

1 **Borough of Akron Council Meeting – February 24, 2025**

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3 **Council Members Present:** Nathan Imhoff, President; Justin Gehman, Vice President; Paul  
4 Swangren, Jr.; Ryan Cochran; Kleon Zimmerman; Bonnie Young; Tonya Haynes; Martin Sweigart,  
5 Junior Council Member; Alyssa Vasyanovich, Junior Council Member; Max Herman, Junior  
6 Council Member

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8 **Others Present:** Mayor John McBeth; Sean Molchany, Borough Manager; Valerie Wagner,  
9 Director of Finance

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11 **Visitors:**

- 12 Larry Alexander, Ephrata Review
- 13 Chief Eric Higgins, West Earl Police
- 14 Thomas Murray, Jr., Akron Borough Public Works Supervisor
- 15 Jeremiah Redcay, Akron United Zion Church
- 16 Gary Eberly, Akron United Zion Church
- 17 John Taylor, 216 S 8th St Akron
- 18 Butch Long, 802 Broad St Akron
- 19 Darryl Witmer, 718 Broad St Akron
- 20 Sue Glick, 119 S 10<sup>th</sup> St Akron
- 21 Anthony Sheaffer, 110 Main St Akron

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23 **Roll Call**

- 24 Tonya Haynes – present
- 25 Bonnie Young – present
- 26 Ryan Cochran – present
- 27 Paul Swangren, Jr. – present
- 28 Kleon Zimmerman – present
- 29 Justin Gehman, Vice President – present
- 30 Nathan Imhoff, President – present
- 31 Max Herman, Junior Council Member – present
- 32 Martin Sweigart, Junior Council Member – present
- 33 Alyssa Vasyanovich, Junior Council Member – present
- 34 Mayor John McBeth – present

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36 Meeting opened at 6:30pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

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38 **Approval of Minutes**

39 Paul Swangren, Jr. made a motion to approve the Akron Borough Council meeting minutes of  
40 the February 10, 2025 meeting; second by Tonya Haynes. No discussion, motion carried.

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42 **Visitors/Comments from the Public**

43 Darryl Witmer expressed concern about the water tower placement in Broad Street Park based on what  
44 he read in The Ephrata Review. He spoke about park land being donated to the Borough – in the deed it

1 was stated that it has to remain a park. Witmer disagrees with putting a standpipe in a park that has to  
2 stay a park.

3 Butch long expressed frustration over why the current tower cannot be repaired. Nathan Imhoff and  
4 Sean Molchany advised of the multiple reasons why the existing standpipe cannot simply be fixed.  
5 Discussion ensued.

6 Butch Long expressed frustration over why the current tower cannot be repaired. Nathan Imhoff and  
7 Sean Molchany advised of the multiple reasons why the existing standpipe cannot simply be fixed. Ryan  
8 Cochran added that it is quite possibly the oldest standpipe in use in the country. Darryl Witmer inquired  
9 if it could be replaced at the existing location. Sean Molchany said he believes it will be very difficult to  
10 rebuild in that location without acquiring additional land, and spoke to the difficulty of getting the  
11 necessary cranes and construction equipment in around the existing buildings that surround the  
12 standpipe. Discussion ensued.

13 Gary Eberly, one of the pastors at Akron United Zion Church, pointed out that T-Mobile gets cranes in  
14 there frequently. Eberly wanted to know if T-Mobile has been notified and asked if T-Mobile would  
15 provide financial help to repair or relocate. Sean Molchany replied that because no decision has been  
16 made it would be premature to notify T-Mobile. All that has been done has been a study to identify what  
17 can be done as far as rebuilding or relocating. Molchany replied that the financial support that is  
18 provided to the Borough is for the utilization of the tower by T-Mobile. He continued by stating that the  
19 agreement that is in place between T-Mobile and Akron Borough states that if the existing system fails, T-  
20 Mobile is responsible to remove their equipment from the tower at short notice upon Borough request.

21 Butch Long asked when the next discussion regarding the tower will be on an agenda; to him it sounds  
22 like there are already serious discussions about moving forward with a relocation to Broad Street Park.  
23 Sean Molchany replied that Broad Street Park is a site that has been identified by the engineers as a  
24 potential location. Butch Long then asked if there are other locations that can be considered to which  
25 Molchany replied that it would require purchasing additional property. Long inquired why the property  
26 that the Akron Volunteer Fire Company uses cannot be considered. Sean Molchany stated that the  
27 elevation is too low there and the purpose of the standpipe is to provide water pressure for the upper  
28 peninsula of the Borough where the standpipe is currently located. Council will discuss again within the  
29 next 30-45 days. Long asked if it will be advertised, Molchany replied yes it will be on the advertised  
30 agenda.

31 Jeremiah Redcay, one of the pastors at Akron United Zion Church, again suggested working with T-  
32 Mobile because of the amount of infrastructure and equipment that they have invested in the current  
33 location on South Tenth Street. Sean Molchany advised that no discussion has been had with T-Mobile  
34 yet, because the decision to take the tower down has not been made. He surmises that if the Borough  
35 were to relocate the tower, T-Mobile may be interested in relocating to the new site as well. Redcay  
36 shared that while he is not familiar with the particular failures of the existing system, it doesn't seem like  
37 all possible avenues of expanding the tower have been discussed. Molchany replied that there is no  
38 room to expand to which Redcay asked what size would need to be considered. Molchany said that in  
39 regard to a new location it comes down to the elevation of the site – the lower the elevation of the site,  
40 the higher the standpipe will need to be, thus adding to costs. Discussion ensued regarding site  
41 elevations.

1 Sean Molchany in phase of seeking design engineers to submit proposals based on the study that was  
2 done over a year ago. Butch Long asked if the park deed has been reviewed as Darryl Witmer stated  
3 earlier in the meeting, Molchany confirmed that it has been reviewed by the Borough's solicitor. The  
4 solicitor has given staff the recommendation of what can and cannot be done; if a water tower were to  
5 be placed in Broad Street Park it would not take away from the park, and the park would still remain.  
6 Darryl Witmer stated that the park land was what was donated, therefore the park land should stay a  
7 park. Nathan Imhoff reiterated that a decision has not been made, the Broad Street Park location is one  
8 feasible location in consideration at this time. The portion of the property in question does not get  
9 utilized; it is currently an unused plot of grass on the edge of park property that requires mowing  
10 maintenance. Sean Molchany added that the potential location that has been identified as a possible  
11 location at the park would be right outfield or center outfield.

12 Butch Long suggested purchasing a portion of the parking lot on the adjacent property. Sean Molchany  
13 reiterated that the Borough is looking to utilize property it already owns; it could be a \$2,000,000.00  
14 project to begin with and acquiring additional land has not been explored at this time. Butch Long asked  
15 if the Borough owns the property where the Akron Volunteer Fire Company is at – yes. Tom Murray Jr.  
16 advised that as of this morning, Ten Thousand Villages no longer owns the 704 Main Street property with  
17 the parking lot that abuts Broad Street Park.

18 Mayor McBeth stated that the highest elevation on land that the Borough owns is behind the Lions  
19 Lodge in Roland Park and asked if this location has been considered. Sean Molchany answered that it  
20 would not be a suitable location to add the necessary water pressure to the portion of the Borough that  
21 needs it. Nathan Imhoff continued by adding that it is a further distance from the area that needs the  
22 water pressure, plus it would need to overcome the dip in elevation on Eleventh Street. McBeth  
23 suggested connecting to the water treatment plant on Main Street. Molchany recommended that the  
24 report from Entech Engineering be reviewed before designing specially engineered systems. He stated he  
25 is willing to provide a copy of the report. Tonya Haynes asked if it can be put on the website for easy  
26 access. Staff will add the report to the website which contains the initial evaluation and the engineer's  
27 report and recommendations.

28 Paul Swangren, Jr. shared a comprehensive overview of the whole standpipe project and what steps have  
29 been taken up to this point. He stated that ultimately it comes down to cost prohibitive. The original  
30 structure was built to provide pressure to the Miller Hess Shoe Factory (704 Main Street); however,  
31 engineers say the standpipe is still necessary as part of the current system. Nathan Imhoff thanked  
32 everyone for sharing their opinions and assured residents that the Borough is looking to be fiscally  
33 responsible and to use the Borough's existing land responsibly. Paul Swangren, Jr. thanked everyone as  
34 well.

35 John Taylor attested that all the discussions that Council has stated they have had, have been had. He  
36 has been present for all water tower discussions and says that Council is not taking it lightly, nor making  
37 decisions on a whim. John Taylor served on Council between 2010-2015 and discussions were being had  
38 during his time on Council as well. Paul Swangren, Jr. shared that ultimately all that the Borough wanted  
39 to do was repaint the standpipe, but due to the presence of lead paint, it would require extensive  
40 measures to strip down to the bare metal which would affect the nearby church and residences.  
41 Swangren, Jr. again stated that it comes down to cost prohibitive and none of the decisions that need to  
42 be made are being taken lightly. Darryl Witmer also commented that discussions were had regarding the

1 water tower and the need to repaint it during his tenure on Council. Nathan Imhoff added that in the  
2 report of findings it was noted that there are portions of the top of the standpipe where daylight can be  
3 seen from the inside, necessitating a decision about the future of the standpipe sooner than later.

4 Kleon Zimmerman added context that there is an existing 8-inch water line running through Broad Street  
5 Park at the spot being considered that can easily be tapped into, which is why it was identified as one of  
6 the possible locations for the new water tower.

7 Gary Eberly stated that if the standpipe moves from its current location, it will put a large financial strain  
8 on the church. Bonnie Young asked Eberly to elaborate. Pastor Eberly shared that Akron United Zion  
9 Church gets monthly income from T-Mobile for equipment stored in their basement. Jeremiah Redcay  
10 added that it is probably about \$300,000.00 worth of generators and equipment. Mayor McBeth asked  
11 United Zion if there was any land that the church owns already where a new tower could be built. The  
12 pastors said there is a small portion of yard that could be used.

13 ***Bills – No Report***

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15 ***Reports/Announcements***

16 ***Police Report***

17 Chief Higgins spoke on the recent Coffee with a Cop event, and promoted the Blood Drive for Bleed Blue  
18 Challenge on February 27, 2025. Participants can preregister to donate blood. Paul Swangren, Jr. wished  
19 the Chief and the department to stay safe in light of recent events. Nathan Imhoff said he appreciates  
20 when positive comments are sent to Council regarding the West Earl Police Officers. Mayor McBeth said  
21 he heard rumors of a potential contract with other municipalities. Chief Higgins confirmed it is not a  
22 rumor; Larry Alexander published an article in The Ephrata Review. New Holland Borough and Earl  
23 Township have approached West Earl Police Department for a proposal on services. Nathan Imhoff asked  
24 for clarification that Akron Borough’s level of service will not be affected by any future contracting based  
25 on our contract that states a minimum level of service. Imhoff believes if anything, Akron’s level of  
26 service would improve due to the benefits of a larger police force.

27 ***Mayor’s Report – No Report***

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29 ***Manager’s Report***

30 Sean Molchany shared that on February 18<sup>th</sup> there was a pump fail at the golf course sewer station. Staff  
31 is looking to see if it can be rebuilt will cost approximately \$8,000.00-\$10,000.00 to rebuild as opposed  
32 to purchasing a new pump at approximately \$16,000.00.

33 Molchany asked Council if staff should advertise the street sweeping in The Ephrata Review, last year was  
34 \$160.00. Justin Gehman feels that advertising on the Borough sign, Facebook and Borough website is  
35 sufficient. Nathan Imhoff asked that staff post it several times in the weeks leading up to the event,  
36 perhaps it could go in Shopping News, less costly, and shows up on everyone’s front yard.

37 Mayor McBeth asked about the mailing list that is offered on the Borough website to stay up to date, he  
38 has signed up several times but said he has never gotten anything. Discussion ensued. Valerie Wagner to  
39 reach out to the Borough’s IT contractor to resolve email distribution issue.

40 ***Finance – No Report***

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**Community Relations**

Bonnie Young attempted to reach out to Monica with US Road Running, was unable to reach. She resubmitted her article for the Emergency Management Coordinator to The Shopping News.

**Parks & Property – No Report**

Kleon Zimmerman mentioned that he noticed Reamstown is planning a playground reconstruction to begin in the spring, suggested that Tonya Haynes reach out to them for insight.

**Personnel**

Paul Swangren, Jr. shared that in the committee meeting that was held this evening that there were three discussion items on the agenda: Assistant Borough Secretary, Planning Commission vacancy and an agreement between Akron Borough and Ephrata Ambulance Association. These were discussion items only with no recommendations made.

**Streets**

Justin Gehman shared that street sweeping is scheduled for April 7 and 8, 2025. Tom Murray, Jr. provided an update on LED street lighting conversion. High Street now has LED lights – Bomberger Road, Vista Drive, and a small section of Broad Street are yet to be completed. Tonya Haynes asked for an update on the street light going in on Broad St. Sean Molchany replied that the survey has been completed, it was found that the majority of respondents would prefer a street light, and now are waiting on PP&L to install it. Kleon Zimmerman asked when the last time PP&L was contacted. Tom Murray, Jr. has not heard regarding the existing work order and will reach out again tomorrow.

**Public Utilities – No Report**

Kleon Zimmerman thanked those that attended the meeting to discuss the water tower. He invited anyone to email him at any time with questions.

**Junior Council Members Report**

Max Herman was not successful in finding musicians for the Akron Concerts in the Park this summer. Alyssa Vasyanovich is a member of Tri-M Music Honor Society and will share this information with students in the group to see if some would be interested in performing one night this summer. Martin Sweigart spoke about an upcoming trip to London with the Ephrata High School Orchestra where students will participate in a masterclass as well as perform with another UK high school orchestra.

**Public Hearings/Presentations/Appointments**

**Old Business**

**New Business**

**A. Resolutions**

**B. Ordinances**

**C. Motions and Decisions**

- 1. Appointment of Assistant Borough Secretary**
- 2. Memorandum of Understanding Between Lancaster County Conservation District and Akron Borough**

1 Sean Molchany provided the context that Akron Borough and Lancaster County  
2 Conservation District (LCCD) have agreed to work together on required reviews,  
3 permitting and enforcement as well as education and outreach for topics such as  
4 erosion and sediment pollution control, municipal separate storm sewer systems,  
5 and waterway management. This memorandum of understanding (MOU) outlines  
6 the specific responsibilities of LCCD and Akron Borough and is an update to the MOU  
7 last offered in 2022.

8 Paul Swangren, Jr. moved to approve the memorandum of understanding between  
9 Lancaster County Conservation District and Akron Borough. Second by Tonya  
10 Haynes, no discussion. Motion carried.

11 **D. Acknowledgements**

12 **E. Other Business/Deliberations**

13 **F. Correspondence & Petitions**

14 **G. Executive Session**

15  
16 **Adjournment**

17 Paul Swangren, Jr. moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:23pm; second by Kleon Zimmerman.  
18 Motion carried.

19  
20 Respectfully submitted,

21  
22 Sean Molchany  
23 Borough Manager/Secretary

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25 SM/vw