

Mount Gretna Borough
Minutes
March 9, 2026

Deborah Simpson, President, called the meeting of the Mount Gretna Borough Council to order at 6:00 pm. The meeting was held in the Mount Gretna Fire Hall.

COUNCIL MEMBERS AND STAFF PRESENT:

Deborah Simpson, President	Mark Malay
Michael Bell	Linda Bell
Allan Feldman	Keith Kilgore, Solicitor
Kerry Royer, Mayor	Betsy Goepfert, Secretary/Treasurer
William B. Care, Director of Public Works	

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:

none

ALSO PRESENT:

Chelsea Peifer, reporter with LebTown	Officer Itzen, for police report only
Bill Osburn, 108 Temple Avenue	Marla & Charlie Pitt, 108 Pennsylvania Avenue
Mt. Gretna Fire Chief Travis Haak	Jim Cassel, 105 Chicago Avenue

POLICE REPORT:

Officer Itzen, Cornwall Borough Police Department, read the February police report. A copy of the report is attached and heretofore made part of the minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jim Cassel asked if Borough Council meetings are available via Zoom. President Simpson responded they are not and Jim Cassel requested that the Borough Council consider it as an option. He also asked if financial information is shared monthly to the community. President Simpson stated that he can request the information from the office. Jim Cassel also asked if the Borough had any long-range planning that they could share and if not, he suggested that the Borough do so to give the community an idea of what is happening over the next three to five years. President Simpson stated that the council will look into it.

Marla Pitt spoke about light pollution and said that it is a complex topic that includes the Borough, MetEd, Pennsylvania Chautauqua Board of Managers and residents. She mentioned that this is a forest community and lighting can have a significant impact on animals. She said her hope was that the four entities can work together towards a solution. President Simpson stated that there was a report about lighting in the Borough and she gave a quick overview. Allan Feldman asked if the report would cover streetlights, Pennsylvania Chautauqua lights and individual homes. President Simpson stated the report was regarding streetlights only. Charlie Pitt asked about the change in the lighting color in the Pennsylvania Chautauqua Parking lot. William Care stated that different fixtures are being looked at but ultimately that the parking lot is a Pennsylvania Chautauqua decision. Marla Pitt went on to thank Deb Simpson and Allan Feldman for discussing lighting in the Borough.

AGENDA:

Betsy Goepfert stated that there were 2 updates to the agenda as presented. The first update was regarding the resolution numbers. The resolution numbers were updated to 03-09-2026B (Handicap parking application) and 03-09-2026A (America250PA). The second update was to add 402 Lancaster Avenue to the agenda for approval under the short-term rental section. Michael Bell made a motion to accept the amended March meeting agenda. It was seconded by Allan Feldman, and all were in favor.

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MINUTES:

Mark Malay made a motion to accept the February meeting minutes. It was seconded by Linda Bell, and all were in favor.

FINANCIAL REPORT AND INVOICE LIST:

Michael Bell made a motion to accept the financial report and invoice list as presented. It was seconded by Mark Malay, and all were in favor. Allan Feldman requested that council be given a tutorial or walk through in the way financials are handled. President Simpson said it would be added to the next Borough workshop.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority Meeting minutes available on website - www.gogira.org

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MAYOR:

Mayor Royer reported that there was another snow/salt event in the Borough and she thanked the Borough staff for their hard work. Mayor Royer attended a two-day NEMO (Newly Elected Municipal Officer) training. She stated that she has a good resource page that she will share with council. Mayor Royer also stated that the deadline for artists to apply to the Mount Gretna Outdoor Art Show is April 1, 2026.

MOUNT GRETNA FIRE COMPANY:

Chief Travis Haak attended the meeting and reported for February. He reported that they are providing more mutual aid than they are receiving. He stated that they are still straightening out the issues with the new reporting system.

SOLICITOR:

Resolution 03-09-2026A: Solicitor Kilgore reviewed the AMERICAA250PA resolution. President Simpson reported that since the last meeting the Borough has received information that the donation voted on in February was not from the official Lebanon County group. She suggested that this resolution be tabled until the next meeting. Linda Bell made a motion to table the resolution until the April meeting. It was seconded by Mark Malay, and all were in favor.

Resolution 03-09-2026B: Solicitor Kilgore reviewed the Handicap parking application resolution. President Simpson brought up the point that the process steps are not included in the resolution, and she felt they needed to be reviewed, approved and added to the resolution. Mark Malay made a motion to approve the process steps. It was seconded by Allan Feldman, and all were in favor. Michael Bell then made a motion to amend the resolution as written to include the application as exhibit A and the process as exhibit B. The motion was seconded by Linda Bell and all were in favor. The council thanked President Simpson for all her work on this item.

ROADS AND STREETS:

William Care reported that there were several snow and ice events in February and that the residents responded well to the parking bans.

William Care reported that he has a meeting scheduled with a paving contractor on March 10th, 2026, to look at repairs needed in the Borough and that they will also review the tennis club at the same time. He further stated that Liquid Fuels money will be used for the repairs needed to Borough streets.

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William Care reported that the railing on the steps from Yale Avenue down to Pennsylvania Avenue are not up to code. He requested approval to upgrade the railing at a cost of \$5,500.00. Mark Malay made a motion to approve the expense. Michael Bell seconded the motion, and all were in favor. William Care also reported that the staff will power wash the steps and apply a nonskid surface to the steps.

CODE ENFORCEMENT:

none

VARIANCE REQUESTS:

none

LIAISONS:

Pennsylvania Chautauqua:

Allan Feldman did not have a report. William Care asked Jim Cassel if he wanted to provide an update about the tenant chosen for the Circle Building. Jim Cassel reported that Desserts Etc. will be renting the Circle Building. They had a meeting with the health inspector on March 9th, 2026. He said that Desserts Etc. will present the Pennsylvania Chautauqua with a list of their requests.

Mount Gretna Authority:

William Care stated that there were water leaks inside four cottages. All pipes were the responsibility of the homeowners. He went on to say that is why we send out reminders to residents to winterize their cottages.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

2026 Short-Term Rental Licenses:

Renewals:

Mark Malay made a motion to approve the short-term rental licenses for 202 Harvard Avenue and 402 Lancaster Avenue. Allan Feldman seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Exception request:

President Simpson reported that the Borough office received a request for an additional short-term rental license above the cap of 18. The request was sent to herself and John Weaver (President of the Pennsylvania Chautauqua) for a response. President Simpson stated that John Weaver reported that there are exceptions listed in the Pennsylvania Chautauqua By-laws. She reported her reply was that the Borough would enforce the ordinance as written. Solicitor Kilgore stated that her response would stand.

Past-due assessments:

Betsy Goepfert reported that there were currently 5 short-term rental owners who were past-due with the Pennsylvania Chautauqua and Mount Gretna Water Authority assessments. She asked what, if anything can be done regarding their already approved licenses. She reported that as part of the ordinance it states

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that they need to be in good standing to hold a rental license in the Borough. Solicitor Kilgore stated that requests would have to come from the Authority and the Pennsylvania Chautauqua to the Borough. He further stated that the Authority has the right to turn off water for nonpayment and the Pennsylvania Chautauqua has to pursue payment through the legal system. Solicitor Kilgore directed Betsy Goepfert to make known to the Pennsylvania Chautauqua Treasurer when supplying the next financial report.

Executive Session:

Michael Bell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50pm at which time Allan Feldman requested an executive session. During the executive session the process for dissemination of financial records was discussed. The session closed at 7:02pm

ADJOURNMENT

Michael Bell's motion to adjourn the meeting was still on the table. It was seconded by Mark Malay, and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:03pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy Goepfert
Secretary/Treasurer
Mount Gretna Borough Council