

**HARRIS TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2026**

Board Members in Attendance: Dennis Hameister, Chair
Frank Harden, Vice Chair
Nigel Wilson
Tracey Moriarty
Chris Murrell

Staff in Attendance: Mark Boeckel, Township Manager
Todd Shea, Zoning/Ordinance Enforcement Officer

Public in Attendance: Kent Baker, Planning Commission Chair
Beth Camerlengo, Parks & Recreation Chair
Bob Hoffman, Planning Commission Member
Diane Farr, Parks & Recreation Member
Greg Roth, Shade Tree Commission Member
Mike Camerlengo

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Hameister called the January 28, 2026 meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There were no minutes to approve at this meeting.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS:

There were no citizens present to discuss items not on the agenda.

4. NEW AGENDA ITEMS:

Pennsylvania Act 65 requires the posting of agendas on the Township website 24 hours before a meeting. Only emergency and de minimus items, and items for discussion only, can be added to the agenda by a majority vote of the Board of Supervisors.

If the Board has any items they wish to add to the agenda, they should discuss them at this time.

There were no new items to add to the agenda.

5. TOWNSHIP BUSINESS:

Since no one from the Shade Tree Commission was present at this time, the agenda was rearranged.

a. 2026 PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN:

This was not read at the meeting; however, was part of the agenda language.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee will present its 2025 accomplishments and its 2026 Work Plan. Copies of the 2025 accomplishments and the 2026 Work Plan were included in the packet.

Beth Camerlengo introduced herself and said she is the newly elected Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. She reviewed the 2025 accomplishments of the Committee. She reviewed the 2026 Work Plan with the Board.

Supervisor Moriarty said it is important to know who is responsible for parks maintenance and who is taking charge of this work to make sure it gets done. Supervisor Harden said his understanding was that CRPRA is working on MOUs with the various municipalities regarding maintenance. Mr. Boeckel said there have not been MOUs prepared yet for any of the municipalities. He believes Patton was a test case, but they have not approached us yet about putting together any MOUs for our parks. He said it was his understanding that the plan is to have MOUs specifying what they will maintain and to what extent. Mr. Boeckel said each park will have specificity. He said he hopes the MOUs will have some mapping involved that could identify target areas of what we expect CRPRA to maintain.

Vice Chair Harden suggested the Committee look into putting books with trail maps in the mini-libraries. He believes these books are free from the state.

Supervisor Murrell said he did not know if Ms. Camerlengo knows Kelly Anderson or not. He said she is resident who just got her Master Naturalist Certification through Clearwater Conservancy and she has a lot of interest in Yoder Preserve and doing a lot of work there. He said he did not know if it would be beneficial for him to get her in touch with the Committee. He said he frequents the preserve and it has so much potential but there is so much work. He said if there is someone in town looking for Master Naturalist credits, they could do something at the entrance to the preserve to earn these credits. Mr. Boeckel said he is not sure exactly which month the Committee will discuss Yoder Preserve on their work plan, but that would be a good time for Ms. Anderson to come to the meeting. He said that the Committee would be talking about what they plan to do over the next five years in that park and that would be a good time for her to share some of her ideas.

Supervisor Harden said benches along the trail in Yoder Preserve would be a good idea.

Diane Farr said the Committee is also looking into some signage for Yoder Preserve.

Supervisor Moriarty said instead of pamphlets for tree identification, would it be smarter to have QR codes since everyone has their phones with them. Ms. Camerlengo said that is an ongoing

discussion. She said they have people who are comfortable with just having the QR code but have also discussed having both. The group discussed the cost of printing pamphlets.

Chair Hameister thanked Ms. Camerlengo and the Committee for their report.

b. 2026 SHADE TREE COMMISSION WORK PLAN:

This was not read at the meeting; however, was part of the agenda language.

The Shade Tree Commission will present its 2025 accomplishments and its 2026 Work Plan. Copies of the 2025 accomplishments and the 2026 Work Plan were included in the packet.

Greg Roth reviewed the Shade Tree Commission's 2025 accomplishments. Mr. Roth reviewed the 2026 Work Plan.

In response to a question from Vice Chair Harden, Mr. Boeckel said we only order trees for sites that have been identified by the Commission, and a Commission member meets with the property owners regarding new trees. In response to a question from Chair Hameister, Mr. Boeckel said at this time Rockey Ridge streets are not our streets, so we do not plant trees on the streets in that development.

Chair Hameister thanked Mr. Roth for the update.

c. 2026 PLANNING COMMISSION WORK PLAN:

This was not read at the meeting; however, was part of the agenda language.

The Planning Commission will present its 2025 accomplishments and its 2026 Work Plan. Copies of the 2025 accomplishments and the 2026 Work Plan were in the packet.

Kent Baker, Planning Commission Chair, reviewed the 2025 accomplishments of the Planning Commission. He said the Commission and staff spent a lot of their time in 2025 working on the Village parking, uses and comprehensive planning. He explained the recommendation from the Commission on keeping two distinct areas – the Village core which we are calling “Village” and have recommended relaxing some of the zoning standards and regulations, changes to pervious/impervious coverages, lowering parking requirements, etc. and the second district is being called “Village Residential”. He said this district added properties along Academy Street and Pine Street.

Mr. Baker reviewed the 2026 Work Plan. He noted the first item on the Work Plan was the Village and Village Residential zoning districts. He noted the Commission took the term parking out of this because it is much more comprehensive than just parking. He said the Commission never really felt we have a parking problem. He said we need to discuss how we are going to do the public outreach and have some open houses where we can get some input from the property owners that are going to have to live with these ordinance changes.

Vice Chair Harden said he thought we already did something on the Village comprehensive planning. Mr. Boeckel said the Board did have a presentation from the Commission on this back in September of last year. He said at that time, the Board was satisfied with what the Planning Commission had done up to that point. He said the Board discussed getting public input on the changes. He said the thought was to probably do something similar to what we have done in the past – i.e. open houses either here or at the fire hall and invite the property owners to come in and if they can't make an open house, they could always come in and talk to staff. We would be explaining what the process was, what the recommendations are and then the Board would have some idea of what the public feels about what is being done. Vice Chair Harden asked if there would be a draft ordinance the Board could have before these meetings. Mr. Boeckel said the ordinances are already drafted. Mr. Boeckel said the question is whether the Board wants to have the input before they really start debating whether they like the ordinance or if they would like to debate it first and then have the public input. He said in the past, we have typically gotten the public input first. Vice Chair Harden said he thinks having the public input first is more helpful.

Mr. Baker said there are a lot of different aspects to this, so it is probably not going to be an easy thing to present to the general public or the property owners. The group discussed having two separate open houses or just sending a separate invite to owners of properties in both districts and having all the information shared at each open house so they understand how the Planning Commission came to this conclusion. Mr. Baker said he thinks it is a matter of showing them how we shifted this from one district to two districts.

Mr. Boeckel said the challenge with these open houses is that we don't have a planner, so it will be finding the time for staff to work on putting this together. He is hopeful we can get this done in the spring. He said staff could also prepare an online story map to allow residents to learn about the process and recommendations. . Mr. Boeckel said he is shooting for April or May, at the latest, to have these open houses.

Ms. Farr said having information available prior to a meeting is always helpful.

Chair Hameister thanked Mr. Baker for the update.

d. RESOLUTION 26-05 – ACCEPTING THE DEED OF DEDICATION FOR OPEN SPACE/PARKS:

Mr. Boeckel said the recently approved Lingle South Subdivision Plan included an offer to dedicate 1.540 acres of land to the Township for the purpose of providing a connection from Kaywood Park to Linden Hall Road and the Rockey Ridge development. The developer has prepared a deed to transfer the property to the Township.

Supervisor Murrell said he is excited that we got the connector running up to Linden Hall Road from Rockey Ridge. He said this was a missing piece and he's excited to have it.

Vice Chair Haren moved to approve Resolution 26-05, accepting the deed of dedication for open space/parkland. Supervisor Murrell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

e. CENTRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE:

Mr. Boeckel said at the January 12th Planning Commission meeting, Phill Becker volunteered to serve as the alternate representative to the Centre Regional Planning Commission. Jeff Duerr was appointed as the primary representative at the Board's January 5th meeting.

Vice Chair Harden moved to appoint Phill Becker as the alternate representative to the Centre Regional Planning Commission with a term ending December 31, 2027. Supervisor Moriarty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

f. CENTRE AREA CABLE CONSORTIUM REPRESENTATIVE:

Mr. Boeckel said at this year's organization meeting, the Board of Supervisors deferred appointment of a representative to the Centre Area Cable Consortium. The Region is nearing the time where the Comcast Franchise Agreement will need updated, so the Consortium will need to meet sometime in the next few months. Per the CACC Articles of Agreement, the representative needs to be a member of the Board.

Mr. Boeckel noted Cindy Hahn is retiring so she also wants to have this meeting to talk about the transition. He said he did not know when they plan to meet other than sometime in the next few months.

Supervisor Wilson moved to appoint Supervisor Murrell as the Township's representative to the Centre Area Cable Consortium. Supervisor Moriarty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

g. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE PENNDOT DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE:

As part of the State College Area Connector Project, PennDOT is creating a design review committee to address historic resources mitigation within the project area. PennDOT is asking for a representative from Harris Township to serve on this committee. They have also asked for representatives from other affected municipalities, the Centre County Historical Society, and other stakeholders. The Board should discuss the potential appointment to this Committee.

Supervisor Moriarty said she would like to do this.

Vice Chair Harden said he read this and the first thought he had was he was hoping to get someone who has some historical background on the valley coming up through that would have insight on some of the historical sites up through there. He said if Supervisor Moriarty wants to do this, he has no problem with that.

Chair Hameister moved to appoint Supervisor Moriarty to serve as the Township's representative to PennDOT's State College Area Connector Design Review Committee. Vice Chair Harden seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

h. ALLEGHENY STRATEGY PARTNERS PROPOSAL:

Mr. Boeckel said he is just introducing this tonight and if the Board would like to hear more about it, he will put it on the February agenda. He said over the past year, the Centre Region municipal managers have been meeting with Allegheny Strategy Partners (ASP) to discuss the potential development of legislative and policy proposals aimed at recovering municipal costs associated with high-volume visitation to the area. He said we have a very limited taxing structure from the state and some other parts of the state have done this but it is very limited. He said State College Borough has been looking into this and they invited us to also participate. The initiative could provide some revenues for our municipalities and also offset some of the costs that we can't recover when we have visitors.

He said this group is proposing to consult for a couple of months to assess support for legislative options and could eventually be taking those options to the state and lobbying on our behalf. He said they seem to believe there could be traction to amend the state code to allow the Centre Region municipalities to have additional taxes to recover costs related to visitors, such as hotel stays or alcohol.

He said at this point, it is just fact finding for the first couple of months. He said there is a cost to it so that is why at this point he is not asking the Board to even formally consider it because he does not have those numbers. He said the managers have talked about equitable ways to divide the costs.

Mr. Boeckel said at this point this is just a discussion to see if there is support locally.. Any potential amendments would need to be passed into legislation by the state. That would be the next step. Then, if that were to happen, the local municipalities would still have to decide whether or not to enact the tax. He said it is really just looking at ways to diversify our revenue streams because we don't necessarily have any way to offset some of the costs we have from all of the visitors that we get.

Mr. Boeckel said at this point it is a question of whether or not we want to be a partner in this consulting agreement. It is not a question that has to be answered tonight but he wanted to bring it to the Board's attention and get some initial feedback. They are hoping to get started on this agreement within the next couple of months.

Supervisor Moriarty said she would like to know more about the scope of this. Mr. Boeckel said right now it is a six month scope for this initial phase. We do not have a solid timeline for the next phase. Initially they had hoped to have all this done before the end of the current legislative session in 2026. He said that is not going to happen at this point. He said he believes there is a 30-day notice to be done and if at any point we decide we are done participating then we could be done after that 30-day notice. He said if we decide to get into this, it is not something we have to stick with for years and years.

It was the consensus of the Board to have Mr. Boeckel get more information on costs, proposal etc. and bring this back to them.

i. MEMORIAL DAY UPDATE:

This was not read at the meeting; however, was part of the agenda language.

The Township Manager will provide an update on the status of this year's Memorial Day events.

Mr. Boeckel said, as he understands this right now, the Boalsburg Village Conservancy is not intending to organize Memorial Day activities and the new Boalsburg Village Historical Society is. He said he wanted to make it clear that we would not be having two different groups asking to occupy the same space on the same day.

He said the way it has been explained to him is the Historical Society is moving forward with planning the events and the Conservancy is not. He said the Historical Society has submitted a request for funding for Memorial Day that is consistent with what the Board has set aside for the Conservancy. He will put this on the February agenda for the Board to consider. They are also asking for the money for Hometown Christmas as well. He said he was going to hold off on that request because there was some confusion on who was organizing that and what that money might be used for.

He said from what he is hearing from representatives from both groups, the Historical Society has the people resources needed to put Memorial Day together but the Conservancy still holds all the money from previous Memorial Days. He said he did not know if the new Historical Society, from a financial perspective, may ask for more help. At this point, they haven't. He said they have made it sound like they are pursuing grants and sponsorships. They are working on getting their non-profit status finalized so they can offer tax write-offs.

He said he just wanted to make the Board aware of the situation. One group has money the other group has the people and it doesn't seem like there is willingness to have reconciliation there or sharing those funds.

Vice Chair Harden said if he remembers correctly, the last time the Board saw the financials from the Conservancy, they had quite a bit of money in their account. The Board discussed the funds being held by the Conservancy. Supervisor Moriarty said she did not want to get involved with this from a Board perspective, but the bigger issue here is the Conservancy needs to figure out what they are going to do with the dedicated funds.

Ms. Farr said she did not know that this was an agenda item. She said the only thing she is comfortable in saying is that the Memorial Day group pulled out of the BVC. She said Mr. Boeckel discussed this with the Historical Society and if he is comfortable sharing why they pulled out, he could certainly share that.

Mr. Boeckel said he was not given any thorough, detailed explanation just that they no longer felt they could continue to operate and organize Memorial Day under the Conservancy and they felt it was in their best interest to establish their own group. He said they did not give him anything in great detail. He said in speaking with Dottie Yukish, she really didn't understand why they left.

Those present discussed where the vendors would get their permits from and if the Township would issue permits to the Conservancy or the Historical Society. Mr. Boeckel said the Township would register this as a special event. He said the Historical Society has already done this.

Mr. Boeckel said he spoke with both these groups and told them both that even though he hasn't spoken to the Board, as the Manager, the most important thing is that Memorial Day continues to happen. Mr. Boeckel said his point tonight was to let the Board know they would not be getting two different groups asking for the same thing. He said at this point, the group has only asked for the \$750 contribution and the cost of the ambulance from the Township for Memorial Day. Mr. Boeckel said this item will be on the Board's agenda in February.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Supervisors, Vice Chair Harden moved to adjourn. Chair Hameister adjourned the meeting at 8:27 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Boeckel, AICP
Township Secretary