



# ABOLITION HALL STEERING COMMITTEE

## Monday, March 2, 2026 at 7:00 PM

### AGENDA

*Meeting will be in-person with a virtual option at the Whitemarsh Township Building  
616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA19444*

**To join Zoom please click: [Steering Committee 03.02.2026](#) and use Meeting ID# 846 7162 9141  
Or by phone 1 646 931 3860**

#### Committee Members:

Laura Boyle-Nester \_\_ Dana Dorsey \_\_ Darren Sudman \_\_ Edmond Shinn \_\_ Deborah Lukens \_\_

BOS Liaison: Jacy Toll \_\_ Staff: Craig McAnally \_\_\_\_

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes: January 12, 2026
3. Updates:
  - Abolition Hall and Property Status
  - 14 Marple Lane
  - MBTA's report on the Conditions Assessment of Property
4. Discussion topics:
  - Governance and Fundraising
  - Website vs. Township Webpage
  - Programming
5. Public Comment
6. Next Committee Meeting: TBD
7. Adjournment



# ABOLITION HALL STEERING COMMITTEE

## Monday, January 12, 2026 at 7:00 PM

### MEETING MINUTES

**Present:**     ✓ Laura Boyle-Nester   ✓ Dana Dorsey   \_\_\_ ✓ \_\_\_ Deborah Lukens  
                  \_\_\_ Edmond Shinn   ✓ Darren Sudman

**Board of Supervisors Liaison:**   ✓ Jacy Toll

**Staff Liaison:**   ✓ Craig McAnally, Township Manager;

**Unable to Attend:**   Ed Shinn

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Chair, Laura Boyle-Nester, called the Abolition Hall Steering Committee Meeting to Order at 7:00 PM.

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#### **Re-Organize for 2026**

**Selection of Chairperson for 2026:** Deborah Lukens nominated Laura Boyle-Nester as Chair. Seconded by Dana Dorsey. Motion approved unanimously (Ed Shinn confirmed support previously).

**Selection of Vice Chairperson for 2026:** Laura Boyle-Nester nominated Dana Dorsey as Vice Chair. Seconded by Deborah Lukens. Motion approved unanimously (Ed Shinn confirmed support previously).

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#### **Approval of Minutes**

**December 8, 2025**

Motion to approve meeting minutes from December 8, 2025 made by Darren Sudman and seconded by Deborah Lukens. Motion approved unanimously.

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#### **Status Update – Abolition Hall Property**

##### **Tree Removal Project**

Township Arborist, John Hosbach, joined virtually and provided the following update on the tree removal project. The tree company, Yellowstone, tree removal contract is scheduled for completion by January 23, 2026, weather permitting. Compliance issues were addressed following a site walk. Final inspection will be conducted by the Township Arborist. Wood chips

are being dispersed in woodland areas for invasive suppression. Disturbed areas will be restored, with Public Works assisting in final site improvements.

Wetland activity concerns were raised during public comments. The Arborist clarified that tree cutting is permitted within wetlands, but soil disturbance and stump removal are not. Compliance will be reviewed during follow-up inspections.

### **Building & Grounds Maintenance**

The Township Manager informed everyone that Public Works identified priority items including gutter and downspout repairs, minor grading adjustments, general clearing, and temporary fencing around unstable patio areas. Most work is expected to be completed in-house.

### **Marple Lane Subdivision & Sale**

Subdivision is complete at the Township level; a parcel number is pending from Montgomery County. The property will be sold via public bid process in accordance with municipal requirements. Marketing options and public notification methods will be reviewed with the Township Solicitor. Proceeds will be placed in a dedicated Abolition Hall account.

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### **Programming & Public Engagement**

The Committee discussed pilot historic tours, participation in Whitemarsh 250 programming, Charter Day (March 8) opportunities, and a Juneteenth event. Parking and accessibility logistics remain under review.

A webpage and donation link for Abolition Hall are in development. The Board of Supervisors approved creation of a separate account for donations and future sale proceeds.

Educational video content covering architecture, Civil War history, Underground Railroad connections, and artistic legacy was proposed.

### **Fundraising Structure Discussion**

Options discussed included establishing a 501(c)(3), partnering with an aligned nonprofit organization, or utilizing a fiscal sponsor. Further research and recommendations will follow.

### **On-Site Apartment Rental Consideration**

The Committee discussed renting the second-floor apartment to provide property oversight and generate revenue. Utilities are separately metered except water. Lease terms and legal review may be required.

### **Volunteer & Educational Partnerships**

The Committee discussed potential partnerships with local schools for service projects and historic preservation education. Liability considerations and volunteer waivers would be required.

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**Grant research and planning**

A meeting is scheduled with Claire, Craig, and township engineer to discuss grant opportunities for this property.

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**Public Comment**

Resident Debra Harris provided a handout on “Amending the 1967 442 Open Space” along with some Municipal Open Space Programs information to all committee members to review.

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**Next Committee Meeting**

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 2, 2026 at 7:00 PM.

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**Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:11 PM.

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Respectfully Submitted,  
Craig McAnally  
Township Manager

DRAFT



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## WHITEMARSH TOWNSHIP

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**To:** Craig McAnally, Township Manager  
**From:** Rob Brown, Media Production Coordinator  
**Subject:** MCAB Feedback on Abolition Hall Webpage  
**Date:** January 28, 2026

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The Media Communications Advisory Board (MCAB), at their January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, provided their input and feedback on whether a webpage on the Abolition Hall property – first debated during the January 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Abolition Hall Steering Committee – should be on the Township’s website or its own website. Roy Wilson, from the public, was in attendance and was interested in hearing MCAB’s thoughts on the question. A summary of the discussion follows:

- The board looked at this from multiple perspectives. The first was getting people interested in the property and its unique nature by organizing and presenting information about the site, history, future events, donation buttons/links, etc. Also, having said website visually communicate the property’s significance, and creating an awareness of its public accessibility. Comments regarding the Township Website pointed to how some informational topics are difficult to find, page formatting, and that lookup of online information is often done using Google or similar search engines.
- Marketing was another key point – thinking about the website’s domain name (i.e.,: “[www.abolitionhall.org](http://www.abolitionhall.org)”); strong, overall site branding, and spreading the word about the page – such as our Electronic Community Sign and a link to the page on the Township’s website.
- External Web Design: In addition to web designer-based services, the MCAB board also noted platforms where websites can be easily built with existing, pre-made templates. Many (if not most) of these options – such as Wix and Squarespace – cost little to nothing to build and maintain said website. Another option mentioned was to have it done at the high school level, perhaps even locally.

Therefore, the MCAB board made the following recommendations to the Steering Committee:

- The Abolition Hall webpage (if given the green light) should be **EXTERNAL**, and place a link to said external page on the Township’s website.
- Suggest reaching out to folks who are experienced in building small but wonderful-looking websites.

Any questions, feel free to reach out to me or to MCAB prior to the next Abolition Hall Steering Committee Meeting.