

BOROUGH OF PORTLAND
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING JULY 3, 2023

Portland Borough Council's regular meeting was held in-person on July 3, 2023, at the Borough Hall Council Chamber. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Council President, Stephanie Steele. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Council members present: Stephanie Steele, Patrick McHugh, Wendy Klug, Karen Pfeiffer, Lance Prator, and Kyle Overfield.

Others present: Michael Gaul, Borough Solicitor; Mayor Heather Fischer; Carol Hummel, Borough Secretary; Diann Eden, Borough Assistant Secretary/Billing Clerk; and Hubert McHugh, Borough resident. Borough Engineer, Mark Bahnick was absent.

Approval of the Agenda and any Amendments:

President Steele asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Councilwoman Wendy Klug had a question as to why item 17 was on the agenda. Secretary Hummel stated that at Council's last meeting, approval was received to apply for the Hotel Tax Grant. Wendy asked that she be notified the next time a topic she is covering is put on the agenda. Wendy added that on Item #23, Patrick should be listed as Chair of the Building Committee -the topic being the handicapped ramp.

Patrick McHugh made a motion to approve the agenda as revised, seconded by Karen Pfeiffer.

Motion carried 6-0

Announcement of Recording:

President Steel stated Borough Secretary, Carol Hummel, will be recording this meeting to help prepare the minutes. Councilwoman, Wendy Klug added she would be recording the meeting also (for personal use and not as an official Borough record).

Editor's note: Recording of the meeting by Councilwoman Klug, other Borough Council members or members of the public, are for personal use only, and do not constitute official Borough action, or an official record, unless expressly authorized by specific Borough Council action.

Two Applications for Vacant Council Seat:

President Steele said there were two applicants for the vacant council seat: Lisa Prator of 703 Delaware Avenue and James Steele of 510 Coffin Alley. Lisa Prator was interviewed first. She stated that she had served on Borough Council previously and participated on several committees. James Steele was interviewed next. James spoke of his experience as an EMT and Fireman for many years. Discussion regarding spouses serving on council at the same time ensued. Councilwoman Klug presented James with several questions. The group again discussed having spouses on council; Attorney Gaul felt it was not a conflict.

President Steele asked if there would be any action taken. Attorney Gaul said any appointment should be done by resolution, and that he prepared a form resolution for that purpose, in which a name could be inserted. **Patrick made a motion to adopt a resolution (Resolution 2023-3) appointing Lisa Prator to fill the vacant Borough Council office created when Councilwoman Kay Bucci resigned.** Attorney Gaul stated Mrs. Prator's term would run until the first Monday of January 2024. **Councilwoman Karen Pfeiffer 2nd the motion. Motion carried 4-1 (Stephanie Steele opposed)-1 (Lance Prator abstained).**

After the motion carried, Borough Secretary, Carol Hummel, handed a letter to President Steele to read aloud. It was Mrs. Hummel's letter of resignation, effective immediately. Stephanie asked if a vote was needed to accept Mrs. Hummel's resignation from all borough duties. It was decided that first, a vote to amend tonight's agenda was needed.

Discussion took place whether Diann Eden had been appointed the assistant Borough secretary and assistant Borough treasurer. Attorney Gaul said to refer to the last reorganization meeting minutes to confirm this.

President Steele called for a motion to amend tonight's agenda to add the resignation of Borough Secretary, Carol Hummel, from all her appointed positions:

Patrick McHugh 1st; Karen Pfeiffer 2nd Motion carried 5-1 (Stephanie Steele opposed)-0.

President Steele called for a motion to accept Carol Hummel's resignation as Borough Secretary, and her other appointed positions (Borough Treasurer and Right to Know Officer): Karen Pfeiffer made the motion, which was seconded by Patrick McHugh. Motion carried 5-1 (Stephanie Steele opposed)-0.

Attorney Gaul said a temporary recording secretary is needed to take minutes. Karen offered to record the minutes. Discussion ensued. At this point, the group decided to take a recess.

Stephanie called for a motion to take a 10 minute recess: Patrick McHugh 1st; Karen Pfeiffer 2nd. Motion carried 6-0

At 7:43 p.m., Council took a 10 minute recess.

President Steele stated the current time of 7:56 p.m. Stephanie called for a motion to come out of recess: **Lance Prator made a motion to reconvene, seconded by Patrick McHugh.**

Motion carried 6-0

President Steele stated that reorganization meeting minutes reflect that Diann Eden was appointed as the assistant Borough secretary, assistant treasurer, and assistant Right to Know Officer. Attorney Gaul stated that, as such, Ms. Eden should take the minutes.

President Steele said that in light of tonight's events, she recommended consolidating some of the agenda items. She called for a motion to amend tonight's agenda to cover only the following items: The financial report #8, community events #19 and executive session #31. All other business will be addressed at the next council meeting. **Patrick McHugh made a Motion as stated by President Steele, seconded by Lance Prator. Motion carried 6-0**

Agenda Item #8: A Motion was made to approve the Treasurer's Financial Reports and bills that total \$ 52,374.14. **Patrick McHugh 1st; Karen Pfeiffer 2nd Motion carried 6-0**

Agenda Item #19: Community Events/Hotel Tax: This is for Founders Day 2024. The grant application is due July 10, 2023. The Community Events Committee will be making a 25% match with fund raising efforts and in-kind services, like volunteering and such. Council needs to approve submitting the application to the county. **Lance Prator made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Patrick McHugh. Motion carried 6-0**

At 8:04 p.m., President Steele called for a motion for Council to go into Executive Session. **Motion by Lance Prator; seconded by Patrick McHugh. Motion carried 6-0**
The Executive Session was to discuss legal matters with the Solicitor and personnel matters.

At 8:53 p.m., President Steele called for a motion to come out of Executive Session. **Patrick McHugh 1st; 2nd Karen Pfeiffer. Motion carried 6-0**

President Steele asked Council if any business came out of Executive Session. **Patrick McHugh made a motion to reduce Randy Snook's hours to not more than 8 hours per week. 2nd by Karen Pfeiffer. Motion carried 6-0**

Patrick McHugh made a motion to begin advertising for a borough secretary at 20 hours per week, up to \$ 20 per hour, seconded by Karen Pfeiffer. Patrick said his wife could do a flyer. Stephanie said we can collaborate and see what we come up with. To save money, we could advertise in the free papers first. Mayor Fischer offered to advertise on Facebook and the borough website; Kyle can do Indeed. Mayor Fischer had created an Indeed account for the Police Department. Patrick asked if Kyle should make an Indeed account for the borough. **Motion carried 6-0**

President Steele asked if there was any other business. Patrick asked for additional information regarding an appropriate motion to approve the purchase of bioaugmentation for the wastewater treatment plant. Lance said Craig has not heard back from Kubota yet. Attorney Gaul said the Motion would be to authorize up to \$ 1,000 to purchase bio-augmentation for the plant, of course, with Michael Girardi's recommendation, provided the operator confirms with Kubota the addition of bioaugmentation will not harm the plant's membranes. **Patrick McHugh made the motion as stated by Attorney Gaul, seconded by Lance Prator.** Attorney Gaul added the bioaugmentation product has a shelf life of 6 months. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Patrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. Lance 2nd the motion to adjourn. Attorney Gaul asked Mr. McHugh if he wanted to comment on anything that was voted on. Mr. McHugh said just give Carol her nameplate and a letter thanking her for her service. While the Motion for adjournment was pending, **Patrick McHugh made a motion, without objection, to give Carol Hummel her nameplate and a letter thanking her for her service. Karen Pfeiffer seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0**

Attorney Gaul said it is a good idea to keep on good terms with Carol Hummel and suggested that Council authorize to have Carol come in as needed, to help with the transition. Patrick McHugh made a motion, without objection, to pay Mrs. Hummel up to 20 hrs. per week as needed; up to \$ 20 per hour. **Seconded by Lance Prator Motion carried 6-0**

Council then adjourned by consensus.

Respectfully submitted,

Diann Eden, Assistant Secretary
Portland Borough