

**BOROUGH OF GREEN TREE  
COUNCIL MEETING  
MAY 5, 2025**

**Call to Order / Moment of Silence / Pledge of Allegiance**

Green Tree Borough Council met on Monday, May 5, 2025 at 7:30 pm in the Sycamore Room of the Green Tree Municipal Center, 10 West Manilla Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15220.

**ROLL CALL**

*Members Present:*

Edward Schenck, Mayor  
Shannon Barron, President (via speakerphone)  
Deborah Demme  
Jennifer Houtz  
Ron Panza  
David Rea  
Emily Schwartz

*Also Present:*

Judy Miller, Borough Manager  
Jake Leyland, Borough Solicitor  
Kim Beck, Stenographer

*Absent:*

Arthur Tintori

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**April 7, 2025**

**Motion:**

**Ms. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Ms. Houtz, to approve the April 7, 2025 minutes as presented.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**POINT PARK FIELD DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION – Justin Delecki / Scott Swain**

Mr. Delecki, Mr. Swain, and Mr. Loren Torres gave a presentation on the proposed Point Park Field Development plan (Attachment A). Mr. Delecki explained that Point Park University and the Borough have had a partnership for the past 15 years and Point Park would like to upgrade the field that is owned by the Borough due to issues with water drainage. They went over data representing the usability of the field and how usage could be improved with the proposed upgrades.

Mr. Delecki explained that the turf is estimated to cost a little over \$1.2 million, and this cost would be covered by Point Park University. The responsibility of future maintenance and replacement of the turf will be with the University, not the Borough. He said that the University would like the ability to use the naming rights of the field to help close the funding gap so the turf can be purchased in a timely fashion.

Mr. Swain stated that they are expecting there to be some drainage issues that will need to be resolved prior to the installation of the turf. They are requesting that the Borough assist in covering the costs of repairs prior to installation. The University is currently unaware of what the costs of this would be for the Borough.

Council and residents asked the following questions regarding the project:

1. **How many games and practices would you expect to have with the turf field, and how would the field be shared with Keystone Oaks School District?** *Point Park University expects to play at least 50% of their games (23) and would be practicing daily as long as the temperature is above 35 degrees. Point Park University has a good working relationship with Keystone Oaks School*

*District regarding scheduling. The School District would be able to use the field during Point Park's away games. They have never had an issue with scheduling games, aside from weather issues. Additionally, Point Park is hoping to be able to host college tournaments once the field has been upgraded.*

2. **Do you have a general estimate on the cost of field repairs prior to turf installation?** *We do not have an estimate because we will not know the extent of the repairs until the turf company comes to do an assessment.*
3. **The Borough will want to know the cost of repairs prior to agreeing to pay for them.**
4. **Do you have an estimated number of attendees for these baseball games, and how will the teams and guests utilize the Borough's local businesses during games?** *I would say around one hundred people between parents and fans per game. The University would recommend that visitors stay in Green Tree Borough hotels and dine at local restaurants.*
5. **Do you have any data showing that visiting teams will book Green Tree hotels?** *When visiting teams ask for recommendations on where they should stay, we are pushing them to stay in one of the hotels in Green Tree. We cannot force them to stay in a hotel, but we always recommend local hotels.*
6. **Can you explain or give a little background on how Point Park University applied for grant funding for this project? The grant funding stated that the University had Borough support, but this is the first presentation the University has had with Council.** *There were ongoing discussions between the Borough and Point Park for well over a year. The Borough was notified that the University was applying for the grant. They also had discussions with the mayor. Mayor Schenck noted that he had communication with Point Park University but was not aware at that time that they had applied for a grant.*
7. **Where are the issues with the drainage? Is the issue in the outfield or the infield?** *There are issues with the whole field. The University can put a tarp over the infield when it is going to rain but cannot tarp the outfield.*
8. **If Point Park University were to discontinue their baseball team, would the Borough be responsible for replacing the turf?** *That is correct but Point Park's baseball team is one of our most successful programs. This would be one of the last programs the University would discontinue.*
9. **Do you have a cost estimate of how much it would cost to replace the turf after 10 to 12 years of use?** *We were told the cost estimate would be around \$700,000 to \$800,000.*
10. **Would the Borough have any control over the naming rights of the field?** *We have had conversations with corporate sponsors who are interested in helping sponsor the field. They are all established companies within the Pittsburgh area.*
11. **Do you envision the need for later developments to handle an increase in crowds for the games, as there is currently little to no seating around the field?** *There is minimal seating behind home plate right now. The University would be responsible for any future increases in seating capacity.*
12. **Would you consider sponsoring the Green Tree Athletic Association in the future to create more of a community-type partnership moving forward?** *We had talked about the opportunity to host youth camps and other ways to get more involved in the community. Our biggest challenge right now is where are we going to have our next practice or game?*

**HEARING OF THE CITIZENS****Sam Salopek – 1195 Greentree Road**

1. Ms. Salopek congratulated the Aiken Mom Crew relay team for crushing the Pittsburgh Marathon and representing Green Tree Borough.
2. Ms. Salopek made the following statement:

*"I would like to say a few thank-yous to the Green Tree Fire Company, our Public Works Department, and the Green Tree Police Department for working around the clock to ensure the safety of Green Tree residents and those passing through our Borough. Additionally, I want to shine a spotlight on some of our citizen heroes over the last several days. Christopher Alan Cropp, Tina Gdovic, Christopher Cratsley, and Jan Adamski worked tirelessly to help coordinate and deliver generators to neighbors without power, checked in on neighbors, and connected with neighbors to help understand and advocate for their needs. They also took the time to share information and engage with residents who had moved through the aftermath of the storm. I want to give a very special and heartfelt thank you to Green Tree's Tyler Dersham, owner of Mario's Pizza. Not only did he cook over 600 pounds of wings that he gave out to the community members for free, but he also donated pizza and supplies to the community meal. Finally, I want to thank the Mayor and Mr. Rea for helping coordinate relief efforts, for advocating and working to get residents emergency charging stations, food waste dumpsters, and I want to thank Mr. Rea and the Mayor for coming to Saturday's community meal to connect with Green Tree residents and understand the needs that still existed following the storm. It does not take long to see that many of our neighbor and peer communities were outperforming Green Tree and sharing information on social media. Crafton, Dormont, and Mount Lebanon shared hazardous areas in the community, road closures, and whether their parks were safe for play, what efforts the Local Government was undertaking in the community, highlighting the work of the Fire Departments, the Police Departments, their Public Works Departments, and thanking community members for stepping up in the time of need. Crafton, Dormont, and Mount Lebanon highlighted community-organized efforts. Mount Lebanon shared the status of their emergency declarations for the community and the impact that declaration would have. They gave updates on Duquesne Light, even if it were just to say there were no updates, and to offer empathy and recognition for the citizens' situations.*

*It has been five months since the development of the Communications and Community Engagement Committee, and I see truly no earnest effort to improve the quality of communication and engagement for our Borough. We need you to be advocating for a dedicated, part-time Borough Communications Manager to rectify our communication shortcomings, to manage social media and the website, and to reinstate our weekly e-newsletter. You need to be connecting and engaging with community members to understand resident needs, not just your friends or immediate neighbors. In the vacuum created by your absence and the lack of policy and procedures around communications brings your residents to, again, resort to unofficial channels to get information. This is a continued trend with this Council to give your citizens minimal efforts, only to the extent indicated by the law. When citizens come to you with improvement ideas or requests, we are met with excuses on why it cannot be done or why the situation is much more complicated than we think. I'm so tired of living under the Council's willing mediocrity. I need someone to step up, aside from Mr. Rea and the Mayor, whose efforts are often quelled or dismissed by six others sitting up there. I need someone who doesn't tell me why we can't but works through it and finds a way to get some of it done. I'm not asking for perfection. I know it won't always work, and it won't always be right, and that's fine. I am just asking you to start to try to work for us, to give us your sincere and solid efforts. Thank you."*

**Lisa Shea – 8 Elmhurst Road**

1. Ms. Shea voiced her concerns regarding visibility issues at the intersection of Elmhurst Road and Greentree Road due to overgrown trees. She said that one of the houses at the intersection has

been very good about keeping their trees trimmed, but the other house has not. She asked the Borough to do something about the visibility issues.

2. Ms. Shea stated that she believes only one Council member, Mr. Rea, has been stepping up to help the community following the storm. She thanked Tina Gdovic for posting updates on the community Facebook pages. Ms. Shea said that she was unaware that the Borough had a Green Tree Connect app until yesterday and has been getting all her updates online from Ms. Gdovic, who is running for Council. She stated that Ms. Gdovic has her vote because she has been online constantly communication with the Green Tree community about the storm.
3. Ms. Shea said that she believes it is time for new leadership in the Borough, as Mr. Rea seems to be the only Council member who cares.
4. Ms. Shea stated that she recently learned that the Borough Manager was communicating with residents through the Green Tree Connect app, but a percentage of the community is not tech-savvy and is not aware that they need to go on this one specific app for information. Ms. Miller stated that residents can set up their account to have communication sent directly to their phone or email. Ms. Shea said that she believes Council and the Borough Manager should be using the multiple other Facebook pages to reach out to the community.
5. Ms. Shea said that the Borough should have put dumpsters out for residents to remove debris from their property following the storm. Ms. Miller stated that the Public Works Department has been collecting tree branches and limbs at the curb. The Borough had a dumpster placed in the pool parking lot on Friday for residents who needed to dispose of spoiled food. Ms. Miller thanked Mr. Panza for quickly scheduling a dumpster.
6. Ms. Shea noted that at one point, the Borough Manager thought only 25 to 50 community members were without service, when in reality hundreds were affected. Ms. Miller stated that she had originally misread the outage information, and that communication was only sent to Council. She said that it would have been helpful if someone on Council had corrected her whenever she sent them incorrect information regarding the number of affected residents.
7. Ms. Shea stated that last year, she had noticed a photo of Council in a Borough newsletter, but Mr. Rea was not included in the photo. She asked Mr. Rea about the photo, and he had told her that he was unaware the photo was being taken. Ms. Shea said that she expects Council to be professional, mature, and to work together, not against each other. She is unsure why no one contacted Mr. Rea to let him know the photo was being taken. Ms. Shea stated that she believes Ms. Gdovic should be running the Borough based on how tirelessly she has been working to communicate with residents over the past seven days.

#### **John Coppler – 57 Rhodes Avenue**

1. Mr. Coppler noted that a tornado had come through the Borough in 2002. When Mr. Coppler arrived home, there were ambulances, fire trucks, and police officers taking care of the debris that had been left. When this recent storm came through last week, he did not see any of that. Mr. Coppler did see the Public Works Department move a tree on Tuesday evening, but when they left part of the tree was still in the roadway. They did not put up any flares or cones to alert traffic that there was an obstruction in the roadway. He said he had heard that this issue was not taken care of on Tuesday evening because the Borough did not want to pay overtime to staff. Ms. Miller stated that this was not true; the Police Department will contact the Public Works Department when they feel it is necessary to call them out, and a call was not received. Mr. Coppler stated that he should have contacted 911 on Tuesday evening to report the fallen-down tree. Fire Chief Don Gaupp stated that it was members of the Volunteer Fire Company who removed the tree from the roadway on Tuesday evening, not the Public Works Department.

**Kara Martorella – 179 Arla Drive**

1. Ms. Martorella stated that she discovered recently that two Council members did things to prevent young members of the community from furthering their careers by reporting things that were untrue. She noted that these young community members are trying to participate in the community, which is rare.

**Maureen Callas – Forest Drive**

1. Ms. Callas stated that she was disappointed in the lack of communication from Council following the storm, and communication is key.
2. Ms. Callas noted that she had tried to email Council to thank them for the placement of the dumpster, but two of the Council member email addresses were missing from the website. She said that she had to manually add their email addresses to the email in order to have it sent to everyone, when it should have just been one click of a link.

**Christine Short – 251 Parkedge Road**

1. Ms. Short thanked Mayor Schenck and Mr. Rea for attending the community meal on Saturday. She said she was disappointed that the other Council members did not attend.
2. Ms. Short stated that there should have been communication on the door of the Borough building letting residents know that the Carlisle Social Hall was open as a charging station.
3. Ms. Short asked if the Borough had an Emergency Management team.

**Christopher Alan Cropp – 252 Parkedge Road**

1. Mr. Cropp asked if the Borough was able to track the number of residents who have downloaded the Green Tree Connect app. Ms. Miller stated that the exact number is difficult to determine. Mr. Cropp said that due to the large number of residents who do not have the app, some sort of Emergency Management board should have been posted somewhere for residents to receive important information.
2. Mr. Cropp stated that when he called the Borough office to ask for a copy of the Borough's Emergency Management Plan, he was told he would need to file a Right-To-Know request. Ms. Miller stated that once it has been updated, a link will be posted on the Borough's website to allow easy access to the document.
3. Mr. Cropp said that, as a leader, he immediately jumped into action following the storm to assist the community. He said that he expected the elected members of Council to have done more for the community. Mr. Cropp noticed that there were residents out in the street after the storm trying to figure out how to open their garage doors, how they would get their prescriptions, and how they were going to make sure their pets were okay. He noted that he did not see any of the elected officials out helping residents.

**Aldo Colautti – 143 Sheldon Avenue**

1. Mr. Colautti said that he was shocked there were no agenda items relating to last week's storm. He said he hopes each committee will address how the storm has affected their committee during tonight's meeting.

Mr. Colautti noted that some residents are still without power, almost a week after the storm hit the community. He recommended that the residents who do not have power contact the Borough office to notify them.

Mr. Colautti stated that residents were not able to receive digital communication from the Borough due to not having power.

Mr. Colautti suggested that Council consider scheduling a workshop meeting to address the issues surrounding the storm in more detail. It would be beneficial to receive resident input to determine what could have been done differently.

The Borough needs to have an Emergency Management Plan in place. They need to know who is in charge of the plan, and whether the plan includes major power outages. Mr. Colautti stated that the Borough needs to determine answers to the following questions:

- a. Is there a generator in the Borough Building?
- b. Does the Fire Hall have a generator?
- c. Do the Emergency Call Boxes at the Borough Building and Fire Hall work during a power outage?

Mr. Colautti said he was disappointed with the Borough's lack of communication regarding the aftermath of the storm. During major power outages, residents do not have access to online communication and need to rely on person-to-person communication instead.

Mr. Colautti stated that the Borough Building should have been open to residents regardless of whether they have electricity, so residents could come to ask questions and communicate with the Borough. The Borough should have been communicating with residents through signs on the doors of the Borough Building and Fire Hall. Administrative staff could have sat outside with a table to help give information to residents who came to the building with questions or concerns.

2. Mr. Colautti said that he had gone to the Borough Building on April 30, looking for information, but the door was locked. He had a conversation with the Borough Manager around 10:00am that morning. He asked her if the Fire Hall had a generator and was told that the Borough Manager believed there was a generator, but she did not know how long it would run. Mr. Colautti told her that he believed the generator ran on natural gas. He asked her why the Emergency Management Facility was not moved to the Fire Hall, as they appeared to have some electricity due to the generator. Administrative staff could have moved over to the Fire Hall to assist residents.

Mr. Colautti said he asked the Borough Manager how to get help if needed and was told to send an email. He stated that he was not able to send emails due to not having Wi-Fi during the power outage. Mr. Colautti said that perhaps the Borough Manager was not yet fully prepared to deal with the emergency when he spoke with her, but he was disappointed with her responses.

3. Mr. Colautti stated that his neighbors on Sheldon Avenue hosted a picnic and invited residents over so they could have a picnic and use their gas grill.

#### **Don Folkmire – 1006 Avacoll Drive**

1. Mr. Folkmire asked if residents were supposed to be limited to three to five minutes during the Hearing of the Citizens portion of the meeting. Mr. Panza stated that he believes residents should have the opportunity to express their thoughts regardless of how long it takes.

#### **Tammy Feeny – 55 Rhodes Avenue**

1. Ms. Feeny thanked Mayor Schenck, Mr. Rea, and the many residents who helped host the community mal last weekend.

2. Ms. Feeny noted that the Borough's response to the storm and subsequent power outage was pretty bad. She suggested the Borough revisit their response and think about how things could have been managed differently.
3. Ms. Feeny said that she appreciated the community members who stepped up for each other to help in this time of need.
4. Ms. Feeny asked for an update regarding the overnight parking ordinance on Rhodes Avenue. Ms. Schwartz stated that she did not believe Council has started discussions on this concern yet.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Finance and Borough Administration – Mr. Tintori**

In Mr. Tintori's absence, Ms. Schwartz gave the Finance and Borough Administration report.

#### **1. Chair Report**

- a) Mr. Rea asked when the Finance Committee last met. Ms. Schwartz stated that they had a zoom call during the ALOM conference in April.
- b) Mr. Rea asked if the Finance committee had a report regarding the peer review. Ms. Miller said that the committee would be discussing the review during their May committee meeting.
- c) Mr. Rea asked for an update regarding the proposed AI policy. Ms. Schwartz stated that it was brought to their attention that the AI policy would need to cover both employees and elected officials. The committee is working with Mr. Leyland to draft a policy that would incorporate elected officials.
- d) Mr. Rea asked for an update regarding performance reviews. Ms. Schwartz said that it is on their agenda to discuss.
- e) Mr. Rea asked if the committee had drafted a policy regarding how Council members should be contacting outside contractors. Ms. Schwartz stated that they recently received a document from Mr. Leyland that the committee will be reviewing at their next meeting.
- f) Mr. Rea noted that he had asked the Borough Manager to compile a list of yearly costs associated with IT, including internet contracting, service, and software. Ms. Miller said she would get a list for Council prior to the June Council meeting.
- g) Mr. Rea stated that at the April Council meeting he had noticed really high costs for workers compensation and asked for an update. Ms. Miller reported that she had spoken with the Finance Director who told her that it was an error in the way it was sorted in the bill sheet and should be corrected in this month's report.
- h) Mr. Rea said that at the April Council meeting he had asked if the pension expense on the bill sheet was due to Ms. Miller's retroactive salary that was approved at the end of 2024. Ms. Miller said that she did not believe it should have been a line item on the April bill sheet, but she would look into it.
- i) Mr. Rea noted that the Borough paid over \$10,000 in attorney fees to investigate a personnel issue earlier this year. He said he was shocked at the cost and was disappointed in the way the matter was managed by Council. He stated that Council never held an Executive Session to determine whether they should move forward with an investigation that would cost the Borough \$10,000. Ms. Barron stated that Council had met to discuss this issue prior to the start of the investigation. Mr. Panza said that to the best of his understanding, the Council President

had made the decision to move forward with the investigation. Ms. Schwartz stated that she recalled a Zoom meeting where the options were discussed. They had received advice from legal counsel as to how the recommended the issue be handled, and Council discussed how they wanted to move forward. Mayor Schenck said that he remembered having a meeting via Zoom, but he believed the decision to retain legal counsel had already been made prior to the meeting.

Ms. Barron stated that once Council had received an email from an employee, she forwarded it on to the Borough Solicitor who gave his advice. The information was then passed on to the Borough's Labor Attorney who also gave legal advice. Council held a meeting on Zoom and discussed the options that were presented to them and made a decision on how they wanted to move forward with the issue. She said that she did not make the decision on her own.

Mr. Rea said that he does not understand why members of Council are not allowed to contact an outside contractor on their own, but the President of Council is able to contact legal counsel without input from the rest of Council. Mr. Leyland stated that his understanding is that this is how it has been handled in the past. He is currently drafting a resolution to memorialize the process and establish proper lines of communication going forward.

2. **Motion:**

**Ms. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Ms. Houtz, to ratify the actions of the Borough Manager in paying the April 2025 invoices from the General Fund totaling \$20,527.19; Payroll Account Fund totaling \$219,075.57; Educational Service Agency Fund totaling \$5,339.50; and Credit Card – February 2025; \$7,954.21.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

3. **Motion:**

**Ms. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Ms. Houtz, to approve payment of the May 2025 invoices from the General Fund totaling \$121,956.20; Storm Sewer Fund totaling \$15,639.82; Sanitary Sewer Fund totaling \$912,879.71; and Capital Projects Fund totaling \$4,734.64.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

4. **Ordinance #1908**

**Setting wages and benefits for the full-time Borough employees**

**Motion:**

**Ms. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Ms. Houtz, to pass Ordinance #1908, setting wages and benefits for the full-time Borough employees.**

Mr. Rea stated that the ordinance was tabled at the April Council meeting so Council could meet in an Executive Session to discuss some concerns. Council had not met in an Executive Session to have these discussions.

**Motion:**

**Mr. Rea made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barron, to table Ordinance #1908 until Council can discuss the Ordinance at an Executive Session.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**B. Infrastructure – Ms. Houtz**

1. **Chair Report**

- a) The sinkhole that developed along Holiday Drive due to a partial collapse of the storm sewer line will be repaired soon.
- b) The Arla stormwater outfall restoration construction has been completed. Property restoration will take place as weather permits.
- c) The Whiskey Run stream bank restoration project is expected to begin in June or July.
- d) The 2025 Road Program bids have been received and are under review. A recommendation will be given to the Infrastructure committee, and a contract recommendation will be placed on the June Council agenda.
- e) Construction specs for phase three of the Green Tree Road Sidewalk improvement project are being finalized and will be placed out to bid in June. The Borough has received \$247,000 in grant funding for this phase of the project.
- f) The Borough was approved for a grant in the amount of \$250,000 for phase four of the Sidewalk Improvement project, which is \$175,000 less than requested. The Borough will adjust the scope of work if necessary to fit the received grant amount.
- g) A grant has been submitted for upgrades to several traffic lights and intersections along Noblestown Road and Mansfield Avenue.
- h) Parkedge Road Sanitary line repairs have been completed.
- i) Dale Drive Sanitary line repairs have been completed.
- j) The Heckler Drive Sanitary sewer project has been completed.
- k) The final design is underway for the Trumbull Bridge project. The Borough has received communication that the project has been approved, so the Borough is currently only responsible for paying \$350,000 toward the project. The Borough has also been granted a \$500,000 Multi-Modal grant to fund any additional expenses associated with the project.
- l) Mr. Leyland is continuing to work with the insurance representatives on the fiber optic claim.
- m) Council recently received traffic data from PennDOT regarding the I-36 Interchange project. Council would like to host a public meeting alongside the Planning Commission to get additional feedback about this proposed project from residents. PennDOT would like to receive an official statement from Council, so they would like to draft this letter after they receive additional input from Borough residents. Ms. Houtz noted that PennDOT will not be attending the June 9 Public Meeting.

**C. Public Facilities, Parks, and Equipment – Ms. Schwartz**

**1. Chair Report**

- a) The Public Works Department has been cleaning up trees and debris from the recent storm. Ms. Schwartz asked residents to contact the Borough if they notice any issues in the parks.
- b) At a recent Planning Commission meeting, members discussed the proposed PennDOT project and expressed interest in collaborating with Council by holding a public meeting for resident input on June 9.

- c) The Planning Commission has recommended that Council adopt the International Property Maintenance Code for the Borough. A public hearing will be held in June for resident input. By adopting this code, the Code Enforcement Officer will have more power to effect change when things need to be corrected regarding private property. Many municipalities have adopted this code.
- d) Ms. Schwartz reminded residents that dogs are not allowed in any parks aside from the dog park and Nature Center and must be leashed. Dogs are not allowed at the baseball fields or Farmers Market. Mr. Panza noted that he would like to have a discussion about possibly constructing a walking track for dogs.

#### **D. Public Safety and Equipment – Mr. Rea**

##### **1. Chair Report**

- a) Mr. Rea thanked everyone who spoke during the Hearing of the Citizens to voice their concerns and holding Council accountable for letting the residents down. He apologized on behalf of Council and said they need to do better. Mr. Rea said that he will be focused on doing better from a Public Safety standpoint.
- b) Mr. Rea explained that according to AccuWeather, the storm that hit the Borough met the criteria to be classified as a derecho, which is a rare and powerful windstorm marked by widespread, long lasting straight-line winds. These events require a damage path of 250 miles, wind gusts of at least 58 miles per hour, and multiple reports of 75+ mile per hour winds. Mr. Rea said that this was one of the worst weather events the Borough has faced in over 25 years. This storm knocked out power, brought down trees, damaged property, and disrupted life for hundreds if not thousands of residents. As of this afternoon, Duquesne Light reports indicate that around fifty customers in Green Tree are still without power. Mr. Rea gave the following statement:

*“I want to thank the Fire Company, Public Works, and Police Department for responding quickly and effectively. They were taping off live wires, fielding calls, and doing what they could to keep the community safe.*

*In the hours and days following the storm, especially the hours after the storm, I wasn't up here to meet the candidates. I was on my friend's roof, helping him with his chimney that fell on his roof. I was out there helping neighbors clean up, assessing property damage, and accessing generators.*

*Wednesday night, I helped Tyler Dersham from Mario's Pizza who had just received a, I think somebody said 600 pounds, I heard 400 pounds, order of frozen wings on Monday morning. His power was out, and so rather than letting them go to waste, he cooked them up and invited residents to stop by for free takeout wings. Together, along with a couple other people, we served hundreds of people that night, making sure families without power had at least one hot, comforting meal.*

*On Wednesday night at 10:00pm I held a Public Safety committee meeting to get our arms around what was happening and determine next steps while many were still without power. At the same time, neighbors were stepping up in big ways. Early in the week, we launched an online forum to connect residents who needed help with others who were willing to lend a hand.*

*On Saturday, several of us pulled together a community meal at the Municipal Gym here next door. We started talking about that Friday night, and the community just rapidly came together. We served over 100 residents and made sure our Fire and Police Departments were fed too. Mayor Schenck came to talk with residents and show support, and again, Mario's Pizza generously donated pizza for that event as well. I would like to thank the community members who dropped off food, drinks, or showed up to help. There were a bunch of kids playing in the gym on a rainy day, so that was nice too. A special thank you to Tyler for being such a consistent and generous steward of our community. More on Tyler hopefully next month at the next Council meeting.*

*Throughout the week I kept pushing for the placement of dumpsters so residents could safely dispose of spoiled food. The original recommendation from Borough Administration was to use electric-powered disposals, which clearly was not an option for those without power. Fortunately, after enough community feedback, the dumpster was placed in the pool parking lot. Ron, thanks for making that happen. Hopefully, I played a part in that. I am told it filled quickly and likely helped us avoid rodents and varmints feasting on garbage left out for days.*

*There are also a few things that did not get done, unfortunately. I suggested that we temporarily allow food trucks into town, just like we do for the Farmers Market, so residents without power could grab a hot meal. That idea was shot down. I was told people should support local businesses, which I fully agree with, except most of them were, guess what, without power. That kind of response was frustrating, and it was not the only breakdown.*

*Communication throughout the week from our Municipal Elected Officials and State Representatives was minimal at best. Many residents were not receiving alerts to the Borough App, especially those without power, and some still have not gotten key updates even now. It also seemed like the Borough was relying solely on Duquesne Light data to assess the situation, instead of actually walking the neighborhoods at night and seeing the conditions firsthand. That disconnect between data and lived experience mattered, and it slowed our response.*

*To put the communication breakdown into perspective, the first email I received from the Borough Manager after the storm was not about the storm. It came Wednesday morning at 11:19am and was to suggest we increase overnight parking fines from \$15 to \$30. Then, nearly 24 hours after the storm, I received the first actual update related to the emergency. In that message, she recommended declaring a State of Emergency, which would not help anyone in the short term. Instead, she planned to open the Carlisle Social Hall as a charging station starting Thursday morning, several days after the storm. I was honestly shocked at the time and tone-deafness of it all, and I apologize that we were not more responsive.*

*To be clear, our first responders did excellent work, and I am grateful for everything they did. This storm exposed gaps in our Emergency Management and communication that we need to fix, and I hold myself accountable to that. For example, I have since learned that we have an Emergency Management Coordinator. His name is David Montz. We have an Emergency Management Plan, but I learned that he was only contacted by email, not phone or text. That delayed our ability to act quickly. Had he been contacted directly; I am confident he would have responded right away.*

*Communication improvements have already started. At Saturday's community meal, a few residents suggested we partner with the library to host the Green Tree Connect training session. They walked over right then and talked with the library staff who were enthusiastic*

*and ready to help schedule. That is the kind of initiative we need. More neighbors offering real, doable ideas that strengthen how we respond and communicate.*

*There is good news out of this. It is a learning lesson, right? We have a community full of people who care, who show up and who take action. That is our greatest strength. It is what gives me confidence that we will come out of this more prepared, more connected, and even stronger moving forward.”*

- c) Mr. Rea stated that Police Chief candidate responded to questions via a recorded video-based portal. Council and the Mayor reviewed the videos and reduced the list to six candidates. Five of those candidates accepted an invitation to an in-person interview that will be conducted by the PA Chiefs Association on May 22. Council and the Mayor are invited to attend these interviews but will not be participating. Council, with collaboration from the PA Chiefs, will then conduct final interviews in June. Council anticipates appointing a new full-time Chief at the July Council meeting.
- d) Ms. Schwartz asked Mr. Rea if he has had the opportunity to review the prior Emergency Management Plan. Mr. Rea stated that it was reviewed about 18 months ago when Mr. Montz was appointed as the coordinator. He said that there are certain policies that may need to be reviewed and updated.

## 2. Resolution #1368 Parking Fines

Mr. Rea stated that Council did not have time to discuss the proposed increase in parking fines, so he would like to table the Resolution until the June Council meeting.

### Motion:

**Mr. Rea made a motion, seconded by Ms. Demme, to table Resolution #1368.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

## E. Recreation and Community Events – Mr. Panza

### 1. Chair Report

- a) Mr. Panza stated that following the storm, he drove around the Borough and once he realized the extent of the damage he contacted the Borough Manager. He said that he was not happy with how the storm was handled and believes it should have been treated like Hurricane Ivan. When Hurricane Ivan came through the area, the Borough Manager, President of Council, Public Safety committee chair, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, and Emergency Manager all met at the Borough building that night to determine what steps should be taken. Mr. Panza stated that in the event of a future storm, he is going to make sure that this happens immediately. He suggested that the Public Safety committee meet to evaluate how this situation was handled.

Mr. Panza noted that, fortunately, the police did not need to handle any major distress calls during or following the storm, and no residents were seriously injured.

### 2. Resolution #1369 Wilson Pool and Summer Recreation Fees

Mr. Panza stated that the Recreation and Community Events committee did not have the opportunity to meet to discuss the proposed Wilson Park Pool and Summer Recreation fees. He said he would like to table this motion until they have the opportunity to meet to discuss the

proposed rates. The Borough will continue to use the 2024 rates until Resolution #1369 is approved.

**Motion:**

**Mr. Panza made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rea, to table Resolution #1369.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Panza noted that his committee has the intention of having a meeting to discuss the Borough's Recreation Department soon and will discuss the proposed rates for Summer Recreation and the Wilson Park pool.

**F. Community Engagement and Communication – Ms. Demme**

**1. Chair Report**

- a) Ms. Demme reminded residents to reach out directly to PRT regarding their proposed schedule changes. Information is listed on the Borough's website. Mr. Panza asked where the closest bus route would be for residents if the proposed cuts go through. He said it appears that the closest bus route would be in Carnegie.

Ms. Schwartz suggested that residents also reach out to their State Officials, as they are the ones who will be passing the state budget and can lobby to ensure that Pittsburgh has adequate public transit.

- b) PennDOT is encouraging individuals to communicate directly with them regarding the proposed interchange project.
- c) Council is looking to re-establish the Traffic Advisory Board and will be looking for volunteer input.
- d) Ms. Demme noted that some residents have indicated that they did not receive any notifications or updates regarding the recent storm. She asked any residents who are having issues signing up for alerts to reach out to her to address.

Ms. Demme said that as the Community Engagement and Communication committee chair, she is taking the residents concerns regarding the lack of communication following the storm very seriously. She will be taking the residents' feedback into consideration as she works with the Public Safety committee chair to ensure that communication is handled appropriately in the Emergency Plan moving forward.

- e) Mr. Rea asked if the Farmers Market require a permit fee for food trucks. It was indicated that they do not require a permit fee, and food trucks are schedule in advance by the Farmers Market committee.

Mr. Rea stated that he would like Council to revisit the Borough's current food truck ordinance to determine if food trucks should be allowed in the Borough. He said that he has spoken to two restaurant owners who have indicated that they would like to be able to have a food truck. Mr. Panza said that his committee would review the current ordinance and discuss possible changes. Mr. Leyland suggested that if the Borough wants to start allowing food trucks, they need to have both zoning and non-zoning ordinances governing when and where food trucks would be allowed to operate within the Borough.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

- A. The Green Tree Garden Club is hosting their annual Spring Festival at the Municipal Center and Carlisle Social Hall on Saturday, May 10.
- B. The Green Tree Farmers Market will be opening for the season on Thursday, May 15.
- C. The Primary Election will be held on Tuesday, May 20.
- D. The Wilson Park Pool will open for the Summer on Saturday, May 24.
- E. Representative Deasy's office is hosting a paper shredding event at Green Tree Park on Saturday, May 17 from 8:00 until 11:00am.
- F. Mayor Schenck said that he is glad the Borough is having a public meeting on June 9 to discuss PennDOT's proposed interchange project. He explained that PennDOT wants a formal statement from Council. Council will gather more input from residents at the June 9 meeting and then use that input to formulate an official statement.
- G. Mayor Schenck stated that Ms. Miller and the Scott Township Manager, Denise Fitzgerald, wrote a letter to the Pittsburgh Regional Transit Authority (PRT). Mayor Schenck read the following excerpt from the letter:

*"On behalf of Green Tree Borough and Scott Township, we are writing to convey the concerns of our elected officials, residents, and business owners regarding the proposed cuts to the PRT bus routes, especially the 38 Bus which services Green Tree, Scott Township, and surrounding areas. In particular, the loss of the 38 Bus route would directly impact those coming to and from Green Tree and Scott Township. Both communities have a substantial business base, and those businesses employ thousands of individuals, many of whom rely on public transportation to get to and from work. The 38 Bus line is a necessity, not a nicety, for many and removing it may very well impact their ability to remain gainfully employed. Furthermore, it is likely the cuts to services for riders with disabilities will decrease to levels below the minimum required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Again, we urge you to carefully consider those who have no other options and the impact of losing the only means of transportation these riders have."*

- H. Some students from Keystone Oaks School District will be traveling to Michigan State University to participate in the Odyssey of the Mind. Mayor Schenck congratulated these students.
- I. The Pennsylvania Police Chiefs Association will be interviewing the five remaining Police Chief candidates. Council will have the opportunity to sit in on the interviews. Once these interviews have been completed, they will make their recommendation of three candidates to be interviewed by Council before a final decision is made.
- J. Mayor Schenck noted that the Borough needs to learn from the recent storm. He said that everyone, himself included, could have done a better job for the residents. Mayor Schenck suggested that he and the Public Safety committee work together to write a memo about what they learned from this and how the Borough can do a better job during the next emergency including:
  - a) Getting more residents signed up on the Green Tree Connect App.
  - b) Determining what residents, due to health and other issues, may need assistance from the Borough.
  - c) Working with PennDOT to determine why the traffic lights and lane change lights were not working on Green Tree Road, as they are supposed to have batteries or be solar powered.

- d) Having the Code Enforcement officer go around the community to areas that do not have power to see if any residents need assistance.
- e) Getting back-up power for the Municipal Building.

Mayor Schenck stated that he had been in contact with Acting Chief Rannigan following the storm, and the officers did an excellent job and had 100% cooperation with the Green Tree Fire Company.

Mayor Schenck thanked everyone who stepped up to help the community following the storm.

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Ms. Barron**

- A. Ms. Barron thanked everyone for the amazing work that was done over the last few days. She said that she agrees that there is always room for improvement. Ms. Barron is very interested in seeing if the Borough can create a database of residents who made need assistance in the event of a power outage due to age, health, or other mobility issues.
- B. Ms. Barron thanked Mayor Schenck, Ms. Miller, and Mr. Panza for keeping her updated throughout the week following the storm. She explained that she was unexpectedly hospitalized on February 25 and has been unable to be out in the community helping residents in person.
- C. Ms. Barron thanked the Green Tree Public Library for opening their building to be a place where residents could come for relief when they did not have power in their homes.

#### **MANAGER'S REPORT – Ms. Miller**

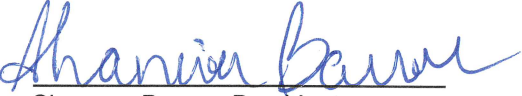
- A. Ms. Miller stated that she understands the frustration regarding the storm and will take responsibility for some of the issues and concerns. She said that she hopes residents realize that decisions were made with the information provided to the Borough at the time. In hindsight, Ms. Miller said that she should have kept the Borough Office open on Wednesday despite not having power. She would have had a table outside where residents could come speak to employees. At the time, she did not anticipate that the power outage would last nearly as long as it did. Ms. Miller said that she looks forward to working with Council now that they have gathered some insightful recommendations from residents at tonight's meeting. She stated that she appreciates the comments, both positive and negative, as the Borough will be able to work to improve their response in the future.
- B. Ms. Miller noted that the Emergency Management Plan needs to be reworked and updated.
- C. Mr. Panza noticed that the emergency light on the water tower was not working during the power outage. Ms. Miller said that she met with the Borough's electrical contractor today to discuss various issues, including why the Borough did not have power from the emergency generator.
- D. Mr. Rea asked if future presentations could be held during workshop meetings to keep the Council meetings from running as long as tonight's meeting. Ms. Miller said that it would not be a problem to hold presentations during workshop meetings. Tonight's presentation was added to the agenda due to time being of the essence for the Point Park project.
- E. The Public Works Department will be finishing tree branch collection tomorrow, Tuesday May 6.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:**

Mr. Panza made a motion, seconded by Ms. Demme, to adjourn the meeting at 10:19 pm.

Motion carried unanimously.

  
Shannon Barron, President

  
Judy Miller, Borough Manager