



Bucks County Association of Township Officials

BUCKS COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Bucks County Association of Township Officials was held via Zoom on Wednesday January 14, 2026 , at 12:00 PM.

MEMBERS:

- *Michelle Benitez, Bensalem Township
- Maggie Rash, Buckingham Township
- *Barbara Lyons, Doylestown Township
- Ken Lichtenstein, Plumstead
- David Nyman, East Rockhill Township
- William Jones, New Britain Township
- *Dick Weaver, Newtown Township
- Ruth Schemm, Warrington
- Chester Pogonowski, Wrightstown Township
- *Vicki Kushto, Clemons Richter & Reiss, P.C.
- Vince Deon, Northampton Township
- Tom Cino, Upper Makefield Township
- Jim Hopkins, Springfield Township
- *Stephanie Shortall, New Britain Township

*NOT PRESENT

1. Call to Order: President Rash called the Executive Board meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

2. Approval of the Minutes: December 10, 2025

MOTION: Motion made by Mr. Pogonowski and seconded by Mr. Lichtenstein, motion carried.

3. Treasurer's Report: December 2025

MOTION: Motion made by Mr. Jones and seconded by Ms. Rash to approve the December financial reports as submitted, motion carried.

Treasurer Deon reported that the organization has good financial health with everything looking good.

4. President's Report:

Convention: President Rash stated that the focus of the upcoming convention will be Municipal Sovereignty. Stated that she has worked with Mr. Nyman in which they made a list of issues out there that some members weighed in on such as affordable housing, E-bikes and data centers.

Ms. Rash reported that a PSATS representative will be part of the panel to see where these issues stand and how PSATS oppose or supports them. Ms. Rash also stated that Senators Santarsiero and Farry will also be joining the panel to have conversations about this and to have them weigh in and how they oppose and approve legislation.

Ms. Rash stated that she and Mr. Deon are working on a concept regarding municipal sovereignty and everything that goes into the elements. Mr. Deon added that the base of our existence is zoning. Stated that he doesn't want to see that deteriorate by the county and state punishing us on what to do.

Discussions ensued regarding the importance of involvement and the legislation process. All were in agreement of not having the zoning authority taken away from local government.

President Rash stated the Mr. Pogonowski sent her an email about HB502, it didn't pass but its foot in door.

Discussion of zoning ensued with concerns from residents concerned about losing local control.

Mr. Lichenstein suggested having a list of things to speak about at the convention that everyone is dealing with presently so that the members appreciate zoning more deeply.

Discussions regarding whether this topic is political or regional and what the legislators' opinions are ensued.

Terms:

Mr. Pogonowski gave the history on election of the board and terms in relation to the convention held in February.

Resolutions:

Mr. Pogonowski reported on requests to extend the period of submitting resolutions for consideration at the convention. Two were received, one from Doylestown and one from Northampton, in which ultimately Northampton withdrew. Reported that Doylestown requested to give them until January 21st.

Mr. Pogonowski stated it would be up to the board whether we should extend this time period.

Discussion ensued regarding the deadline and what was sent in two newsletters. It was the consensus to not extend the deadline.

By-Law Amendment:

Mr. Pogonowski explained the proposed amendment to provide the membership to change from a four-week notice to 14 days by electronic mail. Stating that it gives a little more time for next year and gives the membership until January 20th to get the resolutions in, after the reorganization. This also gives enough time to review resolutions and have Laurie send them out to the membership.

MOTION: Motion made by Mr. Pogonowski and seconded by Mr. Lichtenstein, to make the by-law change and submit to the membership, motion carried.

President Rash stated that she will work with Laurie on the website and asked Mr. Pogonowski to look at it and how it can be cleaned up.

5. Executive Directors Report:

Ms. Courter reported that she is busy with getting updates to the directory from the membership. Stated that she is working on reserving the suite again at Hershey Lodge. She will be able to attend but will not stay overnight. Catering will be scheduled for the Monday and Tuesday lunch at the suite. Reported that she will be looking for a new venue for the Christmas luncheon citing a misunderstanding with a minimum requirement at the current venue.

6. Solicitors Report:

No report

7. Legislative Business:

Mr. Clemons stated that there was nothing to add from what was discussed earlier.

8. Other Business-

Discussion: Education sessions:

Mr. Lichtenstein spoke on education for residents who ask why their town can't do things. Mr. Lichtenstein stated he spoke with Scott from PSATS who stated that they can help us with a three to five minute or 10 minute video clips on what can we do as supervisors and what we can not do. Stated that a lot of residents don't understand that. Stated that he would be happy to assist in setting up what we like to communicate and put it on our websites. Discussion of PSATS already having this and having the idea of having the links put on the BCATO website and push it out to the municipalities ensued. Having this information announced at convention on what PSATS has was also discussed. Mr. Lichtenstein stated he will tentatively explore this with PSATS.

Designation of Voting Delegates for PSATS Conference:

Mr. Pogonowski, Mr. Deon and Mr. Jones were designated as voting delegates for the PSATS Conference on behalf of BCATO.

9. Adjournment:

With no further business, Ms. Schemm made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lichenstein to adjourn the meeting at 1:04 pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie A. Courter

Executive Director