

BOROUGH OF GIRARDVILLE

201 North 4th Street

Phone: (570) 276-1635 Fax: (570) 276-1640 email: borohall@ptd.net

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer"

Regular Meeting

Place: Municipal Bldg. **Date:** Wednesday, May 13, 2026 **Time:** 7:30PM

OPEN MEETING:

Meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Council President Charles Marquardt

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Dave Brennan

President Charles Marquardt

Vice President David Willis

Councilwoman Sarah Purcell

Solicitor Shane Hobbs

Secretary/Treasurer/AORO Harley Ingersoll

Absent: Councilman Daniel Heiser

APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL VACANCY:

Prior to the regular meeting, Council conducted an executive session during the work session for personnel matters related to the vacant council seat appointment. During the regular meeting, Council President Marquardt stated that discussion regarding the vacancy had occurred during the earlier work session due to Councilman Heiser's absence from the regular meeting.

*Motion to appoint Kevin Fidler to the open council seat made by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by Sarah Purcell and seconded by David Willis. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

Mayor Brennan administered the oath of office and Mr. Fidler joined Council for the remainder of the meeting.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA:

Council then amended the agenda to include repository property bids on West Mahanoy Avenue and an Entech proposal related to the ADA improvement project on the Borough Hall bathrooms and exterior doors. *A Motion to accept the changes was made by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by Sarah Purcell and seconded by David Willis. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE AGENDA:

NONE

APPROVAL OF REPORTS:

Minutes: *Motion to accept Minutes of the previous meeting made by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

Treasurer's Report: *Motion to accept Treasurer's Report of the previous meeting made by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by Sarah Purcell and seconded by David Willis. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

Tax Collector's Report & Pay Tax Collector: *Motion to accept Tax Collector's Report and pay the Tax Collector made by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

Mayor Report: Dave Brennan

Mayor Brennan discussed ongoing issues involving vehicles throughout town lacking license plates and vehicles parked in fire lanes. He stated that the Borough has contacted Pennsylvania State Police regarding enforcement concerns and continues exploring additional options. The Mayor also reported participating in volunteer search efforts for a missing kayaker in the area and noted that searches are expected to continue periodically over the coming months.

*A Motion to accept the report was made by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

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Code Enforcement Officer's Report: *Presented by Chair of Code Committee and Vice President David Willis*

Advanced Code Consultants (ACC):

Advanced Code has issued 76 quality-of-life violations since beginning services, including 26 during the current month alone. Reminder notices are being mailed to individuals who failed to respond within the required fifteen-day timeframe. Mr. Willis also explained that the Borough is experiencing difficulty locating a vendor capable of printing updated quality-of-life citation forms.

Hazlett Municipal Services:

Additional code enforcement updates included recent court proceedings involving nuisance properties near the Manbeck property, revisions to rental registration and occupancy forms to streamline administration, and active enforcement of the Borough ordinance prohibiting landlords from operating rental properties while delinquent on taxes, utility bills, or other municipal obligations owed to the Borough. Council approved the reports unanimously.

*A Motion to accept the report was made by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by Sarah Purcell and seconded by Charles Marquardt. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

REVIEW AND AUTHORIZATION TO PAY BILLS: *A motion was made to approve by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

Councilman Willis proposed looking into the purchase of walkie talkies in place of the Borough Cell phones in an effort to eliminate the cost.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Street Paving: Council reviewed paving bids for Second Street, East and West Ogden Street, C Street, and Lower Railroad Street. Pave It Incorporated submitted the lowest complete bid at \$75,000. After discussion regarding ADA compliance requirements and paving scope, Council voted unanimously to award the paving contract to Pave It Incorporated. Council also discussed the possibility of adding B Street to the paving project depending upon additional pricing. *A motion was made to approve by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

NEW BUSINESS

Repository Bid Approval: Parcels 45-05-0036 & 45-05-0037. Bid \$1 each by Girardville Borough for demolition: Council discussed repository acquisitions involving two fire-damaged properties on West Mahanoy Avenue. Officials explained that the properties were obtained for demolition purposes at a nominal cost and that additional deed transfers are currently being pursued in order to secure county and state demolition funding. Council noted that as many as nine demolition projects may ultimately move forward this year. A formal motion authorizing repository action on the properties was later approved unanimously. *A motion was made to approve by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

Approval of Bid Proposal from Entech for ADA Bathrooms in Municipal Building: Council considered a proposal from Entech Engineering for continued administration of the ADA bathroom and door improvement project at a targeted estimated cost of approximately \$50,000. Council approved the proposal unanimously. *A motion was made to approve by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

Appointment of Engineer: Benesch - Motion to appoint Benesch as Borough Engineer upon completion of the ADA Bathroom Project currently being administered by Entech: With the anticipated retirement of the Borough's current engineer following completion of the ADA project. Council reviewed interviews conducted with representatives from

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Benesch Engineering and approved moving forward with Jennifer Kowalonek and her team as the Borough's future engineering firm once the current Entech project is completed. *A motion was made to approve by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

CORRESPONDENCE

Council approved requests from the Girardville Civic Association to utilize the Little League concession stand for a Movie Night scheduled for August 15, 2026, and a Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner scheduled for Election Day on November 3, 2026. *A motion was made to approve by Charles Marquardt, Motion Accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council announced plans to repaint borough crosswalks once materials are received and discussed ongoing efforts to pursue grant funding for storm box replacements through CDBG and LSA programs. David Willis also noted that he would be attending the upcoming PSAB Conference.

PUBLIC COMMENT

During public comment, significant discussion occurred regarding several deteriorating and abandoned properties on West Main Street and the Borough's ongoing efforts to secure ownership for demolition purposes. Resident Mike Manbeck informed Council that conditions at one of the structures had worsened substantially in recent weeks, stating that an interior support wall had collapsed and that only the front wall and a small remaining section of roof were still standing. He warned Council that once the remaining roof section fails, the front façade could potentially collapse outward toward the street, creating a serious public safety concern.

Borough Solicitor Shane Hobbs provided an update regarding ongoing legal proceedings involving three nuisance properties in the area. He explained that hearings had already been scheduled for two of the properties on June 16, 2026, while another matter involving the Maucailla property remained active. Solicitor Hobbs explained that the Borough's primary goal is to obtain signed deeds for the properties so ownership can be transferred to the Borough and demolition funding can be pursued through county and state programs. He noted that court proceedings were initiated largely to encourage property owners to voluntarily cooperate with the transfers.

Hobbs stated that one property owner had recently contacted him and expressed a willingness to cooperate but continued requesting additional assurances and documentation regarding the deed transfer process. He further explained that if the owner fails to appear at the scheduled hearing or refuses to cooperate further, the Borough may seek additional legal remedies through the court.

Resident Mike Manbeck elaborated on a recent interaction he personally had with one of the out-of-town property owners. Mr. Manbeck stated that the owner approached him while photographing the property and repeatedly apologized for the ongoing condition of the structure and the impact it has had on neighboring residents. According to Mr. Manbeck, the owner stated that he was tired of fighting the matter, acknowledged the accumulation of fines against the property, and had even considered attempting to sell the property online. Mr. Manbeck further stated that the owner claimed the structure could allegedly be repaired for a relatively small amount of money despite its visibly deteriorated condition.

David Willis commented that conditions at the property have continued to deteriorate rapidly and suggested updated photographs be taken before the upcoming court hearings in order to properly document the additional collapse and structural instability that has occurred since the Borough's prior inspection. Solicitor Hobbs also discussed another nuisance property owner who had initially indicated a willingness to sign the property over to the Borough but subsequently stopped responding to communication attempts after court proceedings were initiated. Mr. Willis offered to attempt further direct communication with the property owner in hopes of obtaining voluntary cooperation prior to additional legal escalation.

Solicitor Hobbs agreed that updated documentation would be beneficial and noted that any emergency cleanup or stabilization work ultimately performed by the Borough could result in municipal liens being placed against the affected properties. Council

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reiterated that obtaining ownership of the nuisance properties remains necessary in order to pursue demolition funding and address the growing public safety concerns associated with the structures.

A lengthy discussion also took place regarding street sweeping within the Borough. Mary Beth Dougherty questioned whether street sweeping services would continue this year and expressed concerns about maintaining cleanliness throughout town. Council explained that the Borough is currently dealing with an outstanding bill from the prior year totaling approximately \$7,500 related to street sweeping services. According to discussion during the meeting, a prior verbal agreement had allegedly been made for Reading Anthracite to cover the expense; however, no written agreement had ever been executed and payment was never made, leaving the Borough responsible for the unpaid balance. Council further stated that negotiations are ongoing regarding partial reimbursement of the outstanding amount, though the Borough may still ultimately be responsible for a portion of the bill. Mary Beth then asked whether residents should continue manually sweeping sidewalks and curbs in front of their homes. Council encouraged residents to continue doing so and stated that Borough crews would assist by collecting debris piles if residents contact Borough Hall with the location.

Mary Beth then asked about the future of the "Movies in the Park" program. Councilman Willis responded, unlike the previous year when monthly movie events were held, the borough is no longer funding the full series due to budget concerns and uncertainty surrounding tax revenue and potential reductions affecting the borough's financial outlook. As a result, the Civic Association has assumed responsibility for organizing the program for the current year and is accepting sponsorships to support the events. The first movie event has been scheduled, with additional community programming planned for July, including a larger field day event featuring activities such as bounce houses and a dunk tank. The topic was raised in part to encourage continued funding support and community participation given the transition away from borough sponsorship.

A new resident inquired about having the gate to the island open during evenings and weekends as he is working while the borough is open and is working diligently to get his property cleaned up so that he can move his family in. Councilman Willis offered to set up a time to have the gate open for him.

The Tax Collector requested that residents leave voicemail messages when calling Borough offices, explaining that repeated hang-up calls routed through the Borough phone system have created communication difficulties.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: *A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Charles Marquardt, accepted by David Willis and seconded by Sarah Purcell. **Vote: All. Motion Carried.***

Next Meeting Held On: June 10, 2026

Respectfully Submitted,

Harley Ingersoll
Secretary/Treasurer