

BOROUGH OF PORTLAND
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 23, 2023

The Portland Borough Council meeting of January 23, 2023, was called to order at 7:00 PM by Stephanie Steele, President of Borough Council.

The meeting was held in-person at the Borough Hall Council Chambers and via ZOOM Communications.

Council Members Present for Call to Order:

Stephanie Steele Kay Bucci* Kyle Overfield* Patrick McHugh* Wendy Klug* Karen Pfeiffer*

Others Present:

1. Michael Gaul, Solicitor, via Zoom Communications
2. Heather Fischer, Mayor
3. Joanne Conley, URDC, Grant Writer
4. Carol Hummel, Borough Secretary

Approval of the Agenda and any Amendments:

AMENDED TO ADD: Solicitor Gaul

Amend the agenda to authorize the advertisement of the proposed Ordinance 2023-1, "Extend the Life of the Portland Borough Authority".

A motion was made by Karen Pfeiffer, 2nd by Kay Bucci to approve the posted agenda with one (1) proposed amendment. The reason for the amendment was to allow expedient action by Borough Council.

Discussion:

Councilwoman Bucci asked if the name of the PBA could be changed to Portland Water Authority because of all the confusion between the Borough and the PBA. Solicitor Gaul replied, yes, the name could be changed, but he would need to review the process.

Motion carried 6-0-0.

Announcement of Recording:

The meeting is being digitally recorded by the Secretary for assistance in preparation of the minutes.

Council President inquired whether anyone in the audience plans to record the meeting.

- There was none.

Public Comment: Time Allotted – (5) minutes per person

- None

Grant Opportunities: LSA Grant, Gymnasium Demolition: Kay Bucci; Joanne Conley

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Amendment to the Contract:

Ms. Bucci explained that there are unused funds of \$39,998 remaining in the LSA contract. The contract states that a properly executed grant amendment is required to change the termination date of the Grant, to change the Grant Activity Period, to amend the grant amount or to make major changes in the approved program scope, objectives or methods. A written request is required by the Grantee and approved by the Grantor prior to the termination or expiration of the grant.

Ms. Bucci stated that the amendment must be written correctly, in the proper form and sent to the PA-DCED Analyst, Allison Leeper. Ms. Conley has the experience. The request must be submitted by February 1, 2023, for the March 2023 LSA Committee/Board of Directors decision.

Ms. Conley explained that the Borough will request a change in the approved program scope to allow use of the total amount of the funds granted. The Borough proposes to use the funds to write a Master Plan with a Connections component to develop municipal park land with outdoor recreation. The master planning will include a survey of the gymnasium demolition site and two adjacent parcels owned by the Borough, presently used for recreation. Ms. Bucci has secured a survey proposal, in the amount of \$12,000, from Ott Engineering, Inc. and will request a proposal from the Borough Engineer, Van Cleef Engineering Associates.

Ms. Conley stated two grant options, (DCNR) PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources or (DCED) PA Department of Community & Economic Development; DCNR was recommended by Ms. Conley. The remaining LSA funds of \$39,998 would be the matching funds for the DCNR Grant.

Comments from Council:

- Payment to URDC: Ms. Steele and Ms. Bucci stated that \$1,500 was approved in 2022 for grant investigation opportunities by Ms. Conley, URDC. **(Corrected to \$3,450 per 02-06-2023 Council Meeting, C.A. Hummel, Secretary)**
- Ms. Conley explained the remaining criteria of the grant. Planning work will also include trails and mapping. Grant administration is included.
- Master Site Development Plan Guidelines and an Example of Scope of Work were provided.
- Develop a list of all grant projects; grants are competitive; grants are not guaranteed.
- Start with a Comprehensive Plan; develop a time frame for the plan.
- Ms. Steele stated Council has to decide tonight whether they want to amend the LSA Grant Contract.
- Ms. Conley will prepare the letter seeking an amendment to the contract.

A motion was made by Patrick McHugh, 2nd by Kay Bucci authorizing URDC, Joanne Conley, to prepare the letter of amendment on Borough letterhead and forward to the PA-DCED, Ms. Allyson Leeper, Economic Development Analyst by the February 1, 2023 deadline. Motion carried 6-0-0.

- Mayor Fischer exited the meeting at 7:45 PM.

Discussed were historical grants. Ms. Steele replied that historical grants are very challenging.

- Ms. Conley exited the meeting at 8:00 PM.

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Portland Borough Authority Reimbursement:

President Steele explained the reimbursement to the PBA for their shared cost of the backhoe/tractor expenses that were previously approved for payment at the December 5, 2022, Council meeting, in the amount of \$18,365. Ms. Steele stated that after review of the invoices the total should be corrected to \$19,483.

A motion was made by Patrick McHugh, 2nd by Karen Pfeiffer to amend the reimbursement to the PBA, in the amount of \$19,483; and the supplies that remain in the municipal parking lot are to be removed by March 1, 2023. Motion carried 6-0-0.

Extend the Life of the Portland Borough Authority:

A motion was made by Patrick McHugh, 2nd by Karen Pfeiffer authorizing Solicitor Gaul to advertise for adoption the proposed Ordinance 2023-1, "Extend the Life of the Portland Borough Authority". Motion carried 6-0-0.

Discussion:

a) Solicitor Gaul explained that the deadline for approval of the extension is March 6, 2023.

b) Patrick McHugh questioned the powers of the PBA; could the extension be limited to five (5) years instead of fifty (50) years; Mr. McHugh is concerned that the PBA could provide water to a Developer and/or Industrial Park when the Borough needs water for fire protection.

c) Solicitor Gaul explained the process to change and diminish the powers of the PBA; the PBA can be dissolved at any time and revert back to the Borough for management, subject to the Borough assuming the obligations of the PBA. The Borough would also be subject to PUC oversight for the area of service outside of the Borough.

d) Ms. Steele stated that she did not attend the January meeting of the PBA. The last conversation she was aware of was that the PBA does not have enough water to supply the RPL developer with water service.

Public Non-Agenda:

- None

Executive Session:

- None

Adjourn:

The next meeting of the Portland Borough Council will be held on Monday, February 6, 2023, at 7 PM.

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2nd by Karen Pfeiffer to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM. Motion carried 6-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol A. Hummel

Carol A. Hummel, Secretary