

BRUNSWICK HILLS TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING – FY 27 Budget
JULY 8, 2026

The Brunswick Hills Township Board of Trustees met in special session on Wednesday, July 8, 2026, at Brunswick Hills Township Town Hall.

Board of Trustees Chair Ryan Nixon, Trustee Vice-Chair Thomas DeCastra, Trustee Tony Destro, Service Foreman Cory Schultz, Interim Fire Chief Tim Haas, Fiscal Officer Bob Roksandich and Township Administrative Assistant Julie Riffle present.

Trustee Chair Nixon called the Special Budget FY27 Meeting to order at 5:30 PM, noting that the meeting was properly advertised.

DEPARTMENTS

Fire Department:

Interim Fire Chief Tim Haas presented the proposed Fire Department budget, noting that it generally mirrors the current budget with adjustments for the anticipated hiring of a full-time Fire Chief and for the rise in operating costs.

Salary and benefit increases include:

- Social Security
- OP&F retirement
- Workers' Compensation
- Medical insurance

Chief Haas stated that it seemed previous Chief Strazzo had budgeted for a full time Fire Chief and had extra money in Salaries. Trustees agreed previous budgeting had already anticipated a full-time Fire Chief, reducing the need for additional salary adjustments.

Several operating accounts were discussed:

- Increased Contracted services for First Due software, employee physicals, and licensing requirements.
- Property insurance increased due to higher insurance premiums.
- EMS contracted services increased to cover pharmacy licensing renewal and rising equipment costs.
- Utility costs received significant discussion due to recent increases in electric rates. Increase the Fire Department electric utility appropriation to approximately **\$10,000** to account for rising utility costs.
- Fuel expenditures were reviewed and found to be well within budget projections.

The Board discussed the longstanding \$300,000 "Improvement of Sites" appropriation.

- Members agreed it serves as a placeholder should the Township decide to begin planning or design work for a future fire station.
- Trustees agreed there was no reason to remove the appropriation at this time.

Trustee DeCastra brought up long-term financial sustainability of the Fire Department.

- Trustee DeCastra expressed concern that annual expenditures continue to exceed levy revenue,

although reserves remain healthy.

- Discussion included evaluating whether certain expenses could be allocated to the EMS fund or potentially offset in the future through a Safety Services Fund.

Police Department:

Trustees reviewed the Police Department's proposed budget.

Budget increases were primarily attributed to:

- Salary adjustments
- Medical insurance increases
- Uniform replacement
- Staffing changes associated with anticipated retirements and replacement officers

Trustees discussed:

- Expected retirements over the next several years.
- Recruitment challenges caused by larger departments offering significantly higher salaries.
- Pension calculations encouraging officers near retirement to move to higher-paying agencies.

Long-term operating costs were reviewed.

- Trustees noted operating expenses continue to exceed annual levy revenue and are increasingly supported by fund reserves.
- Although actual spending has historically remained below appropriated amounts, Trustees encouraged tighter budgeting to better reflect realistic expenditures.

No immediate budget modifications were recommended.

Service Department:

Road Superintendent Cory Schultz presented the proposed Road Department budget.

Significant increases include:

- Carryover paving projects delayed from 2026.
- Additional paving funding for Plum Creek.
- Salary increases associated with the possible addition of a fifth full-time employee.
- Increased retirement, Medicare, workers' compensation, and insurance costs.

Trustees discussed concerns over the long-term financial health of the Road & Bridge Fund, noting annual expenditures are approaching or exceeding recurring revenues.

Extensive discussion centered on staffing.

- Two part-time employees have indicated they may retire.
- Hiring another full-time employee would significantly increase personnel costs due to benefits.
- Trustees explored alternatives including:
 - Hiring a higher-paid part-time employee.
 - Limiting weekly hours to avoid benefit eligibility.
 - Recruiting CDL-qualified seasonal employees.
 - Utilizing flexible scheduling during winter operations.
- Contracting out mowing services was discussed but generally not favored.
- Trustees also discussed future facility needs, including possible expansion or replacement of the Road Department building and fuel tank installation.

Following decisions were agreed upon by the Board and Service Foreman Cory Schultz:

- Continue evaluating whether replacing retiring part-time employees with a **30-hour/week part-time position** is more cost effective than hiring another full-time employee. Consult legal counsel regarding part-time scheduling and benefit eligibility before creating a new position.

- Prepare a proposal/quote for paving the cemetery driveway.
- Continue monitoring Road & Bridge Fund sustainability.

General Fund:

Trustees reviewed General Fund appropriations.

Legal services were discussed.

- Current labor negotiations are expected to conclude during 2026.
- Trustees agreed no increase is necessary for legal contracted services in the 2027 budget.

Trustees reviewed miscellaneous salary appropriations, amounts used in 2026 seem very low in some line items:

- Discussion will be had with staff members to make sure they are reporting and tracking all hours worked.

Extensive discussion centered on line items that may be obsolete and should be consolidated and/or deleted.

- Fiscal Officer Bob Roksandich will continue to work through budget sheet line items and determine unnecessary accounts that can be deleted and/or consolidated.

Overall Budget Direction

General Consensus

- Department budgets are generally in good condition.
- No major reductions were recommended.
- The Board emphasized:
 - Maintaining conservative budgeting.
 - Monitoring long-term sustainability of levy-supported funds.
 - Watching rising utility, insurance, and personnel costs.
 - Preserving reserve balances while planning for future capital improvements.

Nixon moved to adjourn. Destro seconded. DeCastra – yes. Destro – yes. Nixon – yes. Motion carried.

Adjourned at 7:44 PM.

Ryan Nixon, Trustee Chair

Thomas DeCastra, Trustee Vice-Chair

Tony Destro, Trustee

Bob Roksandich, Fiscal Officer