

BOROUGH OF PORTLAND  
COUNCIL MEETING NOVEMBER 28, 2022

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The Portland Borough Council regular meeting of November 28, 2022, 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.

Council Members Present for Call to Order:

\*Stephanie Steele\* Kay Bucci\* Kyle Overfield\* Patrick McHugh\* Karen Pfeiffer \*

- o Councilwoman Robert Ivancich was absent.

Others Present:

1. Michael Gaul, Solicitor
2. Mark Bahnick, Borough Engineer
3. Christine Troxell, Traffic Engineer
4. Heather Fischer, Mayor
5. Carol Hummel, Borough Secretary

Approval of the Agenda and any Amendments:

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The Council President proposed three (3) amendments to the posted agenda:

- a) Line Item # 7: Sewer Shut-Offs.
- b) Line Item # 7(g): Borough of Portland and Portland Borough Authority, Memorandum of Understanding.
- c) Line Item 8: Purchase (3) desk chairs for Borough Offices.

A motion was made by Patrick McHugh, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci to approve the posted agenda of three (3) proposed amendments. The reason for the amendments was to allow expedient action by Borough Council. Motion carried 5-0-0.

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

Filo's Tree Service: 102 Division Street, Phil Karasiewicz

Mr. Karasiewicz requested permission to access Borough property to remove trees on a residential lot, for a client at 112 State Street. The client was in attendance. Mr. Karasiewicz stated that while he is there, he will be more than happy to remove the Borough trees that are infested with vines. Mr. Karasiewicz provided a picture of the infested trees.

Ms. Pfeiffer stated that a certificate of insurance should be provided. Solicitor Gaul stated that the Borough should be named as additional insured on the insurance, and Mr. Karasiewicz should be required to indemnify the Borough if there is

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any damage to Borough property. Mr. Karasiewicz replied that he was agreeable to those requirements. He would have a certificate faxed to the Borough office.

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Karen Pfeiffer authorizing Filo's Tree Service, Phil Karasiewicz, to access Portland Borough property to remove trees from 112 State Street and to remove the Borough trees that are infested with vines, subject to the insurance and indemnification requirements. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Old/New Business:

Sewer Shut-Offs:               None

McTish, Kunkle & Associates:               Christine Troxell, Traffic Engineer

Ms. Troxell provided Council with hand-outs of traffic studies and summaries concerning the proposed land developments of River Point Logistics. Council members were concerned with the impact of increased truck and vehicle traffic to the Borough and its roadways. The developer has prepared four (4) separate studies, a separate study for each phase of the development.

The proposed 303 New Demi Road Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP), and its Planned Industrial Park Land Development was discussed. Council addressed the issues of whether PennDOT will make improvements to State Route 611, emergency access from the Industrial Park, the railroad trestle, and road widening

The Borough engineer stated that there is no overall plan for traffic from PennDOT; there should be a scoping project for the overall development.

Ms. Troxell advised Council to reach out to the PennDOT District - 5 Engineer to schedule a meeting to discuss the Borough concerns. The Borough Engineer and Ms. Troxell will draft a letter from Council to send to PennDOT. The letter will be presented for approval at the December 5, 2022, Council meeting.

Storm Sewer Video Inspection:               Mark Bahnick, Borough Engineer

Mr. Bahnick presented a quote from Biros Septic for a ½ day storm video inspection of Main and High Streets, on Wednesday, November 30, 2022, beginning at 8 AM, for four (4) hours of a TV-Video Camera, at the cost of \$ 2,500. Mr. Bahnick stated that the Borough needs to have a better idea of the piping system at the intersection.

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Patrick McHugh approving the four (4) hours of Biros Septic, TV-Video Camera Inspection, in the amount of \$ 2,500, weather permitting. Motion carried 5-0-0.

COVID-19 ARPA Small Water and Sewer Grant:

Grants for small water, sewer, and storm water infrastructure projects through the CFA-DCED. Act 54 of 2022 appropriated \$ 105.6 million of American Rescue Plan Act funds to the PA Small Water and Sewer Program. Activities to assist with the construction, improvement, expansion or rehabilitation or repair of a water supply system, sanitary sewer system, and storm water system projects. Eligible projects are those which have a total project cost of not less than \$ 30,000 and not more than \$ 500,000. The grant program requires matching funds in the amount of fifteen percent (15%) of the project costs. The deadline for an application submission is December 21, 2022.

Two (2) grants will be written by Van Cleef Engineering Associates. One for storm water improvements, and one for sanitary sewer improvements. Action will be taken at the December 5, 2022, Council meeting for approval, two (2) resolutions, one (1) for each grant application.

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Wastewater Treatment Plant: Two quotes were presented to Council for review.

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|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 1. RIORDAN Materials:        | SPIRALIFT Model S-12148 | \$ 144,359 |
| 2. KUBOTA Membrane USA Corp. | Membrane Cartridges     | \$ 72,000  |

Ms. Bucci asked the condition of the membranes. Ms. Steele replied that they are functional, with twenty-five per cent (25%) being bad. Some need replacing. Solicitor Gaul stated that the amount of the proposed quotes indicated that the project could be subject to competitive bid requirements. Mr. Bahnick stated that the equipment should be available through Co-Stars. Ms. Steele replied that the WWTP Operator, Craig LaBarre, will do the work. Solicitor Gaul stated that the project could be subject to prevailing wage rates, as occurred in the LSA grant project for the downtown bathroom.

No action was taken. The quotes were for Council's understanding that they will be included in COVID-19 ARPA Small Water and Sewer Grant application:

- o Mr. Bahnick left the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Proposed 2023 Budget, As Revised:

Two (2) revised draft 2023 budgets were presented for discussion. Proposed General Budget with a One (1) Mill increase and Proposed General Budget with a Half (.5) Mill increase.

Ms. Bucci questioned the need to raise the taxes when the Borough has a surplus from the additional real estate taxes received on the new Ultra-Poly building, and monies left over from the LSA (Local Shares Grant) from the gym demolition. Ms. Bucci stated that the Borough can't have too much money when applying for grants. Solicitor Gaul replied that some surplus monies came from unused budget allocation budgeted items, such as police, which the Borough still desires to fund going forward if it has the opportunity; and new developments come with potential new burden on municipal services, at a financial cost. The Solicitor also reminded the Council that the Borough will need operating funds in the first three (3) months of the next year, before real estate taxes come in, and also should have some reserves, beyond that, in the event of unexpected financial expenses.

Patrick McHugh stated that with a number of possible projects, and additional expenses on the horizon, he would prefer not to use the reserve funds to fund the Borough's regular expenses next year.

Ms. Steele stated that she surveyed/spoke with several municipalities concerning their tax base, and those municipalities are raising their taxes  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mill per year. The Boroughs increase would be \$ 11,484 for the One (1) Mill increase and \$ 4,362 for the Half (.5) Mill increase. The consensus of Council was to approve the Half (.5) Mill increase of \$ 4,362.

A motion was made by Karen Pfeiffer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci approving the proposed General Budget with a Half (.5) Mill increase of \$ 4,362, with the total of \$ 4,362 to be split between code 438, Street Maintenance, and code 409, Building Services, along with the other proposed budgets for sewer and sanitation. Motion carried 5-0-0.

A motion was made by Patrick McHugh, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci authorizing Michael Gaul, King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul to advertise the availability of the proposed 2023 budget for inspection. Motion carried: 5-0-0

A motion was made by Kay Bucci, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Patrick McHugh authorizing Michael Gaul, King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul to prepare and advertise an ordinance for the 2023 real estate tax levy at the increased millage amount. Motion carried: 5-0-0

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Fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Monday Meeting Date:

By consensus, the Borough Council approved rescheduling the Fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Monday meeting to 7 PM, Tuesday, December 27, 2022, due to the federal and state holiday.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between Borough of Portland and the Portland Borough Authority (PBA):

The revised MOU, concerning the Backhoe Loader, was presented with the changes read and explained to Council by Solicitor Gaul. After discussion, the MOU was tabled.

Purchase of Office Chairs:

President Steele presented a quote for three (3) new Borough office chairs, from Sam's Club, at a cost of \$ 149.98 each. A motion was made by Patrick McHugh, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Karen Pfeiffer authorizing the purchase of three (3) new Borough office chairs at the cost of \$ 149.98 each, plus shipping. Total \$ 499.94. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Public Non-Agenda:

- o None

Executive Session:

- o None

Action Taken:

- o None

Adjourn:

- o The next meeting of the Portland Borough Council will be held on Monday, December 5, 2022, at 7:00 PM.
- o A motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM was made by Patrick McHugh, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay Bucci. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Carol A. Hummel*

Carol A. Hummel, Secretary