

**MEETING MINUTES  
BOROUGH OF SOUTH COATESVILLE  
JANUARY 13, 2026**

The South Coatesville Borough Council met on January 13, 2026, at 7:00pm. Due to an anticipated large attendance, the meeting was held at the Chester County Public Safety Training Campus, 137 Modena Road, South Coatesville, PA. Members present: President Wright, Vice President Watson, Councilor Jones, Eveland and Mayor Carey. Councilor's Bond and Washington were not in attendance. Present were Solicitor Gerber and Manager Plaughter.

**Call to Order**

Council President Wright called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and announced that Council met in executive session this evening at 6:00pm to discuss personnel and legal matters.

**Citizens to be Heard – Agenda Items**

Chester County FOP President Bob McCarron addressed Council advising he understands the Borough is in financial distress, however the decision to disband the police department impacts Sergeant Gober's future. Further, the state police are a good organization, but response times will not be the same. President McCarron stated that the FOP is willing to work with the Borough on alternatives and asked that Council not move on the disbanding ordinance tonight.

Ms. Thomas advised Sergeant Gober has served the community well and state police response times will be delayed. Council should discuss this action with the fire company. Further, for sake of the community, reconsider enacting this ordinance. You are taking away mine and my family's safety.

Robin (last name unknown) is a 35-year-old resident and had concerns about the disbandment. She wants to know state police response time. The Borough just purchased two new police cars, now what? Her mother is an EMT and could be at the scene alone waiting for the state police to arrive.

Mr. Taylor felt the decision to disband is being made hastily. What was the thought process? Traffic on Youngsburg is bad with speeding vehicles and the state police cannot do it. Disturbances at the Bongo Club will be a delayed police response with the state police. Look at crime rates and all the benefits that come with our local police department.

Marylou (last name unknown) told Council that we have a great community. Traffic cutting through the Borough will worsen without the ability of local police to enforce speeding. We pay high taxes and should be able to keep our police department.

Rev. Brunson commented on traffic on Youngsburg Road, and he has been attempting to install a crosswalk and flashing lights in front of his church. The police department has been present helping elderly people crossing this busy highway. He asked Council to reconsider disbanding the police department.

Bill La Torre spoke about being a retired state trooper and that they operate completely differently than local police. Sgt. Gober does a great job serving our residents. Further, that people from outside the Borough bring a threat to our residents. The state police will have at least a 30-minute delay. He asked that Council maintain the police department with at least one fulltime officer.

Another resident (name unknown) spoke about the police department responding to medical emergencies and assisting until EMS arrived. She would not be alive if our local police were not available. Further, all the criminals will come to South Coatesville since we will not have a police department.

Mr. Boyer commented that a local police department is needed in any community. We need our officers on the street patrolling, directing traffic, and responding to emergencies. I have lived here 63 years and police have been needed all those years. When word gets out that we do not have a police department, criminal activity will be encouraged. He asked that Council reconsider the disbanding ordinance.

Mr. Phillips advised that our police department has always kept us safe. At times gunshots can be heard in the community and the police are needed. He asked Council to reconsider.

Mr. Milanese told Council that we really need our local police department and rather than disband, we should be investing in them. Police could be enforcing truck weight violations if we had the proper equipment. Disbanding impacts the safety of our community.

Tahj Reeves commented that the police department and Sgt. Gober have always been helpful assisting the public works department. Local patrols allowed children to play in the street. Now with state police providing coverage, response times will be delayed. He asked Council to reconsider.

Lawrence Woodward told Council that Sgt. Gober has helped him be a better public works foreman. Local police patrols deter trespass and vandalism at our facility. The state police will not be able to provide that type of coverage.

Paul Garver commented that he read the agenda from the last Council meeting and noticed that Council gave themselves a pay raise and then made a motion to disband the police department.

Robert Ray told Council that he is 78 years old and attends church on Youngsburg Road. Trying to cross the street there is dangerous. When our police department is there, cars slow down. Traffic will be a problem if we do not have our local police.

**Council President Wright's Response**

President Wright thanked everyone for addressing their concerns and went on to explain that Council has been considering disbanding the police department for the past three years. Over 50% of calls for police service here in the Borough are dispatched to the state police who provide police coverage each day when our department is not working. Chester County has seventy-three municipalities and about forty-five of those have local police departments. Our Borough has been underwater financially. Two years ago, we ran out of money and had to borrow more.

As for Council raises, members have been paid about \$125 monthly, and we have increased that to \$140 a month. These raises only apply to newly elected Council members.

The Borough had a substantial tax increase the past two years. When expenses exceed income, cuts need to be made. We have improved the past year and 2026 looks better, with the goal of having a surplus at the end of this year.

**Motion to amend the agenda. Motion to approve the agenda**

The were no amendments. Motion to approve the agenda by Vice President Watson, second by Councilor Eveland. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

December 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve by Vice President Watson, second by Councilor Jones. Motion carried unanimously.

**Bills Update**

President Wright reported that McGarrigle Bookkeeping and Consulting Service has prepared a bills list for tonight's meeting. Motion by Vice President Watson to approve the bills list for payment, pending review of the Finance Committee. Second by Councilor Jones. Motion carried unanimously.

**New Business**

Consider Ordinance 2025-01, Disbanding the South Coatesville Police Department

Motion by Councilor Jones to "Advertise with Intent to Adopt" Ordinance 2026-01. Second by Councilor Eveland. Motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business**

Southview Homes - Update

President Wright reported that the remaining escrow for Southview is being held while the Borough confers with our Solicitor on the next steps.

Summit Village - Update

Manager Plaughter advised that new engineering invoices have been received and we are working with the developer on setting up an escrow.

Woodward Road Grant Project

Council discussed additional roadway repairs on Woodward Road. Councilor Eveland made a motion to use the remaining grant funds to repair the “washed out” shoulder/gutter on the upper end of Woodward Road. Second by Vice President Watson. Councilor Jones discussed using the grant balance for the Youngsburg Road project. Council recommended using Highway Aid/Liquid Fuels to fund the Youngsburg Road grant match. The motion carried unanimously to use the remaining grant funds for Woodward Road.

**New Business**

Upcoming Vacancy on Borough Council

President Wright advised there will be a vacancy on Borough Council and if anyone is interested serving, submit a letter of interest. Those interested must be a resident of the Borough continuously for one year prior to appointment.

Consider a Pay Raise for Administrative Assistants

Agenda item tabled

Wastewater Treatment Plant – Generator Service Contract

Council reviewed the one-year contract for 2026 in the amount of \$3,026.00. Motion by Councilor Jones, second by Vice President Watson to pay the invoices as service is preformed, rather than in advance. Motion carried unanimously.

State Highway Aid/Liquid Fuels

Manager Plaughter advised he met with PENNDOT officials to discuss releasing the past two years of funds. Additional documents need to be submitted.

Modena Fire Company

Invoice received from Modena Borough for payment of South Coatesville’s portion of the Modena Fire Company’s Workers Compensation insurance premium. Motion to approve payment in the amount of \$4,091.80 by Vice President Watson, second by Councilor Eveland. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reports**

Finance Committee - President Wright reported earlier in the meeting.

Police Department – Report to Follow

Public Works – Report to Follow

Parks and Recreation -Tina Floyd advised she and Bob are moving out of the Borough, and she is resigning her position on Parks and Recreation. Council thanked Tina for her service to the community.

Wastewater Treatment Plant– Report to follow

Modena Fire Company – Report to follow

Planning Commission - Councilor Eveland suggested that Council consider reducing the number of Commissioners in 2026. The Commission will begin working on an updated Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

**Citizen Comments**

A resident (name unknown) thanked Council for taking care of the sewer plant odor, making air quality much better. Further, with our tax base growing, revenue should increase.

Another resident (name unknown) lives on Parkway and reported orange cones and a 3-foot-deep hole that should be addressed.

Rev. Brunson stated he understands the tough position Council is in and wants to make sure we are taxing businesses property, so they are paying their fair share.

Mrs. Carey reported increased truck traffic on Upper Gap Road going to the Summit Village construction site. Cars are also speeding. She questioned why the police department has been depleted over the years, and a red alert should have gone out a long time ago letting the community know of the financial strain. We really need the police department. Response time is important.

Bob Flyod advised that he was a Council member for six years and is a strong advocate of community policing. He knows this was not an easy decision and it came down to dollars and cents. Delinquent accounts add up when people do not pay their bills. We should be critical of our community members who do not pay their Borough bills.

Mike Norman told Council that New Holland Borough Police had just merged. We did not and it was not the right thing to do. We are a small Borough that respects our local officers. The Borough will not get the same services from the state police. Modena Borough has not paid their bills owed to South Coatesville, which could have paid Sgt. Gober's salary. He feels Council is not doing their job. If the Borough does not start paying fire and ambulance fees, we will lose those services too. Council raised our taxes and for what are we paying.

### **Council and Mayor Closing Comments**

Councilor Jones thanked everyone for coming out. I am a resident and raising six grandchildren. I do care and am concerned when they play in the park. I help my neighbors. This action to disband the police department is painful. We are trying to make the right decision for the best of the community. Council has been talking about regionalization, and I am going to explore this and other options for policing. It is going to take the community to determine the future of policing. We are working to get a full-time manager. Council is available to answer any questions.

Vice President Watson agreed with Councilor Jones. We have put a lot of time in on our finances and still have more work to do.

Councilor Eveland thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. This has been a difficult decision, and I prefer local police. However, we have to take care of our finances, so the state does not take over.

Mayor Carey advised that he is pleased that our citizens came out to tonight's meeting. He has been a resident of the Borough for over 50 years and just beginning my term as Mayor. The police department is the mayor's responsibility, and now I have nothing. As a community we have to turn the page. We are in this together and must do our best to make this work.

President Wright thanked everyone for coming out tonight. We do post our agenda on the Borough website prior to every meeting. Stay informed and please come back to our meetings. Some of the comments made tonight are not correct. Police funding comes locally through taxes. No help from the state. We have looked at regionalization and have put in long hours and days studying policing and our options. The reality of our Borough budget is that 100% of our bills are not collected, including trash, sewer, and taxes. \$500,000 is outstanding. We want to try for payment plans for those who have not paid or cannot pay. President Wright agreed with the mayor, in that we are turning a new page. He also urged Council to tour the Borough to look at some of the concerns raised at tonight's meeting.

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**Motion to Adjourn**

Motion to Adjourn by Vice President Watson, second by Councilor Jones. Motion carried unanimously at 8:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven J. Plaughner  
Borough Manager