



**Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2025**

On March 3, 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, Vice-President, Lisa Prator, Bruce Cialfi and Susan Ivancich were present. Karen Pfeiffer and Patrick McHugh were absent.

Others Present – Mayor Heather Fischer, Borough Solicitor-Michael Gaul, Borough Engineer-Mark Bahnick and Borough Secretary/Treasurer-Lori Sliker were present. Also, present for part of the meeting - Police Chief-Todd Pysher, Fire Chief - James Potter and Tara Mezzanotte. No other members of the public 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 was recording the meeting. Mayor Heather Fischer said she is 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 Lisa Prator to approve the agenda as posted, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Action on the Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2025: President Prator asked if there were any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of February 3, 2025.

A motion was made by President Lance Prator to approve February 3, 2025, Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 4-0-1 (Lisa Prator abstained); Motion Carried.

Secretary/Treasurer Report:

The Secretary presented the February 2025 Financial Report for review/approval.

Bills Presented for Payment:

Borough Operations	\$ 33,047.82
Sewer Operations	\$ 35,977.07
Garbage Operations	\$ 8,292.00
Estimate Payroll & Payroll Taxes, March 2025	\$ 6,300.00
Estimate WEX Sunoco Fuel, March 2025	\$ 550.00
Escrow –Reed Smith (King, Spry) & Ultra Poly 3 (VanCleaf)	\$ 468.00
<u>TOTAL</u>	\$ 84,634.59

Transfer \$50,000.00 from the Real Estate Fund to the General Fund to cover expenses.

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A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve the February 2025 Financial Report, as presented, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to pay the Borough bills, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to transfer \$50,000.00 from the Real Estate Fund to the General Fund to cover expenses, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Public Comment: None

Route I80-Route 611 Updates-Tara Mezzanotte, Liaison

Ms. Mezzanotte provided a summary of Route I-80- section 106 consulted & interested parties email that was previously circulated. The consensus of Borough Council was that the Borough Secretary will reply to the email and state that the Council members want to be included; the Borough Secretary will provide all Council member emails. The Explore Act was passed and signed into law which includes visitor use and impacts on our mutual aid and within 10 months 10 communities will be identified to participate in the program. Warren County passed a resolution asking that each community ask federal legislators to include us as a gateway community. Ms. Mezzanotte will send out the 3-page resolution and 100-page Explore Act to the Council for review. President Prator and Vice-President Stephanie Steele agreed that Portland should be included in this program.

Attorney Frank D'Amore (FL&B) from Sewer Solicitor Steve Boell's office joined the meeting at 7:16 PM.

Solicitor Gaul reminded the Council that even though no members of the public were present at this time, comments made by Council and the attorney would be considered public information unless they go into an Executive Session.

Borough Engineer's Report - Mark Bahnick, Van Cleef

Stormwater Grant Project – Mr. Bahnick advised that they are looking for information on the rights-of-way for the Borough roads. Mr. Bahnick noted that the Borough Secretary had placed near her seat at the Council table certain road maps that he would take with him to review. Solicitor Gaul expressed concern about the maps leaving the Borough offices as they were ancient and in poor condition. Solicitor Gaul said that he may also have PDFs of some of the plans, which he obtained from PENNDOT archives. Mr. Bahnick said he would review the plans at the Borough when he was there on another occasion in the future.

Sewer Grant Project – project is on-going.

Lamtec Sewer Service-Mr. Bahnick advised that a set of plans and modules were received and reviewed. A letter was sent out today to Upper Mount Bethel Township.

Sewer Committee – Stephanie Steele

Penn Power Systems – Councilmember Stephanie Steele will follow-up with Craig LaBarre.

Ultra Poly - Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised the \$1,300.00 check has been received for partial reimbursement of the Borough's DEP Consent Assessment Penalty.

Commercial and Industrial customer required connection modifications –Attorney D'Amore advised that to have the ability for inspections of the separators to occur inside the building, Portland would need approval to enter the buildings. If the owners refuse to allow entry to inspect and test the separators a warrant would have to be sought. There are some concerns that if the business is aware of an inspection they could clean out the separators; in addition, there are some concerns regarding proper disposal of the collected oil. An agreement

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would have to be signed between the company and the Borough. President Prator asked if the documents could be ready by the end of the month for review. Councilmember Lisa Prator stated that unless there is a legitimate reason to have the separator inside the building it would be best to have access from outside. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that Solicitor Boell was going to review the ordinance for clarification if they could require some businesses to install the separator outside; an update was not available.

Proposed Intermunicipal agreement – President Prator asked if there is any action to be taken-none

Attorney Frank D'Amore ended his remote connection at 7:35 P.M.

Mark Bahnick left the meeting at 7:35 P.M.

Streets Committee: President Prator advised that he spoke to Ms. Abramson regarding the asphalt ramp and she stated she will be getting rid of the ramp; he will follow-up with her again. A streets meeting will be scheduled. The street sweeper May dates may need to be changed as Mr. Farleigh is on vacation; however, President Prator advised that Mr. Potter can run it.

Legal:

Alternative Parking Restrictions Enforcement – no update

Quality of Life Ordinance – no update

UMBT Equipment Sharing Agreement – awaiting response from Upper Mount Bethel Township

Ellis Bankruptcy – will be discussed during Executive Session.

Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO):

RPL East, LLC Proposed Subdivision Plan -current deadline March 31, 2025. The Borough received an offer of extension through July 1, 2025, for Borough review and decision on the Plan.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to accept the RPL East, LLC Proposed Subdivision Plan offer of extension through July 1, 2025, for Borough review and decision on the Plan; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion carried.

RPL East, LLC Proposed Planned Industrial Park Plan-current deadline March 31, 2025. The Borough received an offer of extension through July 1, 2025, for Borough review and decision on the Plan.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to accept the RPL East, LLC Proposed Planned Industrial Park Plan offer of extension through July 1, 2025, for Borough review and decision on the Plan; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Proposed Borough and Township Intermunicipal Agreement on Sewer Service. – Solicitor Gaul confirmed that the referenced proposed agreement concerned sewer service to the proposed Ultra-Poly Building 3.

Zoning, Building and Property Management:

Municipal Building Ramp Replacement – Councilmember Bruce Cialfi advised that he reached out to the lift presenter who was a no show at the last meeting; he has not returned the call. Councilmember Lisa Prator expressed concerns about the building being safe to occupy and asked the Council to consider alternatives such as a prefab building or modular. Solicitor Gaul advised that if the Borough is not using the building for municipal purposes there may be a reverter clause in the deed stating the schoolhouse goes back to the school district; the secretary will pull the deed for their review. The Council will continue to discuss the possible options.

Slate Hills Enterprise (SHE) – none

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Portland Borough Authority – President Prator advised that they received complaints the last time they did the meter readings, they purchased magnetic door signs for the vehicles.

Street Sweeper – Chief Potter was asked if he was available to operate the street sweeper in May; he advised he will not be available. The secretary will email Laura at COG to request a date change for May.

Fire, Safety, Police:

Police report - Chief Pysher presented the February 2025 Police Report. The Chief advised that he added 2 additional incidents to his report. Purchase of new AED – received 4 quotes. AED USA quote - \$1,880.00 - for a new AED and this was the lowest bid.

A motion was made by President Prator to purchase the AED USA for \$1,880.00; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Chief Pysher advised that Officer Darryl Hatter resigned effective March 6, 2025.

Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that a donation was received from Roseto Gun Club for both the Fire Company and the Police. Chief Potter explained that when the Gun Club profits from their small games of chance they are required to donate 70% of the proceeds. The secretary will send a Thank You letter to the Gun Club on behalf of the Police Department.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Fischer advised that the Police Department has prepared a draft 18-page application/HR compliances and asked whether the Solicitor should review the draft document. Solicitor Gaul advised that yes, it should be reviewed by his office. Mayor Fischer applied for the grant for 2025 Founder's Day. The Borough was awarded \$5,000.00. She will begin the planning process. The Mayor would like to have a parade for National Families Day on September 22, 2025; this will be discussed further.

Ordinance Committee: Solicitor Gaul stated he has some questions and comments in regard to the draft Vehicle, Traffic and Parking Regulation Ordinance that Chief Pysher sent; he will email his questions and comments to Chief Pysher, Stephanie Steele and Bruce Cialfi.

Portland Community Events Committee:

Egg Hunt – no update

Dog Station – no update

Councilmembers Bruce Cialfi & Susan Ivancich will meet with Mayor Heather Fischer and Councilmember Stephanie Steele regarding the Events Committee.

COG: President Prator advised that the COG is hosting a gala in October – Megan Pulpz is planning the gala.

Community Development & Grant Committee:

Lowe's Hometown – remove

Post Foundation – lift and generator

LSA Grant – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that they are watching for filing dates for the LSA Grants for both the borough truck & the police car.

Sanitation Committee:

President Prator advised that everything seems to be running very well.

Budget, Finance, Insurance & Cable TV Contract: none

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Plan Slate Belt:

Plan Slate Belt agreement was sent to the Council members and should be reviewed. Solicitor Gaul reviewed the steps with the Council and that there are numerous things to be addressed such as advisory committee needs to be set up, changes to the ordinances, 537 plans, Saldo and zoning could all be impacted. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that zoning will be worked on at the next Plan Slate Belt meeting. Solicitor Gaul had questions about how the advisory committee will be set up and how it will operate. He will e-mail his questions to the steering committee.

Slate Belt Rising: Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the scholarship application and the commercial power washing application are both on the website. April 26th is the Slate Belt litter clean up day and she is the team captain. Solicitor Gaul will provide a case of water for the event. President Prator will contact Les Moore from Sanico regarding a donation.

Personnel – none

Liberty Water Gap Trail Alliance: President Prator advised the next meeting will be March 19, 2025, 6:00 PM -Delaware Water Gap. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that Ms. Cindy Fish asked Council for permission to open the Pokey on Sundays in the afternoon; President Prator will contact her for more details.

Old Business:

Borough Phones – no update

Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption-President Prator advised that every 3 years we adopt the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Resolution #2025-05 was provided for Council review.

Proposed written Resolution #2025-05, titled “Adopting the Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan Update” was presented for Council review.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to adopt Resolution #2025-05, titled “Adopting the Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

New Business:

Council seat resignation – Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer previously submitted her resignation; however, she sent an email asking to withdraw her resignation and to stay on Council. Solicitor Gaul advised that the Council has 45 days to vote on a resignation and since they did not accept the resignation, she can withdraw her request. The secretary will send her an email indicating she can retain her position.

Public Comment Non-Agenda:

Fire Chief Potter advised that trees need to be cut back. The ladder on the fire truck was hit when responding to a call on High Street. Pastor Phil, Chief Pysher and Chief Potter will work on getting the trees cut back.

Executive Session:

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to enter Executive Session at 8:47 P.M. to discuss legal matters with the Solicitor, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to return from Executive Session at 9:07 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Solicitor Gaul left the meeting at 9:07 P.M.

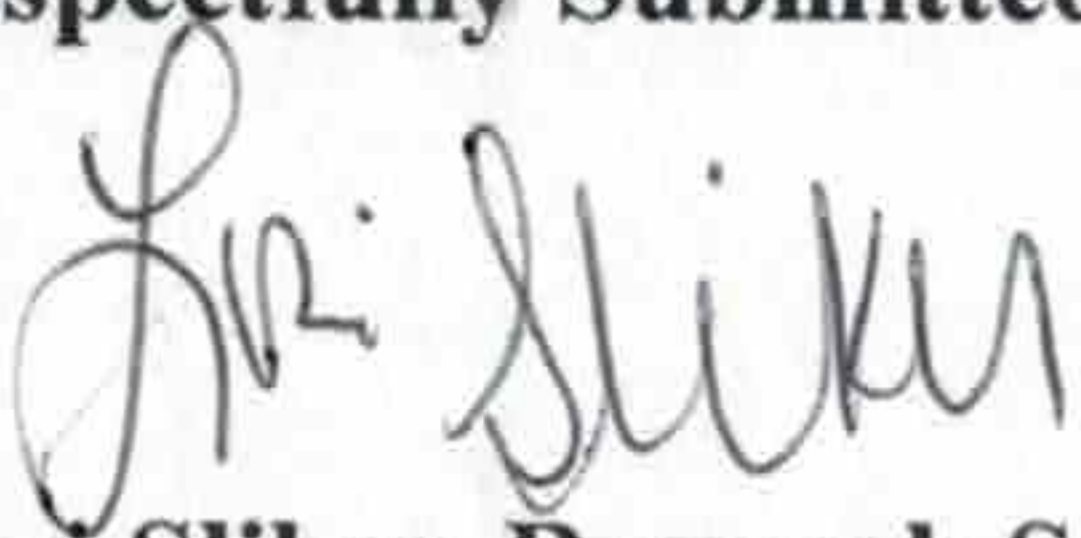
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President Prator asked if there was any action to be taken out of Executive Session. None

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried

**Reminder: Next meetings: Monday, March 24, 2025
 Monday, April 7, 2025**

Respectfully Submitted,



Lori Sliker, Borough Secretary

