

**Mt Holly Springs Borough Council  
Meeting Minutes- December 8, 2025**

**Call to Order-** Mrs. Boyles called the meeting of the Borough Council to order at 7:00 pm and led the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

**Attendance:** The following members of the Borough Council were present: Sherry Boyles, Lois Stoner, Gus Ginter, Cathy Neff, Pam Still, Gay Bowman, and Andrew Tate. Also, present Deborah Halpin-Brophy- Mayor, Thomas Day-Police Chief/Borough Manager, Jason Bonawitz-Codes/Zoning, and Karen Johnson-Secretary/Treasurer.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the Borough Council meeting for November 10, 2025, were reviewed. Ms. Still made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, with a second by Mr. Ginter. Vote to approve passed unanimously.

**Financial Reports:** Financial Report for November 11, 2025, to December 8, 2025, was reviewed. Account Balances \$786,272.12, (Bills \$143,413.91 and Deposits \$228,745.40). Mrs. Stoner made a motion to approve payment of bills and the financial report, with Ms. Bowman seconding the motion. Vote to approve passed unanimously.

**Public Comments:**

--Justin Bretzman-Mt Holly Springs

Mr. Bretzman is here regarding 2 Stuart Street Property, explaining to council that due to the burning of his garage, and financial status, not much has been done since the last meeting. He cleared up tires and some other debris from the property this morning but is waiting on the insurance adjuster. Mr. Bonawitz showed council photos (taken early that morning) of the property with debris still untouched. Mr. Bretzman said he was there at lunchtime after the photos were taken. He is asking council members for leniency due to financial hardship. Discussion to allow additional time to Jan 5<sup>th</sup> for proof of compliance and updating council with answers about what is planned for the property. Mr. Bonawitz asked council to proceed with submitting the property to Cumberland County Blight Mediation Board. By turning it over to the county, (withdrawing at any time if Mr. Bretzman makes progress on the property), would show that council is following through on the timeline given for compliance. Mr. Bretzman will return on Jan 5, 2026 before council with updates.

--Chuck Crone-Mt Holly Springs

Mr. Crone wanted to update council on the Zoning Board hearing time for 2026, moving from 7:00 pm to 5:30 pm. He also would like to extend his concern for projected tax increases for our residents.

--Rick Coplen- Carlisle

Professor Coplen passed updates for council members, showing course studies, and roles that have been added for case study.

--Walter Meck-Mt Holly Springs

Mr. Meck explained about Patriot Rails (Florida) and would like to see a train excursion from Gettysburg to Mt Holly Springs. The train would have to turn around and would also require a trolley for transport throughout town. Cost factor would be for town and businesses (team effort) to draw people in for “a destination not transportation” town. Mr. Day explained at one time the

train did stop in Mt Holly Springs, and now runs from Gettysburg to Biglerville. He also explained that without Norfolk Southern giving authorization to use their tracks, no excursion of this nature will happen.

### **Business Before Council:**

#### **--Authority Secretary and Floating Secretary**

Madeline Pierce: Ms. Pierce introduced herself to council members. Ms. Pierce was selected as the new employee for Authority Secretary. Mrs. Stoner made a motion to hire Madeline Pierce as the Authority Secretary effective December 9, 2025. Mrs. Neff seconded the motion with vote to approve, passing unanimously.

Amber Florig (absent due to illness) is the selection for Floating Secretary. Mrs. Neff made a motion to approve the hiring of Mrs. Florig if she accepts the position. Mr. Ginter seconded the motion and vote to approve passed unanimously.

Rate of Pay: Mrs. Stoner made a motion to set the rate of pay for both positions at \$24.00 per hour with benefit package. Mr. Ginter seconded the motion and vote to approve passed unanimously.

Oath of Office- Ms. Pierce was sworn into her position as Authority Secretary by Mayor Deb Halpin-Brophy.

--Patricia Fisher—Mrs. Boyles asked for a moment of silence in memory of Patricia Fisher who was our Authority billing clerk for 28 years. Mayor Halpin-Brophy read a tribute to Patricia who passed away on November 14, 2025. Ms. Still made a motion to have the tribute dedicated to a page in the minute book. Mrs. Neff seconded the motion and vote to approve passed unanimously.

#### **--Budget 2026**

Mrs. Stoner made a motion to approve the advertised budget for 2026, increasing the mill rate from 3.3 to 3.5 for real estate taxes, with a second by Ms. Still. Discussion followed; Shade Tree increase, library decrease, and projected tax increase. Ms. Still felt this was not friendly for businesses, as we focus on revitalization and comp plan. Mr. Day explained that our municipality cannot be compared to other municipalities in the area because they may rely on higher LSI and LST tax disbursements. We rely on other resources, such as state contributions, franchise credits (Comcast), etc., all are being significantly reduced each year, which means a loss of revenue for our budget. Increased dollar amount difference is around \$22,000 and EMS tax elimination is up for discussion, (offsetting much of the increase if we choose to eliminate).

EMS Tax: Mr. Day stated that Yellow Breeches EMS cannot survive with only Mt Holly Springs' support. Company 40 would replace them once they totally close, which the borough would offer no funding. The EMS Tax (like Street Light, and Fire Tax collections) was established to fund through taxes without taking monies from our budget. The borough is not extravagant in spending; Ed Ginter does a great job repairing our outdated equipment. Mr. Tate explained as a business owner the increases he sees in his business alone.

Ms. Still made a motion to eliminate the EMS Tax (0.35 to zero) starting January 1, 2026. Mr. Tate seconded the motion and vote to approve passed unanimously.

Vote of prior motion to approve 2026 Budget (with real estate mill rate increase and elimination of EMS tax) passed unanimously.

--2026 Meeting Dates: Mrs. Stoner made a motion to approve meeting dates for 2026 with a change of Zoning hearing board time from 7:00 pm to 5:30 pm. Mr. Ginter/Ms. Bowman seconded the motion and vote to approve passed unanimously.

--US Department of Treasury SLFRF—Email received notifying Mt Holly Springs as being compliant with final and fiscal reporting of \$215,460.30 in using State, Local, Fiscal Recovery Funds-Covid 19 monies.

--Ordinance 500-1303 Led Signage—Motion by Mr. Ginter to approve Led sign ordinance as advertised. Mrs. Stoner seconded the motion and vote to approve, passed unanimously.

--Resolution 2025-09 Hazard Mitigation Plan—Mr. Ginter made a motion to adopt the 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan for Mt Holly Springs. Ms. Bowman seconded the motion and vote to approve passed unanimously.

--Approval to advertise Addition of Article IV to the Ordinance 184 for Animal Noise-Mr. Tate made a motion to approve the advertising of the Animal Noise addition to Ordinance 184. Mr. Ginter seconded the motion and vote to approve passed.

--Cumberland County Local Small Bridge Program: Program enrollment information was discussed and reviewed. Mrs. Stoner made a motion for Mt Holly Springs Borough to be part of the enrollment process of the County's Small Bridge Program. Mr. Ginter seconded the motion and vote to approve passed unanimously.

Grant Funding Agreement: Mr. Day noted a correction to the amount on page one after receiving a late email prior to the meeting with the change. The total for East Pine Street Bridge was projected to be \$335,731.00 and was modified to \$370,381.00. County would cover \$180,000 with the Borough's amount as an In-Kind match. Ms. Still made a motion with a second by Ms. Bowman to accept the funding agreement with Cumberland County for the Small Bridge Program. Vote to approve passed unanimously.

### **Council Reports:**

Gus Ginter, Gay Bowman, Andrew Tate, Cathy Neff –No Report

Pam Still-

Planning working on format for Comp Plan.

Stephanie Williams had meeting for Marsh Preserve Sign, which will be ready in spring. Question about new light pole installed-was moved into the sidewalk area and is now narrow. Concern about sidewalk being ADA compliant. She will contact MetEd.

Lois Stoner-

Santa Breakfast for this Saturday, Dec. 13 at Church of God—96 have signed up—will definitely discuss changes for next year at meeting next week.

Decorating Contest- Thursday, Dec 18<sup>th</sup> 6-8 pm

Caroling – Still working on details

Wellspan Letter- Re: Color Our World Program

15 markers were hidden in parks; clues were given to locate. It included logistics to parks and libraries. 910 (34%) entered codes and this was not counting accompanied adults. 100 (16%) w/42 adults located all 15 markers (14.7 miles). Trine Park marker was a stained-glass marker, with 309 (34%) visits. This was an amazing turnout, especially recognizing our park. Everyone should be very proud of the work and workers at Trine Park.

**Mayor's Report:** Mayor Halpin-Brophy addressed the Police Stat Report for November 10<sup>th</sup> to December 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Codes/Zoning Report:** Jason Bonawitz

-- Pema Certified Class Listing: Wanted council to know the course materials he will be taking throughout the year.

-- Emergency Operations Plan—Finance & Admin Section: Email ideas directly to Jason. Some examples for things often missed until an emergency happens: contacting garbage company for items destroyed by the emergency, kennels for animals—400 are stored at Shippensburg University, etc.

Asking Council members to attend at least one meeting to help prepare for emergency planning—Jan 12, 2026, February 9, 2026, or March 16, 2026. All at the Public Safety Building across from the prison, at 6:30 pm lasting around 2 hours.

--Blighted Properties: 28 Chestnut Street-removed from blighted list and 20 Center Street-moving forward

--General Code-raising fees

--Sign by Sheetz has been repaired.

**Borough Manager Report:**

--Digital Sound System: has been ordered.

-- Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, water break at 14 Center Street. Scott Shreve sent an email to the Borough, thanking all who helped repair the line quickly, and wishing everyone a Merry Christmas. Thanks to Jason, Josh and Dylan for a great job.

--Authority Computer Software: New software for residents' online access and payments will cost approximately \$50,000 to \$60,000. Currently looking into several companies for demo and cost estimates.

--Ms. Bowman wanted to address the bikes and scooters through the borough. Chief Day stated they are aware of the problem.

**Adjournment:** At 8:44 pm Mr. Ginter made a motion for adjournment with a second by Ms. Bowman.

**Council moved into Executive Session-Litigation --no action to follow.**

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Johnson