

## AGENDA

### Public Safety & Quality of Life Committee of Borough Council

Date: Tuesday, April 7, 2026 @ 6:00 PM

Committee Members: Bryan Travis, Chair  
Lisa Kearns  
Brian McGinnis

Staff & Representatives: Joshua Lee, Chief - West Chester Police Department  
Keith Kurowski, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Sean Metrick, Borough Manager  
Mark Scanlon, Fire Chief West Chester Fire Department  
Justin Robbins, Director of Operations Good Fellowship Ambulance Club

1. Call to order 6:19pm
2. Announcements - None
3. Comments, suggestions, petitions by residents in attendance regarding items not on the agenda.  
*(Please be advised that all public comments have a 5-minute time limit.)*

Jerome Szczepaniak, 120 E. Virginia Ave, two constituents contacted him concerning traffic and safety on the 100 block of West Lafayette Street. Cars speeding and rolling through stops signs where small children live. He understands there will not be an answer at the meeting, but asks what can be done to help curb this: additional signage, patrol, traffic enforcement, crosswalk refresh, etc.

4. Reports - (Attachments)

A. Monthly WCFD Report

Assistant Chief Justin McClure reports that call volume is over 100 calls compared to previous years, much like the police and EMS are experiencing too. WCFD put its new boat and ATV into service, which were capital projects in 2025. Committee member Lisa Kearns asks when the last fatal fire in West Chester? And how does the department learn from this type of incident? Asst. Chief McClure stated it was December 26, 2023, at 51 Patton Alley. Justin shared that after the incident the department reviews their tactics and response to determine if there needs to be any improvements. The Fire Marshal also completes an investigation and issues a report to the department.

B. Monthly WCPD Report

Chief Lee reports on the status of the hiring process. He also states that the department on average responds to more than 3,000 calls each month, with the majority of them being noncriminal calls. Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> was a busy afternoon and evening in the southeast due to loud, boisterous and disturbing behavior in the college-aged neighborhoods. There were 8 noise complaints in the southeast between 2pm and 3am. Large parties with anywhere from 10 to 100 people. Officers answered every complaint as well as proactive with residences that had large gatherings and moved people along before complaints. Arrests were made and citations were issued for various offenses. Most of these were in the southeast quadrant, but there were a few parties in the southwest as well.

C. Monthly GFAC Report

Justin Robbins reports that GFAC responded to 857 emergency calls with 206 in the borough. Justin explains the chart on the last page of the report that highlights non-emergency events and activities their personnel attend.

D. Public Safety Committee – *Chair Report, workplan and issues raised at prior meetings (attachment)*

Chair Bryan Travis discusses items that are on his chair workplan. There has been some discussion and the work continues on them.

5. Old Business

- A. Approve March 2026 meeting minutes (attachment) *Approved 2-0*
- B. Motion to adopt the amendment to Chapter 80 – Peddling, Soliciting, Handbills (attachment)  
*Issue: Review amendments to Chapter 80*

Questions on those who qualify for exemption versus those required to have a solicitor's license. Limited to those who are exempt from state laws. Comments from Josh Coin, co-owner of Malena's, question confirm understanding and clarification of 80-9. Pete the owner of the Green House on West Gay Street and Malena Martinez, co-owner of Malena's both also remark about the solicitors at their intersection on Gay Street. Multiple peddlers, people and organizations asking for money or signatures, are blocking and preventing foot traffic and access to businesses. They also trap people who are window shopping and intervene with employees. There are questions and clarifications still needed. Tabled & will go back to committee.

6. New Business

- A. Discuss impact of mass gatherings in residential areas.  
*Issue: Discuss mass gatherings at student houses and social clubs in residential neighborhoods.*

Bryan Travis brings to committee the idea of having some sort of parameters or boundaries for events like this, to be proactive to prevent mass gatherings from becoming too large and disruptive. Brian McGinniss suggests a type of permit process for the owner or renter to apply for a gathering for a specific day and time. Mr. Travis had this idea on his list as well. Lisa Kearns states there is only so much WCU can do about this. There is concern about homes that are used for social gatherings for clubs, fraternities, sororities, etc. Anne Carroll comments on the activity of students and committee suggestion of permits. She suggests proactive enforcement. Also, enforce occupancy laws/ordinances for homes with parties. Chief Lee encourages people to call the police for noise, safety, or any issue they feel they need assistance. Bryan Travis asks about unruly behavior ordinance. Chief Lee responds that as long as the ordinance is within someone's constitutional rights it may be enforced. Mr. Travis is looking for help from the WCPD and the committee to problem solving for these issues. He also asks about Newark, Delaware in comparison to West Chester, such as the size, need for more staff, etc. Public comments were also heard from Kim Bove of S. Walnut Street asking what power the borough has over property owners with unruly renters. Sean Barry of Linden Street thanks the WCPD, and asks about public safety and when it becomes a liability with these parties and homes. He suggest coming at the issue from many angles. George Nebel of S. Walnut Street asks are we fully using resources from the state, such as PA Liquor Control Board or other entities for parties, charging for entry, etc. Mr. Travis summarizes main points discussed: Other towns with universities have unruly social gathering ordinances, large party permit systems (to allow parties, but contain them to prevent mob scenes, boundaries), reevaluate more parking and to have codes officers working on weekends, landlord accountability, communication with WCU police and officials which all can lead to better co

- B. Motion to approve weekend closure of Gay Street for summer open air market.  
*Issue: Approve the weekend closure of Gay Street*

John O'Brien from Downtown WC asked why Gay Street is not closed thru the end of September.

*Approved 3-0 for May 1- September 21, 2026*

- C. Discuss impact of vape shops in residential neighborhoods in proximity to parks, schools, and bus stops in the residential zoning districts.

*Issue: Discuss the impact of the retail use of vape shops in residential neighborhoods*

The community discussed the impact of the vape shop currently in business in a residential neighborhood. Lola Birkenstock described the extreme lighting the store has, where the LED lights shine, glare and flash into neighbors' windows and doors. The lights are on until 10pm in the evening. The committee will bring this to council worksession to be sent to solicitor to see if there is the possibility to create an ordinance. 3-0

- D. Discuss Borough chain of command for emergency and non-emergency issues in the Borough.

*Issue: Currently there is no in-house emergency and/or non-emergency team to contact.*

What is the process for emergency and non-emergency weekend issues? Council Vice President Bernie Flynn is looking for onsite Borough Administration personnel for weekend on call for emergencies. He suggests rotation between department heads. Chief Lee states that the borough has its own dispatchers onsite 24/7, so anyone may call the non-emergency line 610-696-2700. The dispatcher has all of the numbers for all department heads to contact them for weekend and after hours. John Brill is the Emergency Management Coordinator for Borough of West Chester, for the last 26 years. He handles emergencies that need to have a coordination for multi-agency or multi-jurisdictions. Agreement that WCPD dispatch will handle all calls, no recommendations.

- E. Special Event Applications (SEAs) (attachments)
  1. West Chester Green Team – Porchfest 2026 – May 16, 2026
  2. Friends of Marshall Square Park – Summer Concert Series: June 18, July 9, July 30, August 20
  3. F4s Chili Cook Off – October 11, 2026 (Rain date: October 18, 2026)

*Issue: Approve Special Event Permits*

Items 1 and 2 approved 3-0

Item 3 tabled until May meeting

- 7. Other Business            NONE
- 8. Adjournment    8:11pm

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