

**BOROUGH OF WIND GAP
545 East West Street
WIND GAP, PA 18091
610-863-7288
FAX 610-863-1011**

Wind Gap Borough Council meeting on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Council President George Hinton, at which time he reminded those present that the meeting was being recorded. In attendance were Council members: Mark Crossen, Jack Rissmiller, Patrick Webber, Dave Manzo, Joseph Romano, and Danielle Weaver. Also in attendance were Mayor Heather Webber, Borough Solicitor Ronald Karasek, Borough Engineer Brian Pysher, and Borough Manager Louise Firestone.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Brianne Kemmerer, 54 W Second Street. She explained to Council that she applied for a zoning permit and the zoning officer denied the permit application. Brianne received correspondence today recommending that a waiver of SALDO be applied for from borough council in order to join the two properties. Attorney Karasek stated that he would say that the property owner does not need a waiver to join the properties, but they do need approval of a reunification merger deed. Nolan Kemmerer said that his plan to erect six units on his property is marked for Land Development. Attorney Karasek stated that the zoning officer may want the properties joined so the development plan is contained all on one lot. Nolan said that he was to come to the meeting and request a waiver to move forward without land development. After much discussion, Council suggested that the Kemmerers go to the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for this Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

2. James Pacovich, 157 Fairview Avenue, came before Council regarding the plowing of the alley behind his house. He expressed his displeasure with how the snow has been recently plowed both on the street in front of his house and the alley. Jim told Council that they have to come up with some kind of program regarding snow plowing to get it right.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Dave Manzo to approve the minutes of February 2, 2026, and seconded by Joe Romano. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. PA Local Tax Collection Law – Tax Duplicate – Compensation
Attorney Karasek said that as the Borough navigates the transition from the recent resignation of the elected tax collector to the newly appointed tax collector a question came up regarding the practice of charging \$10.00 for tax duplicates to mortgage companies and other third-party companies that are paying the taxes on behalf of property owners. Attorney Karasek indicated that through his research, previous council approved the collection of this fee from the third-party companies. Council discussed whether to continue this charge and they fully agreed to keep the Tax Duplicate Compensation the same.

2. Appointment of Patricia Sutter – Deputy Tax Collector to Collect and Settle the 2025-2026 School Tax Duplicate Approve Agreement between Pen Argyl Area School District, Wind Gap Borough, Patricia Sutter, and Irene Matlock. Outgoing Tax Collector, Patricia Sutter, informed both the PAASD and the new tax collector, Irene Matlock, that she would continue to collect the 2025 real estate taxes and the 2025/2026 school taxes and fulfil her obligation to reconcile those bills. The 2026 Real Estate Bills were mailed out with the new address and the name of the new tax collector with her office located here in the municipal complex. Attorney Karasek said that Ms. Matlock must understand that as the tax collector under the law, she is responsible for whatever Patricia Sutter does collecting any outstanding taxes. The school tax is not based on the January 1 to December 31 calendar; it is based on the school year which would be from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026.

George expressed his appreciation for the efforts by the Borough Manager and the Administrative Assistant transitioning from the previous tax collector to the new tax collector not only with the printing, mailing of the tax bills, but additional tasks such as answering the phone, taking messages, directing residents to the collector, setting up the office with supplies and looking into a computer and a software program specifically utilized by collectors. The State DCED approved forms for tax collectors have been located and will be used as opposed to the previous forms. There are still numerous items that have to be identified in order to correctly collect the taxes. Unfortunately, there has not been much cooperation from the tax collector.

The new tax collector is currently working out of the conference room until we get an office created. Her bond is pending; all paperwork is done. They went to the bank and closed out the old account and opened a new one. The bank provided a year's worth of bank statements to cross-reference to make sure all is reconciled. Ms. Matlock has office hours on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. She enjoys the challenge of the position.

On motion Dave Manzo to approve Patricia Sutter as the Deputy Tax Collector with her service ending June 30, 2026, and approving the agreement provided by Pen Argyl Area School District, Wind Gap Borough, Irene Matlock and Patricia Sutter and all monies forwarded to Wind Gap Borough and seconded by Danielle Weaver. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

3. Presentation of Proposed Ordinance Prohibiting the Discharge of Stormwater, including Sump Pumps and Downspouts, into the Public Sanitary Sewer System, to Provide Enforcement By the Borough of Wind Gap - Attorney Karasek reported that he would like Council to look at the ordinances. He added significant provisions, definitional sections, enforcement sections, and he noted that the administrative warrant can be issued if the people do not let us on the property.

George Hinton recommends that we table this until the next meeting to give Council time to read over the ordinances before we move forward with advertising them for adoption.

Brian said that the nuisance ordinance, where we addressed discharging water into the street, was repealed when we adopted the Uniform Construction Code. It may be worth putting something in there reiterating that you cannot discharge water into the street unless it is in a storm sewer.

4. Presentation of Proposed Ordinance Requiring Grease Traps for All Commercial Food Service Establishments and Other Businesses the Produce Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Establishing Maintenance, Inspection and Enforcement Provisions.

As discussed with the previous ordinance prohibiting the discharge of stormwater through sump pumps and downspouts, this ordinance will be on the March 2, 2026, agenda.

5. Plan Slate Belt Presentation – Proposed Date Monday, May 4, 2026, Meeting Time Discussion – 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m.

On motion by Danielle Weaver to advertise the time change for May 4, 2026, Council meeting from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. to accommodate the Plan Slate Belt presentation and seconded by Dave Manzo. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. 332 N Broadway – Patrick Webber reported that he has received complaints that trucks from 332 North Broadway are backing down Broadway. He asked Attorney Karasek for an update on how legally we are handling this property issue. As there has been no movement in the Borough’s attempt to rectify this situation with the property owner, Attorney Karasek will list the injunction case for a non-jury trial in Northampton County Court.

2. Wawa – Attorney Karasek commented on the current status of the Indemnification Agreement with BTS and to advise the Borough to make sure all the permits are in place prior to signing and distributing this agreement allowing the developer to move forward with the demolish of the buildings on the property.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A written committee report was provided to Mayor Webber and Council.

Borough Manager, Louise Firestone reported that our former mayor, Wesley Smith, stopped by the office to discuss our application to the 2026 Community Project Funding grant round through Congressman Ryan McKenzie’s office that was submitted in May 2025. The former mayor inquired whether the Borough had received an email notification of the outcome of the grant awards as he did not see any current borough officials on the email. Wesley stated that Congressman McKenzie notified him that our funding for the Male Road Bridge Replacement and Pedestrian Walkway project in the amount of \$431,000 was included in the fiscal year 2026 Appropriation and Legislation and was signed into law by the United State President. This additional funding will further reduce and financial commitment necessary from tax payer funds.

MAYOR WEBBER REPORT

Mayor Webber reported she attended the Slate Belt COG meeting on January 28, 2026. The COG is looking for a list of needed or wanted equipment by all COG municipalities in order to include them in a grant application. Darlene Dunbar from Roseto Borough is offering her assistance to help write grants for the COG. The COG has new portable lighting that can be utilized by any member of COG. If Council has any ideas, let her know.

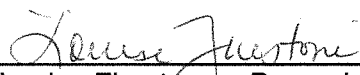
During the last snow emergency, vehicles on South Lehigh were towed because they were parked on the snow emergency route. The Mayor received a call from a resident who stated that there were no signs and they were not aware that South Lehigh was a snow emergency route so their vehicles were towed. The Mayor asked for an explanation of how the Borough communicates to residents regarding important information as she is looking to upgrade and improve communication. The Borough utilizes the NIXLE system, the borough website, the borough newsletter, and Facebook when appropriate.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. James Pacovich of 157 Fairview Avenue once again complained about the plowing in his alley. Mr. Pacovich stated that he and the neighbors do the entire alley with their snowblowers and it is done correctly, so why can't the street workers do the same. He has pictures from all the storms and in his opinion it has not been done right because they can't lift up the plows. George suggested that since there doesn't seem to be a resolution to satisfactorily plowing the snow in the alley, maybe Mr. Pacovich should do it. Mr. Pacovich agreed that he would do it and if any neighbors on his block have an issue, they can contact him at 157 Fairview.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Dave Manzo to adjourn the meeting of February 17, 2026. Council agreed unanimously. The meeting of February 17, 2026, adjourned at 8:18p.m.



Louise Firestone – Borough Manager

Officers investigated 7 criminal offenses and made 3 criminal arrests in January 2026
The Department is concluding its annual audit, being completed by Frye and Co. Firm to attend March 19, 2026, Commission meeting to provide copies of audit and answer any questions.

On Monday, January 19, 2026, the Department's on-site reaccreditation took place.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

- REMINDER: All Elected Officials should complete NIMS IS-700 and ICS-100.

WASTE MANAGEMENT:

Neighboring Partnership Agreement: 1,347.36 tons (\$1.20 per ton)

January 2026 = \$38,806.83

Actual Funds Received in 2026 = \$88,273.03

FIRE COMPANY:

21 Calls for the Month of January 2026

- 2 Assist Agency
- 4 Fire Alarms
- 1 Fire Commercial Structure
- 4 Fire Dwellings
- 1 Fire Vehicle
- 3 Information
- 1 Motor Vehicle Accident Request
- 2 Motor Vehicle Accident Injuries
- 1 Motor Vehicle Accident Unknown Injuries
- 2 Wires Down

WIND GAP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY:

Meeting, Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Wawa Convenience Store

- Question on the number of EDU's required for this development
- Timing of the grease trap removal

Discussion on a proposal to Institute a Tier Rate Sewage Payment System
(Commercial / Residential or possible additional classifications)

Two DRAFT Ordinances (Business Grease Traps / Sump Pumps) – have been reviewed by Attorney Karasek – for discussion at February 17, 2026 Council meeting.

PLANNING:

Meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 19, 2026

Plan for 32 East Fourth Street

FINANCIALS: – Balances as of January 31, 2026:

General Funds:	\$104,089.90
Money Market Funds:	\$392,075.71
Capital Reserve Funds:	\$2,896,189.50 (142,587.13 – Sale of Borough Properties)
State Liquid Fuels Funds:	Current Balance = \$443,084.15 (Allocation Based on 9.36 miles / Population of 2720)

PLAN SLATE BELT – Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan:

Steering Committee Meeting Thursday, February 5, 2026.
Hailstone Economics is in the process of scheduling Municipal Meetings.
Proposed meeting is Monday, May 4, 2026

TAX COLLECTOR:

Bank account has been established
Bond application has been submitted and is pending approval

MISCELLANEOUS:

Northampton County Zoom Grant Workshop
Wednesday, February 18, 2026 – 10:00 a.m to 11:30 a.m.
IRS set 2026 business standard mileage rate at .725/mile