



**Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes  
January 22, 2024**

On January 22, 2024, at 7:00 PM, the Borough Council of the Borough of Portland, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, met for a regular meeting at the Portland Borough Municipal Building, 206 Division Street, Portland, Pennsylvania.

**Call to Order** – President Lance Prator called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Roll Call** – Council Members: Lance Prator, President, Stephanie Steele, Vice-President, Karen Pfeiffer and Lisa Prator were present. Patrick McHugh - Absent

**Others Present** – Mayor Heather Fischer, Borough Solicitor Michael Gaul, Borough Secretary Lori Sliker, Borough Engineer - Mark Bahnick,

**Announcement of Recording** – President Prator announced that the meeting was being digitally recorded for assistance in preparation of the minutes; and asked whether anyone else, besides the Borough Secretary, is recording tonight's meeting. Mayor Fischer stated that she is recording the meeting for her personal use. No other attendees stated that they were recording the meeting.

*Editor's note:* Recording of the meeting by Mayor Heather Fischer, 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.

**Approval of the Meeting Agenda and any Amendments:**

President Prator advised that there will be a change in the agenda order. The Streets Committee will go before the Sewer Committee report and the Borough Engineer will report under the Sewer Committee in Executive Committee.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve the agenda with the order changes, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**Action on the Meeting Minutes:**

**(i) December 4, 2023, Minutes**

Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer advised that her name needed to be corrected on Page #2 from Karen Prator to Karen Pfeiffer.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to approve the December 4, 2023, minutes as presented, with the noted correction, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**(ii) December 27, 2023, Minutes**

**A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to approve the December 27, 2023, minutes as presented, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**Public Comment:** None

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**Streets Committee:**

President Prator asked for an update on the recommendations for Weidman Street. The Borough Engineer will be attending the next Streets Committee Meeting at which time he will present an update on Weidman Street. President Prator advised that Councilmember Patrick McHugh has spoken to Fred Farleigh and Jimmy Potter and they will be working on the various streets and other work as assigned.

**Sewer Committee:**

The Sewer Committee will be discussed during the Executive Session.

**Legal:** Solicitor Gaul advised that he has shared with the Mayor the draft Resolution for Declaring and Recognizing Indigenous People's Day; they will continue to work on it. The Solicitor is reviewing the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Resolution, which is very long, and while seemingly benign, is not simple. Solicitor Gaul will continue to work on the resolution to present it to the Council for review before the next meeting. The Fleischer's Joinder Deed Resolution is moving forward and will be ready for the first meeting in February.

Solicitor Gaul prepared two Resolutions for Council's review/approval:

1. **RESOLUTION DECLARING THE OFFICE OF BOROUGH TAX COLLECTOR VACANT AND AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE BOROUGH SECRETARY TO COLLECT THE BOROUGH TAX DURING THE PENDENCY OF THE VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF TAX COLLECTOR FOR THE BOROUGH** (Resolution 2024-02). Solicitor Gaul advised that because a person was elected as Tax Collector during the election, but then declined it, the office should be declared vacant.
2. **RESOLUTION DECLARING VACANCIES IN TWO BOROUGH COUNCIL OFFICES** (Resolution 2024-03). Solicitor Gaul explained that there are two Council seats that should be declared vacant: (1) Wendy Klug (4-year term) advised that she did not want to take the seat she was elected to, and (2) a second vacant seat is for a two-year term, to which no one was elected.

Solicitor Gaul advised that the Borough Code provides that, when the office of Borough Tax Collector is vacant, the School District Taxes should be collected by the SD Treasurer or Secretary.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to adopt Resolution #2024-02 Declaring the Tax Collector Seat Vacant, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to adopt Resolution #2024-03 Declaring the Council Seat (2) Vacancies, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO):** None

**Portland Borough Authority:** None

**Police Report:** Mayor Fischer distributed the December 2023 Police Report prior to the meeting.

**Mayor's Report:** Mayor Fischer advised that the representatives for the Resolution Declaring and Recognizing Indigenous People's Day will be coming to the March Council Meeting.

**Portland Community Events Committee:** None

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**COG:** None

**Sanitation Committee:** Recycling Grant Update- President Prator advised he has a call into Waste Management, and he will update the Council once he has spoken with them.

**Ordinance Committee:** None

**Budget, Finance, Insurance & Cable TV Contract:** Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the insurance has been secured and the price has not increased significantly.

**Plan Slate Belt:** None

**Slate Belt Rising:** Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that she met with Bryan from Slate Belt Rising regarding the placement of the seven kayaks. The tentative location placements will be Edge of Woods, Dunkin Donuts, PNC Bank, Train Station, Parking Lot, Furriers, and the Duckloe Building. Business owners will be contacted and if they agree to display the kayaks, arrangements can be made for placement. The Borough received a grant, and all the arrangements must be completed by July, 2024.

**Correspondence:** Solicitor Gaul asked if we received information regarding the H2O contract. President Prator advised that he signed the sheet stating that we have received the two grants. The Borough Secretary will send the Solicitor and Borough Engineer the information that was signed. Solicitor Gaul advised that there are significant regulations with these Grant Contracts. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that what was sent out was to update the Keystone System so that when the grant information is sent out it is sent to the correct people.

**Old Business:**

Email Transition: Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer advised that she has been having some difficulties with the new Borough Email. Mayor Fischer will assist with the email transition after the meeting.

**Portland School Tax:** Previously discussed.

**Assistant Solicitor appointment:** None

**Vacancy Board Chair appointment:** None

**Election Certificates:** None

**BACIDA Appointments:**

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to appoint Rich Grucela to the BACIDA Board, as the Lower Mt. Bethel Township designated representative, for a term of five (5) years, expiring December 31, 2028, seconded by President Lance Prator. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to appoint James Kresege to the BACIDA Board, as the Bangor Borough designated representative, for a term of five (5) years, expiring December 31, 2028, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to confirm the appointment of Mark Schiavone to the BACIDA Board, as the Washington Township designated representative, for a term of five (5) years, expiring December 31, 2027, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.

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A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to confirm the appointment of Laura McLain to the BACIDA Board, as the East Bangor Borough designated representative, for a term of five (5) years, expiring December 31, 2024, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to confirm the appointment of Jeff Manzi to the BACIDA Board, as the Upper Mount Bethel Township designated representative, for a term of five (5) years, expiring December 31, 2026, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Several Council members expressed concerns regarding this appointment. President Prator asked Solicitor Gaul what the consequences would be if they did not want to confirm Mr. Manzi's appointment. Solicitor Gaul explained that he would have to research this situation. Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer and Stephanie Steele withdrew their motion and second.

**New Business:**

Borough Tax Collector Office – previously discussed.

**Council Seat - Wendy Klug:** Ms. Klug has submitted an email declining the council position. -Previously discussed.

**Letter of Interest in a Council Seat:** Ms. Susan Ivancich has submitted a letter of interest in one of the vacant council seats. Ms. Ivancich will be invited to the February 5, 2024, meeting. -Previously discussed.

**Secretary Announcements:** The Borough Office will be closed Wednesday, January 24, 2024 – Tuesday, January 30, 2024.

**Public Comment: Non-Agenda:** None

**Executive Session:**

**A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to break at 7:47 P.M. for Executive Session to receive a report from the Borough Engineer and discuss legal matters with the Borough Solicitor, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.**

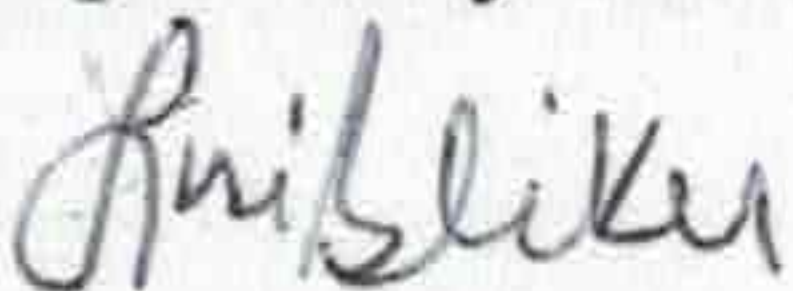
**A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to return from Executive Session at 8:52 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried**

**Any Business after Executive Session:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.

**Next Borough Council Meetings:** February 5, 2024  
February 26, 2024  
March 4, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,



Lori Sliker  
Borough Secretary

