



## **MAYOR'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL AND CITIZENS OF GREENCASTLE May 4, 2026**

CONGRATULATIONS to our small businesses in Greencastle as we celebrate National Small Business Week. For more than 60 years, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has celebrated National Small Business Week (NSBW), which acknowledges the critical contributions of America's entrepreneurs and small business owners. National Small Business Week 2026 is in progress thru May 9, as we officially recognize our mom and pop's hard work, ingenuity, dedication, and their contributions to the economy by employing local workers, contributing to our economic vitality, donating to local causes, and being good stewards of their buildings and properties.

During the month of May, we commemorate our EMS personnel, firefighters, and police personnel with National Peace Officers Memorial Day and Week; today is International Firefighter's Day. This past weekend, over 200 line of duty and illness related deaths were memorialized at the National Fire Academy in nearby Emmitsburg, MD; EMS Week, 2026, will be commemorated with an open house May 17 starting at 11:00 A.M. at the Greene Township Park, off Black Gap Road, Scotland, PA.

Memorial Day is May 25 with a parade scheduled for 10:00 A.M. with plans underway by the VFW Auxiliary. A memorial ceremony is scheduled at 11:00 A.M. at Cedar Hill Cemetery with logistics by the American Legion. Colonel Charles M. Diggs, USA, is the guest speaker. He is a student at the Army Senior Service College (Army War College), Carlisle, PA.

The Greencastle Antrim Christian Women's Fellowship is hosting Greencastle's National Day of Prayer service this Thursday, May 7, at 11:00 A.M. at the Greencastle Presbyterian Church, 57 W. Baltimore Street.

Community activities: Met with Franklin County mayors and discussed matters of mutual concerns. Same with the executive committee of the PA mayor's association. Attended the Greencastle Antrim Baseball Softball Association's Spring opening ceremony on April 4. Met on two occasions at Heritage Hills Retirement Center, one celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Fran Elliott. I was honored on April 11 to attend and speak at the retirement celebration of Pastor David Rawley who pastored over 40 years at Otterbein United Brethren Church in Greencastle. On April 25, I was again honored to be a Guardian (escort) on a Veterans' Honor Flight (bus trip) to Washington, DC and northern Virginia. I again escorted a Vietnam veteran from Adams County for the day and evening, from 6:00 A.M. until 8:30 P.M. Hosted a gathering on April 26 at the Veteran's Memorial Wall remembering MSG Benjamin F. Bitner, KIA, Afghanistan on 23 April 2011 (15 years ago). April 28, Spoke with Scout Troop 99 with nearly two dozen in attendance at the RHCo. training room regarding citizenship, public service, and volunteerism. Attended a town hall committee meeting along with the Civil Service Commission meeting.

AMERICA (G-A) 250 COMMEMORATION: Plans continue and include a G-A Alumni Association band concert and pageant. Ringing of the bells across G-A on July 4 at 7:00 P.M. A time capsule, Franklin County Liberty Bell on display in Greencastle, the first week of August. WRGG with a weeklong guest program on the Morning Show regarding G-A history. A heritage walk sponsored by GAHS students and events being organized by Antrim Township.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAIN IDLING: Citizen Larry Pittman documented two train idling events in April.

MAYOR'S TASK FORCE TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF DOWNTOWN PASS THRU TRUCK TRAFFIC TO AND FROM I-81 EXIT 5: Additional truck traffic reductions will only occur if PennDot authorizes large signage, as we have requested, at 11 and 16 and along I-81 in southern Franklin County. PennDot has acknowledged our second letter as listed on p. 3 of this agenda.

Regional Greencastle area traffic impacts (today and in the future) by large housing plans near Williamsport Pike and Williamson Road in Antrim Township. Again, I strongly encourage updating our 15-year-old Comprehensive Plan and look at the five year Strategic Plan that is now 17 years old.

Regarding this evening's agenda, I reserve the right to voice my opinion on several items based on my research, experience, and opinion.

HOLD FOR AGENDA DISCUSSION: One example is "Personnel 1." Creating a Greencastle Police lieutenant's position. For some reason, the mayor has been totally kept out of communications and transparency regarding a recent personnel committee meeting with staff attendees regarding a GPD lieutenant's position; a scheduled Civil Service Commission meeting to review the personnel committee's recommendations that was not posted on the Borough's website or calendar until I brought the matter to the Borough's attention. I learned more about this lieutenant's position by attending the Civil Service Commission meeting and offered my research and opinion in writing. I even learned more by reviewing the 122-read-ahead pages regarding this significant topic of lieutenant that will have a negative impact on the department's future budgets and efficiency. The Greencastle Police Department has a Chief, four full-time officers with a fifth graduating in mid-June from the Police Academy, and three part-time officers. We need personnel on the street doing police work. The job description does not live up to my expectations.

By: *Ben Thomas, Jr. - Mayor*