marathon on the Schuylkill River Trail on Sunday, July 13, 2025, from 7:00 am to 11:00 am. Conditioned upon receipt of all fees and valid Certificate of Insurance naming Borough as Additional Insured.
2. Motion to approve a Temporary Community Event Application for the Pennsylvania Avenue Block Party on Saturday, June 21, 2025, from 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Pennsylvania Avenue to be closed between Callowhill Street and Paradise Street from 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Conditioned upon receipt of all fees and valid Certificate of Insurance naming Borough as Additional Insured.
3. Motion to authorize Staff to develop a land development plan for the Taylor Street Park and MDM Preserve.

E. Items from Finance Committee.

1. Motion to approve the 2025 pre-paid dated 4/1/2025 - 4/30/2025 in the amount of \$1,349,871.74.
2. Motion to approve the 2025 pre-paid Credit Card Statement dated 4/1/2025 - 4/30/2025 in the amount of \$55,167.03.
3. Motion to approve the 2025 pre-paid ACH dated 4/30/2025 in the amount of \$55,804.46.
4. Motion to approve Budget Increase 2025-10 from General Fund Balance in the amount of \$5,310.77 to Code Enforcement (Vehicle Maintenance) to replace the transmission in Truck I-7.
5. Motion to approve Budget Increase 2025-11 from General Fund Balance in the amount of \$12,000 to Fire Protection (Vehicle Maintenance) for repairs to the Ladder Truck.

Ms. Burckley made a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Mr. Weiss.

Motion Approved 8-0.

VI. Communications/Council Participation

Ms. Burckley thanked staff for all of the coordination and hard work that was needed for the events on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. She knows there was a lot of heavy lifting on the back end, and it shows that Phoenixville is a great place to live.

Mr. Ewald stated that every department was utilized and implemented to ensure many

successful events over the course of five days. The teamwork of the Borough Staff is astonishing, and he appreciates all the hard work the departments put into every event with the tens of thousands of visitors that come through the Borough.

VII. Mayor's Report

Mayor Urscheler stated he echoes Ms. Burkley and Mr. Ewald's comments, and thank our incredible Borough Staff, our Police Department, Fire, EMS, and all of our Borough departments for their extraordinary work. During the past week we hosted the Clydesdales on Thursday, June's First Friday and Pride Fest on Saturday. It has really been an exceptional magnifying glass of the extraordinary work that our entire Borough team does, especially Ms. Getzfread, Ms. Logan, Ms. Strout, and the entire team that makes that possible. He reported on the events occurring in the Borough including the Annual Dogwood, the Chamber of Commerce hosted a Chamber Breakfast to have conversations around the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority, and the VFW and American Legion put on an extraordinary Memorial Day Celebration at Reeves Park. He extended his congratulations to all of our Middle school and High school students from the Phoenixville Area School District as well as Renaissance Academy, who have either moved up or who have graduated. He thanked Boy Scout Troop 58 and J.D. Malone who placed a flag drop-off box outside of Borough Hall so you can properly retire a flag.

VIII. Appointments

- A. Call for Residents interested in being appointed to various Boards and Commissions.

Mr. Ewald encouraged residents to continue to apply for openings on the various Boards and Commissions and stated openings can be found on the Borough's Website.

IX. New Business

- A. Motion to not accept Request for Proposals received for the Phoenixville Potable Reuse Feasibility Study.

Ms. Burckley made a Motion to not accept Request for Proposals received for the Phoenixville Potable Reuse Feasibility Study. Seconded by Mr. Moore.

Motion Approved 8-0.

- B. Review ZHB Application from 220 3rd Avenue requesting special exception approval to change the existing office use to a tattoo and piercing studio use, to be heard at the June 18, 2025, Zoning Hearing Board Meeting.

Mr. Denlinger explained the current use is a nonconforming office use, so they have requested a special exception to change from the existing nonconforming

use to the newly proposed nonconforming use. Changes from one nonconforming use to another nonconforming use is permitted where the proposed nonconforming use satisfies the elements of our Zoning Ordinance, and specifically for this application, proving that this use would be more appropriate for the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming use. He stated that he doesn't see anything unique about this beyond what the Zoning Hearing Board typically sees.

Mr. Ewald asked if they have provided background on the hours and days of operation.

Mr. Denlinger stated that is information typically provided at the Zoning Board hearing.

Mr. Ewald asked if the location is one block off of Main Street across from the Parochial School and behind St. Ann's Church.

Mr. Denlinger confirmed that is correct and the Council is not required to take any action on this item unless Council believes that it would like to.

Ms. Dugan asked if this use is appropriate for the neighborhood, if they have parking and will the hours be acceptable for the area.

Mr. Denlinger explained that is the exact question that the Zoning Hearing Board needs to examine and the applicant will have to put on testimony before the Zoning Hearing Board to prove its case, and interested parties from the community are able to participate in that hearing, and if they so desire, become parties to the matter and present evidence whether in support or against it.

X. Public Hearings

XI. Resolutions/Ordinances

- A. Motion to adopt a Resolution acknowledging Randall Morin for his 15 years of service on the Tree Advisory Commission.

Ms. Burckley made a Motion to adopt a Resolution acknowledging Randall Morin for his 15 years of service on the Tree Advisory Commission. Seconded by Mr. Strenfel.

Motion Approved 8-0.

Mr. Ewald read aloud the Resolution for the record and thanked Mr. Morin for his service to the Borough.

B. Motion to adopt an ordinance amendment to Chapter 15 “Motor Vehicles”.

Ms. Burckley made a Motion to adopt an ordinance amendment to Chapter 15 “Motor Vehicles”. Seconded by Mr. Strenfel.

On the Question:

Mr. Denlinger stated the ordinance amendment was advertised by the Pottstown Mercury on May 27, 2025, and was also sent to the Pottstown Mercury and Chester County Law Library for public inspection on May 14, 2025.

Mr. Kirkner stated this amendment adds the parking lot at the Recreation Center. In the morning, the lot on the Franklin Avenue side is full of cars of employees and contractors to Franklin Commons and he is glad to see the lot will be used for its intended purpose.

Mr. Ewald stated there is no shortage of programs at the Recreation Center and the parking is needed.

Mr. Moore asked how the new process will be established to enforce the parking lot use. He asked for confirmation if signage will be installed.

Mr. Ewald asked if this would be handled by the Police or Parking Department.

Chief Marshall stated there will be signage and he will work with Ms. Gibbons on the process, or they can contact us directly and the Police or Parking can enforce it.

Mr. Moore stated the ordinance also addresses parking at the parks. He asked if there have been any issues with vehicles being parked overnight.

Mr. Ewald confirmed that there are several parks that are being used for private vehicle parking overnight and during park hours.

Mr. Moore stated he thinks it is important that when the Council adopts things like this that they be enforced and a presence is created that helps people understand this can't be done anymore.

Motion Approved 8-0.

XII. Reports of Committees, Boards, and Commissions

A. Historical and Architectural Review Board – Ms. Dugan

1. Motion to approve/deny the Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of existing shed and adding hardscaping at 381 Bridge Street.

Ms. Dugan made a Motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of existing shed and adding hardscaping at 381 Bridge Street. Seconded by Mr. Weiss.

On the Question:

Ms. Dugan stated the reason that she voted against this was only to bring it to the attention of the Council and to ensure that anyone interested could be made aware of the steps being taken.

Motion Approved 8-0.

B. Planning Commission - Mr. Moore

C. Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee – Mr. Kirkner

Mr. Kirkner reported a consistency review was done for a development in Charlestown on Whitehorse, which includes residential townhouses and apartments, 389 townhouses or 257 townhouses, plus 205 apartments. The intended location is the intersection of Whitehorse and Route 29, in the southern end of Charlestown Township, near where Charlestown, Tredyffrin, and East Whiteland come together there.

D. Recreation Board – Ms. Dugan

Ms. Dugan stated the 4th of July Fireworks and Family Trivia night will be on Saturday, July 5th from 5pm to 9pm. She reported on the upcoming camps and programs at the Recreation Center including youth summer camps, playground camp, yoga for all ages, Chester County Food Bank Mobile Market and Pickleball.

E. Tree Advisory Commission – Mr. Carminito

Mr. Carminito shared the commission sadness that Randy Morin is stepping away from the Tree Advisory Commission. Randy has played a very big role in all the work done for trees in the Borough and improvements to our urban canopy. The commission wants to thank him, and they hope to still see him around at our events. He reported that the commission continues to work through the tree planting list, maintaining the current list of tree removals that are recommended by the arborist and continuing to plan for the fall plantings.

F. Human Relations Commission – Ms. Burckley

Ms. Burckley reported the HRC meeting will be on June 11, 2025, at the Recreation Center instead of the first Wednesday of the month. She reported that

several members of the HRC attending a local meet and greet with HRC's from varying municipalities to share ideas for inclusion and resources.

XIII. Council Action referred from:

A. Personnel and Public Safety Committee – Ms. Burckley

1. Motion to authorize Staff to submit an application for seven (7) firefighters under the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant.

Ms. Burckley made a Motion to authorize Staff to submit an application for seven (7) firefighters under the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant. Seconded by Mr. Moore.

On the Question:

Ms. Dugan expressed her concerns with having to hire all seven (7) firefighters at one time and its impact on increased taxes in one year. She hopes the hiring can be budgeted as planned with two (2) employees over the next three years.

Mr. Ewald asked Chief Brazunas to come to the podium to explain the Grant Program.

Chief Brazunas read aloud from the grant guidelines. If the SAFER program were to accept our application, SAFER program funded firefighters begins when FEMA approves the application for an award. Under this activity the 36-month period performance automatically starts after 180-day recruitment period, regardless of whether the recipient had successfully hired the requested firefighters. In addition to that a staggering of the hiring over the period is permitted. However, the Borough won't have the ability to take full advantage of the funding on the reimbursement. He stated since joining the Borough an application has been submitted each year but with the removal of the requirement for matching funds more applications have been submitted and decreasing the chances of applications being awarded. He explained if the grant is awarded there would be no request for additional firefighters in addition to the ones included in the grant.

Ms. Dugan asked if the plan is still two (2) each year, and this has to be

done in 3 years would the need for the 7th hire be required or would the Borough just receive less of the grant funding with each years hires.

Chief Brazunas explained the thought process for seven (7) is to scale down the part-time element of the Fire Department. He stated the Borough does better than most places, but the part-time component for the Fire & EMS services is not great. With the exception of probably one (1) of our sixteen (16) part-timers, everybody else is working a full-time job so trying to fill those gaps is very difficult. The reason we arrived at seven (7) is because the SAFER grant is looking to establish a baseline. This includes three (3) platoons with four (4) staff per fire truck. Currently the department has five (5) positions filled within that system. The additional seven (7) hires will fill the three (3) platoons.

Ms. Dugan stated her last concern was that the department would request a third firefighter it will remain a request of two (2) per year over the next three (3) years.

Chief Brazunas confirmed the request would be for two (2) per year if the SAFER Grant application was not successful.

Motion Approved 8-0.

B. Parks and Recreation Committee – Mr. Moore

1. No action to report.

C. Policy Committee – Mr. Carminito

1. Motion to schedule and advertise an ordinance amendment to Chapter 13 “Licenses, Permits and General Business Regulations, Part 5.

Mr. Carminito made a Motion to schedule and advertise an ordinance amendment to Chapter 13 “Licenses, Permits and General Business Regulations, Part 5. Seconded by Mr. Weiss.

On the Question:

Mr. Moore offered his appreciation for the work by the Policy Committee and for them allowing him to have the opportunity to share his concerns with the original ordinance.

Mr. Carminito thanked the Staff as they put a lot of work into listening to

the feedback from the committee and the public. They came back with an ordinance that everyone was happy with.

Mr. Ewald stated it was a good collaboration between the Policy Committee and the busking community.

Motion Approved 8-0.

2. Motion to authorize Staff to send an ordinance amendment to Chapter 27 “Zoning” to the Borough Planning Commission, Chester County Planning Commission, and the Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee for review and comments in accordance with the Municipal Planning Code, upon completion by the Borough Solicitor of a legal review and revision thereof.

Mr. Carminito made a Motion to authorize Staff to send an ordinance amendment to Chapter 27 “Zoning” to the Borough Planning Commission, Chester County Planning Commission, and the Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee for review and comments in accordance with the Municipal Planning Code, upon completion by the Borough Solicitor of a legal review and revision thereof. Seconded by Mr. Moore.

On the Question:

Mr. Denlinger explained the Zoning Task Force has been working on the amendment to the overall Zoning Ordinance. He stated he is in the process of a legal review of the changes to ensure the defined terms are not in conflict between provision and that there are no unintended consequences of the proposed changes and he believes the review will be completed by the last week of June. With this motion the ordinance will then be sent to the Planning Commissions for their review. Once this is complete the ordinance will come back to the Council for scheduling and advertising in July in its final form.

Mr. Kirkner asked what the clock for reviews and when would it start.

Mr. Denlinger explained the review period is forty-five (45) days and that clock starts when the ordinance is sent out for review and that’s part of the reason the request for authorization is before the Council tonight to send it out before the next Council Meeting.

Mr. Moore asked if the ordinance will need to go before the Zoning Task Force again after the reviews.

Mr. Denlinger explained it depends on the reaction. The more significant the reaction, the more likely that we will need our planning consultants

and the Zoning Task Force to look at it again. To the extent that the comments are more minor, it's something that he can add without materially changing what the Zoning Task Force has sought to achieve. He stated he can do that without having a Zoning Task Force meeting.

Motion Approved 8-0.

D. Infrastructure/Technology/Transportation/Sustainability Committee – Mr. Weiss

1. No action to report.

E. Finance Committee – Ms. Dugan

1. Motion to award the Phoenix Wheel contract to Specialty Metals Welding & Fabrication, Inc, a COSTARS vendor in the amount of the Base Bid, Alternate Bid No. 2, Alternate Bid No. 3 and Alternate Bid No. 5 in the total amount of \$2,193,596.00, contingent upon funds being available and upon receiving authorization to award from all funding agencies.

Ms. Dugan made a Motion to award the Phoenix Wheel contract to Specialty Metals Welding & Fabrication, Inc, a COSTARS vendor in the amount of the Base Bid, Alternate Bid No. 2, Alternate Bid No. 3 and Alternate Bid No. 5 in the total amount of \$2,193,596.00, contingent upon funds being available and upon receiving authorization to award from all funding agencies. Seconded by Mr. Weiss.

Motion Approved 8-0.

2. Motion to approve the RVE Change of Scope #2 for the Phoenix Wheel project in the additional amount of \$53,313.00.

Ms. Dugan made a Motion to approve the RVE Change of Scope #2 for the Phoenix Wheel project in the additional amount of \$53,313.00. Seconded by Ms. Burckley.

Motion Approved 8-0.

3. Motion to approve an agreement substantially similar to the Amended and Restated Outgoing Loan Agreement for the Phoenix Wheel with the Schuylkill River Heritage Center, as may be negotiated and revised as deemed reasonable by the Borough Solicitor, and further authorizing Council President, Manager, and Solicitor to execute such amended and restated agreement and take any other action necessary to enter into this amendment and satisfy the terms and conditions thereof.

Ms. Dugan made a Motion to approve an agreement substantially similar

to the Amended and Restated Outgoing Loan Agreement for the Phoenix Wheel with the Schuylkill River Heritage Center, as may be negotiated and revised as deemed reasonable by the Borough Solicitor, and further authorizing Council President, Manager, and Solicitor to execute such amended and restated agreement and take any other action necessary to enter into this amendment and satisfy the terms and conditions thereof. Seconded by Ms. Burckley.

Motion Approved 8-0.

XIV. Public Comment

Barbara Cohen, President of the Schuylkill River Heritage Center. She thanked the Council and Borough Staff for making history come alive again. She stated it has been her goal for all these years to bring the oldest wheel back to its glory.

XV. Communications/Council Participation

Ms. Burckley thanked the public for joining us tonight and while she is sure it was for the Phoenix Wheel she encouraged the public to attend the meeting and engage with Borough Council. She stated that the Council members are happy to meet after the meeting to answer questions.

XVI. Staff Reports are in the packets.

- A. Manager
- B. Police
- C. Fire
- D. Planning and Codes
- E. Public Works
- F. Finance
- G. Human Resources
- H. Recreation

XVII. Adjournment

8:20 pm. Ms. Burckley made a Motion to Adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Weiss.

E. Jean Krack
Borough Manager

Transcribed by: Jennifer Logan
Administrative Assistant
June 2025