

BOROUGH OF PORTLAND  
COUNCIL MEETING FEBRUARY 3, 2020

The Portland Borough Council Meeting of February 3, 2020 was called to order at 7:00 PM by Stephanie Steele, President of Borough Council.

Council Members Present for Call to Order:

\*Stephanie Steele\* Kay Bucci\* Yvonne Gumaer\* William Godshalk\*

Others Present:

1. Michael Gaul, Borough Solicitor.
2. Lance Prator, Mayor
3. Mark Bahnick, Borough Engineer
4. Carol Hummel, Borough Secretary
5. Members of the Public

Pastor Phil Karasiewicz: Refiner's Fire Ministry

Pastor Phil thanked Council members for their service to the community. A prayer and blessing were given to Council and the public. Pastor Phil announced that since last year he and his wife Jessica have become chaplains. Chaplains are separate from pastors; they volunteer for any type of chaplaincy issues that you may need.

CREDITECH Ordinance & Resolutions:

Solicitor Gaul stated that the resolutions, ordinance and agreement for collection services be tabled for the moment and be discussed under Legal.

Vacant Council Seat Applications:

- Robert Ivancich 101 Division Street
- Bridget Kenna 507 Pennsylvania Avenue
- Steven Becker 111 Main Street
- Erin Long 501 Northampton Street

Ms. Steele inquired from the applicants if they are residents of the Borough, are all registered to vote and have resided in the Borough for more than one year. All applicants replied YES. Ms. Steele proceeded to state that the seated Council members are welcome to ask questions.

Question from Councilwoman Bucci:

Ms. Bucci stated that Steven Becker, who has applied for a vacant Council seat, has requested that Council revisit his sewer account late fees under public comment. Ms. Bucci suggested that Council should proceed to public comment before the applicants are interviewed and before any action on appointments. Ms. Bucci wants to know Mr. Becker's motivation.

Public Comment: Steven Becker: 111 Main Street

Mr. Becker approached Council about the sewer late fees to his account, first brought before Council in November 2019 and in again in December 2019. Solicitor Gaul stated that there was discussion at the Council meetings, but no one was in favor of waiving the late fees or taking any action. Council was aware of his request.



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Mr. Becker asked if there were any outstanding issues that Council did not address? Mr. Becker stated that there are inadequacies in the minutes.

Kay Bucci asked Solicitor Gaul if Mr. Becker could go to the Court of Common Pleas to plead his case. Solicitor Gaul stated YES, but that Mr. Becker is here now for discussion. Solicitor Gaul asked, "didn't you send letters to Council? What is the discrepancy? Council has the benefit of the letters that you had previously sent". Mr. Becker replied that the discussion of Council is not entirely accurate in the minutes.

Ms. Bucci asked, "why weren't you here for the last two Council meetings? If this was such an important issue you should have taken off work to be here to discuss this"? Mr. Becker replied that he had to work but his working schedule has changed, and Monday's are now available. Ms. Bucci stated that this is a water authority issue. "Have you addressed this with the water authority, this is not a Borough issue, the water authority cashed your check not the Borough, and now you want the Borough to make an adjustment to your sewer bill"? Mr. Becker stated that the Borough and the water authority are one organization. Mr. Becker was corrected by President Steele and Solicitor Gaul that the water authority and the Borough are two separate entities. Mr. Becker then stated that the water authority is an umbrella of Portland. Mr. Becker was again corrected that the Borough and water authority are two separate legal entities.

Mr. Becker replied that the sewer was installed in 2009. He has been on auto pay from his banking institution to the Portland Borough Sewer Authority, which has cashed and credited his sewer account up until March 2019. Last March 2019 the auto pay was deposited into the water authority account. Mr. Becker was then made aware that there is no sewer authority and corrected the bill pay in June 2019. Onward all the checks have been made out to Portland Sewer. Solicitor Gaul replied "what is the issue? You did not pay your bill on time; your check was never received to the Borough". Mr. Becker replied that he paid his bill on time but administratively it was applied to the water authority not to the sewer. Ms. Steele asked, "What PO Box did that check go to? It never was received to the Borough office in PO Box 476". Mr. Becker said for the past nine years there was never an issue; there was no intent on his part. Mr. Becker is asking for the late fees and the interest charges be waived from his account.

Mr. Becker stated that he didn't do anything wrong. Ms. Steele stated the Borough did nothing wrong as well. Ms. Steele explained that the check went to the wrong address; you did not address the issue until you were notified of water shut-off. Being on the shut-off list prompted you to send us letters. Ms. Steele stated that Council has generally, in the past with anyone being a good customer every month, would waive the fees for one month. You waited until being on the shut off list to address Council. Mr. Becker disagreed. Initially Mr. Becker stated, he tried to resolve the issue before the first letter was sent; and in June 2019 he tried to resolve the issue long before being notified of water shut-off.

Ms. Bucci stated that it appeared more than a coincidence that he applied for a vacant Council seat the same night that he was addressing Council about his late fees. Ms. Bucci asked if the late fee issue is the reason he applied for a vacant Council seat. Mr. Becker stated partly, Yes.

President Steele stated that no one on Council has expressed a desire to take any action to waive the late fees and interest charges. Ms. Steele's opinion is that the postmaster saw the word authority written on the address of Mr. Becker's mail, never looking at the PO Box number and deposited it into the water authority's PO Box. Mr. Becker then asked to have the Council



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minutes from the November 4, 2019 corrected, since he stated earlier in the meeting that they are factually incorrect. No action was taken.

Solicitor Gaul stated that, while Mr. Becker maintains he paid his sewer bill in a timely fashion, that is not the case. The payment went to wrong place, it was never delivered to the Borough; it is not payment because it was never received. Mr. Becker's payment was late. Mr. Becker replied that is another reason that he applied for the vacant Council seat; to facilitate helping people with their problems.

Council Applicants Interviews: All were asked by Ms. Steele why they wanted to be appointed.

Robert Ivancich: Mr. Ivancich is now retired and has the time to volunteer.

Erin Long: Mr. Long participates in Borough Events and would like to serve.  
Bridget Kenna: Already has served previous ten years on Council.

Steven Becker: Mr. Becker has the experience to help Portland move forward. Ms. Bucci asked his definition of moving forward. Mr. Becker replied, to help the town grow; the Borough never recovered from the floods of 2004, 2005, 2006.

President Steele stated that there is one vacant (2) year seat and two vacant (4) year seats, according to the Northampton County Election Division. Ms. Steele explained that when appointed you serve for two years until the next election.

i. Mr. Becker asked why are there four empty seats? Ms. Steele replied because of write-in votes, there was a four-way tie with Ms. Bucci being selected as the winner through a draw by the Northampton County Election Division. One individual won two write-in positions; a four year and a two-year term and declined both.

a) A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk appointing Bridget Kenna to a two-year term. Motion carried: 4-0-0

b) A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk appointing Erin Long to a two-year term. Motion carried: 4-0-0

c) A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer appointing Robert Ivancich to a two-year term. Motion carried: 4-0-0

d) The appointed Council members took the oath of office and were sworn in by Mayor Prator.

e) The required statements of financial interests were completed by the appointees, but appointees cannot take their seat and vote until the affidavits of residency are completed and signed. Since there is not a Notary Public available to witness signatures for signage, Solicitor Gaul will prepare the affidavits in accordance with Sections 501 and 901 of the Borough Code, Act 43-2012 and 18 PA. C.S., Section 4094, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.



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Action on Minutes:

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer approving the reorganizational minutes of January 6, 2020, as presented. Motion carried 4-0-0

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Carol Hummel

1. Bills Presented for Payment:

Borough Operations:	22,295.32
Sewer Operations:	13,355.56
Sanitation Operations:	5,032.86
Ultra-Poly Improvement Escrow	1,774.50
Real Estate Taxes to the Fire Tax Account	None
Community Events Account (Halloween @ Refiner;s Fire)	415.80
February Payroll & Taxes	5,700.00
February Sunoco Fleet Gas	<u>300.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48,574.04</b>

A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci approving the bills as presented in the amount of \$ 48,574.04. Motion carried 4-0-0 .

2. WWTP Bills Presented for Payment to Portland Contractors, Inc.:

WWTP Contractor monthly services:	2,590.00
WWTP Operations:	<u>1,992.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,582.00</b>

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer approving the bills presented for payment to Portland Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$ 4,582.00. Motion carried 3-0-1 (William Godshalk abstained).

3. EMC Insurance Premium:

The municipal building was undervalued in the 2020 renewal policy, the value is now \$ 1.4 million. The additional premium is \$ 525. Ms. Bucci commented that the \$ 1.4 million is the replacement cost. A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk. approving the additional cost of \$ 525 to EMC Insurance. Motion carried: 4-0-0

3. Police Capital Account:

A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci approving the transfer of \$ 2,950.19 from the Police Capital Account to the General Checking Account, for payment to Pro-Vision Video Systems for the 2020 police vehicle. Motion carried: 4-0-0

Borough Engineers Report: Mark Bahnick



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Upper Mount Bethel Township:

- Met with the DEP on January 10, 2020 and talked about potential sewer service provided to UMBT.
- The DEP will not be the driving force behind the project; the DRBC will be the driving force, who were also in attendance at the meeting.
- The Delaware Riverkeepers have been active and may play a role in the approval process. They are aware of the potential sewer service to UMBT.
- Mr. Bahnick will meet with the UMBT engineers on February 6, 2020 at the UMBT municipal building. It was an important meeting to have the DEP and DRBC input. This will be a long approval process.
- The Portland Sewer Committee will meet with UMBT representatives on February 19, 2020.

Dunkin Donuts:            398 Delaware Avenue

- Dunkin is still working on approval conditions.
- The garbage dumpster will be moved from the front of the building to the rear.
- PennDOT HOP requirements need to be completed, i.e., curbing and painted crosswalks.

Back to Council Appointments and Affidavit of Residency:

Solicitor Gaul stated that all affidavits have been completed and signed. The appointees may take their seats and vote.

- Councilwoman Gumaer left the meeting at 7:55 PM.

Back to Dunkin Donuts:

Solicitor Gaul questioned the dumpster at Dunkin Donuts. Ms. Steele replied that she met with owner, Dhruv Acharya, on Saturday. Ms. Bucci asked what was discussed. Ms. Steele replied that the dumpster was supposed to be installed in the rear of the building by the tree through the driveway pick-up window. It could not be installed because there is no room, according to the property survey. The project manager installed it in the front corner of the property on a slab. Ms. Steele stated she was concerned about placement because of access to the WWTP pump station. Mr. Acharya told Ms. Steele it will be moved to the rear of the building.

Portland Steel:            394 Delaware Avenue

Solicitor Gaul asked if there were any safety issue concerns since Portland Steel was lost due to a devastating fire. Ms. Steele replied NO, that according to a news publication the business plans to rebuild in 2021. The owners are presently working at other locations. Fire Chief Potter also had safety concerns. Ms. Steele replied that Portland Steel met with the zoning officer about the installation of a fence around the property.

- Mark Bahnick left the meeting at 7:57 PM.



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Zoning Officer Report:

- None

UCC Building Code Inspectors Report:

- None

Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB):

- No hearings are scheduled at the present time.

Planning Commission:

- None

Portland Borough Authority (PBA):

Lance Prator, Chairman

- Mr. Prator reported that administrative secretary, Nina Cerulli, is doing well after recent surgery. Chairman Prator and Secretary Thomas Fish are filling in while Ms. Cerulli recuperates.
- Vice Chairman Jim Potter stated that the PBA has spent quite a bit of money to repair the building at 105 Division Street, situated across the street from Ms. Bucci's house; the building is owned by the Borough and leased by the PBA; it is used for storage. Mr. Potter stated that the inside has been dug out to install a concrete floor; they will install a concrete apron around the outside perimeter as an overhang, rather than install gutters on the roof; stated a new roof will be installed this summer. Mr. Potter was asking permission to do the repair work.
- A copy of the lease agreement was provided to Solicitor Gaul prior to this discussion. Solicitor Gaul asked about repairs being subject to the building code; the lease provides for improvements to the building. Mr. Potter replied that NO structural work is being done and a permit will not be needed. Ms. Steele asked if anything needs to be built into the lease agreement? Solicitor Gaul replied NO.
- Ms. Bucci stated that she remembered that there was a lease agreement; and was concerned about outside storage, as had been in the past. Mr. Potter replied that racks will be installed on the outside of the building for the hanging of pipe; the piping is too long and cannot be stored inside; items stored inside will be a generator, tractor, two garden mowers, weed whackers; there is no room in the garage building at the municipal building. Ms. Bucci asked if this should be in a residential district because it was a mess when items were previously stored outside. Mr. Potter was asked to keep the dialogue open.
- A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bridget Kenna allowing the Portland Borough Authority to replace the roof on the building at 105 Division Street. Motion carried: 6-0-0
- Maintenance man, Fred Farleigh, suggested that the Borough and the PBA co-purchase a backhoe w/tractor. No action was taken.



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Legal:

CREDITECH: Solicitor Gaul

- The commission rate being charged to customers' needs to be approved by Council.
- Table until after Executive Session.

Subdivision and Land Development:

- None

Community Development, Slate Belt Council of Governments (COG) & Grants:

1. The Slate Belt COG received a \$ 208,000 grant from Monroe County (LSA) Local Share Account for the purchase of a street sweeper. The sweeper will be available to all COG members. Also, received a CIPP Grant for a storm jetty and tar buggy.

- Solicitor Gaul asked who will be the owner of the street sweeper? Mayor Prator replied the Slate Belt COG.
- Ms. Bucci stated that she read in the COG minutes that a vote was taken to continue the COG for another year. Mayor Prator stated that UMBT has decided to drop out of the COG; this leaves the COG with less funds; the COG stores their (2) leaf vacuum's in UMBT's garage; the leaf vacuum needs a new storage place. Portland could store one leaf vacuum and will then be able to use the leaf vacuum free of charge. The leaf vacuum would need a special lock to keep it from being stolen; the Borough will need a truck to haul the leaf vacuum.
- There will no longer be a Managing Partner position; the GOG is hiring a grant writer.
- Ms. Bucci asked where the street sweeper would be stored? Mayor Prator replied Roseto, Plainfield and Wind Gap have room.
- There is no place to store the leaf vacuum but in the Borough parking lot. Solicitor Gaul stated that the Borough will need an agreement because it is technically someone's else's property. Mayor Prator agreed.
- MS4 requirements are on their way and the Borough will be required to sweep the streets more often than once a year.

A motion was made by Bridget Kenna, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk to temporarily allow storage of the leaf vacuum at the Borough parking lot pending finalization of a waiver. Motion carried: 6-0-0

2. The COG's next meeting is 7 PM, February 26, 2020 at the Chamber of Commerce Building. An alternate COG representative is needed from Portland Borough.

3. Northampton County DCED is hosting three instructional grant workshops at three different locations; February 19, February 25, and March 4. Ms. Bucci and Ms. Steele agreed to attend the March 4, 2020 workshop at the Wind Gap Fire Co. Social Hall from 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM. Ms. Steele stated that she attended two workshops in 2019. It is strongly recommended that someone from each municipality attend.

4. The CACLV is working with Northampton County on a new lead remediation initiative. Funding is available to qualified homeowners.



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Community Events/Recreation Board:

- The lists of events are not currently available.

Police Report:

The January 2020 Police Report was provided in writing by Chief Mulligan:

- Mayor Prator stated that the police would like Council to purchase a small two-bay pole barn garage for police vehicles since the shed is extremely small for the SUV's. Mayor Prator investigated that the PBA's pole barn is a "Pioneer". Ms. Steele stated a new pole barn would need a concrete floor, electric, etc. Mayor Prator and Chief Potter stated the approximate cost could be in excess of \$ 12,000 plus electric. Ms. Steele stated that all costs need to be researched.
- Councilman Godshalk suggested the Borough pursue grant monies to revamp the Borough gymnasium into a Borough garage. Ms. Steele stated that the gymnasium is insured as being in use by the public. After discussion, no one stated that they were opposed to repurposing the gymnasium into a garage. Council will research.
- The Crown Victoria police car has been moved from inside the police garage to the parking lot. Ms. Steele asked, "what is the process to get rid of the car"? Mayor Prator suggested "muni bid". It is the easiest method.

Mayor's Report:

- Time Magazine highlighted the Lehigh Valley with (46) pages.
- Portland has applied to the HGTV Town Makeover Contest. Mayor Prator congratulated the committee.
- Mayor Prator congratulated the new Council members.

Streets Department:

1. Lohman's Lawn Care and Landscaping, LLC.: Snow Removal

Mr. Lohman spoke with President Steele earlier about the exorbitant cost he has been quoted for snow removal insurance coverage to plow and cinder the Borough streets. Mr. Lohman's insurance coverage will expire on February 9, 2020. Solicitor Gaul questioned Mr. Lohman whether his coverage was commercial or personal. Mr. Lohman replied commercial. Solicitor Gaul's concerns were whose/what insurance applies if an accident occurs during the use of a leased vehicle and protection from third party claims. Ms. Steele stated that Council can either put Mr. Lohman's company on the Borough's insurance policy or hire Mr. Lohman and his helper Rick Weaver as employees. Ms. Steele asked which is easier, to contact the Borough's insurance carrier to find out that if the Borough lease's Mr. Lohman's vehicles, with Mr. Lohman and his helper driving them, would there be more out of pocket cost for Borough insurance; and how to make sure we have insurance coverage for operational needs. Solicitor Gaul advised Ms. Steele to contact the Borough's insurance carrier tomorrow for answers to the above. Solicitor Gaul stated, Council can authorize hiring Avery Lohman and Rick Weaver tonight as employees; and authorize the leasing of Mr. Lohman's equipment. A lease agreement would be prepared by Solicitor Gaul.



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A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk authorizing the hire of Avery Lohman and Rick Weaver as employees, as needed, at the hourly rate of \$ 25 per hour, for seasonal snow removal employment. Motion carried: 6-0-0

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk to lease the vehicle equipment of Lohman's Lawn Care and Landscaping for seasonal snow removal, subject to a lease agreement satisfactory to Solicitor Gaul, at the rate of \$ 75 per hour less the cost of insurance. Motion carried: 6-0-0

- Councilman Erin Long left the meeting at 8:55 PM

2. William Godshalk asked about the Co-Stars salt contract sign up date. It ends March 15, 2020.

3. Applications for part-time maintenance man:

- Richard Dalrymple      303 State Street, Apt D, Portland PA
- James Kenna            507 Pennsylvania Avenue, Portland PA

Ms. Steele stated that this is the slow time of the year, but extra help is needed in the spring, summer and fall seasons. Ms. Steele asked if anyone would be interested in interviewing the applicants. Ms. Bucci asked if it could be done at the next Council meeting. Ms. Steele replied that an interview is generally done by a Personnel Committee and then the applicants would be invited to attend Council.

4. Fred Farleigh, Borough maintenance man, would like Council to set up an agility agreement with East Bangor Borough. Ms. Steele explained the procedure of trading employees off to work in each other's municipality and using each other's resources. Ms. Steele stated that Mr. Farleigh would like to use East Bangor's bucket truck.

5. Councilwoman Kenna notified Council that there is a 2007 dump truck for sale at Dotta Chrysler Jeep. Councilman Godshalk stated that new cinder spreader hydraulics for the truck was quoted at \$ 10,000 plus \$ 3,200 cost for a cinder spreader. Mr. Godshalk stated that muni bid might be the better way to go. No action taken.

6. Maintenance man Fred Farleigh asked Ms. Steele if he could change out the old fuse sub-panel with a new breaker panel in the municipal building basement. The labor would be done by Mr. Farleigh.

- Change out the old fuse sub-panel with a new breaker panel, cost is \$ 100.
- (8) breakers \$ 72

A motion was made Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk authorizing the electric work in the basement of the municipal building with the labor to be done by maintenance man Fred Farleigh.

Question: Ms. Bucci asked about an electrical inspection. President Steele stated that she was also thinking about that and would contact the Building Inspector, Tina Serfass.

Motion then carried: 5-0-0



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7. No discussion about the co-purchase of a backhoe. Ms. Steele was informed that this was discussed at the Portland Borough Authority meeting.

8. Ms. Steele reported on street sweeping being done by Bangor Borough again this year. We will reach out to Bangor Borough to get on their spring schedule.

9. No action taken on the agility agreement.

10. The Borough received their (5) Year Winter Maintenance Agreement payment in the amount of \$ 4,355.35.

11. William Godshalk reported that Mr. Farleigh wants to extend the yellow curbing in front of 406 Pennsylvania Avenue; vehicles park up to the end of the curbing and it is hard for vehicles to make the turn when coming up or down Division Street. There is only a stop sign on the Division Street side. Ms. Steele stated that a no parking sign can also be installed.

Ms. Bucci stated that it is also hard for the garbage truck. Ms. Steele stated that when she was at the Borough Office the last three Wednesday's and heard the garbage truck, she ran outside to see which way they were exiting after emptying the dumpster. Ms. Steele stated that the trucks are using Division Street instead of Jim Ginn Alley; the garbage trucks were told not to use Division Street because they are damaging the blacktop at the intersection of Division and Pennsylvania Avenue.

12. William Godshalk, concerning MS4 regulations, asked if all the storm sewers in the downtown belong to the Borough? YES, Jim Potter confirmed. Mayor Prator stated that the Borough is exempt from MS4 regulations now because of population. Mayor Prator stated that it is coming; the Borough will have to comply within (2) years. Ms. Bucci asked, "how do you do this"? Solicitor Gaul replied it is to reduce street sediment. Mayor Prator explained it is almost like a car wash tax. Solicitor Gaul stated that fees are collected against the municipality itself.

Sanitation:

The Borough received notification that the (8) yard recycle dumpster was contaminated with trash on several occasions. The Borough may be charged \$ 15 per yard for contamination. Ms. Bucci suggested that cameras be posted there. Ms. Steele agreed and stated if it continues the dumpster can be taken away.

Back to No Parking Sign at Corner of 406 Pennsylvania Avenue:

Solicitor Gaul stated that a sign would have to be installed and an ordinance would have to be adopted.

Building Committee:

- Nina Cerulli of the PBA office asked the secretary if a new vacuum cleaner could be purchased. A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bridget Kenna to purchase a new vacuum cleaner with the cost not to exceed \$ 300. Motion carried: 5-0-0
- The secretary asked Council if the Borough would pay for the purchase of bottled water for the Borough office refrigerator and hard candy for the Council meetings. The



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secretary stated that the maintenance man, Fred Farleigh, has been buying the water. After discussion, a motion was made by Robert Ivancich, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bridget Kenna authorizing the secretary to purchase hard candy for Council meetings, using cash from the petty cash account, no bottled water for the Borough office. Motion carried: 5-0-0

- i. Ms. Steele stated that Fred should use reusable bottles. Ms. Bucci stated that the Borough needs a new faucet to refill the water bottles.

Budget, Finance, Insurance, & Cable TV Contract:

1. Ms. Steele reported on the recent vandalism at the restroom facility at the Park & Walk Lot on Delaware Avenue. Ms. Steele met with Service Electric Cable TV. Per the contract the Borough is entitled to another internet drop connection; there is one connection already in the police station. Ms. Steele stated that a security camera could be placed facing the bathroom door, on the back corner of the rest room and a motion detector installed in the storage room. The cost is \$ 71.09 per month with an annual fee of \$ 153.08 for the internet connection. There is no security at the present time.

Ms. Steele explained the scenario that occurred on Christmas Eve. The restroom was closed over the holidays. Ms. Bucci suggested cameras for here. Ms. Steele agreed. Ms. Steele stated that cameras can be placed at the garbage dumpster and gymnasium; there are better systems out now. Ms. Bucci questioned the connection. Ms. Steele replied that the drop fee is free; Ms. Steele stated that when she met with the Service Electric technician, he stated that the easiest connection was on the mast at 415 Delaware Avenue; the property owner agreed to the connection but Solicitor Gaul advised Ms. Steele that an access agreement was needed between 415 Delaware Avenue and Service Electric Cable TV.

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk authorizing President Steele to execute the Commercial Cable Modem Account Service Agreement with Service Electric Cable TV for the internet connection at 417-419 Delaware Avenue. Motion carried: 5-0-0

- i. Camera quotes to be considered for the March 2, 2020 Council meeting.

2. ESSA Bank & Trust has reached out to Ms. Steele on two separate occasions. They would like to meet with the committee to discuss what they could offer the Borough. Ms. Steele, Ms. Bucci and the secretary met with Merchants Bank on January 22, 2020; Merchants Bank assured the Borough that the merger with Fidelity Bank will be okay. Bank accounts were discussed.

- i. Ms. Bucci stated that two banks that donated money to Slate Belt Rising (SBR) are merging; Merchants Bank with Fidelity and Lafayette Bank with Fulton; "how sure are you that the funding will continue"? Ms. Bucci stated that some of this money may be in jeopardy. Ms. Steele replied that Allan Jennings, SBR, met with Merchants/Fidelity Banks and was assured that the commitments will stand; there is four years left on the six-year commitment.

- ii. Ms. Steele asked if anyone was interested in meeting with ESSA Bank. No action taken.

3. Merchants Bank reviewed the Borough's withdrawal transactions of the sewer savings and sewer checking accounts'; there is more money and activity in the sewer checking account thus Merchants Bank suggested that the sewer savings account be moved into a money market account; the interest rate is better at .02% and six transactions are allowed each month; Ms.



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Bucci stated that it was also suggested that the Merchants Bank Borough's credit card be moved into a Cash Back Account.

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bridget Kenna authorizing the transfer of the Sewer Savings Account into a money market account, that allows up to six transactions per month.  
Motion carried: 5-0-0

Ordinance Update Committee:

- None

Council Policy & Procedure Committee:

- None

Air Liquide Safety Committee:

- Ms. Steele reported that the committee met on January 8, 2020.

Slate Belt Rising Committee (SBRC): Stephen Reider, Director

None

Liberty-Water Gap Trail Alliance: Cindy Fish

- The Liberty-Water Gap Trail Alliance will hold their monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at the Delaware Water Gap (DWG) municipal building at 9 AM.
- The quarterly meeting will be held at UMBT on Wednesday, February 19, 2020 at 5:30 PM.
- Mayor Prator reported that Northampton and Monroe Counties have completed their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and are being reviewed by their Solicitors. The Alliance still does not know who the committee representative is from UMBT.
- Date to be announced for the spring clean-up along the proposed trail.

Correspondence:

Slot Machine Nuisance Ordinance:

Solicitor Gaul stated that the gambling casinos would like local regulation of "slot" machines that operate outside of the gaming industry regulation and are trying to persuade municipalities to enact an ordinance. No action taken

Secretary's Announcements:

- None



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Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- None

Executive Session:

A motion was made by Bridget Kenna, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci to convene to executive session at 9:51 PM. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Discussion: personnel; legal advice from the Solicitor.

A motion to reconvene from executive session at 10:11 PM was made by Bridget Kenna, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Action Taken:

a) A motion was made by William Godshalk, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci to increase the hourly wage of police officer Todd Pysher to \$ 20 per hour, beginning with the payroll period beginning February 3, 2020. Motion carried: 5-0-0

b) A motion was made by Bridget Kenna, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Robert Ivancich authorizing Solicitor Gaul to advertise proposed Ordinance 2020-1 "Authorizing the Retention of a Third-Party Collector for the Collection of Municipal Claims, the Recovery of Charges, Expenses, Commission and Fees for such Third-Party Collector". Motion carried: 5-0-0

Public Comment, Non-Agenda:

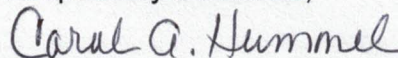
- None

Adjourn:

The next Council Meeting will be held on Monday, March 2, 2020 at 7:00 PM.

A motion was made by Robert Ivancich, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk to adjourn the meeting at 10:14 PM. Motion carried: 5-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,



Carol A. Hummel, Secretary