

BOROUGH OF PORTLAND  
COUNCIL MEETING NOVEMBER 4, 2019

The Portland Borough Council Meeting of November 4, 2019 was called to order at 7:00 PM by Stephanie Steele, President of Borough Council.

Council Members Present for Call to Order:

\*Stephanie Steele\* Bridget Kenna\* Ralph Frasca\* Michael Sullivan\* Kay Bucci\* Yvonne Gumaer\* William Godshalk\*

Solicitor Michael Gaul was absent.

Others Present:

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

Action on Minutes:

A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci approving the minutes of October 7, 2019 as presented: Motion carried 6-0-1 (William Godshalk abstained)

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Carol Hummel

1. Bills Presented for Payment:

Borough Operations:	9,665.06
Sewer Operations:	11,673.32
Garbage Operations:	5,165.39
Ultra-Poly Improvement Escrow - Van Cleef	1,328.50
Community Events Account	47.48
Real Estate Taxes to Fire Tax Account (2 mills)	None
Dunkin Donuts Streetscape Escrow – Van Cleef	578.00
November Payroll & Taxes	9,100.00
November Sunoco Fleet Gas	<u>300.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37,857.75</b>

A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Michael Sullivan approving the bills as presented in the amount of \$ 37,857.75. Motion carried 7-0-0

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

WWTP Contractor monthly services:	2,520.00
Other maintenance:	<u>1,078.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,598.00</b>

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A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bridget Kenna approving the bills as presented for payment to Portland Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$ 3,598.00. Motion carried 5-0-2 (William Godshalk and Michael Sullivan abstained).

3. The secretary reported that there is an \$ 18,000 check payment in the General Checking Account that was earmarked for the Portland Hook & Ladder Fire Company truck loan from January 2019. The payment due date was changed to June 2019. At that time the Borough paid their portion of the loan with the 2-mill tax increase. The secretary asked to void the check. Council directed the secretary to leave the \$ 18,000 in the General Checking Account.

4. Escrow Accounts Closed per Solicitor Gaul and President Steele:

A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bridget Kenna approving the closing of the following escrow accounts:

- PIP Lot 6 Subdivision
- PIP Improvements
- PIP Lot 6B & 6C Land Development

Motion carried: 7-0-0

5. Olav Sandnes Subdivision in the PIP:

There was no reply from Olav Sandnes to the secretary asking for the status of the project.

Public Comment:

Anita Einolf: Introduction of new Health Officer/Inspector

Ms. Einolf stated that she is only available to inspect establishments on weekends since she has a full-time job at East Stroudsburg Borough.

- Ms. Einolf asked who will write the citations; the Zoning Officer, Ms. Tina Serfass.
- What is the policy on inspections? The former health inspector charged the Borough \$ 75, the Borough added \$ 25 for an administration fee.
- The PA Department of Agriculture requirements was discussed and explained by Ms. Einolf.
- Ms. Einolf will provide a fee schedule template; the Solicitor will prepare the Resolution for adoption at the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Council meeting.
- The secretary, Ms. Steele and Ms. Einolf will meet on a Saturday morning to review the fee schedule.

Zoning/Codes Official: Tina Serfass, Keller Zoning & Inspection Services

1. Mike's Auto: 208 Northampton Street

Ms. Serfass reported that each of her inspector employees have visited the property twice since the collapse of the roof. There is no access or hazard unless someone trespasses on the property.

- President Steele asked if the Borough has any obligations to secure the property? Ms. Serfass replied NO, the obligation is on the property owner.

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- Councilwoman Gumaer stated that vehicles are still being towed to the garage. Ms. Serfass replied that Mike's Auto customers cannot be stopped from picking up their vehicles; persons picking up cars enter at their own risk. Ms. Serfass stated that the property is for sale.
- The auto lift is what is holding up the end of the building; the building is not going anywhere; it is private property; the building itself is not collapsed.
- Councilman Frasca commented that Ms. Serfass' summation is fine as long as there is no public health hazard; the man can do what he wants with his property.
- Councilwoman Bucci asked "when does it become blight"? Mr. Bahnick replied that there is more than one property in the Borough that could be considered blight.
- Ms. Serfass said this property comes to the attention of zoning month after month; that citations cost money and magistrates keep continuing the cases. Ms. Serfass stated that she rides by several times a week to keep an eye on the property.
- Councilwoman Bucci stated that blighted properties are getting worse about town; these owners are not paying their water, sewer bills. Ms. Serfass replied that when a property has its water turned off for non-payment of sewer bills she can post the property as uninhabitable;

Snow-Ice Removal Contract: Lohman's Lawn Care & Landscaping LLC

President Steele stated that she spoke with Solicitor Gaul this morning concerning the Borough purchasing its own piece of equipment. Solicitor Gaul stated to Ms. Steele that it would be in the best interest of the Borough to make its own purchase. Solicitor Collins stated to Ms. Steele that Council enter into a non-exclusive agreement. Solicitor Collins explained that this is the recommendation since there are some aspects of the past standard agreement that needs to be reviewed and modified because Lohman is not able to fulfill them.

- Councilman Sullivan secured Mr. Lohman today for the position as contractor.
- Mr. Lohman has no dump truck at this time but has two (2) 4-wheel drive pickup trucks with plow and cinder spreader. One truck with plow and cinder spreader would be committed to the Borough.
- President Steele replied that there would be emergency coverage from Portland Contractors if needed.
- Councilman Sullivan asked Mr. Lohman if he needed more clarification. Mr. Lohman replied NO.
- The cost per hour, per truck is \$ 100; the backhoe is \$ 75 per hour.
- Councilman Sullivan stated that he showed Mr. Lohman the streets; Mr. Lohman was satisfied with all the requirements.

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer authorizing a non-exclusive snow-ice removal agreement between the Borough of Portland and Lohman's Lawn Care & Landscaping LLC, with the agreement to be signed by President Steele and reviewed by Solicitor Gaul. Motion carried: 7-0-0

Sewer Shut-Off Notices:

1. Steve Becker: 111 Main Street

Mr. Becker was not in attendance but earlier delivered a letter requesting that his late fees and interest charges be waived due to an administrative error between himself and his on-line

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banking sending his payment to the Portland Borough Sewer Authority. The Portland Borough Authority received the payment and credited the payment to his water usage account. President Steele read the letter of request to Council and those in attendance. Ms. Steele stated that Mr. Becker has refused to pay the late fees and interest; now that the water is going to be turned off for delinquency Mr. Becker has decided to address the issue.

Councilman Frasca suggested that the late fees and interest be waived but from here on out checks must be written with the appropriate name; that no further late fees and interest would be waived.

The secretary explained the problems that the Borough encounters daily because customers assume that the Borough and the Authority are the same entity. Councilwoman Bucci commented that Mr. Becker has lived in the Borough for nine years; this makes no sense, that he has been paying checks to the Borough since 2009 and now his on line banking is sending the checks to the wrong entity. Ms. Bucci stated that Mr. Becker should write a check for the delinquent amount of \$166.61. Mr. Sullivan questioned if it is a banking error. The secretary stated that Mr. Becker has been told repeatedly by Ms. Eden to omit the word Authority from correspondence and on line bill pay, but Mr. Becker continues to send correspondence to the Borough addressed to the Authority with the Borough's PO Box number. Ms. Hummel stated that the Borough office does not tell the bank how to address the bill pay, that is done by the customer.

A motion was made by Ralph Frasca, 2<sup>nd</sup> by William Godshalk that a letter be sent to Mr. Becker stating that the late fees and interest, in the amount of \$ 166.61, would be waived at this time but there would be no further consideration.

Motion failed.

(5) NO: Gumaer, Kenna, Bucci, Sullivan, Steele  
(2) YES: Godshalk, Frasca

Discussion:

- 111 Main Street is a tenant issue; the rules are different for tenant's water shut-off.
- The Borough needs the tenant addresses which Mr. Becker has failed to supply.
- There is a section on tenants listed in the Sewer Ordinance 2008-9.
- Ms. Serfass stated that each tenant's apartment door can be posted.
- Ms. Serfass stated that if the addresses cannot be obtained the Borough can address each tenant with an apartment number through postal mail.

2. A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci to proceed with water shut-off to the following delinquent sewer accounts.

- Sewer Account No. 25
- Sewer Account No. 241

Motion carried: (4) Yes: Gumaer, Bucci, Steele, Kenna  
(3) Abstain: Frasca, Sullivan, Godshalk

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Sewer Matters and Borough Engineers Report:

1. A motion was made by Ralph Frasca, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer authorizing President Steele to sign the Waste Management Solutions letter granting permission to Van Cleef Associates to sign Waste Management documents, on behalf of the Borough, concerning reed bed cleaning at the WWTP. Motion carried: 6-0-1 (Michael Sullivan abstained)

Van Cleef Engineering Associates: Mark Bahnick

- Correspondence was received from Carroll Engineering, UMBT, dated October 28, 2019, requesting 110,000 gpd sewer services to the Route 611 corridor in UMBT.
- 220,000 gpd requested for the GenOn property.
- Correspondence from UMBT requesting a letter of intent to provide sewer service; and the available capacity at WWTP that Portland would be willing to allocate.
- Cost of capacity to expand the WWTP to provide the 110,000 gpd and the 220,000 gpd; Van Cleef Engineering has requested a meeting with the DEP in Wilkes Barre to discuss the request. There has been no response to date. Feedback will assign costs to the project.

Ultra-Poly:

- Issues with Ultra-Poly will be discussed in executive session

Ultra-Poly Land Development (Expansion):

- Van Cleef Engineering is providing limited construction observation.
- Site development activities are moving along.
- Van Cleef Engineering will review and confirm when all outstanding conditions have been met and the plans are suitable for recording.

Dunkin Donuts:

- A punch list has been provided to close out the required site improvements to comply with the approved plans and conditions. Dunkin is working on the punch list.
  - Mr. Bahnick left the meeting at 8:02 PM.
  - Ms. Serfass left the meeting at 8:02 PM.

Creditech Collection Agency:

- President Steele stated that Creditech information was provided in the Council packet; Ms. Steele has spoken with Solicitor Gaul for his opinion, who thought it was a good action for the Borough.
- Ms. Steele stated that after reviewing the payment plans of Middle Smithfield Township she concluded that payment plans was a lot to ask of a small office to undertake; that Creditech has many options to choose from; Ms. Steele asked for Council discussion.

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- Councilwoman Gumaer questioned the commission fees and was of the understanding that the Borough would pay no customer fees; Ms. Steele stated that the commission fees would be 18 to 20 percent with 20 percent on the high side.
- The Creditech packet and draft resolutions was given to Solicitor Collins, for review and preparation by Solicitor Collins and SolicitorGaul.
- There would be a fee to post the properties but if Creditech sends the postings as a pdf to the Borough there would be no fee for the Borough; the maintenance man, Fred Farleigh, could still post the property as he has been doing.
- President Steele stated that Creditech will free up the secretary and billing clerk's time that they spend working on delinquent accounts; Ms. Steele asked Solicitor Collins if the Borough would need two separate agreements, one for sewer and one for garbage; Ms. Collins replied it would depend on what Creditech offers to the Borough; Ms. Steele replied that the Borough could cancel the agreement with ninety (90) days notice; Ms. Collins confirmed that information, based on the documents provided by Creditech.
- Solicitor Collins stated that the resolutions need not be approved tonight but can be done at the next meeting; An agreement with Creditech can be approved tonight subject to Solicitor Gaul's review and approval.

A motion was made by Michael Sullivan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer authorizing Creditech as the Borough's collection agency for delinquent sewer and garbage accounts, based on the terms of a written agreement to be approved subject to review by Solicitor Gaul and signature by Council President Steele.

- i. Councilman Frasca asked the secretary if she and the billing clerk (Diann Eden) recommended Creditech. Ms. Hummel replied YES.
- ii. Ms. Steele stated that Ms. Eden is familiar with the process of Creditech since she uses the system at her full-time place of employment.

Motion then carried: 7-0-0

Payment Plans for 425 Delaware Avenue: Yudelky Schomberg

- a) President Steele stated that once the Creditech resolutions are reviewed and approved the payment plan could be sent to Creditch for collection.
- b) President Steele asked Mrs. Schomberg if she would like to speak to Council.
  - i. Mrs. Schomberg replied that she was waiting on the outcome of a payment plan.
  - ii. She also needs her water lines tested so that she could have her water turned on. Chairman Prator advised Mrs. Schomberg to contact Ms. Nina Cerulli, administrative assistant at the Portland Borough Authority office.

Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB):

- No hearings are scheduled at the present time.

UCC Building Code Inspectors Report: Tina Serfass: Keller Zoning & Inspection Services

- None

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Planning Commission:

- None

Portland Borough Authority (PBA): Lance Prator, Chairman

- a) Councilwoman Bucci asked about the GenOn property on River Road.
- i. Chairman Prator replied that the developer recently attended a PBA Board meeting inquiring about water service. Mr. Prator stated that the Board was told it would not be warehousing but manufacturing. If water service would be supplied the PBA would have to drill a new well.
  - ii. Chairman Prator stated that the developer could not give the PBA any footprint of the facility.
  - iii. The Riverkeepers organization has become involved.

Legal:

- None

Subdivision and Land Development:

- None

Community Development, COG & Grants:

Resolution 2019-12

1. Mayor Prator stated that this is the final agreement.

A motion was made by Michael Sullivan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer adopting Resolution 2019-12, the Final Proposed Corrected/Amended Slate Belt Council of Governments Articles of Agreement Between and Among the Governments of the Townships of Lower Mount Bethel, Upper Mount Bethel, Plainfield and Washington; and the Boroughs of Bangor, East Bangor, Pen Argyl, Portland, Roseto, Wind Gap; and Pen Argyl and Bangor Area School Districts. Motion carried: 7-0-0

2. Councilman Godshalk asked about grant writer, Victor Rodite. Ms. Steele replied that Mr. Rodite's proposal was for grants geared towards multiple municipalities not for Portland individually. Mayor Prator stated that Mr. Rodite's fee schedule was pricey and that he has retired. The information was included in the Council packet several months ago.

i. Ms. Bucci asked if the Borough would be looking into an LSA Grant. Mayor Prator replied YES. Ms. Bucci stated that she had notes written that UMBT and its fire company would be applying, and that the Borough should be doing the same.

ii. Mayor Prator stated that Sara Pandl is a grant writer; that Northampton County has a grant writer; Ms. Steele replied that we need to find a person who has the time and to do the leg work involved; the Borough did apply a few years ago for an LSA grant for funds to upgrade the municipal building. Ms. Bucci asked if the Borough applied on-line and had a portal. Ms. Steele replied YES, the Borough has portals for LSA Of Monroe County and Northampton County. The LSA Grant closed October 31, 2019.

iii. Ms. Steele reported the 2020 Grant Schedule for Northampton County.

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- a) CDBG: opens March 2, closes May 15
- b) Hotel Tax: opens April 13, closes June 12
- b) CIPP: opens May 11, closes July 10
- c) Affordable Housing: opens July 13, closes Sept. 11

iv. Mr. Godshalk stated that Council should hire a grant writer; the Borough has a storm drain that is falling apart and needs major repair. Councilman Sullivan asked if the Borough would have to contract with Northampton County or is it a service that they would offer. Mayor Prator replied that he doesn't know how that works. Mayor Prator stated that grant writers cost approximately \$ 150 per hour.

v. Ms. Bucci stated that she was reading from an article in the Morning Call concerning USDA grants. Northampton & Lehigh County have the highest number of households that have no internet connections; 35 % of the population of Portland has no internet subscriptions; Portland is in a perfect position to go after grant money for broadband service. Ms. Steele replied that what goes through her mind is that Portland is an older community; they may not want or can afford internet service. Mayor Prator replied that the USDA is more interested in giving loans than grants. Ms. Bucci stated she spoke with a woman from the USDA who referred her to a Community Connect grant.

vi. Ms. Steele stated that normally the Borough does not have the matching funding. Mayor Prator stated a more reasonable cost to pay a grant writer is \$ 75 per hour; that the PBA hired their engineer to write grants for their water line project; the cost was worth it for the amount of grants the PBA received.

3. Curbside Leaf Pick-Up:

Curbside leaf pick-up is scheduled for Monday, December 2 and Tuesday, December 3, 2019 beginning at 8 AM. A motion was made by Michael Sullivan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer authorizing President Steele to execute the Slate Belt COG Intermunicipal Lease Agreement for the two day rental of the leaf vacuum at the cost of \$ 150. Motion carried: 7-0-0

4. Mayor Prator reported that Managing Partner of the COG, Sharoll Lilly, is a grant writer. The COG has applied for a grant for a street sweeper and a storm water jetty, in the amount of \$ 240,000. All municipalities of the COG will be able to use the equipment for cost. Plainfield Township has agreed to sponsor the COG for the grant application.

5. Pibbles & Paws:

Stacey & Ed Kellner of Pibbles & Paws, animal control officers, are accepting dogs in the entire Slate Belt. Currently Plainfield, Wind Gap and Pen Argyl are using them as their ACO. Portland would need a holding pen which would be supplied by Pibbles & Paws. Portland needs to provide the area/land; the opening hours are will be from 9 AM to 10 PM. Current per capita is \$ 1.00 but will be raised to \$ 1.25 to \$ 1.50 per person.

- i. The Borough is currently contracted with Prestige Animal Control through 12-31-2021.
- ii. Ms. Steele questioned a holding pen. Mayor Prator stated that he was against a holding pen.
- iii. No action was taken.

6. Mayor Prator reported that former ACO Christine Mammi has had extensive damage from a house fire over the weekend. If anyone would like to donate, Christine can be reached through the Slate Belt Animal Advocacy Group, Bangor PA.



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7. Mayor Prator passed out the most current Slate Belt Directory.

Community Events/Recreation Board:

- Councilwoman Gumaer reported that Portland Community Day had an excellent turnout. All vendors showed up but one, due to illness. Donations were received from the vendors.
- Halloween Trick or Treat was a big success; about 100 children/adults attended the after-costume party held at Refiners Fire Ministry.
- The annual Christmas Tree lighting ceremony will be held on Sunday, December 1, 2019 on the railroad station property of Jim & Stephanie Steele. The secretary will contact the Borough's insurance carrier for a certificate of insurance naming the Borough as additional insured.

Police Report:

- The police report was provided in writing by Chief Mulligan.
- It was a slow month for calls but officers are actively conducting traffic stops and inspecting commercial vehicles.
- Halloween Trick or Treat went well and the police had numerous positive comments from parents.
- The Ford Explorer was in the shop again for a catalytic converter, which was covered under warranty. Chief Mulligan stated that there are too many vehicle issues lately and the department needs a new police car. Chief Mulligan is soliciting donations from businesses.
- Councilman Frasca questioned the citations on overweight trucks. Mayor Prator explained.

Mayor's Report:

Attended & Commented:

- Discover Lehigh Valley
- LVPC General Assembly had poor attendance.
- LV-EDC, Mayor Prator reminds them that they have forgotten the Slate Belt.
- Future LV Plan
- Presented information and booklets on the 2020 census.
- Presented information on the spotted lantern fly.
- Northampton County COG meeting of October 30, 2019.
- Plan Slate Belt meeting is scheduled for November 6, 2019.
- Valor clothing and household items drive collection for homeless veterans; a drop-off box is in the vestibule of the municipal building.

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- LVPC Certification of Recognition Awards 2019 presented to the Borough on October 16, 2019. The Borough garnered three awards; the Slate Belt was well represented.
- Rockwall I-80 NJ-DOT Mitigation Project.

Streets Department: William Godshalk

1. No estimate was received for the repair of the drain box at 600 Pennsylvania Avenue.
2. Street Department Employee, Fred Farleigh, is registered to participate in a defensive driving trainer webinar on November 18, 2019, sponsored by the Borough's insurance carrier, Brown & Brown of the Lehigh Valley.

Resolution 2019-8:

A motion was made by Yvonne Gumaer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Michael Sullivan approving the PennDOT (5) Year Winter Services Agreement (2020 -2024).

- i. Councilman Godshalk inquired about Route 611, State Street and Delaware Avenue where it becomes River Road in the township. Ms. Hummel provided the last page of the contract that specifies River Road, Route 611 and State Street, the area and dollar amount.

Motion carried: 7-0-0

- ii. Ms. Steele asked how to proceed with the purchase of a basic truck to provide winter services for the Borough 2020-2021. Solicitor Collins replied that should be discussed with Solicitor Gaul. Ms. Steele stated that she spoke with the Borough's PennDOT representative, Jeff Robach, of District 5, who stated that 20% of the Borough's Liquid Fuels allocation can be used to purchase equipment; \$ 3,200 to \$ 3,600 would be available. Mr. Robach showed Ms. Steele how to get into the Co-Stars website and navigate the dealerships who are Co-Stars dealers.

Mayor Prator stated that Reagle Dodge is a Co-Stars dealership. Ms. Steele asked if the Borough had to purchase vehicles from the dealership lot? Mayor Prator replied NO, the dealership can order for the Borough. Solicitor Collins replied that the Borough can authorize up to a certain amount to purchase a small basic snow plow truck. Ms. Steele was concerned that if the budget is approved tonight there would no room in the budget to move forward with a basic dump truck purchase with plow and cinder spreader; Ms. Bucci asked if the PBA had a plow for their truck and could help provide snow removal service. Councilman Sullivan replied that doesn't solve the problem; the Borough should be self sufficient and help the new contractor that the Borough just hired; Mr. Lohman does not have the ability to remove snow piles from the downtown. Mr. Godshalk stated that a real concern is where the Borough dumps their snow; Ms. Steele replied that the Borough has a place to dump the snow; Mr. Godshalk stated the area has to be certified. Ms. Steele stated a small tax increase was put on the side in the budget if we needed funds towards the purchase of a snow truck. Councilwoman Bucci stated the Borough raised the taxes (5 mills) in two years; a tax increase was not a good idea even though the Borough must still provide the services; Ms. Bucci asked if the fire company had a snowplow on their truck, no comment. If the budget is not approved tonight Solicitor Collins stated, the Borough would have to advertise for a special meeting in

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December. Solicitor Collins stated the budget can be amended after the new council members are sworn in January 2020; Ms. Steele stated she was not aware that the budget could be amended.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the Borough should think about storage for the accumulation of new equipment rather than have it sit outside in the elements. The secretary stated that the late Steve Knott had the best idea to make the gymnasium a salt shed. Mr. Sullivan replied no salt shed; the secretary corrected herself that it could be made into a garage to store the vehicles.

Ms. Bucci asked about the new contractor's prices. Ms. Steele stated much better; the previous contractor charged \$ 125 per hour for every piece of equipment; Mr. Sullivan replied there is no four hour minimum; Ms. Steele stated we are not paying for equipment sitting on site and not being in use; the Borough should see a significant reduction.

Mr. Sullivan stated that he took Mr. Lohman around town to show him "the lay of the land", familiar with the streets.

3. Flagpoles:

Councilwoman Bucci stated that (2) military flagpoles snapped off during a recent wind storm; Ms. Steele replied that (2) Slate Belt Rising flagpoles also came down.

i. A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bridget Kenna to purchase new flagpoles for the downtown.

Ms. Steele researched an estimate of the cost of new flagpoles and stated with tax exempt status and the presence of a fireman with her she could receive a discount.

i. The motion was amended by Ms. Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Kenna that the cost is not to exceed \$ 250.

Motion carried: 7-0-0

Sanitation:

- None

Building Committee:

The secretary reported that birds may be roosting in the belfry since there is nesting debris at the site of the front door every day. Ms. Steele replied that shouldn't be the case since the belfry was repaired last year. Ms. Steele stated that birds are nesting under the soffit in the hole in the bricks above the front door.

Budget, Finance, Insurance, & Cable TV Contract:

1. The proposed 2020 budget was reviewed by Council.

- The police budget is under budget by approximately \$ 15,000.
- Concerning the 2015 Ford Explorer, the loan has been paid in full; the yearly payment was approximately \$ 5,500.

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- Councilman Frasca favors a no tax increase to the budget.
- Ms. Steele stated that the WWTP Operator's contract will expire December 31, 2019 and will increase slightly.
- There is no increase to the sewer budget.
- There is no increase to the sanitation budget; the Borough received an increase in the Act 101 PA Performance Recycle Grant; the grant monies combines the Borough's recycle, all the recycle business dumpsters, the fire company, and Ultra-Poly and Air Liquide in the PIP.

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer to accept the proposed 2020 General, Sewer and Sanitation Budgets. Motion carried: 7-0-0

A motion was made by Michael Sullivan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer authorizing King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul to advertise the proposed 2020 budget in the Pocono Record publication. Motion carried: 7-0-0

2. Merchants Bank Credit Card Machine:

Councilwomen Bucci, Kenna, Steele and the secretary attended a Merchants Bank webinar instruction to accept customer credit cards through Merchants Bank.

- Councilman Frasca left the meeting at 9:39 PM.

Credit card payments can be processed over the telephone, in person or on the Borough's website. All service fees associated with credit card payments will be incurred by the customer. The Borough's cost will be a \$ 20 monthly service charge or \$ 240 per year per account, i. e., sewer and garbage each. The credit card terminal cost will be \$ 299, with the cost split in half between the sewer and garbage accounts. The cost of a receipt printer will be \$ 150 to \$ 200, with the cost split in half between the sewer and garbage accounts. If payments are made through electronic banking those fees will be paid by the customer.

If Council approves credit card payments this evening the Borough can be set up to take payments in January 2020.

- Councilman Frasca returned to the meeting at 9:42 PM

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer authorizing the purchases of the credit card machine equipment and the process of accepting credit cards through Merchants Bank. Motion carried: 6-0-1 (Ralph Frasca abstained)

Ordinance Update Committee:

- None

Personnel, Policy & Procedure Committee:

- None

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Slate Belt Rising:

The Plan Slate Belt Steering Committee meets Wednesday, November 6, 2019 at the Weona Park Community Center in Pen Argyl at 7 PM.

Air Liquide Safety Committee:

- President Steele attends the monthly Air Liquide Safety Committee meetings.

Liberty-Water Gap Trail Alliance:

- The Alliance is still without a secretary.
- Mayor Prator stated that Monroe and Northampton Counties are working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two.
- It was questioned whether someone was working behind the pedestrian walk bridge. Northampton County will be installing new signage in the spring of 2020.
- Mayor Prator stated that the NJ-DOT I-80 Rockwall Project public meeting at the Mount Bethel fire company was very well attended. Senator Mario Scavello traveled to Washington DC with 10–12 people to meet with the Transportation Secretary.

Correspondence:

- The Slate Belt Band Boosters Bag Bingo Event and Tricky Tray, scheduled for November 24, 2019, is seeking donations for prizes and raffles. No action was taken.
- The Totts Gap Art Institute 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, 8<sup>th</sup> annual scholarship dinner and auction is being held on November 9, 2019 from 6-10 PM. Tickets are \$ 50, and the deadline is now. The Institute is asking for a donation. No action was taken.

Secretary's Announcements:

- The secretary will be out of the office on Tuesday, November 5, 2019.
- The secretary and the billing clerk will be out of the office on Monday, November 11, 2019.
- The secretary will be out of the office on Tuesday, November 19, 2019 until 12 noon to attend a PennDOT Grants training at the Monroe County 911 Center.

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- Mayor Prator stated that the basement of the municipal building is a mess and needs a good clean-out. There is a lot of junk that should be thrown away.

Public Comment, Non-Agenda:

Ms. Cindy Fish, Liberty-Water Gap Trail Alliance, reported that the National Park Service (NPS) is doing a survey on how to proceed with parking in the national parks. The NPS does not

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receive much funding and Ms. Fish stated that she does not know how it will affect the Borough. The NPS is discussing parking fees.

Executive Session:

A motion was made by Michael Sullivan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer to convene to executive session at 9:54 PM. Motion carried: 7-0-0

Discussion: legal advice from the Solicitor.

A motion was made by Michael Sullivan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ralph Frasca to reconvene from executive session at 10:05 PM. Motion carried: 7-0-0

Action taken:

- None

Adjourn:

The next Council Meeting will be held on Monday, December 2, 2019 at 7:00 PM.

A motion was made by Michael Sullivan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yvonne Gumaer to adjourn the meeting at 10:06 PM. Motion carried 7-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol A. Hummel, Secretary