A regular meeting of the Richland Borough Council was held on Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the meeting room at the Richland Borough Building. The President being in the chair and the Secretary being present.

President Bricker called the Richland Borough Council Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Bricker completed roll call, Present were President Kelly Bricker, President Pro Tem Larry Hartman, Councilmembers Matthew Johnson, James Niethammer, Richard Strickler, Robert Rittle, Mayor Owen Landes, Solicitor Colin Macfarlane, Secretary Rebecca Schnoke, Road Supervisor Dwight Belleman and Road Laborer/Water Technician Benjamin Becker. Also in attendance was James Kinney from Becker Engineering. Absent was Vice President Mark Brubaker.

The President asked for a motion to approve the previous months minutes. A motion was made by Richard Strickler, seconded by Robert Rittle, to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on June 10, 2025; motion unanimously carried.

The President asked for a motion to approve the previous months workshop minutes. A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Richard Strickler, to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the previous workshop held on June 24, 2025; motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker opened the floor for citizens’ and visitors’ comments. There was one (1) person present.

Gary Althouse – 26 N. Race Street – No Comments.

Robert Rittle – 210 Oak Street – Commented as a citizen that he recently attended a funeral where the Richland Legion honor guard was present and wanted to share that they did an amazing job, their presentation was immaculate and very impressive. President Bricker stated the Richland Legion does an amazing job and does a lot for the community and requested Richard Strickler to please pass the compliment on to the Richland Legion.

The following Committee reports were presented to Council: Water Report, Highway Report, Property Report, Finance Report, Safety Report, and Personnel Report.

Water Committee – Nothing to report.

Recreation Committee – Richard Strickler advised the recreation committee met 7/1/25 and did a walkthrough of the park and noted the following items; drainage concerns, the sinkhole is approximately 5 feet deep, possible drainage issue next to cornhole area, no bikes/motorized vehicle signs needed, porta-potty needs to be secured, bottle filler needs to be installed, bike racks need to be installed, tot-lot shapes falling off needs to be addressed, park operations & maintenance plan needs to be completed, and maintenance logs must be completed and filed. Benjamin Becker advised the soft area at the cornhole boards has resolved, it was due to the large amount of rain we had and that is where the drainage bed is. Secretary Schnoke advised the equipment manufacturer is going to send new hardware to resolve the issue of the shapes falling off on the tot-lot equipment. President Bricker advised that one additional item being considered and looked into is possibly having a mural painted on the back of the municipal building and maybe speaking with the ELCO art department about having art students paint the mural.

Highway Committee – Nothing to report.

Property Committee – Nothing to report.

Personnel Committee – Nothing to report.

Finance Committee – Nothing to report.

Safety Committee – Nothing to report.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Larry Hartman, to accept the Committee Reports. Motion unanimously carried.

The following reports were presented to the Council: Mayor Report, Road Supervisor Report, Office Report, Solicitor Report, Code Enforcement, and State Police Report.

Mayor Report – No questions about the report.

Road Supervisor’s Report – No questions about the report.

Water Report – No questions about the report.

Office Report – No questions about the report.

Engineer’s Report – No questions about the report. James Kineey of Becker Engineering provided the following updates for ongoing projects.

Elevated Water Storage Tank -alternate bid advertised 7/17/25, bid to be received 8/18/25. Working with Kraft on the tank zoning and building permits, zoning permit has been approved, to provide updated specs for the tank building permit application.

Park Project – As-builts have been received and are being reviewed, SLC will need to mobilize to correct a couple things including the inlet and sinkhole

Well No. 9 - Vaults #2 & #3 are installed and connected; Dwight & Ben were helpful with the installation of these vaults. Vault #1, metering vault, air release box and well are in. There was one resident complaint received, a tractor trailer truck making delivery turned around in a resident’s yard and left ruts, Kinsley Construction will address and correct the issue. Will be scheduling installation of vault #1 in two weeks, work will be done at night, water will be shut off at midnight for approximately 4-6 hours, approximately 10 properties will be affected. To give notice of water shut off and boil water, A letter will be mailed to the affected properties a week in advance and a Rave alert will be sent 24 hours prior to the start of the work. For all other water customers, a Rave Alert will be sent giving notice of possible low pressure during the time of this work. These notices will also be posted on the Borough website and office door.

Solicitor’s Report –No questions about the report.

Code Enforcement Officer Report – No questions about the report.

Police Report – No questions about the report.

MRJA Report – Meeting was held July 7, 2025, electronic copies of the monthly reports are on file and available for viewing upon request, the next meeting will be held August 4, 2025.

A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by Larry Hartman, to accept the Officials Reports. Motion unanimously carried.

The Financial Reports for June 2025 were submitted by Secretary/Treasurer Rebecca Schnoke. A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Robert Rittle to approve the Financial Report, and have it placed on file for Audit. Motion unanimously carried.

The invoices were presented and reviewed by Councilmember James Niethammer. A motion was made by Richard Strickler, seconded by Matthew Johnson, to pay all the invoices submitted; Motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Robert Rittle, to ratify the bills paid; Motion unanimously carried.

The following communications were received:

* Weidle June 2025 Monthly Municipal Recycling Report 🡪 5.02 Tons
* 2 Zoning/Building Permit Application Received
* 2 Zoning/Building Permit Issued.
* PPL Electric Utilities Newsletter 🡪 3 Good Reasons to Maintain Your Equipment.
* COSTARS Connection Newsletter.
* 2024/2025 Severe Winter Reimbursement Received 🡪 $7,869.52.
* PMRS Notice of 2023 Excess Interest Award 🡪 Police Plan $5,624.00.
* PMRS Notice of 2023 Excess Interest Award 🡪 Non-Uniform Plan $11,119.00.

Old Business:

Well No. 9 - Update provided by James Kinney with the Engineer’s Report.

A motion was made by Robert Rittle, seconded by James Niethammer to approve to authorize and execute Contract #1 Kinsley Construction LLC Change Order 01 in the amount of $4,112.16 for additional ductile iron pipe and fittings at Vault 2 & Vault 3 for the Well No. 9 project; motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Larry Hartman, seconded by Matthew Johnson to approve to authorize & execute an LSA requisition in the amount of $362,005.00 for the Well No. 9 Project; motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Larry Hartman to approve to authorize & execute Kinsley Construction LLC payment application No. 2 in the amount of $213,021.00 for the Well No. 9 Project; motion unanimously carried.

Elevated Water Storage Tank – Update provided by James Kinney with the Engineer’s Report.

Playground Project - Update provided by James Kinney with the Engineer’s Report.

Secretary Schnoke advised she attended the DCNR park inspection with DCNR regional manager Lori Yeich and YSM Landscape Architect consultant Chuck Strodoski. A walkthrough was performed, and Lori Yeich from DCNR was very impressed and excited about the park. She expressed how much she loved the colors and overall aesthetics of the park and playgrounds; she had nothing but good things to say. Secretary Schnoke advised she informed Lori Yeich that the Borough is adding bike racks, a bottle filling station and considering a mural on the back of the municipal building, and that the Borough applied for funding for phase two and provided a summary of what phase 2 includes. The only recommendation Lori Yeich offered for future consideration was shade structures/sails at the play equipment and. Lori Yeich also advised that through Lori was very excited that as small as our Borough is that we were able to complete a project of this scale and caliber, she asked that the Borough consider speaking at a Borough’s meeting/conference because a lot of small municipalities are not aware that projects of this scale are possible through grant funding.

New Business:

Lebanon County 250th Committee – established to plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, Pennsylvania’s integral role in that event, and the impact of its people on the nation’s past, present, and future. Gary Althouse advised that he was contacted to be Richland Borough’s representative, and as long as Council is ok with that, he is happy to do so. Gary Althouse provided a list of talking points and stated he will know more after the committee meeting to be held July 29th, 2025, and he will be back in touch once he has more information.

Gary Althouse advised that the Lebanon Valley Counsel of the Arts may be a resource for having a mural painted on the municipal building if needed.

President Bricker expressed gratitude to Gary Althouse, his son Gary Althouse Jr. and Lydia Eberly for having their food trucks here with the book mobile, that the food was great, it was an awesome turn out, and it was great to see everyone enjoying themselves.

Solicitor Colin Macfarlane advised that the Cooperation & Sub-Grant agreement between the Borough and the Neptune Fire Company is a requirement for the LSA grant and indemnifies the Borough in the event the sub-grant organization misuses the grant money the resolution authorizes the entry into the agreement. A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Larry Hartman to approve to adopt Resolution 2025-20 authorizing the Cooperation & Sub-Grant Agreement between Richland Borough & the Neptune Fire Company; motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Robert Rittle to approve to adopt Resolution 2025-21 Richland Borough 2025 Fee Schedule; motion unanimously carried.

Hunting Permits – Council discussed the issuance of hunting permits for the reservoir property for the upcoming hunting season. Concerns were expressed regarding the safety of contractors working on the Well No. 9 Project and parking. Council decided to table this matter for further consideration.

Richland Christian Home Parking Spot Request – Secretary Schnoke advised she was contacted by Mr. Elvin Hurst, and the home is requesting a handicap spot or a designated parking spot for the home on S. Race Street in the front of the home for when the ambulance or hearse needs to pick up a resident. President Bricker advised she wants to work with the home however the biggest concern is there is no way to police or enforce any parking designation. Benjamin Becker advised that currently at the rear of the home there is a designated area for ambulance parking that leads to the entrance into where the elevator is. Secretary Schnoke stated Mr. Hurst advised currently if the resident is on the first floor they take them out the back but if they are on the second floor they take them out the front rather than down the elevator, and they are suggesting a designated spot, so they are not blocking the road or alley during these times. After lengthy discussion, Council decided a spot will not be designated and the home should continue to do what they have been doing, the ambulance or hearse can block the alley if needed.

Park Bottle Fill Station – President Bricker advised that Dwight Belleman expressed concerns regarding mounting the bottle fill station as the block wall is not solid block. President Bricker consulted Justin Yeiser, he informed her it can be done, but that area of block wall would need to be filled with mortar. President Bricker inquired who could do this type of work, Justin Yeiser advised he could but is extremely busy right now and stated he recently has some masonry work done by J.E. Horst and they did an awesome job, and recommended checking with J.E. Horst. Secretary Schnoke contacted Jay Horst for a price estimate, and he offered to core drill the block wall, grout the block wall, mount the bottle fill station, and patch the core holes for the Borough at no cost. The only cost to the Borough would be the necessary plumbing to connect the bottle fill station and any painting needed.

A motion was made by Richard Strickler, seconded by James Niethammer to approve to authorize J.E. Horst Building & Remodeling to prepare the block wall & mount the bottle fill station at no cost to the Borough; motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Larry Hartman to approve the library end of summer party to be held in the park on Saturday, August 23rd, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; motion unanimously carried.

Push Mower – Road Laborer/Water Technician Benjamin Becker advised the quote received for the Honda push mower was a verbal quote but is no longer valid as the item is no longer available, Honda push mowers are hard to find as Honda discontinued production. The most comparable push mower they had was a Cub Cadet, but it was not recommended. President Bricker advised public works to look for another push mower and if they find one to contact her as she can approve small dollar amount purchases.

President Bricker announced that Council will recess the Regular Session and enter Executive Session at 7:35 p.m. to discuss legal & personnel matters.

The Council returned from the Executive Session at 8:01 p.m. after discussing legal & personnel matters and reconvening the Regular Session with no action taken.

President Bricker asked if there were any comments for the good of the Borough. With no additional matters presented, a motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Robert Rittle, to adjourn; motion unanimously carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Rebecca Schnoke,

Richland Borough Secretary