



**Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2024**

On November 4, 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, Karen Pfeiffer, Susan Ivancich and Bruce Cialfi were present. Patrick McHugh was absent.

Others Present – Mayor Heather Fischer, Borough Solicitor- Michael Gaul, Borough Engineer-Mark Bahnick and Borough Secretary/Treasurer-Lori Sliker were present. Also, present- Police Chief-Todd Pysher, Michael Hunsinker, Hubert McHugh,

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 was recording the meeting. No one else was 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 asked if there were any amendments to the agenda.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to approve the agenda as posted, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Action on the Meeting Minutes of September 23, 2024: President Prator asked if there were any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of September 23, 2024. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that she is listed on both the present and absent list and her name should be removed from the present list.

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to approve the September 23, 2024, Council meeting minutes with the stated correction, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Action on the Meeting Minutes of October 7, 2024: President Prator asked if there were any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of October 7, 2024.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to approve the October 7, 2024, Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Secretary/Treasurer Report:

The Secretary presented the October 2024 Financial Report for review/approval.

Bills Presented for Payment:

Borough Operations

\$ 54,220.10

Sewer Operations

\$ 37,003.42

**Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2024**

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Garbage Operations | \$ 8,043.15 |
| Estimate Payroll & Payroll Taxes, October 2024 | \$ 6,300.00 |
| Estimate WEX Sunoco Fuel, October 2024 | \$ 550.00 |
| Escrow – New Demi Rd (King Spry) | \$ 162.00 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>\$106,278.67</u> |

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the October 2024 Financial Report and pay the bills, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Public Comment:

Mayor Heather Fischer swore in Police Officer Michael Hunsicker prior to the beginning of tonight's meeting.

Route I80-Route 611 Updates: Tara Mezzanotte, Liaison:

Mayor Fischer advised that Route 611 will be opening tomorrow morning and advised that trucks should not take this route.

Borough Engineers Report: Mark Bahnick, VanCleaf Engineer

COVID Grant Project – Stormwater - none

COVID Grant Project – Sewer – none

Ultra Poly Proposed Land Development Plan Proposed Resolution 2024-23-Resolution granting conditional approval of final land development plans for Ultra-Poly Building three; and authorizing further incidental action by Borough Officials. Solicitor Gaul reviewed the conditions for final approval with the Council. In addition, Solicitor Gaul prepared a resolution with the Council for consideration.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to adopt Resolution 2024-23-Resolution granting conditional approval of final land development plans for Ultra-Poly Building three; and authorizing further incidental action by Borough Officials, seconded by Bruce Cialfi. Vote: 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Sewer Committee:

Sewer Shutoff – no sewer shutoffs; there will be one more shut off cycle before winter.

Commercial and Industrial customers required connection modifications –President Prator advised the letters went out however the Borough has not received any responses.

Portland Steel use of property/sanitary sewer requirements –no update – Solicitor Gaul advised that he needs to speak with Tina at Keller Zoning.

Kubota Sewer Membrane replacements – President Prator advised that the paperwork has been completed and the membranes should be arriving soon. Membranes should arrive within the next month.

Engagement of Special Counsel on Sewer Matters – President Prator advised that they met with Attorney S. Boell and he is willing to act as the Attorney for sewer matters. Solicitor Boell provided a quote for services on an as needed basis at \$260.00 per hour and in accordance with the letter. Councilmember Lisa Prator asked how often we will need him over the next year; because there are so many projects going on right now it is difficult to determine. Solicitor Gaul advised that some of the sewer attorney's cost may be reimbursable through professional service agreements. Mark Bahnick, Borough Engineer advised that because there is so much activity with the Sewer, having a designated attorney makes sense.

Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2024

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to hire Attorney S. Boell as the designated Borough sewer attorney on an as needed basis at \$260.00 per hour and in accordance with his letter, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

DEP Correspondence – will be discussing this matter at tomorrow’s sewer committee meeting; a payment needs to be approved - Table until next meeting

Streets Committee:

EM Kutz quote for back up camera - \$1,478.00 – President Prator reviewed a quote for back up camera for the dump truck. He advised that when trying to back up the dump truck there is zero visibility.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to purchase the back up camera for \$1,478.00 to be installed on the dump truck; seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Mark Bahnick left at 7:27 PM.

Legal:

RPL Center request for Developers Agreement regarding traffic review costs/Council approval of Developers Agreement. – no update
Alternative Parking Restrictions Enforcement – no update
Quality of Life Ordinance – no update
Reed Smith Professionals Services Agreement: no update

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to table the Reed Smith Professional Services Agreement until the next meeting, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO):

RPL East, LLC Proposed Subdivision and Planned Industrial Park Plans-current expiration date of December 31, 2024. Solicitor Gaul will speak to Mark Bahnick about getting an extension for the December 2, 2024, Council meeting.
Ultra Poly Building 3 Land Development – current decision deadline 11/19/2024. -previously completed
Proposed Borough and Township Intermunicipal Agreement on Sewer Service-no update

Zoning, Building and Property Management:

Municipal Building Ramp Replacement – President Prator sent two lift company names to Councilmember Bruce Cialfi who in turn received an estimate for an outside commercial lift costing approximately \$17,000-\$20,000.00. The estimates for the ramp replacement were over \$40,000.

Slate Hills Enterprise (SHE) – no update.

President Prator asked if a letter was sent from Zoning to 108 Division Street-the letter was sent. Chief Pysher advised that he reached out to a brother for help. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that typically his sister has helped with the yard cleanup.

Portland Borough Authority

President Prator advised that there is a drought emergency and water restrictions are in place.

Fire, Safety, Police:

Police report - Chief Pysher presented his October Police report to the council.

Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2024

Chief Pysher reviewed a quote to purchase a NOCO portable Boost GB50 for \$149.50. A 12-volt booster box for cars to keep the battery charged. They stay plugged into the cars, so they stay charged.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steel to purchase the NOCO Boost GB50 for \$149.50; seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Chief Pysher presented a quote to purchase ammunition for the Police Department in the amount of \$908.00. President Prator advised that the Borough is responsible to purchase the ammunition.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to authorize the purchase of the ammunition for \$908.00; seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Central Square E-Filing Quote - \$2,340.00 – Chief Pysher advised that the current cost is \$2,340.00 to install the E-Filing recording system. If Council approves the payment now that will lock in the price; however, the work cannot be completed until March-April 2025. There are no additional fees.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to authorize Central Square E-Filing quote price of \$2,340.00; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Park & Ride signs – Chief Pysher advised that the Park and Ride has no signage – Chief Pysher reviewed the ordinance which states no overnight parking; Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated there were signs there, but they are gone. There are people that park there and go into the city to work overnight; a disabled car was parked there for 2 weeks that needed to be removed. Chief Pysher suggested the ordinance be reviewed before any signs are placed. Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer asked if there was anything through the bridge commission regarding overnight parking. Councilmember Lisa Prator stated it would be best to hold off until we know what signs should be placed there. This item will remain on the agenda.

Chief Pysher advised that the 2015 police car has an issue with the transmission. Mayor Fischer advised that the Police are due for a new car next year and consideration if the car should be taken to a mechanic. Councilmember Lisa Prator asked that the mileage be provided for the car at the next meeting.

Fire Chief James Potter arrived at 7:47 PM.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Fischer advised she is working with the Nurture Nature Center process and will keep the Council updated. Route 611 will be opening tomorrow. The official opening will be November 9, 2024, with a parade from Delaware Water Gap and ending in Portland; no other events are planned.

Portland Community Events Committee:

Trick or Treat-October 26, 4:00-6:00 P.M.- was well attended.

Thank You letters: Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer and Lisa Prator developed a thank you letter for Slate Belt Rising, Edge of the Woods and the artist Carol Lanier for the kayaks. The secretary will put the letter on the Borough letterhead and the Council President will sign it.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to have President Prator sign the Thank You letter and send it to Slate Belt Rising, Edge of the Woods and Carol Lanier, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the Tree Lighting will be held on Sunday-December 1, 2024, at 6:30 P.M. Additional lights may be needed for the tree which takes over a mile of holiday lights; the tree is between 65-75 feet tall. It is getting hard to get the lights on the tree and Councilmember Lisa Prator asked if

Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2024

the Steele's would be opposed to a new tree; she would also like to use the smores table maker for the event and other events during the winter.

COG: President Prator advised that the next meeting is Wednesday 11/20/2024; Councilmember Bruce Cailfi attended last month's meeting.

Mayor Heather Fischer thanked the Portland Fire Company for attending the Bon Fire.

Sanitation Committee:

Trash Collection for 427 Delaware Avenue Apartments –The Council noted there is a decorative fire pit social area where the parking lot was supposed to be.

Proposed Resolution regarding Classification of Multi-Unit Apartment Buildings as Commercial Establishments for Purposes of Residential Garbage Fee – Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer advised that a decision needs to be made regarding the number of rental units in a building that will trigger the building's classification as commercial. Solicitor Gaul advised that a council member should discuss this with Sanico before the next meeting.

Dumpster for State Street property – Stoutland – Solicitor Gaul advised that upon receipt of the signed contract with Sanico this can be discussed.

Budget, Finance, Insurance & Cable TV Contract:

ARPA Grant Funds-need to be obligated by 12/31/2024. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the website is cumbersome to use and make updates; but we are working on entering a project.

Councilmember Stephanie Steele asked if the 2025 budget information was reviewed. President Prator stated he thinks the addition of 1 mill is needed. Councilmember Lisa Prator stated that things are continually increasing and that to cover those increases an additional 1 mill is needed.

The consensus of Borough Council was to approve the presented proposed budget with the 1 mill real estate tax increase. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the two grants, and the fire company grant will be included in the proposed budgets.

Solicitor Gaul advised that the possible fire truck financing may need to be reflected in the budget; he asked Chief Potter to send him the terms for the potential financing for purchase of a fire truck. Chief Potter stated the fire truck would not be available until November 2025–January 2026. The consensus of Council was that the possible financing would not be included in the proposed budget as no decision had been made concerning the matter, but that the Council will consider the matter in the future and possibly adjust the budget in 2025 depending on the availability of funds or adjust the financing to reflect the Borough's future budgeting requirements.

Solicitor Gaul will prepare the ordinance and resolutions as needed for the Sewer, Garbage and General Fund budgets. Solicitor Gaul advised that there should be sufficient time to advertise the availability of the proposed budget and adopt the final budgets at the December 2nd meeting. The new garbage contract costs were discussed by the Council; the yearly garbage fee will be \$450.00.

A motion was made by Karen Pfeiffer to approve the Sewer, Garbage and the General Fund budget with a 1 mill increase, seconded by Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried

Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2024

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to authorize the Solicitor to prepare and advertise an ordinance to increase the real estate tax by 1 mill, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Plan Slate Belt: President Prator advised that the comment period is over. Lehigh Valley Planning Commission is tentatively scheduled to come to the December 2nd Portland meeting for a public hearing on the proposed Comprehensive Plan. Solicitor Gaul advised that if Portland adopts the plan the zoning ordinance may need to be updated to conform to the policy goals. In addition, he advised that the plan is still showing Delaware Avenue as Route 611. President Prator advised that Slate Belt is doing the advertising and possible court reporter for the meeting. President Prator will confirm the December 2nd date; once confirmed it will be placed on the December 2nd agenda.

Mayor Heather Fischer left at 8:43 P.M. and returned at 8:45 P.M.

Slate Belt Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan Intermunicipal Cooperative Implementation Agreement-no update.

Resolution Adopting Plan Slate Belt Multi-Comprehensive Plan-no update

Slate Belt Rising: Councilmember Stephanie Steele said the Kayaks have been a big hit; there are covers to protect them during winter storage and displayed again in the Spring.

Personnel – none

Liberty Water Gap Trail Alliance: President Prator advised that the next meeting is November 20, 2024, at 9:00 A.M.-Upper Mount Bethel Township Municipal Building. The intermunicipal agreements for the counties have been signed; there is \$50,000 for Park Service, Penn Dot and Monroe County for Phase 2 corridor study.

Old Business:

President Prator advised that Pastor Phil's equipment is on the property and asked that Pastor Phil complete the paperwork prior to placing equipment in the future.

President Prator advised that he is not aware what is going on with Terry Abramson's dumpster.

New Business:

Safe Street Grant – East Bangor Mayor is a grant writer and looking to do a safe street grant and he asking Portland to provide a support letter – President Prator will reach out to the Mayor for more information.

President Prator presented Councilmember Stephanie Steele with an Outstanding Volunteer award.

Public Comment: Non-Agenda:

Resident Hubert McHugh advised that a grey truck is parked out on the yellow lines in the street (in front of Duckloe Building) downtown coming up Main Street. Chief Pyscher will review the matter.

Chief Potter advised that H&K billed the stone that the Portland Borough Authority purchased to the Borough in error. The borough secretary will call H&K and have the invoice corrected.

**Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2024**

Executive Session:

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to enter Executive Session at 9:05 P.M., to discuss legal matters with the Solicitor and personnel issues; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

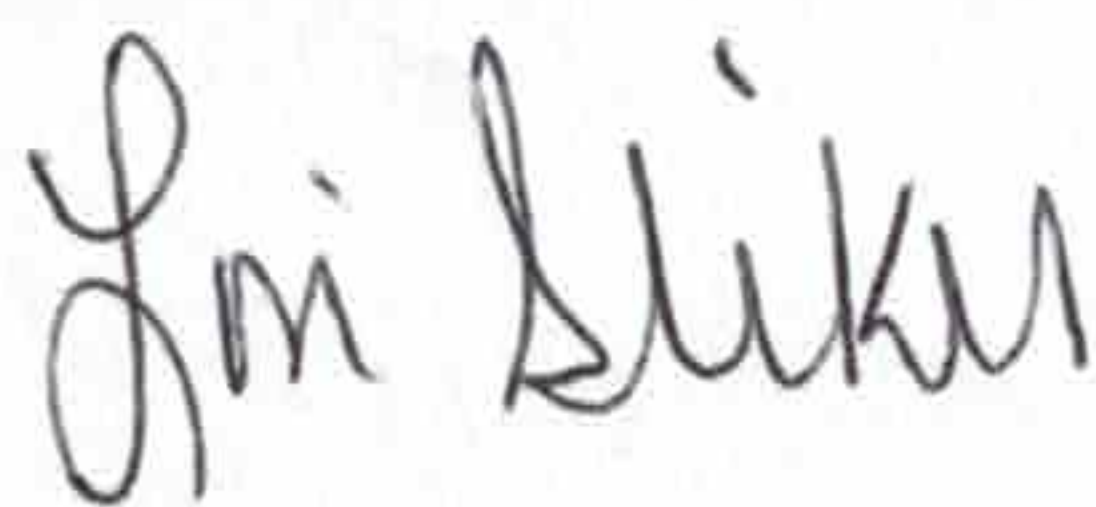
A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to return from Executive Session at 9:26 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

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

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried

**Reminder: Next meetings: Monday, November 25, 2024
Monday, December 2, 2024**

Respectfully Submitted,



Lori Sliker, Borough Secretary

