



## **Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes March 24, 2025**

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

**Others Present** –Mayor Heather Fischer, Mark Bahnick, VanCleef Engineering, and Borough Secretary/Treasurer - Lori Sliker were present. Also, present-Craig LaBarre, Tara Mezzanotte, Chief Todd Pysher, Dallas Dayton and Ms. Dayton.

Borough Solicitor Michael Gaul and Sewer Solicitor Steve Boell 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. Mayor Heather Fischer advised she is also recording the 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 President Lance Prator to move Tara Mezzanotte's Route I80-Route 611 Updates from agenda item #22 to agenda item #7, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried**

**A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to approve the agenda as posted with the approved movement, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**Action on the Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2025:** President Prator asked if there were any changes to the February 24, 2025, Council meeting minutes.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve February 24, 2025, Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**Public Comment:** Route I80-Route 611 Update-Tara Mezzanotte advised that the Explore Act email was sent to the Council members to review and consider. President Prator asked Ms. Mezzanotte to provide a quick reminder of the Explore Act; which she provided. Ms. Mezzanotte advised that Portland and the surrounding areas are considered Gateway Communities and there will be opportunity to be considered as one of the 10 gateway communities to be included in the Explore's Act. A resolution has been sent to the Solicitor for review; this will be discussed at the next meeting.

Dallas Dayton-Eagle Scout Project for Troop 41. Mr. Dayton had spoken to Mayor Fischer about doing a project for Portland; they were considering construction of a locked display case for the Pokey. The estimated cost would be \$2,500.00 which he will ask local businesses to donate. The project needs to be

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completed by May 15<sup>th</sup>. The Council approved the construction of one case and construction of a shadow box to display a historical document on a wall in the Pokey. The secretary will provide Mr. Dayton with a letter.

### **Borough Engineers Report: Mark Bahnick, VanCleeef Engineer**

COVID Grant Project–Stormwater - Mr. Bahnick provided Council with documentation showing the rights-of-way for the brough streets, which he reviewed with Council. The next step is to identify areas outside of the rights-of-way and to resolve any issues and begin planning for the construction activity.

COVID Grant Project–Sewer – Mr. Bahnick advised that the sewer screens shop drawings have been received which will be reviewed at the next meeting. Upon approval they will be fabricated and delivered for installation.

Lamtec Planning Modules – Mr. Bahnick had provided comments; however, he has not heard anything back. The construction drawings letter will be reviewed this week.

Portland-UMBT Sewer Service Intermunicipal Agreement- solicitor review

### **Sewer Committee:**

Commercial & Industrial customer –Mr. Bahnick provided an update on the oil separator installations; several businesses have been approved for the installation and the others will continue to be addressed. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that most of the separators will be installed inside the buildings. President Prator will reach out to Solicitor Boell regarding the agreements. The Council would like to be provided some basic information regarding permits; the secretary will provide Council with her spreadsheet and in addition she will touch base with Keller Zoning to see if additional information on possible permits can be provided.

Sewer liens – President Prator advised that sewer liens will be sent to Solicitor Boell for review/action.

EDMR – The EDMR report was provided in the packet for Councils review. Mr. LaBarre advised that the EDMR numbers are good; although last week the numbers were high, however he believes it was a lab error. The hot water heater is broken in the sewer plant; he received quotes for a new one. It will be placed on the April 7<sup>th</sup> agenda for consideration to purchase. Mr. LaBarre advised that when the lab company was at the plant to do testing, they dropped a specimen cup, and the cup caused a clog; Allstate came to remove the clog. Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated that the bill from Allstate should go to the lab for payment. Mr. LaBarre would like to be advised when the bill is received.

President Prator advised that the Authority and the Borough met with the ABC company, and they may be interested in affluent discharge water; however, they do not think they will need sewer service.

R&K Hess requested a letter of recommendation for Portland Borough Authority.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to write a letter of recommendation for Portland Borough Authority; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.**

Mark Bahnick & Craig LaBarre left the meeting at 7:50 PM

**Streets Committee:** President Prator advised that they will be scheduling a street meeting with Mr. Farleigh and Mr. Potter at which time they will discuss the street repairs and the manhole paving. Councilmember Stephanie Steele asked if they 3 remaining manhole repairs could be completed all at one time. Councilmember Lisa Prator asked if the street employees could put together a proposal to do the manhole repairs with an estimate. Street sweeper rental dates will be emailed to the Council. Discussions were held regarding hiring a part-time seasonal employee for downtown this year.

### **Zoning, Building and Property Management:**

Generator – Hunter & Sons quote was received for a generator and after some discussions it was decided that they will apply through the Post Foundation for a generator. If the Borough had a generator the building

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could be utilized as a cooling/heating and charging station for the residents during power outages. The Grants Committee will apply for the grant which is due April 1, 2025. Councilmember Lisa Prator will send out what she thinks the office would need if a new building was considered.

Elevator/lift – In addition to the lift, the stairs would need to be reinforced as they are hollow. President Prator advised that he spoke to Jason Abbott, and he advised that there are plans for a ramp at his office that had been previously approved. 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 – previously discussed.

President Prator advised that he attended the Northampton County COG meeting – Portland needs to do some community outreach programs.

**Portland Community Events Committee:** Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that she met with Councilmember Bruce Cialfi and Susan Ivancich regarding community events and went over the events they have been doing. Councilmember Lisa Prator is currently working on the Easter Egg hunt – April 19, 2025, at noon - Ball Field.

**Fire, Safety & Police Committee:**

Taser Instructor Class-May 1, 2025, Easton Police Dept-Chief Pysher advised that the cost of the class is \$895.00 for a 2-day class. Chief Pysher spoke to Officer Dean who is the defensive tactical trainer, and he would be interested in taking the training. The training is repeated every 2 years and if Officer Dean leaves Portland he would be willing to reimburse Portland on a prorated basis. This will remain on the agenda for the next meeting. Officer Pysher will send out a video on how to operate the AED.

**Ordinance Update Committee:**

The Council continues to discuss implementing a move-in-and-out permit.

**Personnel, Policy and Procedure Committee:** none

**Sanitation Committee:** President Prator advised that he contacted Sanico asking for any donations for the cleanup day (April 26, 2025) such as vests or gloves. Sanico agreed to donate vests/gloves and a dumpster which will be placed at the Park & Walk.

**COG:** President Prator updated the Council on the ambulance meeting at the township. The Slate Belt COG will act as the liaison.

**Plan Slate Belt:**

President Prator advised he brought in maps for the borough. President Prator advised that Plan Slate Belt is planning a Plan Slate Belt party.

**Slate Belt Rising:** Litter Clean Up – Councilmember Stephanie Steele will send out the link with the details.

**Liberty water Gap Trail Alliance:**

Meeting minutes were provided in the Council packet. President Prator advised that they are currently planning an event for September. They will continue their monthly meetings.

**Old Business:**

Borough phones – tabled

Pet Waste Eliminator Quote – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that this is a metal pet waste station for \$299.00. Chief Pysher asked if an ordinance sign could be placed on the waste station.

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**A motion was made by President Prator to purchase the Metal Pet Waste Eliminator for \$299.00; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**New Business:**

**A motion was made by President Prator to authorize the purchase of Taser cartridges for \$223.00, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.**

Truck on Pennsylvania Avenue & Main Street email – President Prator reviewed the email with Council; it is difficult to monitor and address without a full-time police force.

President Prator advised that the elections will not be at the Borough garage but held again at the Fire Station on Route 611. He also advised that there are 3 council seats and a tax collector listed on the ballot.

President Prator advised that Portland received a letter indicating that our Emergency Management Plan is overdue. The Fire Chief and the secretary have a meeting scheduled to work on updating the information.

President Prator advised he was approached by a code enforcement officer regarding providing zoning services for the Borough; he provided a proposal. President Prator asked the secretary to advise council what the current zoning officer rate is.

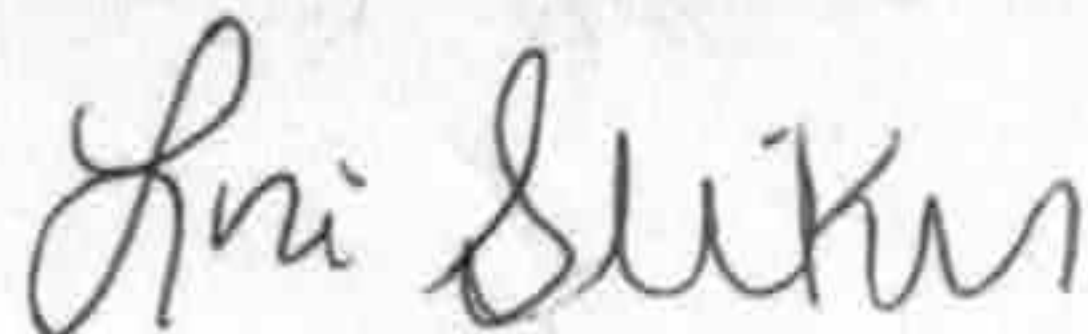
**Public Comment: Non-Agenda: None**

**Executive Session: None**

**A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to Adjourn the meeting at 9:12 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried**

**Reminder: Next meetings:                      Monday, April 7, 2025  
Monday, April 28, 2025**

**Respectfully Submitted,**



**Lori Sliker, Borough Secretary**

