



MAYOR'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL AND CITIZENS OF GREENCASTLE July 6, 2026

2026 PA STATE ASSN. OF BOROUGH'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE: See my attendance report (attached) as I was present at this very informative educational event May 31 thru June 3, in Hershey, PA.

SIDEWALK DAYS - The 59th annual Greencastle Sidewalk Days is this Friday and Saturday. I hope all of you will attend our special recognition of the G-A High School PIAA, District 5A PA State Championship baseball team at a special ceremony, 6:00 P.M. Friday, on the NE corner of Center Square (ELM corner).

AMERICA (G-A) 250 COMMEMORATION: Plans continue and include a G-A Alumni Association band concert and pageant, September 24 and 26 (7 PM) in the Shockey Center for Performing Arts auditorium at GAHS. Shady Grove Ruritan members had a wonderful program and fireworks entitled "CELEBRATE AMERICA," on Friday evening, June 26. Ebenezer UB Church had a special America 250 Celebration last Wednesday at the church along Williamson Road. I was honored to be a presenter at both events. Though the 4th of July has come and gone, let us continue to celebrate AMERICA 250, the Declaration of our Independence!

Attendance and participation in the month of JUNE – Attended the G-A Senior High School Class of 2026 Commencement on June 6 with 244 diplomas presented. Honored our Nation on Flag Day, June 14.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAIN IDLING: June was a quiet month.

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 we await a study and response.

Repeating: 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. ***I recommend a joint "visioning" workshop early this autumn with our Planning Commission (prior to 2027 budget discussions). This would be a great, team opportunity to brainstorm the Borough's future and planning goals.***

Continued...



AFTER CONFERENCE REPORT; PA STATE ASSN. OF BOROUGH PROGRAM, 31

MAY THRU 03 JUNE 2026

ATTENDEE: Mayor Ben Thomas, Jr., PSAB instructor

Authored: 10 June 2026

INTRODUCTION: The 114th annual conference was held at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center and attended by Borough officials (elected and appointed) from across the Commonwealth. A wide variety of educational seminars are held morning, noon, and night, along with vendor exhibitions and personnel on display (inside and outside). The session closed Wednesday morning following extensive discussions and votes on dozens of resolutions by the voting delegates, which I participated in. Two resolutions were submitted by yours truly on behalf of the Franklin-Cumberland Counties Boroughs' Association, which will be discussed. We also met with senators, state representatives (including Chad REICHARD) that served on a legislative discussion panel, and Secretaries of PennDot, PA DEP, Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources, PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development, PA Fire Commissioner and staff, and others. We were able to impart questions / discussions directly with these elected and appointed PA officials.

This Report will review discussions with the above, *important information that will be italicized for Greencastle officials to consider, PA legislative initiatives affecting Boroughs (example: zoning for data centers (compacted and large), and resolutions that were approved and submitted to our legislators.*

DISCUSSION / INFORMATION:

[/ Legislative Panel: 31 counties charge \$15 for each recording of deeds. Funds are restricted for municipal use to mitigate "blight." This is authorized under PA Act 157.)

[/ Downtown funding is available to fund structural (private property) improvements for the heart of boroughs (downtown). Review "Main Street Matters Program," that is funded annually through PA DCED. Local governments may apply for funding. There are building "façade grants," if you begin a downtown façade program with micro loans for businesses. This ends up being a revolving loan program for municipalities or downtown non-profit organizations like Waynesboro and Chambersburg have.

[/] Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RCAP) for redevelopment assistance to stabilize employment and increase tax revenues. 50% match for construction projects. I received several of these grants in Adams County...typically into the millions of dollars. LERTA was discussed. I can provide additional information if requested regarding how LERTA works (for blighted and deteriorated businesses. A good example of this program was the old CORNING Glass Works building from 1960, south of Greencastle.

[/] Grant opportunities? Brainstorm projects over a five + year period as the grant submission, award period could be three years. Do a “community needs planning assessment with timeline goals...working with your planning commission.

[/] Vape Shop Ordinance? Ban “Kratom,” a synthetic drug that may be sold in vape shops to anyone! No PA regulations (yet). Greencastle has two of these shops.

[/] Data centers were a continual topic as small centers are being proposed in Boroughs in the Commonwealth. It is important to have data center regulations in place within your zoning ordinance. Otherwise, they may go anywhere if not specifically stated in zoning. Franklin County Commissioners have adopted sample ordinances for boroughs and townships to review.

Thanks to Greencastle Police information provided, Representative REICHARD has introduced PA HB 2251 that would provide 20% of police related grants to municipalities with a population fewer than 20,000. Now, many grants are written for city police agencies in PA.

The PA Fire Commissioner...Pennsylvania is, unfortunately, #1 in civilian fire deaths in the country, ten years in a row. 200 fire deaths in 2025 in PA. Reason? Older homes and communities without sprinkler systems, lack of property rental maintenance inspections.

Fire / EMS retention discussed in detail. Fire Commission Captain Tracey YOUNG-BRUGARD held a separate seminar on recruitment and *retaining volunteers and career personnel.*

Guidance for Local Officials Evaluating Data Center Proposals



Municipalities across Pennsylvania are increasingly receiving inquiries and proposals for data center development. While these projects can bring major investment and economic opportunity, they also raise complex questions around infrastructure capacity, land use, fiscal impacts, and community priorities.

The **Pennsylvania Data Center Planning Toolkit** provides practical guidance to help local governments understand data centers and evaluate proposals in a way that aligns with local authority, infrastructure realities, and community goals.

About This Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to support decision-making from initial inquiry through zoning, permitting, and long-term planning.

It will help municipalities:

- Understand data center development and siting drivers
- Evaluate infrastructure needs (power, water, broadband, land use)
- Assess fiscal, economic, and service impacts
- Navigate zoning, planning, and legal considerations

Who Is This For

- Elected officials (council members, supervisors, commissioners, mayors)
- Municipal managers and administrators
- Municipal solicitors and legal counsel
- Economic development staff and authorities

How to Use This Toolkit

Use the full document or navigate by issue area depending on where you are in the process.

Received a proposal? Start here:

- Data Centers 101
- Location Drivers
- Local Government Roles

For planning and zoning review:

- Land Use & Zoning
- Infrastructure Capacity

[/ PA DEP SECRETARY: PSOS lead and copper regulations? There are over 2,000 small water systems. 90% now have a reduced monitoring requirement based on their submissions. Future Federal regulations are unknown. A lead / copper water line inventory and replacement plan date is Nov. 1, 2027.

MS/4? PA DEP is making changes to their DRAFT BMPs' so they may be more easily understood, making systems easier to navigate. Funding availability by PennVEST and PA DEP.

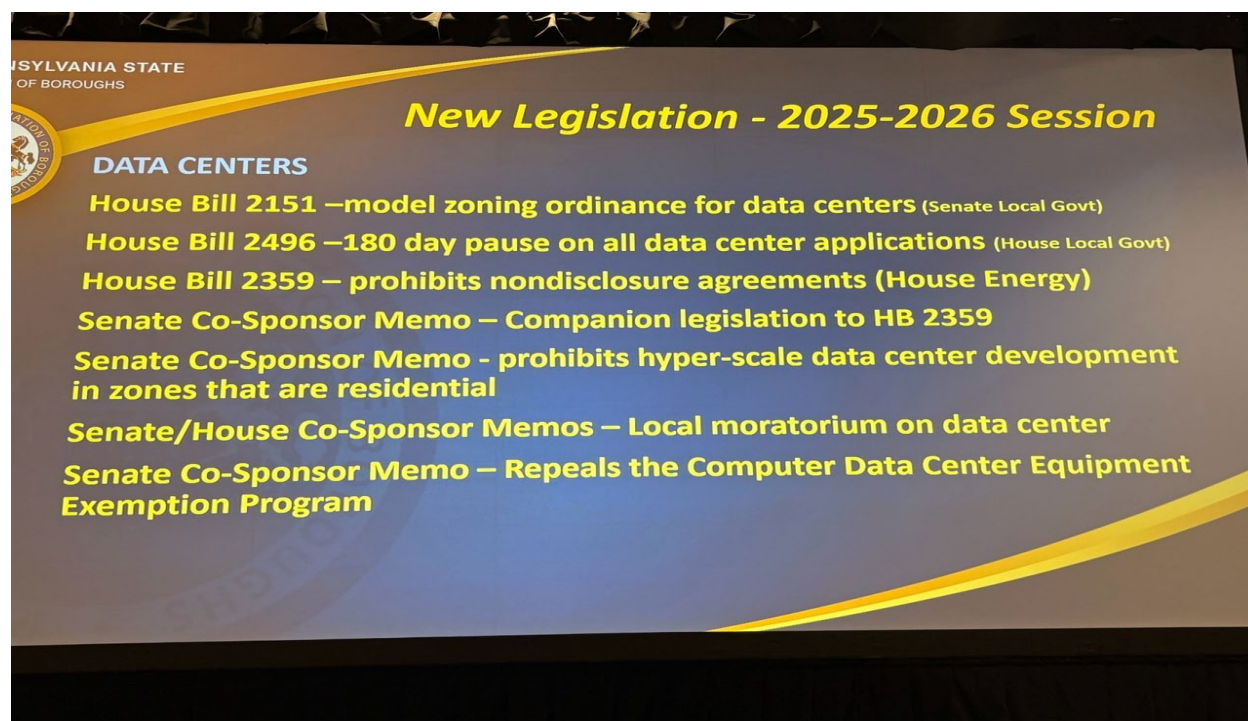
*[/ **Property maintenance inspection ordinances?** Some boroughs have adopted "slum lord / rental inspection ordinances." Yes...that is what they are called. Actions may prohibit "slum lords who do not repair their properties or pay their taxes" from buying more property, i.e. sheriff's sales.*

*[/ **The PA Supreme Court recently ruled that storm water fees are a "tax" and not a "fee."** This was the decision where West Chester University (PA System of Higher Education) sued the Borough of West Chester. We had much discussion regarding the ruling, and the West Chester Manager was present in our meetings. The "CONCLUSION" of the Court stated..."the law is clear: Where a municipality is duty bound to provide a service for the public benefit and in the absence of a voluntary contractual relationship between itself and those receiving the service, the*

associated charge is a tax.” HB 1308 would require a “fee” similar to water and sewer utilities.

Legislation continues to fail regarding publishing legal notices in newspapers. Venango County, PA no longer has any newspapers. (See legislative initiatives).

A lot of information was provided regarding the PA Governor’s proposed General Fund budget of \$53.3 billion, a 5.4% increase. The current budget expired June 30. Senate republicans outlined their concerns.



Borough Code HB (House Bills): 990 for SWM fee without establishing an authority (like the PA Township Code); HB 1893 increases the cap on the fire & EMS special purpose taxes; SB 1318 increases the bidding threshold increase (before the local govt. committee)

Right to know/Sunshine law/ Public Notice legislative reform: Senate Bill (SB) 350 establishes a Commercial Request Fee; SB 790 address vexatious requestors; SB 194 enables boroughs to publish public notices on their websites; HB 1291 allows local governments to publish on newspapers websites if no print options are available; HB 2146 would remove the ability to change its agenda at a meeting by a majority vote.

SB 359 would require PennDot to maintain SWM facilities on state highways in boroughs by a population threshold. HB 1204 would require PennDot to maintain all SWM facilities on state highways.

PUBLIC SAFETY PROPOSED LEGISLATION: SB 509 and 1237 for local police radar; SB 737 creates EMS authorities; HB 985 would allow tax exempt property municipal assistance fund.

Franklin-Cumberland Counties Resolution was recommended for adoption and approved, “supporting amending the PA Prevailing Wage Law to increase the threshold from \$24,500 to \$257,000 for municipal or authority funded public works projects with an annual CPI.”

Also, to remove the three-mill tax cap on the fire tax and the removing threshold related to fire and EMS services.

Furnished to Emilee: Copy of Voting Delegate Resolutions and the votes.

Reminder: I still await a Personnel Committee meeting as requested two months ago.

By: *Ben Thomas, Jr. - Mayor*