HARRIS TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Meeting Minutes
October 12, 2026

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

Staff in Attendance: Mark Boeckel, Township Manager
Debbie Lang, Administrative Secretary- via Zoom

Public in Attendance: Joseph Merrill, State College Borough Chief of Police
Duane Musser
Dan McIntire
Todd Horsley, CATA CEO
Margy Boal, Harris Township CATA Representative
Kimberlee MacMullan, COG Finance Director
Rick Miller
Roy Love

Public in Attendance via Zoom: John Sepp, PennTerra Engineering

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Hameister called the regular meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Supervisor Murrell moved to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2026 public hearing and the September 14, 2026 regular meeting. Supervisor Moriarty seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Rick Miller said he is representing the Harris Township Fish & Game and wanted to clarify some comments that were made at the meeting last month, specifically that they were using the building as a short-term rental and they were serving meals out of the building. He said none of that is true. He was getting questioned in town because people saw this on C-Net and started hearing about this. He said it is members only. He said the club does not have a short-term rental, nor do they provide meals to the public. All meals served at the club are for members only. The Board thanked Mr. Miller for the clarification.

4. NEW AGENDA ITEMS:

Supervisor Moriarty wished to add an item to the agenda regarding the accident at the intersection of Boal Avenue and Church Street last Sunday afternoon. She said she would like to see the lights changed so all the lights remain red until pedestrians are no longer in the crosswalk. The Board did not feel this was an agenda item. Mr. Boeckel said since Boal Avenue is a state highway, we would need to get PennDOT approval for any change Mr. Boeckel said he briefly discussed this with our Traffic Engineer who said it is unlikely that PennDOT would allow this because of the impacts it would have to traffic. He said we could possibly look at increasing that delay and he said he would look at this with the Traffic Engineer to see what the options are.

Supervisor Moriarty said the second item she would like to add to the agenda is that she spoke with Rich Francke regarding the individual costs each municipality is paying for maintenance of municipal parks. He advised her a letter would be needed from the Board to the Executive Committee. Mr. Boeckel said this would be an item for discussion under the COG Committee Reports rather than an agenda item.

5. TOWNSHIP BUSINESS:

a. <u>2027 POLICE BUDGET:</u>

Chief Merrill provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Board. He briefly reviewed the department's mission statement and objectives and strategies for 2027. He reviewed calls for service in the Township and Part 1 and Part 2 crimes. He reviewed traffic enforcement programs and targeted enforcement locations. He also reviewed crash statistics and locations. He discussed projected revenues and expenses for 2027. The Chief recommended the Township contract for 76 hours of service per week at an hourly rate of $139.56 per hour. He recommended those hours be split as follows: 21 hours for scheduled patrol, 20 hours for traffic/selective enforcement, 23 hours for complaint response and specific assignments and 12 hours for detective and community relations/crime prevention services. The Township currently contracts for 76 hours of service per week at a rate of $141.16 per hour.

Dan McIntire from Roundhill Road said he noticed that no part of the mission statement references the Commonwealth or the Constitution of the United States that you are going to adhere to. He also observed that in the second slide discussing objectives and strategies, the word crime does not appear anywhere, and he wondered if there is a reason for that. Chief Merrill said these are the objectives and strategies for the actual budget and obviously they are still responding to calls and fighting crime. Mr. McIntire also said the numbers on the crash data slide do not total 85. Chief Merrill said he would have to check with his records staff. He said it is possible that there are other crashes that don't fit in those categories. Mr. McIntire also stated depreciation is not a cash expense. Chief Merrill said the Borough has a separate account that is called the capital depreciation fund. He said this is a finance department, not the police department, and theyhave a separate line item for depreciation. In response to a question from Mr. McIntire, Chief Merrill said this is the capital fund for long-term expenses.

Vice Chair Harden said every year, we talk about our hours and where the department breaks them down and we have been pretty good with that. However, we have had a lot of resident input on speed limits, and most of them occur on Main Street. He said he knows it is hard to do to get the sight distance needed for enforcement but sometimes just more visibility would go a long way. Mr. Boeckel said there had been vascar lines on West Main Street and he told the Chief if they need touched up or if there are some issues where vegetation as grown up, let the Township know and we could take care of that. Chief Merrill said these are certainly things they can work with the Township on.

Chair Hameister thanked Chief Merrill for his presentation.

b. HAWK RIDGE LOT CONSOLIDATION MINOR SUBDIVISION PLAN:

Mr. Boeckel summarized this minor subdivision plan proposing to combine the two lots at the corner of South Academy Street and Emma Court, vacant lots created by a previous subdivision approved in the last few years. Both lots have the same owner, and a house is to be proposed once the lots are combined.

Vice Chair Harden moved to approve the Hawk Ridge Lot Consolidation Minor Subdivision Plan contingent upon satisfactory completion of comments from the September 22, 2026, letter of the Township Engineer and the October 2, 2026, letter of the Zoning Officer. Supervisor Murrell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

c. RESOLUTION 26-16 – ADOPTING AND APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CATA JOINT ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT:

Mr. Boeckel reviewed the proposed amendment to the Joint Articles of Agreement and explained that the amendment would allow CATA to contract to extend public transportation services outside of its five member municipalities. The amendment would add public sector and non-profit institutional partners, government entities and "transportation hubs open to the public" as eligible contractual partners. It also clarifies that CATA may contract for public transportation services with non-member municipalities.

The proposed amendment would also clarify Section 13 of the Joint Articles of Agreement, allowing for a resolution to be submitted as evidence of approval of the Joint Articles. Currently, the articles allow for an "ordinance or resolution" as evidence of approval.

Todd Horsley, CATA CEO and Margy Boal, Harris Township's CATA Representative were present to discuss this item with the Board. Mr. Horsly said he didn't have much more to add from what Mr. Boeckel said other than this is the first amendment to the Joint Articles of Agreement since they were first passed in 1982. This amendment will extend and clarify the types of entities that CATA could potentially provide service to. The group discussed whether this would be increasing or decreasing the municipality's share for servicing non-entity municipalities and the seven percent the Township must contribute in order for CATA to get state and federal funding. Mr. Horsly said any non-member entities, the intent is that any type of new service CATA would offer outside of the five municipal jurisdictions would provide for a

full cost recovery and it would not increase the cost to member jurisdictions. In response to a question from the Board as to whether Township costs would decrease, Mr. Horsly said the intent is that it would be cost neutral to the Township and potentially reduce the Township cost. Ms. Boal said this amendment should have no effect on the Township. She said servicing non-profits would benefit the Township by bringing people into the Township, minus all the traffic an event might create. She said the intent is to broaden their services without any negative impact to their members. CATA would separately contract with these entities unless the Board would like items brought back to them.

Vice Chair Harden moved to approve Resolution 26-16, adopting and approving an amendment to the CATA Joint Articles of Agreement. Supervisor Murrell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

d. COG SUMMARY BUDGET:

Mr. Boeckel said participating municipalities are being asked for review and comment. It was requested that comments be submitted to the COG Executive Director by 8:00 AM on October 22, 2026, for distribution to the Finance Committee. The Township's municipal share will increase by 6.3%, which is $48,548, for a total contribution of $818,835.

Kimberlee MacMullan, COG Finance Director said Ben Estell, the COG Executive Director had a meeting at the Borough to attend so she apologized for that and said she would review this item with the Board. She explained the budget increase calculation earlier this year came in at 8.92 percent and that was due to higher health care costs and the COLA. She said as they went through the budget process, the COG-wide share only increased by 7.6 percent. She said that includes some of their fund balance analysis and reconciliation. She said in the last few years, they have used their fund balance to pay for operating expenses. They are trying to no longer do that, so they are passing on some of those expenses through municipal shares. She said the Executive Director had decided this was not the year to begin a replenishment plan for the fund balances that are coming in under the minimum requirement, so they have a stay on this as they move through this year. She said health insurance was capped in this budget at 10.9 percent. They used a COLA of 3.5 percent this year and that is an increase over last year when it was at 2.7 percent. She also discussed rising electricity costs. She said they revised the enterprise transfer methodology, and this will be used to reduce municipal shares. She briefly reviewed some items on each of the individual agencies. She said in May of 2028 the COG lease ends and the ownership reverts to COG and they will be responsible for maintenance. She said Parks and Recreation are working on a cost recovery analysis. She said this is the first year they are applying municipal shares to the Pools Operating budget because it is something of a loss leader. She said COG has no authority to set the fees for pools. The fees must be set by the Authority.

Board members offered a range of individual comments on the COG budget. The Board stated that the budgeting process is better than it had been but there are still concerns with the direction that COG is heading as an organization. The Board expressed concern about the size of COG and its annual budget increases, noting that continued significant increases in municipal shares could lead to COG services becoming unaffordable for some member municipalities. The Board recommended that COG examine staffing levels, organizational structure, hiring and promotion

practices, and opportunities to improve organizational efficiencies. The Board also pointed out that capital projects were deferred, which resulted in a lower overall budget and reduced increase to municipal shares, but that these projects will still need funded in future budgets. The Board expressed their concern about parks maintenance, stating that existing parks need to be prioritized over adding new programs or facilities. The Board also expressed concern about the need to provide municipal funding to support pool operations and questioned the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority's role in setting fees for facility usage. Mr. Boeckel stated that he would summarize the Boards consensus comments and provide them to the COG Executive Director by the deadline.

e. PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 387 – ESTABLISHING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL SIGNAGE REQUIREMENTS:

A public hearing was held on this item earlier in the evening. Mr. Boeckel noted the effective date of this ordinance is January 1, 2027 to allow us time to order the signs.

Vice Chair Harden moved to approve Ordinance no. 387, establishing development proposal signage requirements. Supervisor Moriarty seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

f. PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 388 – UPDATING SHADE TREE COMMISSION RELATED REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SHADE TREES:

A public hearing was held on this item earlier in the evening.

Vice Chair Harden moved to approve Ordinance No. 388, updating Shade Tree Commission related regulations and requirements for shade trees. Supervisor Murrell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

g. PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 389 – AMENDING THE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE SNOW REMOVAL ORDINANCE

A public hearing was held on this item earlier in the evening.

Vice Chair Harden moved to approve Ordinance No. 389, amending the penalties for violations of the snow removal ordinance. Chair Hameister seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

h. PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 390 – ESTABLISHING AND AMENDING THE POSTED SPEED LIMITS, STOP INTERSECTIONS, AND PROHIBITED PARKING AREAS ON SEVERAL TOWNSHIP STREETS:

A public hearing was held on this item earlier in the evening. Mr. Boeckel noted the effective date on this ordinance has been changed since the agenda packet went out. The effective date will be ten days from enactment to ensure all the applicable deeds are recorded.

Supervisor Murrell moved to approve ordinance no. 390, establishing and amending the posted speed limits, stop intersections, and prohibited parking areas on several township streets. Vice Chair Harden seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

i. RESOLUTION 26-17 – ADOPTING RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR ARBOR WORK:

Mr. Boeckel said in February of this year, the Harris Township Shade Tree Commission approved a series of minor amendments to the Township's rules and regulations for arbor work. These rules and regulations had been initially approved by the Commission in 2014. This document primarily addresses planting and maintenance of trees within the street rights-of-way or on other township-owned property.

Proposed ordinance no. 388 allows the Board of Supervisors to adopt rules and regulations for arbor work by resolution.

Chair Hameister momentarily left the meeting.

Supervisor Murrell moved to approve Resolution 26-17, adopting Harris Township Rules and Regulations for Arbor Work. Supervisor Moriarty seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0-0.

j. RESOLUTION 26-18 – ADOPTING AN APPROVED TREE LIST:

Supervisor Moriarty moved to approve resolution 26-18, adopting the Harris Township Approved Tree List. Supervisor Murrell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

k. RESOLUTION 26-19 – AMENDING THE TOWNSHIP'S FEE SCHEDULE:

Mr. Boeckel said proposed ordinance 387 allows the Board of Supervisors to establish by resolution a non-refundable fee for the installation, usage, and removal of Development Review Notice Signs provided by the Township. Resolution 26-19 would amend the Township's fee schedule to establish a $50 fee for each Development Review Notice Sign provided by the Township.

Supervisor Murrell moved to approve resolution 26-19, amending the Township's fee schedule. Vice Chair Harden seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

l. REQUEST FOR FUNDING - ADDISON COURT:

Mr. Boeckel provided background on this request.

Dan McIntire said he recommends that there are no funds appropriated. If Harris Township has surplus funds they should be used in Harris Township. That's what the taxes paid by the Harris Township residents are for – for Harris Township. He said he did not think Harris Township has

a dog in this hunt. If the Borough wishes to socialize the costs of this that is fine, but Harris Township should stay out of it.

It was the consensus of the Board to not provide any requested funding for this project.

m. HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS REQUESTS:

Mr. Boeckel advised the Board there will be a few minor changes in the street closing this year. He said Church Street will remain open to allow for the carriage rides.

Vice Chair Harden moved to approve the closure of Main Street from Tennis Alley to Church Street on December 5th from 3:30 PM to 7:00 PM for the tree lighting and approve the use of the Boalsburg Fire Police for traffic control for the event. Supervisor Moriarty seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

6. MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr. Boeckel said we recently received a rebate from PMHIC for roughly $20,000 from our 2025 claims. He also noted the 2027 insurance increase will be seven percent less than he originally told they would be.

He also noted that the Nittany Mountain Biking Association applied for a grant and received funding to build new trails in Tussey Pond Park from Discovery Drive up to the pond and loop back around. The trails will be multi-use trails.

Mr. Boeckel also reminded the Board the Tussey Mountain DRI will be voted on at the October General Forum meeting, so it is important that we have a quorum there.

He said he and Supervisor Murrell were recently able to visit the properties near the Boalsburg Yacht Club that were donated to the Township earlier this year. They observed many standing dead trees on the properties as well as the condition of nearby parcels that were recently logged. He was able to speak with a forester from the DCNR, who stated that there is no environmental harm to allowing the dead trees to stay on the properties. He was unable to provide specific advice about logging Township's parcels but did provide a list of consulting foresters that should be able to provide an assessment. He said it would be up to the Board to decide which trees they would want taken out. After a brief discussion regarding the matter, Mr. Boeckel said he would reach out to the abutting property owners to see if there is any willingness to allow us access and he will also reach out to the consulting foresters. He will place this item on the Board agenda after he has done this.

Supervisor Moriarty noted with regard to item number four on the Manager's Report, she said she spoke with Susan regarding the Boalsburg Liberty Bell installation dedication scheduled for October 22nd. She stated the eagle scout would not be available that day and she told Susan they should think about rescheduling the dedication. She said she knew the Board received an invitation to this dedication and wanted to point out the date may be changed.

7. APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

Vice Chair Harden moved to approve voucher transmittal sheet No. 2026-09 in the amount of $237,481.44. Supervisor Moriarty seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-0.

8. COG COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: Chair Hameister said this group set the agenda for the General Forum.

Land Use, Sustainability and Infrastructure Committee: Chair Hameister said this group discussed Centre County MPO pedestrian activities, discussed the 2027 draft CRPA work plan and discussed regional interest items.

Finance Committee: Vice Chair Harden said the next time this group meets they will discuss comments received on the COG Summary Budget.

State College Area Connector Project: Vice-Chair Harden said there was nothing new to report on this project.

Centre County MPO: Vice-Chair Harden said this group received a status report on the connector project, discussed the Centre County Passenger Rail Access study, received an update on "Centred on Safety" Safe Streets and Roads for All, reviewed the draft fiscal year 2027-2029 Unified Planning Work Program, received a status report on the CCMPO draft calendar year 2027 budget and received a status report on CCMPO biennial Municipal Outreach.

Parks Capital Committee: Supervisor Moriarty said this committee did not meet.

Parks Governance Committee: Supervisor Moriarty said this committee is still working on the MOUs and they are working on how we adopt new municipal parks into the COG and how we give the authority to do that. They also discussed finding out exactly what the costs are of our municipal parks. She said to find this out, Mr. Francke said a letter would be needed from the Board to the Executive Committee and that committee would decide what they are going to do with it.

Centre Region Parks Authority: Supervisor Murrell asked the Authority is looking for the MOU comments by October 22nd. Mr. Boeckel said the managers met with COG administration back in July or August and they were provided with drafts at that time and there were some comments made, but since that time, but the managers were never told to take this to your governing bodies. He said he will ask the Executive Director about the status of the MOUs. Supervisor Murrell said reviewed the proposed revised CRPR Authority bylaws, discussed the CRPR revenue enhancement plan and discussed the 2027 authority budget details.

Spring Creek Watershed Commission: Supervisor Murrell said this group discussed the Rockview property, they spent a lot of time discussing what the original charter was and what the plan is moving forward and fostering partnerships for the good, specifically of the watershed and focusing on that. The commission would also like any input from the Township or our

citizens as far as cleanup and new cleanup areas for watershed cleanup day next April. The commission is trying to increase the visibility of the watershed commission and trying to find more of a purpose and viability in what the Commission is.

Public Safety Committee: Supervisor Wilson was not present to provide a report.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Supervisors, Vice Chair Harden moved to adjourn and Chair Hameister adjourned the meeting at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Boeckel, AICP
Township Secretary