



**Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes**  
**August 26, 2024**

On August 26, 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, Lisa Prator, Susan Ivancich, and Bruce Cialfi were present. Karen Pfeiffer, Patrick McHugh, Mayor Heather Fischer and Solicitor Michael Gaul were absent.

**Others Present** – Borough Engineer-Mark Bahnick and Borough Secretary/Treasurer-Lori Sliker were present.

**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. No one else is recording tonight's meeting.

*Editor's note:* Recording of the meeting by 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 asked if there were any amendments to the agenda.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the agenda as posted, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**Public Comment:** None

President Prator advised that at a prior meeting the Borough Solicitor stated the Sewer Committee cannot send out letters; it should be noted that the sewer committee has never sent out letters without approval of the Council. This meeting will be used to go over committee updates; so that all the Council members are updated at the same time and if this works the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting date will continue as a committee update meeting.

**Borough Engineers Report: Mark Bahnick, VanCleaf Engineer**

COVID Grant Projects – Stormwater and Wastewater – Mr. Bahnick asked if the paperwork had been completed for GPRSINC-the underground location work; the secretary will send Mr. Bahnick the information so the work can be scheduled. A meeting was held with residents Hubert McHugh and Ron Angle to discuss storm water easements. Both residents advised that they do not want the pipe to go through their property; however, there is a known easement on lot 9 & 11. Mr. Bahnick provided the council members with a storm sewer improvement plan map for their review. Mr. Bahnick advised that if they were to follow the green line on the map to place the pipes it is approximately 150' longer which will cost more and there are issues to overcome with that plan. President Prator asked that by using the easement how much pipe would it save; Mr. Bahnick advised that would save approximately 75' of pipe. The existing pipes have not been opened in many years and that could be causing issues. The alley is not very wide, which will cause issues that will have to be overcome. There is an easement through lots 9,11 and possibly 12. Mr. Bahnick advised that changes can be made to the design as needed. The replacement of the sewer plant membranes and screens are pending

## Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes

August 26, 2024

purchase. Solicitor Gaul previously advised he was going to check the information to ensure it is all approved prior to purchasing them. The Secretary will reach out to Solicitor Gaul to check on the purchase of the membranes and screens; and ask that the Solicitor provide an update at the next meeting.

**Sewer Committee:** Commercial and Industrial customer letters were sent out August 6, 2024; however, there has not been any other information at this time.

Portland Auto – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the outside connection work has been completed and inspected; she will follow-up with the owner regarding the sink.

Penn Power Systems– Mr. LaBarre reviewed the current plan and the remote monitoring feature; he also advised that the current plan works; and if the Council wishes to review the remote monitoring at another time they can do so. Councilmember Lisa Prator asked that the remote monitoring be left on the agenda and revisit the topic March 2025.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the Penn Power Systems 3-year plan for \$2,348.67; seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.**

Mr. LaBarre advised the Council that the Sewer Plant is doing well right now; however, the membranes need to be replaced. One of the membranes is 16 years old and the recommended replacement is 10 years. Mr. LaBarre also advised that if something were to happen that shut down the plant it would cost \$7,000.00 per day to have sewage hauled away. The Kubota membranes are in the country right now and this is a very time sensitive issue. The membranes are very sensitive to the cold and cannot be placed in January; it is very important to get them now. Mr. LaBarre will take the Council members on a tour of the sewer plant to better their understanding of how the plant operates. Some dates will be set up.

Council President Prator advised that the main purpose of having the end of the month meeting will be to go over the Committee information. An updated Committee Assignment listing was given to the Council at the beginning of the meeting.

**Streets Committee:** President Prator advised that he has added Councilmember Stephanie Steele as an alternate to the Streets Committee. Marke has completed the Crestmont Street project, and it looks good. Crestmont is not a liquid fuels street therefore the work will be paid for through the Sewer account. The secretary will forward the bill for the project to Ms. Eden for processing. Councilmember Lisa Prator gave a brief background of the project for the benefit of the new Councilmembers.

Mark Bahnick left the meeting at 7:41 P.M.

**Building Committee:** President Prator advised that he has added Councilmember Susan Ivancich to the Building Committee; currently the most urgent need for the building is an ADA compliant ramp. Councilmember Lisa Prator provided a history of the existing municipal building to the new Councilmembers.

**Budget, Finance, Insurance & Cable TV Contract:** President Prator advised that Councilmember Stephanie Steele, Lisa Prator and Karen Pfeiffer will be working on the 2025 budget beginning in September. A budget must be approved by 12/31/2024 for an 1/1/2025 effective date.

**Community Development & Grant Committee:** no update

President Prator advised the Mayor can sit in on all the Committees.

**Community Events:** President Prator advised he has added Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to the committee.

**Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes**  
**August 26, 2024**

**Fire, Safety & Police Committee:** President Prator advised that the Mayor and the Police Department handle any Police issues; this committee has met one time in 15 years.

**Ordinance Update Committee:** President Prator advised that Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer has been scanning ordinances to be placed on the website. He also advised that the Sewer Plant Ordinance needs to be reviewed and updated. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that there used to be a move in/out ordinance; and she would like to revisit the idea. In addition, consideration should be given to a Welcome Packet / Folder that could be given to new residents with information regarding Portland.

**Personnel, Policy and Procedure Committee:** will be discussed during executive session. Councilmember Lisa Prator advised that she previously wrote up some job descriptions to give the employees some guidance and President Prator thought an employee handbook could also be considered. However, previously these types of things have not been easy to get approved.

**Sanitation Committee:** President Prator advised that Solicitor Gaul wants to advertise the Garbage bid information in the Easton Express.

**Old Business:**

Striping on Pennsylvania Avenue and Main Street has been on-going, and the curbs look good. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that they went with an average for the striping.

**New Business:**

Waste water treatment plant bees – Ehrlich quote \$175.00 per service and a one-time service fee \$425.00 for the bee treatment.

**A motion was made by President Prator to approve Ehrlich to remove the bees for 175.00 per service and one-time service fee \$425.00 at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.**

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

**Executive Session:**

**A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to enter Executive Session at 8:26 P.M., to discuss personnel matters and possible litigation; seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to return from Executive Session at 8:57 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.**

President Prator asked if there was any action to be taken from executive session: None

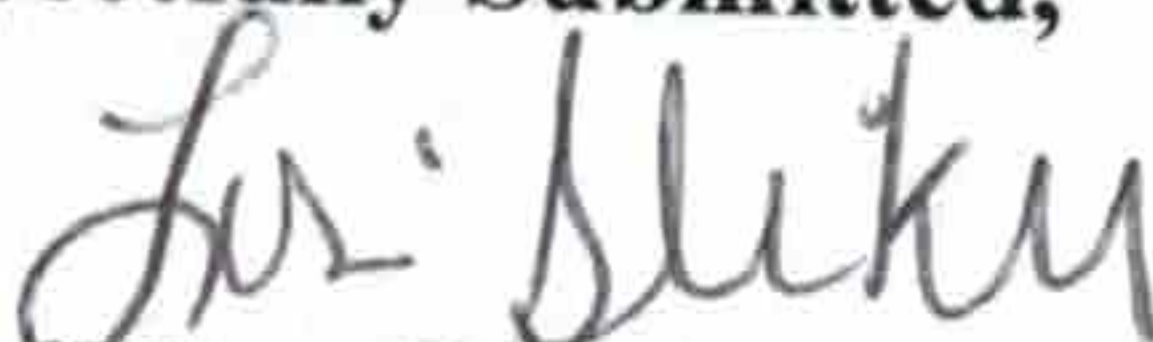
**A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to Adjourn the meeting at 8:58 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried**

**Reminder: Next meetings:**

**Monday, September 9, 2024**

**Monday, September 23, 2024**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

  
**Lori Sliker, Borough Secretary**