

BOROUGH OF NORTH WALES
 300 SCHOOL STREET
 NORTH WALES, PENNSYLVANIA

MEETING: March 24, 2026, 7:00 P.M., EST

CALL TO ORDER made by Vice President Groce at 7:01 P.M.

ROLL CALL:	Candace Anderson	Absent
	Melanie Catanese	Present
	Sherwin Collins	Present
	Alexander Groce	Present
	Anji Fazio	Present
	Star Little	Present
	Susan Manning	Present
	Sally Neiderhiser	Absent
	Mark Tarlecki	Absent
	Mayor Neil McDevitt	Present

Also, in attendance were Borough Solicitor, John Filice; Chief of Police, David Erenius; Assistant Borough Manager, Danielle Ervin, and Junior Council Member, Violet Anderson.

Manager Hart led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Presentation: Parks and Recreation – Ideas to Highlight Borough Parks

Mr. Fazio, a member of Parks and Recreation, presented an idea from the Parks and Recreation Board where each Borough Park is highlighted via a video clip that contains general park information. The video would be made by various Council and Borough Administration. This would showcase the Borough Parks and why they are so important to those who utilize them. Council's reaction was favorable to this idea.

Jocelyn Tenney, 801 E. Walnut Street, thought that it was a good idea, especially to identify some of the smaller pocket parks.

Consideration: Acceptance of Resignation for Jason Farabaugh from Shade Tree Commission

Member Catanese made a motion to accept the resignation of Jason Farabaugh from the Shade Tree Commission. Member Fazio seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.

Consideration: Appointment to Parks & Recreation, term ending 12/31/2026

Manager Hart explained that since there are three vacancies on the Parks and Recreation Board, she felt it prudent to get the most recent nomination in front of Council as soon as possible. She introduced Zoe Rex, one of the candidates for the open vacancies, to share why she was interested in the position. Zoe Rex, 227 South Second Street, explained that she was very interested in the outdoors and that she coordinates camping trips for her 20-member rugby team. She further explained that she is especially interested in birds and, as such, appreciates the smaller parks.

Member Manning made a motion to approve the appointment of Zoe Rex to the Parks and Recreation Board, term ending December 31, 2026. Member Collins seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.

Consideration: Approval of Certificate of Appropriateness – 402 East Montgomery Avenue

Manager Hart explained that this was for repairing roofing and downspouts. Member Fazio made a motion to Approve the Certificate of Appropriateness – 402 E. Montgomery Avenue. Member Little seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.

Consideration: Approval of Minutes: March 10, 2026

Member Catanese asked about a portion of the March 10th meeting, under public comment, being transcribed versus other portions of the meeting being summarized. Member Hart explained that in the past, both residents and Council had asked to have minutes amended to capture more of the commentary during public comment, so this was a situation where the minutes were recorded with those requests in mind.

Member Collins responded, saying that a summary of the residents' public comment would be sufficient and would avoid adding additional work to process the minutes.

Member Fazio suggested that all resident public comments should be transcribed, with the other portions of the meeting being summarized.

Member Collins asked how hard it is to transcribe, to which Manager Hart responded that it wasn't difficult, but rather time-consuming.

Jocelyn Tenney, 801 E. Walnut Street, feels that if a resident wants to voice their concern and opinions, it should be transcribed, but if it's a basic announcement, then it can be summarized.

Member Manning stated that she took minutes for her church, and in instances like this, they summarize the statements and then ask the speaker for a more detailed version if they want to provide it and include it as an addendum to the minutes.

Member Little stated that this can become a slippery slope. If the purpose of the minutes is to summarize what is being said, then it should be definitive that this is the practice. She also stated

that there are other avenues (social media, newspaper editorials) that are more appropriate to be used for this type of communication.

Roseann D'Angelo, 915 East Montgomery Avenue, stated that Council meetings are also a public forum where residents are asked to come share opinions, and having quoted information in the minutes is imperative to reflect public opinion and avoid any possibility of not capturing the intent of the speaker. She recommended a mix of using the quoted words and a summary approach.

Vice President Groce said that he wanted to get President Tarlecki's views on the topic before making any changes to the format. Manager Hart agreed with Vice President Groce about consulting with President Tarlecki and added that direction is needed; recommending that a policy be created on how Council would like public comment to be handled in the future.

Member Little made a motion to Approve the March 10, 2026, Minutes. Member Collins seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 yes, 1 no, with Member Catanese voting no.

Consideration: Approval of Disbursements \$85,063.62

Manager Hart reviewed some of the highlights of the disbursements.

Member Fazio made a motion to Approve the Disbursements of \$85,063.62. Member Manning seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.

Old Business / New Business / Committee & Board Reports / Zoning Applications

There was no old business. Manager Hart gave an update on the Ninth Street Park, stating that progress is moving quickly. She informed Council that larger trees are going to be ordered, along with watering devices to increase the sustainability of the plantings. A change order will be submitted in the near future.

Member Little asked if there was an anticipated date for completion of the project. Manager Hart responded that the deadline was anticipated to be in late May, early June. The timing of the completion will be contingent on the weather.

Mayor McDevitt added a reminder to keep kids from "admiring" the big trucks, especially at night. Manager Hart reminded everyone that the park is a construction zone and is closed. She also added that the Police Department has extra patrols to monitor the park.

Vice President Groce asked for Committee and Board Reports, to which Manager Hart stated that the Shade Tree Commission met and reorganized officers. She also mentioned they needed more members. Lastly, she explained that a tree in Weingartner was recently removed and that the stump would be ground down. Manager Hart also updated Council on the Parks and Recreation Board's minutes and explained that they are working hard on upcoming events, from the Egg Hunt to the Spring Planting to the Summer Kickoff. They are also working with the NWCPA on the Fourth of July event.

There were no Zoning applications.

Solicitor / Mayor / Council / Chief / Public Works / Manager

Solicitor Filice stated that there would be an executive session to discuss matters of personnel and litigation, he did not expect any action to be taken on either subject.

Mayor McDevitt wanted to share a moment of gratitude. On Friday afternoon, there was a significant house fire at the North Wales Baptist Church parsonage. Along with the volunteers from North Penn Volunteer Fire Co, the daytime fire call brought out responders from ten mutual aid fire companies: Fire Department of Montgomery Township, Hatfield Volunteer Fire Company, Fairmount Fire Company, Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department Centre Square Fire Company, Wissahickon Fire Company, Norriton Fire Dept, Colmar Fire Company, Fort Washington Fire Company No. 1, and Towamencin Volunteer Fire Company. VMSC staff were also on standby to provide immediate medical assistance if needed.

He also stated that everyone is thankful that Pastor Ragwan and his wife, Eva, were able to evacuate safely and that there were no injuries among the family or the responders on scene. He added his gratitude for the aggressive attack on the fire to contain it and prevent it from spreading. He further stated, "Moments of tragedy like this often bring out the best in our community. When it was clear that the scene was "safe", seeing all the neighbors coming out to support each other was a beautiful moment."

Member Catanese asked about the pedestrian sign at the Walnut Street crosswalk. Manager Hart stated that it was a result of a hit and run and that the Borough is working on getting it remedied.

Junior Council Member Anderson added that she hoped that the tragic fire event raised awareness for everyone to be mindful of having working fire extinguishers and smoke detectors.

Manager Hart reminded everyone about the Earth Day Extravaganza and Shred-A-Thon Event that will take place on April 25. In addition, she reminded everyone about the upcoming Farmer's Market sponsored by Main Street North Wales, beginning May 3, 2026.

Adjournment

Member Catanese made a motion to adjourn. Member Fazio seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Attest: _____
Christine A. Hart
Borough Manager