



West Pikeland Township

ATTENDING BOARD OF SUPERVISORS	ATTENDING TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL
Thomas J. McLewee Jr., Chair	Joseph L. Romano III, Township Manager
Noreen Vigilante, Vice Chair	Tom Goggin, Chief of Police
Steven F. Costa, Supervisor	Dorene Guistwhite, Township Treasurer
Harold M. Hallman III, Supervisor	Jennifer Wachsmuth, Township Secretary
Bryan Maher, Supervisor	

Mr. McLewee called the meeting to order on January 20, 2026 at 7:30 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. McLewee reported an executive session was held on January 5, 2026 regarding personnel. Supervisors will hold an executive session tonight, January 20, 2026, regarding personnel.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Vigilante made a motion to approve January 20, 2026, Board of Supervisors agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Costa and passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Ms. Vigilante made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 5, 2026, Board of Supervisors meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Maher and passed unanimously.

REPORTS:

Police:

Chief Goggin reported statistics for the month of December 2025.

Mr. Hallman welcomed Chief Goggin to the township as Monday January 19, 2026 was his first day on the job. He also expressed the Boards appreciation to Sergeant O'Connell for his time as Officer-in-Charge over the last year.

Treasurer Report/Approval of Bills:

Ms. Guistwhite provided the written report to the Board. Mr. Costa made a motion to approve the bills. Ms. Vigilante seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, apart from Mr. Hallman, as he abstained from voting on the motion to pay bills to check number 10766 in the amount of \$4.99 citing a conflict of interest as the motion provides payment to Hallman's General Store.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Ordinance 2026-01 (Burning Outdoor)

Mr. Romano introduced the proposed Buring Outdoor Ordinance and explained that due to the safety risks associated with open fires, air pollution concerns, and the need for

proper waste disposal, regulation is necessary to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the Township and its residents. This proposed ordinance was coordinated with the Planning Commission, which reviewed the draft and heard public input during meetings held in August, September, and October. Most comments focused on clarity and consistency in the language and time periods, but did not recommend changes to the policy itself. The Planning Commission concluded its review by noting that the decision to adopt the ordinance rests with the Board of Supervisors, as the Commission's role was advisory in nature. Township Solicitor, Mr. Donatelli, has reviewed the ordinance and found it to be legally sufficient. In accordance with Township Code Section 1601, the proposed ordinance was advertised in the Daily Local News on January 8, 2026. Mr. McLewee opened the meeting for discussion.

Mr. Costa thanked Mr. McLewee, Mr. Romano and the Township staff for their months of effort and work on this ordinance.

Mr. McLewee was asked by Glenn Wegner to summarize the ordinance for the residents at the meeting. He stated that it is an ordinance outlining what can be burned and when, specific months of the year when burning is allowed.

Resident Jeff Kern asked if a vote would be taken on this ordinance tonight. Mr. McLewee stated yes. Mr. Kern shared his thoughts and concerns to include the low number of phone calls to made to 911/Police regarding burning in the past. He disagrees with the ordinance. He suggested that Mr. McLewee abstain from the vote for personal reasons.

Resident Sue McElroy agreed with Mr. Kern. Feels this is a self-serving issue. Original ordinance was written in 1999 without complaint. Restrictions for properties under two acres are difficult to comply with. She is not in support of this ordinance.

Resident Brian Urbanski agrees with previous two residents. Time frames are unsafe – hose bibs are turned off in winter, eliminating their ability to assist if needed. Many birch and ash trees have significant damage or have died and he has no ability to address them. Haven't provided alternatives other than paying for chipper rentals or removal by outside source. He is against the ordinance.

Resident Betty Ryberg, owner of three properties in West Pikeland Township, is vehemently opposed to this ordinance. Requested a summary of hours spent working on it. The 1999 Ordinance is a clean air act ordinance, serving the purpose it's intended to. Spoke about burning being best remediation for Bamboo and invasives. Feels insufficient notice was given to the residents. She opposed this ordinance.

Resident Talara Chalian, wanted to quantify numbers. Feels that this ordinance is not supported by the number of calls reportedly received. Suggested if we are discussing burn ordinance changes, the fire chief should be in attendance, as well as the police department to present the actual numbers.

Ms. Vigilante stated that in addition to the police and fire companies, the office receives calls about burning.

Resident Gordon McElroy agreed that trade waste should not be allowed to be burned at any time, and penalties enforced. He provided dates of storms that generated damage locally, resulting in the need to burn yard waste. Safe yard waste management has been completed for decades and is not considered in this ordinance.

Mr. Maher proposed whether tabling the vote and holding a working session was the best way forward. Mr. Costa disagrees with tabling the vote. This has been an open item for quite some time and it has been modified and reposted with updates based on previous feedback received. No new feedback was received prior to tonight.

Mr. Hallman proposed a committee of residents should be sought for feedback so that these concerns can be heard and addressed with a timeline for execution.

Ms. Vigilante restated that many public comments have been incorporated into this ordinance – it has evolved over the course of the year to its current iteration.

Mr. Maher asked clarifying questions about the ordinance – if the ordinance passes tonight, we would have until March 31st to revisit any necessary points. He is generally in favor of the ordinance based on feedback he has received from residents. Would like to acknowledge that our safety record in the township is good, and wants that considered as well, giving residents time to contribute to the rules and regulations going forward.

Ms Ryberg added additional concerns to the conversation.

Mr. McLewee shared that the 1999 ordinance did not cover residential burning. If you were to call the police to complain about someone burning, the police had no ordinance to enforce. As a supervisor, he received calls from fellow residents asking if he could do something. That is the motivating factor for this change. We've re-written the ordinance based on feedback from residents, comments received after the ordinance was posted for review, advertised in the paper as legally required by the Sunshine Law. This ordinance is so that residents can enjoy the outside during the warmer months. Neighboring townships have similar ordinances, or even more restrictive than this. This is a good neighbor ordinance.

Mr. Hallman stated the following: no evidentiary data for the date restrictions, the federal holiday ban is arbitrary, the authorized enforcement personnel include Township Manager, Police, Building and Zoning officials which is over broad, no enforcement standards, no inspection protocols, no appeal process, no warnings.

Resident Ara Chalian commented that it's the Board's responsibility to find a way to connect with the residents. Waste disposal issues are a concern, and it should be on the Boards agenda. Tree limbs on the roads cause another type of hazard and will need to have a solution determined.

Ms. Ryberg added additional concerns to the conversation.

Mr. McLewee recommended some alternatives to address yard waste.

Mr. McElroy added additional concerns to the conversation. Requested a grandfather clause be considered for long term residents.

Mr. Maher added that the public notice section of the Daily Local News website is free. It is not extremely user friendly, but it is available at no cost. The posting we complete with them is required by law, outdated as it may be, we are legally bound to do so.

Resident Glenn Wegner composts all debris from his yard. He has never burned or had anything hauled away.

Mr. Costa made a motion to approve ordinance 2026-01. Mr. McLewee seconded the motion. The vote passed 4 to 1, with Mr. Hallman registering a vote of nay.

Mr. Maher reiterated his desire to schedule a meeting to reevaluate, and to take public comment to consideration well before March 31st.

b. '26 Budget Review

Mr. Romano stated IAW Second Class Code, section 3202, para (d), after a municipal election year, the Board of Supervisors may amend the adopted budget and the related tax levy during the month of January following that election. Having requested the '26 budget to be reopened Supervisors sought clarification regarding the expected timeline for hiring full-time police officers. With the Supervisors' concerns addressed the '26 budget is not amended and remains approved as voted on at the BoS meeting held on December 15, 2025. No further action is necessary by leadership.

c. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources - Pine Creek Park Grant Update

Mr. Romano stated West Pikeland Township has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$231,900 from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) through the Community Conservation Partnerships Program for the Pine Creek Park Rehabilitation and Development Project. On behalf of the Township and residents, Mr. Romano extended a huge thank you to Ms. Ann Toole, who wrote and submitted the grant application on behalf of the West Pikeland community. Her dedication and hard work were instrumental in securing this important funding. DCNR staff will be working with the Township to finalize the grant agreement and move the project forward.

Mr. McLewee added that late this afternoon the township received an email from the PA Small Water and Sewer Program. They awarded us \$276,486 for the Pikeland Road Drainage project.

d. Collective Bargaining Agreement

Mr. Romano shared this Collective Bargaining Agreement incorporates the earlier agreed to MOU between West Pikeland Township and the West Pikeland Police Officer's Association. The purpose, to set forth a mutual understanding of the parties as to wages, hours and other conditions of employment.

Mr. McLewee asked for a motion to approve The Collective Bargaining Agreement between West Pikeland Township and the West Pikeland Police Officers' Association. Ms. Vigilante made the motion to approve, and Mr. Costa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. Committee and Commission member approval

Mr. Romano stated that Mr. Best, Planning Commission Chair is recommending the Board's approval of Mr. Dan Iannucci for appointment to the Township's Planning Commission. Mr. Iannucci offers the Commission extensive knowledge and practical experience across historic and contemporary architecture, land use planning, zoning, construction, and civil engineering. Equally important, as a resident of the Township, he brings a strong commitment to preserving the character and integrity of West Pikeland while thoughtfully guiding its future growth.

Additionally, Mr. Loudin, Parks and Recreation Chair, is recommending the Board accept the resignation of Nancy Bartley and approve both Ms. Joey Druecker and former Supervisor Carin Mifsud for appointments to the Township's Parks and Recreation Committee.

Mr. McLewee asked for a motion to approve Mr. Iannucci as a member of the Planning Commission, accepting the resignation of Nancy Bartlet from the Parks and Recreation Committee, and approve both Ms. Druecker and Ms. Mifsud as members of the Parks and Recreation Committee. Mr. Hallman made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Maher. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Bellwoar Kelly contract

Mr. Romano reported that this action will retain Bellwoar Kelly to conduct an internal investigation (Personnel).

Mr. McLewee requested a motion to retain Bellwoar Kelly to conduct an internal investigation. Ms. Vigilante made the motion to approve. Mr. Maher seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a vote of 4-1, with Mr. Hallman voting nay.

Supervisor Hallman requested permission to read a prepared statement concerning a matter related to events following the public meeting of January 5, 2026. Chairman Mr. McLewee advised Mr. Hallman that the matter was not appropriate for discussion in public session and stated that the statement could be presented in executive session.

Mr. Hallman proceeded to read from the statement and was ruled out of order by the Chairman. Mr. Hallman requested that the statement be included in the meeting minutes.

Following the conclusion of the public meeting, Mr. Hallman provided the written statement to Ms. Wachsmuth, Secretary. Mr. Romano, Manager, subsequently retrieved the statement from the Secretary where it was placed into an envelope, sealed and placed in Mr. Hallman's personnel file. No further action was taken.

c. Boy Scout Troop 216 and Pickering Grove Park

Mr. Romano reported that Scoutmaster Phil Grant (Chair, Township Auditors), on behalf of Boy Scout Troop 216, respectfully requests permission to camp overnight at Pickering Grove Park. A core purpose of Scouting is to help youth develop leadership, responsibility, and service-minded character through hands-on experiences guided by their Scoutmasters.

During these outings, Scouts work closely with their Scoutmaster and adult leaders to apply skills they are learning while giving back to the community. Last year, during the same time period, Troop 216 camped at Pickering Grove Park, where Scouts removed invasive species and cleared the River Birch Trail as part of a conservation service project. Similarly, for the past three years, Troop 216 has partnered with Anselma Mill to help prepare the site for its spring opening.

Mr. Grant is requesting use of Pickering Grove Park from Friday, March 27 through Sunday, March 29, 2026, to establish a campsite and continue the conservation and stewardship work begun last year, providing Scouts with meaningful opportunities for personal growth while improving a valued community resource.

Mr. McLewee attended last year's event and was very pleased with the event as a whole. The scouts were well-behaved and properly supported and safely supervised by the troop adults.

Mr. McLewee requested a motion to waive ordinance 2013-01 (Township Park Ordinance), specifically para 3a (no-overnight provision) and 3o (campfire), and approve BSA Troop 216 usage of Pickering Grove Park during the period 27 thru 29 March 2026.

Mr. Hallman inquired if the new burn ordinance would present a conflict with this request. Ms. Vigilante advised that it is not. Mr. McLewee added that campfires and fire pits are permitted as per the ordinance.

Ms. Vigilante made the motion to approve the usage of Pickering Grove Park for this event, seconded by Mr. Costa. The vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Hallman requested that if the township can assist in any way with the event to please reach out.

d. Environmental Advisory Council Meeting Schedule

Mr. Romano reported that the Environmental Advisory Council is requesting approval to move the Council meeting time from 7:30pm to 6:00pm to allow for maximum

participation. With approval, a public announcement will be made as well as updating the township website.

Mr. McLewee asked for a motion to approve the meeting time change for the Environmental Advisory Council to 6:00pm effective March 3, 2026. Mr. Maher made the motion to approve the change. Ms. Vigilante seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. McLewee opened the floor for public comment.

Resident Jeff Kern commented that passing the ordinance tonight with plans to review and modify is irresponsible. Hoping that everyone can all work together on the final ordinance.

Resident Sue McElroy requested clarification if the plan is to hold a work session.

Mr. Maher stated that it will be added to the next Board meeting to determine the plan forward and seek transparency for the residents, as well as a communication mechanism for disseminating information effectively.

Resident Betty Ryberg commented that we don't need new laws that increase the cost of ownership. Requested mailers be used to share information with residents.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Board of Supervisors meeting will be on:

- Monday, February 2, 2026
- Tuesday, February 17, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to address, Mr. McLewee adjourned the meeting at 8:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Wachsmuth
Township Secretary