

4:30pm – Budget Workshop

**ELLWOOD CITY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – 6:00 P.M. – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
December 15, 2025**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

President Brad Ovia called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mr. Barry, Mr. Celli, Mr. Cragle, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Lamenza, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Ovia

Also Present: Solicitor Ryan Long, Borough Manager Kevin Swogger, and Mayor Anthony Court

INVOCATION – Tom Topar, Word Alive Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

VISITORS

1. Louis Sbarro – RE: condition of sidewalks (200 block Crescent Ave)
2. Joseph Mancini, 309 2nd St – RE: condition of sidewalks (Madison Ave at Pershing St)
3. Irvin Strohecker, 9 First St – Re: condition of sidewalks (Glen Ave)

COMMUNICATIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Regular Meeting 11/17/25

A motion was made by Mr. Celli, seconded by Ms. Lamenza, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held 11/17/25 as submitted. Voice vote; all in favor. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

Pre-Paid Voucher List 12/11/25 and List of Vouchers to be Paid dated 12/11/25

A motion was made by Mr. Barry, seconded by Mr. Celli, to approve the Pre-Paid Voucher List dated 12/11/25, in the amount of \$1,092,101.40, and the List of Vouchers to be Paid dated 12/11/25, in the amount of \$292,009.53. Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

A motion was made by Mr. Cragle, seconded by Ms. Williams, to approve the Departmental Reports, as submitted. Voice vote; all in favor. Motion carried.

BID OPENINGS

ORDINANCES

1. 2026 Tax Rate (11.75 mills)

A motion was made by Mr. Celli, seconded by Ms. Lamenza, to adopt an ordinance, as submitted, establishing the real property tax rate at 11.75 mills for the year 2026. Roll call vote. All voted against, except Mr. Celli and Ms. Williams. Motion failed, 5-2.

A brief discussion was held that a tax rate and budget has to be in place by December 31 with the ability of the tax rate/budget being revisited in an even numbered year (2026).

A second roll call vote was held. All voted in favor, except Mr. Barry and Mr. Johnson. Motion carried, 5-2.

2. Sewer – Rates & Effective Dates
A motion was made by Mr. Cragle, seconded by Mr. Celli, to adopt an ordinance, as submitted, amending the sewer ordinance designating rates and effective dates, specifically effective February 1, 2026, for usage beginning January 1, 2026, \$9.21 per 1,000gal of water and \$9.21 per customer per month. Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.
3. Code Book Updates
This item was pulled from the agenda.
4. Compensation – Mayor/Council
A motion was made by Ms. Lamenza, seconded by Mr. Celli, to adopt an ordinance, as submitted, fixing the rate of compensation for the Mayor and Members of Council as follows: Mayor (effective 1/1/26) increase to \$5400 annually and Council (effective 1/1/26) increase to \$3600 for every new term of Council, but not an incumbent, and any newly elected council member elected after 1/1/26. Roll call vote. All in favor, except Ms. Williams. Motion carried, 6-1.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolution - 2026 Budget
A motion was made by Mr. Cragle, seconded by Ms. Lamenza, to adopt a resolution, as submitted, adopting a 2026 Budget. Roll call vote. All in favor, except Mr. Barry, Mr. Celli, and Mr. Johnson. Motion carried, 4-3.
2. Purchase Power Adjustment (PPA) Stabilization
A motion was made by Mr. Celli, seconded by Mr. Cragle, to adopt a resolution, as submitted, establishing a stabilized Purchase Power Adjustment (PPA) beginning with the February 1, 2026 billing through the July 1, 2026 billing as \$0.01744/kwh sold. Roll call vote. All in favor, except Ms. Williams. Motion carried, 6-1.

APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

1. Appointments – Planning Commission, Civil Service Commission, Board of Health
A motion was made by Mr. Celli, seconded by Ms. Lamenza, to make the following appointments:

ELLWOOD CITY PLANNING COMMISSION - Four Year Term, 2 vacancies, 2 applicants

Sherri Greco, 610 Madison Ave, 724-714-3896
Brad Ovia, 866 Constitution Ave, 724-674-1841

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION – Six Year Term, 1 vacancy, 1 applicant

Brad Ovia, 866 Constitution Ave, 724-674-1841

BOARD OF HEALTH – Five Year Term, 2 vacancies, 2 applicants

Krista Newman, 853 Thalmann Lane, 412-295-7595
Peter Leck II, 411 Byng St, 412-735-2508

Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.

2. Appointment – Zoning Hearing Board
A motion was made by Mr. Barry, seconded by Mr. Cragle, to appoint _____ to the Zoning Hearing Board.

ZONING HEARING BOARD - Three Year Term, 1 vacancy, 2 applicants (vote for 1)

David Parker, 323 Franklin Ave, 724-674-0893
Renee Pitrelli, 603 Woodside Avenue, 724-674-3835

Roll call vote. All voted for Mr. Parker. Mr. Parker was appointed to the Zoning Hearing Board.

3. Appointment – Library Board
A motion was made by Ms. Lamenza, seconded by Mr. Cragle, to appoint _____ to the Ellwood City Library Board.

ELLWOOD CITY LIBRARY BOARD - Three Year Term, 2 vacancies, 4 applicants (vote for 2)

Michelle Hand, 215 Foch Street, 724-758-3978
Peter Leck II, 411 Byng St, 412-735-2508
Nora DiBuono, 413 Line Avenue, 724-614-9163
Becky Guisler, 700 Clover Avenue, 724-622-3135

Roll call vote. All voted for Ms. Hand and all voted for Ms. DiBuono, except for Mr. Celli who voted for Ms. Guisler. Ms. Hand and Ms. DiBuono were reappointed to the Ellwood City Library Board.

COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

Finance: (Williams, Celli, Lamenza)

Health/Public Safety: (Cragle, Lamenza, Ovial)

Public Works: (Celli, Barry, Williams)

Utilities: (Williams, Celli, Johnson)

Parks/Recreation: (Cragle, Williams, Ovial)

Administration/Personnel: (Lamenza, Cragle, Ovial)

1. Local #964 – Clerical Contract
A motion was made by Ms. Lamenza, seconded by Mr. Johnson, to approve the Local #964 Clerical Contract for the period 1/1/26 to 12/31/29. Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.
2. Local #964 – Laborers’ Contract (Public Works, Electric, WWTP)
A motion was made by Mr. Barry, seconded by Ms. Williams, to approve the Local #964 Laborers’ Contract for the period 1/1/26 to 12/31/29. Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.
3. Worker’s Compensation Insurance – Firefighters
A motion was made by Mr. Cragle, seconded by Mr. Celli, to approve the Workers Compensation Insurance with the State Workers Insurance Fund (SWIF) for the volunteer firefighters for the period 1/1/26 – 1/1/27. The estimated annual premium is \$15,584 (final premium is subject to adjustment by audit). This amount will be paid from the General Fund. Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.
4. Herbert, Rowland, & Grubic, Inc. (HRG) – 2026 Fee Schedule
This item was pulled from the agenda.

5. Terminate Employment – Ralph Chiappetta (Code Enforcement Officer)
 A motion was made by Mr. Cragle, seconded by Mr. Johnson, to terminate the employment of Ralph Chiappetta, Code Enforcement Officer, effective 12/16/25, his last day of employment. Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.

6. Emergency Management Coordinator
 A motion was made by Mr. Cragle, seconded by Ms. Lamenza, to establish the position of Emergency Management Coordinator as a stand-alone position (separate from the Fire Chief). Roll call vote. All in favor, except Mr. Barry and Mr. Celli. Motion carried, 5-2.

7. 2026 Wages – Part-Time Employees
 A motion was made by Ms. Williams, seconded by Ms. Lamenza, to establish salaries/wages for the following part-time employees effective with the first pay in January, 2026 as follows:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Salary/Hourly Rate</u>
Animal Control Officer	\$5,000
Health Officer	\$5,500
Tax Collector	\$9,000
Emergency Mgmt. Coordinator	\$10,000
Code Enforcement Officer	\$20.00
Parking Meter Enforcement Officer	\$18.00
Firefighters	\$21.00
Paramedics	\$27.00
Secretary to Mayor/Police Chief/Planning/Zoning	\$16.00
School Crossing Guards	\$15.00
Playground Coordinator	N/A
Parks Manager (year round)	\$16.00
Park Employees (Labor & Playgrounds)	\$13.00
Public Works Laborers	\$17.00

Roll call vote. All in favor, except Mr. Barry. Motion carried, 6-1.

8. 2026 Wages – Non-Union Full-Time Employees
 A motion was made by Mr. Cragle, seconded by Mr. Barry, to establish wages for the following Non-Union full-time employees effective with the first pay in January, 2026 as follows:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Salary/Hourly Rate</u>	<u>Annual Base</u>
Borough Manager	\$43.27	\$90,000
Borough Secretary	\$28.70	\$59,688
Fire Chief	\$41.92	\$87,192
Paramedic Captain	\$29.00	\$60,320
Public Works Director	\$43.60	\$90,688
Electric Department Superintendent	\$42.78	\$88,989
Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager	\$38.57	\$80,233
Wastewater Treatment Plant Lab Tech	\$28.35	\$58,959

Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.

Community Development/Buildings: (Ovial, Cragle, Johnson)

Blight: (Johnson, Barry, Ovial)

Technology: (Cragle, Williams, Lamenza)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

1. Add to Agenda – Additional Borough Representative on EC Library Board
A motion was made by Ms. Williams, seconded by Ms. Lamenza, to approve adding an additional Borough representative on the Ellwood City Library Board to the agenda. Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.

2. Appoint Additional Borough Representative to EC Library Board
A motion was made by Mr. Barry, seconded by Mr. Cragle, to appoint Councilman James Johnson as the alternate Borough representative on the Ellwood City Library Board. Roll call vote; all in favor. Motion carried.

MAYOR'S REPORT

MANAGER'S REPORT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reorganizational Meeting – January 5, 2026 at 6pm

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned on a motion by Ms. Lamenza, seconded by Mr. Celli. Voice vote; all in favor. Motion carried.

Linda M. List
Borough Secretary