



Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes February 24, 2025

On February 24, 2025, 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, Lisa Prator, Susan Ivancich and Bruce Cialfi were present. Karen Pfeiffer and Patrick McHugh were absent.

Others Present – Sewer Solicitor Steven Boell from FLB (via phone), Mark Bahnick, VanCleeef Engineering, Borough Secretary/Treasurer-Lori Sliker were present. Also, present-Craig LaBarre.

Mayor Heather Fischer and Borough Solicitor Michael Gaul were absent.

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 the Mayor, 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 Lisa Prator. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Action on the Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2025: President Prator advised that Mayor Fischer had sent an email indicating the next meeting date was wrong and should reflect February 24th; does anyone else have any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of January 27, 2025.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve January 27, 2025, Council meeting minutes as presented with the stated correction, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 4-0-1 (Lisa Prator abstained); Motion Carried.

Handicap Lift Presentation-AmeriGlide – The scheduled presenter did not attend the meeting.

Public Comment: None

Sewer Solicitor Steve Boell joined the meeting at 7:05 P.M. via speaker phone.

Borough Engineers Report: Mark Bahnick, Tyler Evans-VanCleeef Engineer

COVID Grant Project–Stormwater - Mr. Bahnick advised that Sewer Solicitor's office completed the title searches, they have the information. There are several storm sewer lines that are close too or in the right-of-way of streets and they have to determine the right-a-ways; they have requested right-of-way information from the Borough. Mr. Labarre will review the sewer plans to see if they provide any information. President Prator advised that Ronald Angle's property has an easement; however, was anything on Hubert McHugh's property found. Mr. Bahnick advised that the McHugh property does not have an easement.

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COVID Grant Project–Sewer – Mr. Bahnick advised that the sewer screens have been ordered; construction has been authorized, and bond insurance documentation is being processed.

Lamtec Sewer Service Request – Plan Review & Letter – Mr. Bahnick advised there are a several sewer service requests but multiple things must take place to provide service: 1. Planning module process 2. DEP sewer plan approval 3. DRBC review 4. Plan Review Comments 5. Document finalized. President Prator stated that the Borough has received a second submission from Lamtec of the planning module for sewer service; while the Borough agreed to discuss providing sewer service to Lamtec it was not approved. The intermunicipal agreement has not been completed and DEP has not approved anything yet. Without the agreement and DEP approval there will be nothing to move forward with. Councilmember Stephanie Steele asked who is paying for this; Sewer Solicitor Boell stated that we can request reimbursement through UMBT.

Planning Modules – DEP Review- DRBC Review-no update.

Sewer Committee:

Commercial & Industrial customer require connection modifications – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that we need discuss the sewer ordinance. Sewer Solicitor Boell advised that the Ordinance speaks about the separators on page 9 as being “readily and easily accessible”; however, no where is it stated in the ordinance that they should be installed inside or outside. Mr. Bahnick provided the council with page 9 of the ordinance for their reference. Mr. Bahnick stated they would prefer the separators to be located on the outside of the building; however, it would depend on where the plumbing is located on the inside of the building. Mr. Bahnick’s stated that Jon Valance should be fine as the plumbing is close to the wall; he has not been able to view the other locations. President Prator asked if these could be done on a case-by-case basis; Sewer Solicitor Boell advised the other businesses could express preferential treatment. Sewer Solicitor Boell stated that section 4.10 of the ordinance allows for inspections. Mr. Bahnick stated if the separators are inside and we have access to complete inspections that could meet the needs. Councilmember Lisa Prator asked if the separator is inside would a set minimum/maximum number of inspections be allowed; the solicitor advised that advanced notice may be necessary to enter the building. President Prator asked what a reasonable inspection frequency would be; Craig LaBarre stated that once or twice a month at the Borough discretion would be acceptable. Sewer Solicitor Boell advised he would like some time to read and research this matter. Mr. LaBarre asked if it would be possible to require paperwork showing that the oil from the separators has been properly disposed of; Solicitor Boell stated that they will look at this also. Solicitor will get back to the Council on Monday.

President Prator advised that the reed beds have been cut down. Mr. LaBarre stated that the cut reeds need to be removed. Councilmember Stephanie Steele will ask J.P. Potter if he wants to come back to remove them.

Sewer Solicitor Boell has a conflict for Monday – he will have someone else call in.

Sewer Solicitor Boell ended his call at 7:35 PM; Craig LaBarre and Mark Bahnick also left at 7:35 P.M.

Route I80-Route 611 Updates: Tara Mezzanotte, Liaison

President Prator advised that Ms. Mezzanotte is at the UMBT meeting.

Streets Committee: President Prator advised that they will be scheduling a street meeting with Mr. Farleigh. Street sweeper rental will be April 14 & 15 and May 19& 20, 2025; the secretary will email COG to reserve those dates.

Zoning, Building and Property Management:

Generator – received two quotes for the generator with a third one pending.

Elevator – In addition to the lift the stairs would need to be reinforced as they are hollow. Councilmember Lisa Prator stated that this building is in such disrepair and requires extensive work; would it be best to consider a new structure. (prefab building/shell). After some discussions the Councilmembers decided to put together a list of what they want/need for a new building and send it for RFP estimates.

Budget, Finance, Insurance & Cable TV Contract: None

Community Development & Grant Committee:

Municipal Building ADA compliant lift & generator-grant – no update.

President Prator advised he sent out the information from his Grant training for everyone to view.

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LSA Grant – Council is looking at applying for a Borough truck and a police car.

Portland Community Events Committee: Councilmember Lisa Prator stated the Easter Egg hunt needs to be planned - April 19th. The ball field needs to be cleaned up. In addition, consideration to purchase a dog poop station and place a garbage can at the ball field was discussed.

Fire, Safety & Police Committee:

Resolution 2025 - 04: Resolution of the Borough of Portland for destruction of specific records within the Police Department.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to adopt Resolution #2025-04, Resolution of the Borough of Portland for destruction of specific records within the Police Department, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Signature for disposition of records:

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to authorize the Council President to sign the disposition records as presented, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Paper shredder – (\$375.00 + delivery charge if any) Amazon (split- police/borough)

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to authorize the police to purchase a small business commercial shredder for \$375.00 + delivery charge if any, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Ordinance Update Committee: Ordinance regulating the vehicles, traffic and parking regulations-President Prator advised that Solicitor Gaul will bring his comments to the next meeting.

Personnel, Policy and Procedure Committee: Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that we may need to hire someone to work in the spring; she stated a resident approached her and expressed his interest in working for the borough. Councilmember Stephanie Steele will reach out to the resident about working this spring.

Sanitation Committee: President Prator advised that the Stoutland's have decided to keep their garbage cans instead of paying an additional \$60.00 a month for a dumpster. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the solicitor dissected the sanitation ordinance and showed Sanico and Ms. Abramson that they were in breach of contract for the borough. Ms. Abramson will pay her sanitation fees are required by Borough Ordinance.

COG: President Prator advised the COG meeting is next week.

Plan Slate Belt:

Next meeting March 6, 2025-Pen Argyl @ 7:00 PM.

Slate Belt Rising:

Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the scholarship information is on their website, and she will post it on the borough's Facebook page. There is an application process for commercial building to complete for the Commercial building power washing program.

Old Business:

Borough phones – no update

New Business:

Hazard Mitigation Plan- President Prator advised that the borough must adopt a hazard mitigation plan every 3 years- Council members will review the link for discussion. This will be tabled until the next meeting.

Draft Tenant Tax letter – Mr. James Steele sent a letter regarding tenants in Portland that still have NJ license plates on their vehicles. Tenants need to change their residence to Portland; we are missing out on an income stream by not having the tenants change their residences and by not having permits to move in/out. Councilmember Lisa Prator would like to work on a welcome packet including the move in/out ordinance.

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Election location discussion – President Prator advised that he met with the county about the elections being held in the garage – the county provided a list of things that will be required.

Council Seat resignation / Vacant seat posting – Councilmember Lisa Prator asked to table this until the next meeting. It will remain on the agenda.

Certified Flagger Training – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that she wanted to send Fred Farleigh to the certified flagger training for \$50.00; he can then help Upper Mount Bethel Township and Bangor.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve Fred Farleigh to attend the Certified Flagger Training-\$50.00; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Intermunicipal agreement with Upper Mount Bethel Township – President Prator advised that Solicitor Gaul had sent the agreement out for review/discussion. The agreement must be sent to UMBT for review by the township manager and solicitor. Councilmember Lisa Prator stated that before we discuss adopting the agreement we should send it to UMBT to review and see if they need anything changed.

A motion was made by President Lance Prator to send the Intermunicipal agreement to Upper Mount Bethel for Manager and Solicitor review, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

President Prator asked if there was any other new business. The borough secretary advised the Council members that she received a letter stating the liquid fuels monies will be deposited on March 3, 2025.

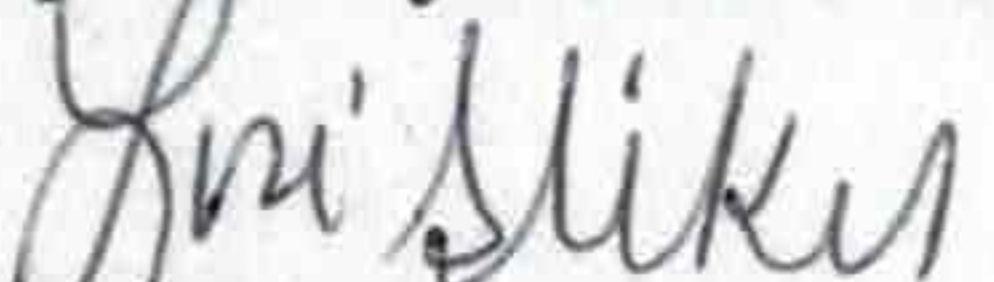
Public Comment: Non-Agenda: None

Executive Session: None

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to Adjourn the meeting at 8:45 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried

**Reminder: Next meetings: Monday, March 3, 2025
 Monday, March 24, 2025**

Respectfully Submitted,


Lori Sliker, Borough Secretary

