

BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**Monday
August 10, 2026**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Edward Tokmajian, Jr., Council President
Jesse Sloane, Council Vice President
Joseph Wenzel, Jr., Council Secretary
Edward Kisselback, Council Member
Joseph Knowles, Council Member

SUPPORTING STAFF PRESENT:

Debra South, Recording Secretary
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor
Philip Wursta, Township Engineer

PLEASE NOTE:

The minutes are not verbatim but rather a synopsis of what transpired during the meeting, and while I do my best to attribute remarks and questions to the correct individual, there may be mistakes or omissions because of the “back and forth” dialogue and the lack of the use of their microphone.

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING:

Council President Tokmajian opened the meeting with a moment of silence and/or prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND STAFF:

Council President Tokmajian introduced the Council Members and Supporting Staff.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT – LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:

Council President Tokmajian indicated that if you are here this evening for anything outside of agenda items, he would simply ask if you could hold off for the other public comment.

4. APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:

Councilman Knowles motioned to approve the Council Minutes for July 13, 2026 as presented. **Council Secretary Wenzel** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

5. CONSIDERATION AND SIGNING OF DEVELOPERS AGREEMENT:

Applicant:	JRI CFA, LLC (Chick-Fil-A)
Location:	1525 Street Road
Proposed Use:	Drive Thru Improvements
Zoning Classification:	R-44 Residential
Tax Parcel:	02-071-242-001

Solicitor Pizzo indicated as Council is aware, land development was previously granted for the Chick-Fil-A on Street Road that's part of the Center there that includes the Texas Roadhouse. The land development is to add additional canopies, curbing, striping, and the like for an expanded drive-thru to serve the restaurant. The Developer's Agreements were prepared by our office. The necessary funds and supporting documents have been submitted by Chick-Fil-A. They are ready to get underway. All that is remaining is Council's approval of these Developer's Agreements. They are in a form acceptable for your consideration and signature this evening.

Council President Tokmajian thanked **Solicitor Pizzo** and asked if there were any questions or comments from Council.

Councilman Kisselback stated if ready, he will put a formal motion to approve the consideration of the Developer's Agreement for JRI CFA, LLC (Chick-Fil-A). **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

6. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR ACT NO. 537, PA SEWAGE FACILITIES ACT, PLAN REVISION FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT OF A PARCEL OF LAND IDENTIFIED AS 2600 STATE ROAD, BARBARA RYBAS**

Solicitor Pizzo stated that for both Agenda Items #6 and #7, which will be considered separately, but the explanation for both is the same. In both cases, these are proposed forms of resolution approving an amendment to the Township sewage facilities plan. Also referred to as an Act 537 plan. What's necessary in both cases, these are projects that were previously approved upon the condition among other things that the necessary water, sewer and highway occupancy permits and the like are secured by the developer.

In this case, the developers have gone to both the county water and sewer authority and the Philadelphia Water Department who are the two entities that take care of the sanitary sewage from the Township. Both entities have certified that the necessary capacity is available in the transmission facilities as well as the treatment facilities.

And so, with those certifications, the state requires the Council's approval of the amendment to the 537 Plan so they can move forward with both projects. The Resolutions are in a form as required by the State Department of Environmental Protection and are in a form acceptable for your consideration and approval this evening.

The first of the two, Item #6 is for a proposed warehouse at 2600 State Road, property of Barbara Rybas. As Council may recall this as the gypsum site that was the areas previously subject to an application and approval by Johnson Warehousing. Johnson has decided not to move forward, but the owner of the property, Barbara Rybas, has decided to move forward with those approved plans. Again, the 537 is in a form acceptable for your consideration this evening.

Council Vice President Sloane asked is that why this is coming before us four years after the land development was approved.

Solicitor Pizzo Yes. There was a period of time with the transition from Johnson to Rybas. There were certain conditions attached to the Johnson approval that Rybas took exception to. We went through an appeal process with the court. The court entered an Order dictating what would and wouldn't be part of the approval. The building is largely the same as it was applied for by Johnson and the requirement that the Township had imposed that the extension of Renaissance Boulevard that was intended to cross this property will in fact be constructed by Rybas. That was really the point of contention during the appeal.

Council President Tokmajian stated that traditionally we don't always go to public comment for these. Is that required by Act 537's?

Solicitor Pizzo stated it is not.

Council President Tokmajian stated we will start with the first one. Agenda Item #6 for 2600 State Road. Any other questions from Council? If not, I would ask for a motion to accept and adopt.

Council Vice President Sloane motioned to approve the Resolution for Act No. 537 PA Sewage Facilities Act plan revision for new land development of a parcel of land as 2600 State Road. **Councilman Knowles** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

Solicitor Pizzo noted parenthetically to **Council President Tokmajian** that in response to your question of a moment ago that while it isn't required, the public did have an opportunity to comment as this is an Agenda item and therefore someone could have come up during that period of time.

7. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR ACT NO. 537, PA SEWAGE FACILITIES ACT, PLAN REVISION FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT OF A PARCEL OF LAND IDENTIFIED AS 1601 STATE ROAD, PEN RYN ESTATES**

Council President Tokmajian stated that as recently we saw here over the last, I think, two meetings ago. Any further questions from Council on this. If none, a Motion will be in order.

Council Secretary Wenzel motioned to approve the consideration and resolution for Act No. 537 PA Sewage Facilities Act for the new land development of parcel of land identified as 1601 State Road, Pen Ryn Estates. **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

8. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Natasha Bica, 2047 Hansell Drive – here to ask where we are with the plans to fix the retention pond. I heard that things were going to get done soon, but there's no time line.

Council President Tokmajian stated he invited Mrs. Khan to the meeting and asked if she would speak to that issue. Because the Mayor and the Director of Administration were not in attendance, he asked Mrs. Kahn to come in to speak. I know we have initiated some design towards looking at a fix for that. Would you mind coming up, please?

Nicole Kahn stated she works for the office of the Township Engineer. Tomorrow morning we are having a meeting with myself and the other applicant engineer in order to figure out what would be a final approach towards managing the back side of Hansell Drive on the hub side of the property what used to be the old Armstrong School. We are in a good spot.

I would love to go into detail, but until we put something down because there are a couple of different techniques we are looking at. It's not just one thing. It would be a couple of different things that would be interim stop gaps to handle what is happening, the volume of water that is affecting the backside of Hansell Drive. While we address what we hope would be the future land development, but this will help mitigate some of the concerns that the residents are seeing and again the things that are being seen are not just things that Natasha is making up. They are credible threats to their properties we understand. But the applicant owner engineer is very willing to come forward with the solution that we come up together.

Because we've been able to be out here, they're not here everyday to understand what happens on the back side of the house. So I've been supplying either pictures of days that we have rain, days that we don't, so we can understand what is happening with the base flow, what's coming from the lot itself from adjacent to Street Road. Things that will make an impact as to how much water gets into the culvert that heads under Natasha's home out to Hansell Drive.

Council President Tokmajian asked if we have an ETA as far as when you think we will be able to finalize this design? **Nicole Kahn** stated that within two weeks. They would like to see somebody out there starting active construction. **Council President Tokmajian** stated that it is also going to be pending putting it through Building and Planning, having them review and sign off on it. **Nicole Kahn** stated she assured that she is working with Director Ken Farrall's office and we would make sure to have that done immediately. We would not wait. **Council President Tokmajian** stated that he appreciates the work that she has done since the residents have come. Also, did the current owner, I understand that the for sale sign went on the property, but what you are saying is that the current owner of that property is amenable to helping to support, I am assuming financially, to putting a fix into place. **Nicole Kahn** stated absolutely. That is not going to be the burden of the Township. It would be currently on them to be able to manage their side of the line until they come through with the development. So we can help these people to have sanity. **Council President Tokmajian** in terms of an ETA for the developer to have a crew on site, let's just say it's two weeks to finalize some sort of plan. Maybe a few more days for Building and Planning to look at it. Let me ask you this. Did the owner of the property give us an idea as how quickly he can have a crew there to start that work? And then sorry, second to that question is I am assuming and I'm hoping that you'll have some oversight onto that project to make sure it's done correctly.

Nicole Kahn stated absolutely. So, one, we would review the plan to make sure that we believe that it would be the proper plan for that location. Everything needs to be right sized. Our engineers have been looking to see what we do to the basin, how we build the basin up on the one side. How do we address the channel that heads to the back of Natasha's property? You know, we've been really diving in on our side before we met with the applicant engineer just to make sure that we closed whatever concerns we had and brought them to his attention so they can address it.

Second thing is that they would like to be out as soon as possible. I know that they had gone to Director Farrall as well as John Chaykowski last week saying that they were ready to mobilize, but we needed to have this final meeting hopefully tomorrow and the remainder of this week so we can get the actual plan on plan, get it reviewed and then start that process to see construction before the end of the summer. That's the plan. **Council President Tokmajian** said before the bad weather starts hitting. **Nicole Kahn** said as you know hydrologic cycle is a problem that we have in addition to what's happening on the back side of the property being undeveloped and unmanaged.

Council President Tokmajian said real quick, I will just point to anybody else have any questions. **Councilman Kisselback** said there's several problems reoccurring in this adjacent property. What if the Township takes the majority of the solution but yet there's another percentage left and it has nothing to do with the actual property. It has something to do with another aspect of the flooding either from Street Road or from Giant or something like that. Who's going to take the responsibility for that? How are we going to address that?

Nicole Kahn stated that I tried to explain very openly to Natasha and the residents of Hansell Drive that they are at a confluence point between the stream as well as being landlocked between Street Road and Hulmeville Road, which are two state highways that have their own drainage systems. The Township has our own drainage system. There's a point at which we need to address one thing at a time. If I can pull the backside of the hub property off from the Hansell Drive drainage system, that's one step in the right

direction. The Township would still probably need to do another type of drainage improvements project on Hansell Drive itself, which would be separate and independent of what's happening on the hub property. We could also go to PennDOT as well because their water is influencing what's occurring on Hansell Drive. So, there are a couple different things that are happening at that location and I know you guys want to see this get done. We want to see action occur to create relief.

Council Vice President Sloan stated so, you're managing current stop gaps, but you just talked about additional work that needs to be done on Hansell Drive. Is that something that WK2 is taking the lead on?

Nicole Kahn said I definitely looked into the problem. I have not designed a drainage system to alleviate Hansell Drive. And again, there is the backside of what's coming from Armstrong's property. We also have the drainage system itself. Hansell Drive only has two inlets to service Hansell Drive that has a horizontal curb that comes around Hulmeville Road as well as what is coming down from Street Road. So it all wants to come right in front of Natasha's home to enter into the vault system that heads to Wendy's. That Wendy's system then takes a hard right and heads underneath Street Road. There are a lot of things that are happening in that area of the Township. So as I started saying, yes we have looked into it. I can get something on plan that would address what's occurring on Hansell Drive itself but it was not part of what I was tasked to do for this to work with the applicant engineer.

Council Vice President Sloane So my concern here is that we had funding that we were told was allocated to correct the Hansell Drive portion, not what the developer was doing, what the Township was going to fund back in 2021. That work was never done. No work was done there. And what Miss Kahn is talking about is now dealing with the developer side of the property, not what the Township is responsible for.

Nicole Kahn asked if she could answer. Real quick, just to let you know that in 2022 when you know we got involved to be able to know today why Hansell Drive behaves and operates even on the developer side or even on the front side of Hansell Drive is because the Township gave us the opportunity to investigate what was happening to be able to have solutions and to be able to understand what was happening. Like I said, it I not just one thing. It is a couple of different layers that are attached to it. The reason why I can speak about this right now, the way that I can is because for the last four years that I did investigate from the money that was spent previously to investigate and figure out what would be causing the problem to Natasha and in 2021 when she did arrive and say my house is under 11 feet of water. I need help. The money was spent in order to figure out where we were at and what would be causing her problems.

Council Vice President Sloane said that he was under the impression that no money was spent. That's what we were told by the Director of Administration today. We were there in 2021 and we advocated for funding to address this issue. We specifically asked at that 2021 budget meeting to make sure that Hansell Drive was included in that. **Natasha Bica** stated that there was no money allocated to it according to what was put out on the actual website on the budget on the meeting that was held here our Council brought up but we were told we had to wait for the developer to make a move. It's been five years he's not making a move. **Council Vice President Sloane** agreed and I'm glad that we're at least finding some way to get some temporary relief for you all and I'm very grateful for the work that you're doing on that. My concern is that that's not going to solve all the problems. It'll help, but it won't solve the problem.

Natasha Bica And we the problem is moving, right? But we can't do that either. But me and Nicole have been communicating since 2022 and I specifically told her what the problems are. Nothing's changed. The problems are the same. The only problem is that it is getting bigger. The overgrowth is getting bigger. The water mitigation is getting worse. There's no water mitigation. It's coming into our yards, into our homes, and that's coming from both sides. I'm getting it from both sides. So, if we could put more drains, if we could do this, if we could do that, I can't tell you, I'm not an engineer, that that's going to solve all of our problems. But I also spent over \$100,000 fixing my house, which includes water management in

that house, waterproofing. Okay, that can only do so much, but I need the rest of it to work. I can't tell you yes, it's definitely going to work. Nobody can say anything, right? But at least we can say that something was done to be proactive and to try and mitigate all these problems that have been going on for years. It's not something that happened overnight.

Council Vice President Sloane - Completely agree. **Councilman Kisselback** What Jesse is saying is we want to resolve the problem 100%. **Natasha Bica** I appreciate that and I agree. I would love it. I would love all the problems to be solved right now, but we don't know that because the land is constantly changing and it's changing even more if nothing gets done to fix what's there or because the land has already changed. Nicole can tell you there's more wetlands back there now. Why? Because nothing's ever been done.

Nicole Kahn Because the site has not been developed. Right. Again, a lot of the things that we see in Bensalem are developed parcels of land where it has a storm water basin or has infrastructure to support the land development. In this case, what occurred behind, you know, it has grown and we are working to help alleviate what's happening. I promise you that we will we have a solution.

Council President Tokmajian Natasha, rest assured, as you can see, over the 45 days, we made progress. We will make sure that we continue to follow up to ensure that gets done. I think Nicole knows that and we're all aligned in terms of the administration. We'll ensure that work gets done. The second piece of it is and **Councilman Sloane** I as you know we've been talking to proactively and John's not here but we have been talking to him about what our funding will look like for additional storm water management across this Township and we can certainly make sure that we include that a second piece of water running from Hulmeville and Street into Hansell as part of that funding when we look at the budget this year.

Councilman Kisselback And I agree with your approach instead of getting engineering after engineering after engineering for several projects, do the engineering, do the project and finish it up and see where we are. I agree with what you're doing 100%.

Natasha Bica - Okay. I just have one more question. Behind my house and this is something we've discussed with you guys a million times. I've got poison oak growing through my fence that's actually broken my fence at this point. Is that part of what's going to be something that is at least cleaned up? I know you can't tell me too much information about it. **Nicole Kahn** If you tell me it's okay to do that. Yes. **Natasha Bica** Yes, because it's breaking my fence. My fence is broken. **Council President Tokmajian** Let's talk to the owners about it. But just know that we are not waiting for this property to get developed at this point. That's not the answer. So, to your point, we're holding the owners of that property responsible. **Natasha Bica** Which should have been done back in 2021, but anyway, we can't go backwards. We're moving forward is what I want to know. And I want to know how quickly it's going to move forward.

Council President Tokmajian And at least I asked that question. You got some sort of ETA and we'll certainly keep them accountable to that. **Natasha Bica** - Okay. Thank you.

Colleen, 2032 Hansell Drive. I'm good cop bad cop. You keep referencing the monies, but it was in an article this past week or week two, but the funds have been moved multiple times to your general fund. So why are the monies not there to fix this issue? **Council President Tokmajian** Colleen, it's a good question. **Colleen** And the mayor's not here, you know, and he makes the decisions for this Council. So where's the money? **Council President Tokmajian** It's a good question and it's certainly something that we are posing the administration. **Colleen** And then I also want to know and it also reported that there was a grant applied for from the Township. Who applied for that grant? If you have nothing to do with

the property which we were told at the last Council meeting. **Council President Tokmajian** So the administration does apply for the grants.

Council Secretary Wenzel The grant for that property in question was applied by the county. That wasn't applied by the Township. **Council President Tokmajian** Mr. Pizzo, do you want to respond?

Solicitor Pizzo Well, just consistent with what Mr. Wenzel was saying, a RACP, a state grant, was applied for and awarded to that site for infrastructure work. It was not applied for by the Township, however. It was applied for through the County Redevelopment Authority, I believe, on behalf of the developer and it was awarded by the State. Township had nothing to do with that. Those are state funds that were awarded through the County RDA. **Council Secretary Wenzel** I believe they did get rejected.

Solicitor Pizzo And regarding the ARPA funds, and I believe the Director of Administration provided to Council a breakdown of how those funds were spent and where they were spent during 2024 and 2025. And they were spent on drainage problems throughout the Township, flooding problems throughout the Township. One of the requirements of the ARPA program, at least as it was explained to me, was that the money couldn't be spent on private property, couldn't be spent on the Armstrong property. Township had to spend it on Township facilities. So the projects Grandview, Glendale, Michael Drive, Mark Circle, Ogden Avenue, Pasqualone Boulevard, all of those projects that were done by the Township over the last two years were done using the ARPA funds. That's my understanding and I believe that's consistent with what the Director of Administration explained to the Council President.

Colleen So I'll be assuming in the 2027 budget we will have a name of Hansell Drive on that budget. **Council President Tokmajian** I have already started talking to the Director of Administration in terms of funding, particularly including storm water management. **Colleen** Thank you.

Michelle Cooper, 2469 Williamson Court in Springdale. I've lived there for 27 years. We've been in Bensalem 45 years. And I had never had a rodent problem before, ever. About five or six weeks ago, my neighbor told me that she saw rats in her backyard right next door to me. And I thought she was crazy. I mean, I've seen mice, but never rats. And I pulled up my shade and there's a rat just walking across my backyard. I've been informed that we've had rat infestation because last year Pasqualone was dug up for sewer work. And when the people were finished for the night, they didn't put metal plates down, they put tarp down. So, the rats decided that they were coming up and they frequented our neighborhood.

I contacted Building and Planning and I also contacted the Board of Health. I sent information to the Board of Health about unattended easements because we also heard that besides bird feeders, which we've all taken down, if the easements aren't mowed and maintained, that's a breeding ground for rats. So, I contacted them with the addresses and the people have rectified the problem because Board of Health has been out to see us three separate times, come into our backyards, told us what we have to do, what we're doing correctly, what others need to do. I've contacted most of my neighbors on Williamson Court. Many of my neighbors have also had to contact their exterminators to place rat boxes in their backyards, which to me sounds disgusting, but we've done it. My exterminator was out yesterday and he opened the box. He said, "Oh, there's no poison in here, so they've been in your box. They've been in all the other boxes, and hopefully they will all die." I would be very happy. I do love animals, but not rats. The situation is not acceptable at all. Besides the health problem, there's children that like to play in their backyards and they can't play in their backyards if there's rodents back there. I want to thank you for your time and also say I find it very coincidental that right now you have papers outside the board meeting tonight telling us what to do about the rats. Where has everybody been for the last five, six, seven, eight weeks that they're here? And my exterminator also told me that they will be back in the winter because that's when they

really come around. So I would appreciate it if the Township would really do something about this. Because it skives me out.

Carol Tamini, 5748 Corsair Court, Bensalem. I've lived here for 41 plus years. Same problem that she's having right now. Last summer when they opened up the sewer pipes in Pasqualone, it's exactly what they did. They left them open. The rats that lived in there infested our neighborhood. I know that for a fact, which was told to me by the Board of Health as well, that's exactly where they came from. We noticed holes in our yard last summer. We thought that they were coming from rabbits. We didn't think they were rats. We've never had rats back there. And came fall, we were leaving to go out. We threw a shade up in our backyard. Yes, I was feeding birds at the time. I've been feeding birds back there for 25 years at least. Never had a problem. My backyard was covered. 30 to 40 rats running around my yard eating the bird seed. Needless to say, I freaked out. Called a couple of my neighbors. I told them, "We have a serious problem back here. I don't know what is going on."

So, we had an exterminator come out, kind of settled everything down. Once we took the feeders down, put them in a trash can, got rid of them, one dove across, hit my husband straight in the head. We haven't had bird feeders up since then. So, we have back there now one, two, three, four, four traps in our yard. We have killed numerous rats in our yard. We have nothing back there that these rats want. My backyard, the Board of Health has been out. She said, "You have nothing back here." They're coming from my adjoining neighbors behind me and on the side of me. They're digging holes every night coming into my yard. We have them on video. My husband has set up four cameras out back. We watched them in the yard. I let the dog out one night. Two ran right in front of me. They're all over the town. They're all over the Valley. More people I talked to, they all say yes that they have seen rats. Numerous people. Alexis Court is infested with them. They're seeing them during the day. So people the Township wants to say there's no infestation. When you see them during the day, that's an infestation.

There are people dissing them. There is a guy on Alexis who I know for a fact is trapping numerous ones. Some of them feel they don't want to hurt the rats. They're taking them down to the bridge by Hulmeville Road and that's where they're leaving them. Can't do that. They're going to come right back to where they came from. They've got to be over a mile away. People still have bird feeders up. You walk around, you tell people, they look at you. Well, I haven't seen any. Most of them say they haven't seen any because they have chain link fences. They have no lights in their yard at night. They open the door, they let their dog out, they open the door and bring their dog back in. They never walk outside. We in fact have lights throughout our backyard and we see exactly what's going on out there. So, we're on top of it. We're trying to do everything that we can.

The Township has to take some responsibility for this. Whoever they hired who did this work back there should have been more cautious about it. They had to know if they do this for a living that this is what's going to happen. You at least open sewer pipes up, rats are going to come out of them. So now we get the burden of having to clean this up. Exactly what the woman before me just said. It's very coincidental that on Facebook today all of a sudden Bensalem Township decides they're going to put this big post out about rats in our neighborhood. They won't use the word infestation. It's an infestation back there. When you're killing numerous rats and you're seeing them during the day, it's infestation. Board of Health has been out numerous times, she has her hands full. She said, she doesn't know what to do. She needs word of mouth. She needs people that are going to work with her to try to get this matter cleaned up. She also stated if we don't get this matter cleaned up ASAP, what's going to happen is they're going to breed during the winter and next summer, we're going to have double the amount of rats back there.

They're traveling. So, they're going into adjoining neighborhoods now. They're not just in our neighborhood, but they're going other places. I've been told that they are on the side of Valley School,

they're all over Valley School. Somebody sent me a message on Messenger and they said, "Tell the Board of Health to go to Valley School." They're all over the side of Valley School. Somebody posted today that the old Wood River Village, I forget what it's called now, but they said they have them all over down there as well. So, with that being said, we're just trying to ask the Township for some kind of help. Maybe drop some black boxes in the easements, you know, try to help us. We have, like I said, numerous traps back there. We have killed numerous rats back there. We have a black box back there. The problem is these rats are smart and they know what to look for and they'll walk right the bait and just not even go after them now. So, we don't know what to do. We came here tonight to ask for help.

Cecilia Cam, 2482 Williamson Court. I have not seen them, but I've certainly heard all of the stories about these rats. Okay. 44 years, never saw a rat. I mean, a mice, a little field mice, yes, but a rat, never. So, I guess my question is, this is not the first time you've heard of this problem, correct? How many people are here regarding the rat situation? Okay, that's a pretty good showing, right? So, I guess my question is, what can you do? Because honestly, I let my dog out and I'm afraid. I won't go outside at night because of this. I will not step foot out in my backyard. I'm doing everything I can. I make sure I pick up all my dogs droppings because I know that when your dog leaves a dropping that attracts the rats and that's another big problem because if you're not picking up after your dog in your backyard every time that dog goes, you're going to invite the rats in. And the same goes for when you walk your dogs through the neighborhood. And we have a ton of dogs in Springdale. I know you know you've knocked on doors in Springdale. You know how many dogs are there. People are walking around. They're walking their dogs. I would say 90% of the people that do walk their dogs pick up the droppings. But there are people who do not. And that has got to stop because it has to be a joint effort. The residents have to do their share and believe me I know these people are doing their share but we need to know what you can do. What can you do to help us with this issue? I got my little sign. It's very upsetting and it's very scary and the older you get the scarier this becomes. Thank you.

Christy Repco, Williamson Court - So I I'm not prepared. I didn't have a whole lot of bullet points here, but the first I knew of this was in July and I thought I had a vole that was in the yard. I saw the little tunnels. I thought it was a vole. I mentioned it to my neighbor. My neighbor text me the next day saying, "That's a rat." And lots of expletives later in my text. I was grossed out and was like, "I need to do something about that." Luckily, I found an exterminator that would come out and he came out on the weekend for me and everything which I was so grateful. So that was the beginning of July and within two to three weeks, he has two bait boxes in my yard and within two to three weeks one of them was half gone and the other one was completely gone. So clearly they're being eaten.

The most I had seen at some point was six, but if you see six, you know there's more around. But my issue was that I didn't know there was a problem until I saw them. So, how do you convince everybody needs to know. Unless everybody's doing something, there's still going to be a problem. Everyone has to be in it. And putting this out to the people who already know today because they're here isn't the answer. It is door to door. It is sending stuff out. It is blasting the entire area so that everybody is taking care of it at the same time. If you have pockets of people that are doing something, it's only going to be solved in those pockets of people. I mean, luckily, I don't have any right now, but I will be very curious to see what my exterminator says when he comes back out for the ones that he's refilled to see if those have also been eaten. But I mean, I am horrified by dead things. I am horrified that I'm so afraid to go out in my yard. I shouldn't be so afraid to walk outside and see something scurrying in front of me and like, you know, trying to do weed whacking out there the one day and had just screaming bloody murder because one's running in front of me. Like I can't handle that and I shouldn't be afraid to have to go out and see that in my yard.

The Board of Health woman came by. I spoke to her last week and she said I'm doing all the right things. I again was a bird feeder. All of those have gone in. There's no more feed out. Anything that fell on the ground, I have dug up and put top soil down. Anything I couldn't has like ceramic tiles on top of it. I have done whatever I could to make it difficult for them. I've filled all the holes. She's telling me I have done all the right things. But what I'm curious of is this can't be the first time it happened in neighborhoods. And so I would hope that that the Township will look into what has been done in other neighborhoods. How to help us out so that we're not all taking on this burden by ourselves and how to get the word out there so that everybody knows. Like I said, if everybody's doing it, we have a chance. But if it's just pockets of people doing it, we don't have a chance. So we need help. I don't want to be grossed out in my yard anymore. Thank you.

We're not here for the rats. We're here for the drainage issues.

Council President Tokmajian Oh, okay. Hold on a sec. I just want to make sure that you don't mind holding. Is there anybody else for the rat situation? Do you did you want to speak? Sorry. I want to address the rat issue if you don't mind, please first. But we want to hear their issue. Yeah. Whatever you do, just don't leave. We want to hear you. I just want to make sure that I get everybody up for the rat issue first because we have some folks here that we can speak to it and then I was going to remark to it too as well. So just hang tight, okay? If you don't mind.

Mark Cooper, 2469 Williamson Court. Michelle is my wife. The concern that I have is all of us, all of the residents that are dealing with this are taking money out of their pockets at \$20 a clip to take care of this. It's not fair. Especially the lady on Corsair Court, if she's got 30 or 40 rats and she needs five or six traps, that's a \$100 a pop. It's not right. We shouldn't have to deal with this. The other thing is if you're going to have a sewer issue or a construction, then part of that deal that you just approved should have something in it that says they are responsible for all of the rat issues that may develop or any kind of issue that develops. If Pasqualone had been handled properly, we probably wouldn't be talking to you people today. It's just not right. We pay our taxes no different than anybody else. We expect service. We don't get service, then you guys are out of a job and we're going to find somebody who's going to do it. That's the American way. So, all I'm asking is figure out what you can do and if you have to reimburse it only costs us \$40 so far, but that woman over there, she's probably going to spend hundreds, maybe even \$1,000 and that comes out of their pockets and that takes away from them paying taxes to support this Township and it's not right. Thank you.

Kathleen Mars, 5706 Arcadia Court. Where actually I used to live there with my mother. She passed away and I now own her home. And as a teacher, first thing that came to mind was the emperor has no clothes. We've been talking about this is an infestation and people are telling us it's not. And in fact, you've even said that this is an uptick in a few areas. That's a disgrace to say that as though none of us are telling you what we see. That's a disgrace. We're all supposed to pretend that they're not here. It's from the Danish author that the phrase says with that idiom to describe a situation that people are either afraid to point out or will not point out because of social pressure. The social pressure is Bensalem.

I did some further investigation. I said, you know, I'm going to do my homework because I am a teacher. So, why is this occurring? It says road work disturbs rats. Why? Vibration. Heavy machinery. Shaking the ground scares rats out of their burrows. Destruction. Digging tears up the underground and the nest and breaks open the sewer lines. Noise. Loud jackhammers and drills disrupt the nocturnal resting cycles forcing them away. And then of course flooding. We've had all this water. Fixing water mains can also push water into these dry pipes. So what do we expect? Well, they're going to go to another area where it's quiet and where they have settled is right here in that area of Bensalem. And from what I heard, they're

moving further. So this is not just going to be a certain area of Bensalem. This is growing. They look for easy food and shelter.

I understand that and I agree with everything that they're saying here, right? We to avoid more of this rat population, we shouldn't be feeding the birds. We should be picking up after our dogs. We should be cleaning and making sure that we don't have sheds that have things that are broken down. We understand that. But these things existed before the construction and the road work that happened. All of this existed. People didn't pick up after their dogs. We can say that people had sheds that they needed to be cleaned. People had bird feeders. Now all of a sudden we have a problem with rats. The reason is because of what has happened with the road work. Now we can't sit here and say we shouldn't have road work. We do need to have road work. We do need to change the pipes and whatever else they were doing. However, what I heard from someone who was just standing up is that they didn't take the proper measures in order to stop. So, that may be something that you could look at as far as the Township to see what did they do to try to avoid these rats that existed underground.

Also, excuse me just one second. So, I also looked up, which was not to my delight, that water companies are generally not legally obliged to deter rats from scattering into private property during standard road work unless it is a local law that is dictating it. So, I guess the question is, do we have a local law that dictates that when they are doing the work that they have to have some type of measures to try to stop any rats that they are disturbing? And the nest from them coming up and them coming into the neighborhood because I'm a teacher so I do my homework. I went to our representative. I went to the Board of Health and left a message and she was kind enough and probably was the same woman that has been to the other houses. She's been great. She gave us the same kind of ideas, but she did state that because I asked, "Well, aren't they responsible to a certain degree to try to deter these rats?" And she said, "Yes, but it's hard to prove." So, I don't know of anyone who was stating that they knew that they did not put down the proper material in order to try to stop some of the rats from coming up. I don't know if anyone has pictures, video, if you have a house with a camera that you see it because God knows I thought like Rome really was developed faster than what they did with these roads. So maybe if we have some kind of videos or on some of the houses that possibly can see it, but I think the bottom line is we're afraid.

I know every single one of you sitting up here would not want to have rats in your backyard. Every single one of you up here would not want to have rats in your house. Every single one of you up here have children and grandchildren. Do not want them to possibly be bit by a rat. And as a teacher, although I'm not with Bensalem, that is a serious problem. If that school is infested with rats, that needs to be addressed immediately as a teacher, I'm not even talking about my house, this immediately needs to be looked into. I don't know how many children are at Valley School, but they go outside and play. And if the rats are being so abrasive now that they just come out in daylight, we have a serious problem. I guess what I'm basically saying is what can you do as a Township? Can you look into whether or not they did their due diligence? They being the water department, did they do their due diligence on trying to keep the rats at least at bay? Because it certainly is not at bay. And I think all of you can say that.

Last thing they said was to call 311, which is a non-emergency phone number used in many cities and counties, which I think many of us did. But this is life-threatening. It really is. If you think about it. That was appalling. Whatever that woman said about 40 rats in her backyard. Dear God, they carry disease. They can they can injure someone.

I'm afraid. And we as taxpayers need to know that you're helping us. And this, I appreciate this because this will help kind of like deter the rats to a certain degree, but this is not the solution. It really isn't. We need your help. We need you to look, dig, find something, even to find them responsible if they are responsible. And I can't imagine that they're not. Nothing else has changed other than all of the work that's

been done. Please help us. Please look into Valley. As a teacher, I'm telling you, please look into Valley. There are way too many kids that are there that are going to go outside and play on those swings. It's your responsibility to protect the children. It's my responsibility to protect children. So, I'm asking for you to do that first, but you need to look into it. Please do not push the paper aside and say, "Okay, we'll talk about this at a later date. This is a definite problem." And I appreciate every single one of you. Please think of yourself as having a home or having a child at Valley. And if you do that, you'll do the right thing. I appreciate your time. Thank you.

Tina Scott, 2467 Williamson - I don't want to repeat myself or, you know, have everything repeated, but I'm just kind of looking for in the future. I know they're working on Hulmeville Road. I see them digging. I know it's going to disrupt them. It's pretty bad. I mean, my bait boxes are empty. He comes out every one to two weeks and he has to. He said, "I can't believe it. Everything's gone." And then when they die, I have to move them, which, you know, last time I picked them up, there were maggots everywhere. It's just awful. They're all different sizes. So, there's a lot. And I don't want to take up too much of the time, but with them doing that other work, I wish that there was an idea or something proactive because, you know, they're going to come out and with other areas like Mayfair, they all have them. But thank you.

Council President Tokmajian – Real quick. First and foremost, I wouldn't want the rats in my backyard to answer that question. So, I want our residents to know that their concerns have been heard and are being taken seriously. In response to these concerns, Mr. Farrall is here this evening and he can come up to the podium. I would ask him just to kind of speak if he doesn't mind here in a minute. I know the Mayor's administration has had members of Building and Planning visit the affected areas to identify conditions that may be contributing to the problem. As part of that effort, violation notices have been issued where inspectors identified issues such as overgrown grass, accumulated trash, and debris, and property conditions that could potentially provide shelter or nesting areas. The Township administration is also working with the Bucks County Board of Health to identify potential areas of concern and determine whether there are common nesting or harboring areas that may be contributing to the problem. And I know we have some folks from the Bucks County Department of Health here as well to speak to that.

As you pointed out, at the same time, the Township has since provided some information and practical tools to help prevent rats from being attracted to their properties, including things such as proper trash storage, eliminating food sources, reducing areas where rodents can nest, and understanding safe and appropriate ways to address the activity on private property. I know it's frustrating and frightening for residents to deal with the situation. While there are limitations on what the Township can do on private property, that doesn't mean that the problem should be ignored or that residents should be left to deal with it on their own. As a legislative body, we don't manage the departments or direct day-to-day administration. That's why I'll have Ken come up. We're here to listen to the residents raise their concerns with the administration and provide the support and resources necessary and when appropriate. And ensuring that the administration does what they can to try to address the issue. Ken, you want to come up? We'll continue to work with the Mayor and his administration to encourage a thorough response to the problem, which Ken is here to kind of give a summary of it. And lastly, I just wanted to also note someone pointed out it's going to be a joint effort. This is going to require a community effort. Residents have just an important role to play. But they should also expect that Township government to respond when a problem affects an entire neighborhood. And I will tell you, council stands ready to support reasonable measures that can help address this issue. And as Ken can tell you, I was in there just this past week meeting with John and with the Mayor on kind of talking about what's already been done. So I'll turn it over to you, sir.

Kenneth Farrall, Director of Building and Planning – Council, thank you. Solicitor Pizzo, thank you for the opportunity. Yes, we've been working with the health department and when we identified areas

that have received a lot of complaints, we have sent out our staff to not only drive the area, but walk the area, walk the easements behind the houses. When we find properties that maybe the grass is a little bit higher that could harbor rodents like this, we sent out notices to say, "Hey, let's bring your property into compliance." There was one or two properties that had some property maintenance issues and again a lot of these are in the backyards. We've addressed that with them and as one of the resident says it seemed like a lot of the properties have been cleaned up. So, we've been trying to do as much of that as we can.

We've also gone to the shopping centers and gone behind the shopping centers to make sure that the trash and the dumpsters and everything are cleaned up as well. And if there is an infraction, we've been going back to the property owner, the store owner, and saying, "Hey, let's get this cleaned up." As with the apartment complexes, because I know that's always an issue. We generally on the inspections, because we have a full-time housing code inspector that goes to the apartments and that is part of what he does. With the dumpsters, we're making a special effort with that. It was one of the one of the apartment complexes that was swapping out the trash compactor for a dumpster and taking a little bit of time. So, we got on them to make sure that happened sooner than later. So, we do have all of those places commercial and the apartments in our crosshairs.

The one thing that I did want to mention and when the work on Pasqualone was done, as standard protocol our Township engineers office did have the pipe televised. So when that pipe was televised there was no evidence of rodents there in the pipes. So, a lot of it I believe is a misconception. But again, maybe the road work was we don't know where they're coming from and certainly I don't know if anybody from the health department has an idea or not, but we certainly aren't sure and that's why we're taking these other measures. But prior to the work being done, they always as standard practice do the televising so they can see what they're dealing with so that when the work starts, we can't have a contractor coming back and say, "Oh, that was that was a different situation than what and you know trying to get extra money and stuff like that." So, we do that as a standard protocol and at that time when it was televised, there was no evidence of rats or rodents or anything like that. So, that's also a standard procedure for when any road work gets done. So, we're continuing to work with the health department. We are going to these areas. Stephanie from the health department had told us there was a couple or there was a one abandoned building in Eddington. We went there did our legal stuff that we have to. We're going to have public works out there to board up the building and that happened to be a unique situation because the neighbors were taking care of the front and there was a fence all around the property. So, we didn't know what the backyard looked like because when we drive by through Eddington, we see the front yard. It's manicured. There's a fence on either side, manicured from the two side neighbors. Had no idea that what it looked like in the back. So, now we found it. Now, we're going to have public works out there because the notice of violation just expired today. So, we're going to have public works out there in the next day to get that property cleaned up. And again, we're trying to chip away at this as much as we can to try to bring these properties up to compliance so that they don't have a problem with, you know, harboring vermin and all that.

Solicitor Pizzo - Just to expand a moment on what Mr. Farrall was saying, the Township does have a full-time apartment complex inspector who is out to the apartment complexes on a daily basis. Viewing the common areas, making sure that things are being properly maintained. And as he said, since the complaints started in July, the Township has upped the inspections that those individuals are doing to make sure that the dumpster areas in the apartment complexes and the commercial shopping centers and businesses are clean and to the extent that they're in compliance with the Township code. The other thing that the Township does, the public may not be aware, is the Township maintains a list of vacant properties in the Township. And our inspectors routinely go out to make sure that the vacant properties, to the extent they're not Township open space, which gets cut by public works, but to the extent they're private properties, Township goes out, particularly in the summer months, to make sure that those are being properly

maintained, that grass isn't getting high and overgrown. So, the ability for those properties to harbor any kinds of vermin is abrogated.

But the public needs to understand also that when the Township finds that a property has high grass, there's a process that we have to follow which is the same as if it was any other private property. Township just can't go out and start cutting private land. Township has to issue a notice of violation to give the property owner a chance to abate the violation. We go out and reinspect. If it's been taken care of, fine. If it hasn't, then the Township has to issue a citation. Citation has to go through the DJ (District Justice) system. We have to get an order before we can go out and start to take matters into our own hands. It's unfortunate, but it is the law and it applies to private property throughout the Township. Township also maintains a list, to the extent it's aware, of abandoned properties, properties that may be under foreclosure. The properties owners have moved out. The bank now has the property. Again, once we become aware of and they're on our list, inspectors are going out routinely to make sure that the buildings are secure, that the property isn't subject to high grass because sometimes these banks or mortgage companies don't care. But usually, if we observe it and notify those companies, the banks or the mortgage companies, they're usually pretty good at getting somebody out there to address the problem. But the Township does that as a routine practice. But again, all these things have been upped since the complaints of the rats coming from different neighborhoods in the Township have increased.

The last thing as to Pasqualone, Mr. Wursta or Miss Khan might be able to speak to this more specifically than I can, but as Mr. Farrall said at the outset of the job, this was storm water. This wasn't sewer. This was storm water pipe which was televised and inspected. No indication that the pipes themselves were infested with rats. Township inspectors are on site as work is being done and the contractors themselves are doing reports as work progresses. And there's nothing to indicate either from the Township inspectors or from the inspection logs that were provided by the contractor that there was any indication that they encountered a rat nest as will sometimes happen in these cases. But as I mentioned earlier when we were discussing all the ARPA funds and all the projects that were done over the last couple of years, all of these projects didn't result in rat infestations in all the various neighborhoods throughout the Township. It's in this one area of Springdale that seems to be the concentration. But the work on the Pasqualone job started in January or February of 2025, almost 18 months prior to this problem reaching the point that it's reached. During that work from January or February through August of 2025 when the work was done, again, no indication that they encountered a rat nest or that there was evidence of rats coming up out of the trench or that that they encountered any of this while the work was being done. So, not precluding anything, but just letting you know that again the Township as it does on all of these jobs is watching for just this sort of thing as the works being done and progresses. So, wanted to share that with all of you and share that with the public as well. And again, as you indicated, the Department of Health, they've been on the front lines with this. There are three representatives of the Department of Health with us here this evening and they can certainly speak as to what it is they've been encountering as well as what we should be doing as a community to address this problem.

Council Secretary Wenzel - You answered one of my questions. Typically, on site civil drawings there's typically standards put on the drawings to protect for environmental protections, things like silk socks, scanning, etc. Are we reviewing and making sure that those things are all being completed? Now you said the scan's happening, can we also make that a Township code that it has to be done on any project that's public like that?

Solicitor Pizzo - That may already be part of the contract specifications. Again, the engineers can speak to that perhaps better than I.

Phil Wursta - We do that for every drain.

Council Secretary Wenzel - It's in the contract specifications?

Phil Wursta - As part of the design we look through all the storm sewer pipes with TVs.

Council Secretary Wenzel - Yeah. I just know that sometimes they get overlooked or there's not enough and that does happen.

Phil Wursta - And I should make a point. Storm sewer it's not sewage. And you know there's nothing to eat in those things. There's conveyance of you know you could walk through one if you're a rat I suppose but there's no food in there.

Council Secretary Wenzel - Typically. I mean people throw trash in there. It could get lodged.

Phil Wursta - They need something that has food. and storm sewers are probably, you know, the least likely and we have not seen that and we've done all those investigations.

Council Secretary Wenzel - Okay. My next one is the properties that are in foreclosure or not there. We go take care of them. We are putting liens on them homes?

Kenneth Farrall - Yes.

Councilman Knowles – We are also checking that the areas that are easements that we're doing our part on the easement areas, those areas are being cut and maintained.

Kenneth Farrall - Yes. Like I said, we not only drove the neighborhoods, we walk behind the neighborhoods because each resident is responsible. Generally, the easements are 4 feet. They're responsible for 2 feet and 2 feet. So, when we find an area that is not cut or uncut, unkept, we notify them and generally they will take care of it. If they don't take care of it, again, we go through the process. We'll have public works cut it if need be, but we don't let them get unsightly if we're able to.

Councilman Knowles – Okay. Thank you.

Council President Tokmajian - Okay. Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Farrall. I know the Bucks County Department of Health is here. If there's anything else that you feel needs to be added? Thanks, Mr. Farrell.

Carol Tamini - I just want to add to this. I disagree with what you're saying as far as when the project started. It maybe it started early 2025. That is when I stated that we started noticing holes in my yard. So, it's very coincidental that it all occurred at the same time. Early spring last year, 2025 is when we started seeing holes under our fence. And come fall, that's when we noticed that there were rats. Rats are nocturnal technically, so you're not going to see them during the day. So, I don't know what cameras would show looking into something. They're nocturnal. They're not around. They're not out during the day when it's light out. They're out when it's an infestation. That's when they come out during the day when it's an infestation. So, the timeline is perfect. They came from these pipes. There were many times every morning I drove past these guys working. They were off doing whatever they were doing and those pipes were wide open. So, you're going to tell me that they were standing right there. I never saw inspectors out there. I went by every single day numerous times. I went by on my way to work and home back again. My husband works from home. My husband doesn't miss a trick. He sees everybody who walks by my house. He sees everybody in the easement. Hasn't seen anybody walk down the back of our easement. But yet, we're the ones that have the problem back there. As far as what that gentleman said about what the cost,

we're into hundreds of dollars right now to try to do this. I have no neighbors that are doing much of anything. They're cleaning up here and there, and that's about the extent of it. No, they have not put any traps down. They have not tried anything. I am several hundred dollars into this. We had to go buy rocks and put rocks down the entire side of my yard to stop them from coming in from my neighbor's yard next door, but they claim that they don't have them over there. So, the timeline is perfect. So, you know, I just wanted to say I totally disagree with what you're saying about the timeline that they didn't come from there. That's where they came from. We didn't have rats back there. Again, I've lived back there 41 years. Never in my life have I had rats. Mice, maybe. I don't have a problem with mice. Mice come, mice go. We don't have mice back there anymore because we have rats back there. Once the rats show up, the mice go away. So, timeline is perfect. I have a grandchild who plays back there. I have a dog back there. I go out there at night, they're running in front of me.

Council President Tokmajian - Ken if there's any additional reports, email addresses that residents can reach out to your department?

Kenneth Farrall - It's on the website.

Council President Tokmajian - It's on the website. Okay. So, if you do foresee any issues, if you happen to come across some sort of infestation, if there's something within easement property, please reach out to Building and Planning. Their contact information is on the website.

Kenneth Farrall - Yes, absolutely. And if there are areas that we need to look at so we can send notice of violations out, we will do that as well.

Council Secretary Wenzel - Since obviously this is going to have to be a collaborated effort, can we send notification out via mail that the letter that was conveniently showed up today in front of the meeting out to all the residents of Springdale so they know what's going on. So maybe they take a little more action. So it sounds like some members know, some members don't, some members here, some member here have them, some don't. Some are taking care of some, some aren't. If we you know, send a letter out or you know post it in a neighborhood so more people are aware of the situation.

Kenneth Farrall - I will work with administration to figure out how we're going to do that. But yes, we can do that.

Council President Tokmajian - Thank you. Yeah. And I had that as a follow-up potentially looking at somehow increasing that advertising specific in that neighborhood. And then the second follow-up is, I think we'll have to reach out to Valley, the school district.

Kenneth Farrall - I will call Mr. Curry tomorrow. He's a facilities manager and just ask him if is there a problem? what is the problem? How can they address it? I already wrote it on my list of things to do for tomorrow. So, I'll reach out to him tomorrow morning.

Council President Tokmajian - Thank you, sir.

Solicitor Pizzo - Mr. Tokmajian - Truly the front line on this battle is the Board of Health.

Council President Tokmajian - Yeah, that's fine, please.

Ray Buckley, Board of Health - Good evening everybody. Can you all hear me? Okay. I'm Ray Buckley with the Bucks County Department of Health. I'm one of the supervisors in our environmental division.

We also have Steven Bobs. He's in our Levittown office. And Stephanie English who's been our boots on the ground for this entire process as we receive complaints. She's probably seen some of you here. you've invited her into your home. The easement aspect I would like to discuss more that would help with our inspection process. We can't just go on to people's properties without their permission. But if there's an easement we're able to see these things that would kind of speed things along for us. We'll talk after the meeting after this.

What I wanted to touch on is our complaint process and what we're able to investigate. So for us, we have to receive something in writing. Generally, it's what's going on, who you are. We keep things anonymous, mainly because we're dealing with neighborly disputes. So, you might have gotten along with your neighbor for the last 40 years, and you don't want to, lack of a better term, rat them out. So I know it's terrible. From there, once we receive that, Stephanie may make contact with you or another person from our department to gain access to see what's going on out there. Most of our regulation is for exterior property maintenance. And that's looking for harboring sources, water sources, and food sources, which is the information we've been talking about all night. You know, removing dog feces and bird seed and cat bowls and everything like that. We all know that. But that's kind of the extent of the Bucks County Department of Health's reach here. Without you telling us of where some of these things are, our resources are kind of limited. So, we have to focus in on specific properties rather than a neighborhood multi-streetwide investigation. We just don't have the resources for that. So, we rely on you to reach out to us and say, "This person on, not to out anybody, Williamson Court is they've left all of their trash out in the backyard." Everybody's front yard looks great, but we can't get to some of those backyards. So, if you can tell us, then we can help you a little faster. If we go out there and we see that property is not doing what we're asking them, which is clean it up, remove those resources, we have similar enforcement as Bensalem, we would issue an order letter saying clean it up in a certain amount of time. And if that doesn't happen, then we go have to go to the District Court. From there, hopefully there's enough leverage there for the property owner to put that money to cleaning up the property rather than them paying the court or the department a fine in that sense. So, that's really our process. I can take questions after the fact if you'd like.

Council President Tokmajian - Will you stick around so this way the residents after this meeting can speak to you. Then one other quick question. How do they reach you and contact you?

Ray Buckley - I have some business cards tonight. So does Stephanie as well.

Council President Tokmajian - In terms of folks that might not be here is our website, contact information on that website.

Ray Buckley - Bucks County Department of Health, if you just Google it. My name is Raymond Buckley with the, you know, inspector control program coordinator. It's pretty easy to find. I can give you my direct line. It's 215-345-3333.

Council Secretary Wenzel – Thank you sir.

Solicitor Pizzo – Mr. Buckley, when we had our Zoom last week to discuss this, you had suggested that there might be some benefit rather than the neighbors each dealing with a separate exterminator and dealing with this peace-meal perhaps pooling together and finding an exterminator perhaps that's experienced in dealing with larger complexes. Because as you're saying and as the residents are saying, if the rats are coming from the next-door neighbor's yard, the rats are coming from the next door neighbor's yard. And if the resident is paying for an exterminator to do something, but it's not happening next door, then you're to a certain extent pushing a rock uphill.

Ray Buckley - That's right. So rats are fairly smart. If you introduce something into their neighborhood, they're going to probably stay away from it for a little bit. Like if something somebody puts something in your house, you would assume that's a mystery item. You're not going to bother until you kind of get used to it. So with hiring multiple different pest control companies, they're sort of competing against each other. So hiring one unified company to handle a few properties in a neighborhood would be the best approach to handling something like that.

Solicitor Pizzo - The phrase you used was coordinated pest control.

Ray Buckley - Correct. Now I know you just mentioned some mass messaging out to the neighborhood that might also be incorporated into something like that. I can't give any specific companies who can perform those services. But there certainly are ones out there and available that would be able to be contacted.

Solicitor Pizzo - And following our meeting last week, the paperwork that's here in the Council tonight, that was at your recommendation that we provide that to the community. That's going out on social media if it isn't already on the Township web page and as is being suggested by Council this evening, perhaps mailing directly to the households in that neighborhood as well. The education is just as important. Taking in the bird feeders, getting up the dog and cat feces, whatever it might be, is key to helping abate this problem. Correct.

Ray Buckley - That's correct. That'll help prevention. But eventually you need some type of additional control, which is extermination. Trapping, I know somebody had mentioned here they were trapping and releasing. Personally, that's not going to resolve the issue. You need to stop the life cycle process of these rats reproducing. That would ultimately be the effective approach.

Solicitor Pizzo - And lastly, when we when we met last week, I think Stephanie had indicated, and please correct me if I'm wrong, that the Board of Health had received six rat complaints up to mid-July for the Township and that since mid-July, that number has gone up significantly. We're now into 16, 18 something like that. But the complaints started multiplying and growing that you were receiving in mid-July of this year. Correct.

Ray Buckley - We did receive some additional complaints. I think with a neighborhood becoming more aware of things, that was expected. We certainly get rat complaints all throughout Bucks County including Bensalem Township each year. This may be a peak year. Hopefully not. But by having these this information out there, a coordinated effort, I think that'll we'll start to see less as long as those prevention approaches are being taken. Thank you.

Council Secretary Wenzel - We have had some email communications and you were able to provide stuff relatively quickly. I'd like to thank you for responding as quickly as you can. My question is when somebody reports it, do you automatically report it to Building and Planning as well or do you guys like try to handle it first and then go to Building and Planning?

Ray Buckley - Sure. I think discussing with Ken, there's some coordination on where our reach would be and where Building and Planning would be. A lot of things do overlap, but there's sometimes some things Bensalem were able to handle that we just don't have the regulatory authority to oversee.

Council Secretary Wenzel - Yeah, I asked for some list and you came really quickly with that. And then there was another instance in Eddington. You came quick with that one, too. And Ken has been working on the one on Eddington because it's predominantly vacant homes that are bank owned. So that is

something that could potentially be a main source in some of these areas that we're not aware of. But thank you very much for everything you're doing.

Ray Buckley – Can't take credit for all that. That's all Stephanie English back there. So again, she she's boots on the ground.

Council President Tokmajian - Certainly appreciate the cooperation and the response here with Bensalem Township. Thank you very much.

Solicitor Pizzo - And that is the case council. That when Stephanie issues a written notice or whatever, Ken's office is made aware. There is coordination back and forth. Again, in years past where this hasn't really been a problem, we haven't needed the kind of coordination that we're now finding ourselves in because again, this uptick, if you will, this increase in what we're seeing is an anomaly in at least in all the years that I've been representing the Township. This is the first time in 30 years that I've been sitting here that we're having this discussion.

Council President Tokmajian - We'll continue with public comment. Thank you so much for your patience since we started with the rats.

Diane Builda, 2811 Marion Avenue

Lori, 2819 Marian Avenue. That that was not very much fun, was it? We just wanted to make sure the Council is aware that we are working with people from public works. Brian came out and he actually came out when we had rain on Wednesday and he saw firsthand that I have lake view property which I don't want. If I wanted that, I'd rather go to a beach. You saw which outlets were backing up? Yes. He saw everything as far as like our drains, our pipes cannot handle this rain and that's why I have flooding constantly in my house. So, he saw it firsthand. He walked on my property. He knows what's going on. He came out with an engineer. Bill, I thought that was you. I've sent Bill videos for the last three years. I could send a whole bunch more since 2021 because the problem started in 2021 and that's when we've had such bad rain from 2021.

Prior to that, no, we didn't have a problem. But it's the rainfall and these pipes and these drains cannot handle it. He saw firsthand. They're this deep. What is that going to do with all the water that comes down? It's going to come in my house. Yeah, you can ask them. I have quick sand bags in my door. I've sealed up my door. I'm waiting for a floodgate to come in my door now that I've spent \$1,038 on, not including the \$50,000 I've already spent since 2021, which I shouldn't have to. I have a bed that sits 33 and 1/2 inches off the floor so I don't lose another bed. These drains and pipes need to be fixed. And please make sure that they contain the rats because I don't need that problem either. I certainly don't want that problem. Send them down. And I don't care if you got to get on my property, tear it up, tear up the street. I don't care. It just has to be fixed.

Solicitor Pizzo - I'm happy to tell you that the Mayor, one of the things the Mayor wanted to make you aware of is the property at 2822 Edington Avenue public works was out today, got permission of the property owners to go on the property and turn this into this (held up 2 separate pictures).

Lori - Thank God because I mean I even dug up my backyard because their foundation was a foot and a half. Mine was a foot and a half lower. The water can't flow. It can't get to that drain. But I brought that to the Township. It was Quinton and he told me that the Township did not own that drain. He said my neighbor put it in. I contacted that neighbor. She said, "No, I didn't. It's been there for as long as I've been here."

Solicitor Pizzo - Well, Brian and his team went out this morning.

Lori - Brian is wonderful. When I saw Brian out there on Wednesday, I couldn't thank him enough. And I told him I was going to praise him at this meeting because Brian is a wonderful guy and he knows the problem. He saw it firsthand. And Bill told me, "Send the videos." Because he wanted to show Nicole so they knew what was going on. Exactly. It needs to be fixed. My backyard does not look like that. Mine is all clean and Bill can attest to that. I cut all those bushes back because all of it's growing on my property.

Solicitor Pizzo - And that'll be the next step. Bill and the engineers now will have an opportunity to, just we were talking about, televising seeing what's going on up upstream.

Council President Tokmajian - We recognize there's other areas of need across this Township and that's why we've already started discussion with the administration, the Mayor about trying to address additional storm water issues.

Lori - Yeah. Especially with the grant that's out there that's billions of dollars that we hear that gets returned in December. Well, let's get the ball rolling so we don't have to send it back.

Solicitor Pizzo - But again, had had the author of that article spoken to the Township, as I indicated earlier, that money's been spent. The projects had to be identified by the end of 2024 and had to be completed by the end of 2025 and 9.8 million worth of drainage work was done throughout this Township using those funds in 2024 and 2025.

Lori - Well, can someone tell me what the \$56,000 was spent on Marion because I never saw anything happen.

Solicitor Pizzo - Mr. Chaykowski is on a well-deserved vacation and when he returns, he can tell you how that money was spent.

Lori - With that 56,000 was found. It might have been the curbs. I mean, but the curbs did nothing. What did they do?

Council President Tokmajian - We can follow up with him on that.

Colleen - So, I just have a question. You've mentioned through the rat problem and through the water problem that there is you know you have a policy, they have a policy or a procedure to go through when you can't step on private property. Is there a tracking or somewhere we can see that tracking because if somebody's reporting a home that something's being done to be cited. So in my situation or our situation we've reported 2201 Street Road multiple times. Where's the tracking to know that went through all the way through citation to the Township actually going on the private property to fix it?

Solicitor Pizzo - In terms of releasing records regarding private property, to the extent that it involves a Building and Planning Department, you would submit a right to know request to the Township. Depending on the status of whatever the complaint might be then once the complaint is done and it's closed out it becomes a public record. Prior to that it ...

Colleen - We would see the process on that right to know.

Solicitor Pizzo - Yes. You'd see what was issued and whether the Township took it to court or not.

Colleen - What is the right to know? How would I have a right to know?

Solicitor Pizzo - It's a state law. The forms are on the Township website.

Council President Tokmajian - Any additional public comment? I would just ask do you ma'am do you have any other comment?

Haiti Dia, 2033 Hansell Drive. I was here last month with my other neighbors as well asking for solution regarding that we keep getting water in the house. I've been getting it more now than Tasha. I got it that Monday and thank God they was home to help me out and clean it out because lucky I was off. But this is what I came here to say. It's just a quote and I hope you guys understand what I'm going to say and forgive my language if sometime I can become aggressive but it's just frustration. Honestly every time I come here to the Township I wish leaving here from that door with hope because hope should be the last thing that a human being can lose. I'm pretty sure all of you here agree that all we want is hope and solution. We want answers and every time we come here we asking for questions and asking for answer and I don't feel like we get the right answer. I don't feel that we get the right plan. Two weeks ago, this lady right here, she was supposed to come to my house and show me her plan. Unfortunately, I had an emergency with my mother-in-law. 5 minutes later, I had to run and she was just coming to my house. We sent her a text message, but I'm still waiting for her answer for my text message. So, every time we come here, I feel like I'm wasting my time. It shouldn't be like that. Honestly, it should be that I get answers and not just me, everybody else here should get answers and get solution. That's all I got to say. I'm just hope that I don't lose the hope on you guys. Please do something about it.

Council President Tokmajian - So, as you see, she's here this evening. I can see she provided us an update and we'll hold them accountable to making sure that that work is done. She presented what's happening, right? And you were here at the last meeting. We made a lot of progress and we should have it designed finalized within the next week or so and at some point over the next month we'll start the work of trying to at least mitigate some of it. We understand that's not the complete fix, but as you can see at least that we're making progress.

Haita Dia - I just hope we get something work on this.

Council President Tokmajian - I just asked if you guys don't mind if there's any additional outside discussion. Okay. Any other public comment? Seeing no one else come forward for public comment. I'll close the portion of public comment. I'll move to agenda number No. 9 other business.

9. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Councilman Knowles - I'm just glad that people had a chance to come out and discuss their thing. I think we had some resolution and we have a plan to move forward on some of these things.

Council Secretary Wenzel - Since we've been up here since January, we've been trying to get a meeting with PennDOT to address some of the situations in the Township. It took a little while, but we finally had a meeting. Ed will elaborate on a little bit more. Just to touch on a few things. Hulmeville Road after Aqua's done is supposed to start in late fall. They just reached about that to me today. So late fall Hulmeville Road after Aqua's done, they're going to be repaving that area. We had some headway on Station Avenue and State Road. We are really trying here. When we had this meeting they were shocked. They didn't know a lot of things that were happening. It's very strange that you know some of them said that we didn't know this was going on where everybody in you know the world knows this is going on.

This is their words. This isn't my words. This isn't anyone else's words. This is PennDOT. There was about 25 people on the call. So you know, we're really trying here to get to the bottom of some of these things, especially on state issues. So I'll hand it over.

Council President Tokmajian - Since Mr. Wenzel started out on that issue. Council, since I know a number of the members were not part of that call, I just wanted to just take a few minutes to report back and just be transparent to the public about the recent call that we did have that Mr. Wenzel referred to, thanking Mr. Wenzel for coordinating the call. The video call was held this past Friday, August 7th. Councilman Wenzel and I participated on behalf of Council. Representing the Township were Mr. Chaykowski, the Director of Administration, Mr. Guay from public works, Mr. Pizzo, our solicitor, and the Mayor. There were also a number of officials participating from PennDOT, the state's legislative affairs team, and Bucks County maintenance. And overall, I thought the call was extremely productive. Mr. Chaykowski, Mr. Guay provided PennDOT with an overview of the flooding issues down on Station Avenue that we've been experiencing and the impact that it has had on Bensalem. One significant concern that was raised was the documented water that was coming off of I 95 and exacerbating the flooding conditions on Station Avenue. PennDOT agreed to take a closer look at that drainage coming off of 95. They also agreed to send representatives to Station Avenue to conduct a more detailed assessment of the overall flooding problem.

We also discussed the ongoing renovation at the Cornwells Heights train station and PennDOT also agreed to take the flooding concerns into consideration as it evaluates the permit application associated with the project. The discussion ultimately identified two potential paths forward. The first is a short-term solution that we're looking at now including the possibility of utilizing or applying for a multimodal transportation grant to help fund some of those improvements. The second is a longer term, more permanent solution that we're working to have added to PennDOT's transportation improvement program or what they consider call sometimes is the tip list. I also want to make clear that we'll be reaching out to state rep, our local state representative and state senator to ask for their support in moving this forward and I believe it's time for us to elevate the issue with our state-elected leaders. This has been an ongoing problem in our community far too long and we need a meaningful solution. And every time Station Avenue floods, we put our police officers, our firefighters, and other emergency personnel in potentially dangerous situations while they respond to these conditions. I believe Friday's call was an important first step because we were able to bring this issue directly to state officials and make clear that this is no longer going to be simply a recurring inconvenience. It's a serious public safety issue, as well as infrastructure issue that requires a solution. Lastly, we certainly appreciate PennDOT's willingness to engage with us and now we just need to continue to ensure that progress is made similar to Hansell Road and that this issue moves from discussion to action. Mr. Pizzo, did I capture that? Is there anything else that you wanted to add to that?

Solicitor Pizzo – No, I think that's an accurate portrayal, Mr. Tokmajian. You may or may not be aware Mr. Chaykowski did follow up following that Zoom questioning PennDOT as you said PennDOT put it into the Township's lap for the short-term fix through multimodal grant to put up the gates. You know following some further discussion the administration threw it back to PennDOT to say this is a state highway and it's a state problem. Why is it for the Township to spend quarter million dollars to half a million dollars for a temporary solution? So we'll see what comes back in that regard. And as you know, to the extent that they said putting something on the tip, we're 12 years if we're lucky. Bristol Road was on the tip when I first became a solicitor and they finally got to that project within just the last couple of years. So that was on the tip for the better part of two decades.

Council President Tokmajian - Thank you. I wanted to make sure we summarized it simply because I know it came up at one of our prior meetings. So I wanted to be transparent in terms of the results of that

call and in addition to some of our other council members that were not on that call. I don't really have anything else. I'll turn Mr. Pizzo, do you have anything?

Solicitor Pizzo - I do not other than, for those who aren't aware, the Mayor had a particularly difficult month of July. Both his sister and his sister-in-law passed away. So, he had two funerals that were, you know, incredible significance. This evening, his granddaughter, it's her 20th birthday. The whole family was going out for dinner prior to this evening's meeting. So he was hopeful that he'd get back, but since it was a light agenda, he's spending some well-deserved time with his family celebrating a joyous occasion. He just wanted me to pass that along.

Councilman Kisselback - Yes. I'd like to thank the health department for coming out and addressing this issue so we can get a different perspective of really what's happening. I mean, we've been certainly dealing with it for several years and we're trying our best, but we appreciate everything you're doing for us, too. So, thank you.

Council Vice President Sloan - Yeah, I'd like to echo that. Thank you to the members from the health department coming out and helping us with this issue. Thank you to Mr. Farrall, Miss Khan for also addressing some of these flooding and permanent issues. This really is a community effort. So, grateful that we have everybody here looking out for the residents and doing what we can. Also, just a public safety announcement. It is back to school season. School's starting up in just a couple weeks. Some students are already back at school for activities and things like that. So, motorists, please be careful out there. Once school buses start being out there on the road, please pay attention. Speed limits, stop signs, all of the warning signs, and let's keep our kids safe.

Council President Tokmajian - Great point. Okay. Thank you very much.

Solicitor Pizzo - I was just going to add as a corollary to what Mr. Sloane said, anytime there are students in the schools, the flashers may be on. So everybody's thinking, well, school isn't open again, why is the flasher on, I'll ignore it. No, if the flashers are on, that means that there are students of some number in the school. So do heed them when they're on.

Council President Tokmajian - And there, as a reminder, we have cameras in those buses now too as well. Okay. With that said, I'll ask for a motion to adjourn.

10. **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

The Bensalem Township Council Meeting of August 10, 2026 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

www.bensalempa.gov

or

www.youtube.com

Respectfully submitted,

Debra South
Recording Secretary