



**Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2025**

On September 8, 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, Bruce Cialfi, Susan Ivancich and Karen Pfeiffer were present. Patrick McHugh was absent.

Others Present –Mayor Heather Fischer and Borough Secretary/Treasurer-Lori Sliker were present. Also, present- Borough Solicitor-Michael Gaul, Chief of Police-Todd Pysher, Fred Farleigh, Hubert McHugh, Cindy Fish and Kenny Golden. Borough Engineer-Mark Bahnick was 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 was recording the meeting. Mayor Fischer indicated she is recording the meeting for her personal use.

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. None were requested.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the September 8, 2025, agenda as posted, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Action on the Meeting Minutes of August 4, 2025: President Prator asked if there were any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of August 4, 2025. No changes were requested.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve August 4, 2025, Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-1 (S. Steele abstained); Motion Carried.

Secretary/Treasurer Report:

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

Bills Presented for Payment:	
Borough Operations	\$ 24,339.52
Sewer Operations	\$ 27,912.35
Garbage Operations	\$ 9,294.86
Estimate Payroll & Payroll Taxes, September 2025	\$ 6,300.00
Estimate WEX Sunoco Fuel, September 2025	\$ 550.00
Escrow –Lamtec/UMBT (FLB)	\$ 6,327.00
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$ 74,723.73</u>

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A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve the August 2025 Financial Report, as presented, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to pay the Borough bills, as presented, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Golden Property Maintenance Code Appeal- Solicitor Gaul advised that he corresponded with Tina Serfass, Keller Zoning and while there is some improvement the property is not completely cleaned up. Solicitor Gaul asked Council if they would like to consider another postponement of this matter until the October meeting, providing additional time for Mr. Golden to continue the cleanup. Mr. Golden asked if Tina Serfass was going to contact him and advise him of what she expected; Solicitor believes that she has spoken to his brother but will ask her to contact Mr. Golden as the homeowner. Solicitor asked Mr. Golden if he had reached out to the County for some assistance and he stated no; Solicitor Gaul encouraged him to contact them for some assistance. Solicitor Gaul confirmed with Mr. Golden that this will be tabled until the October 6th meeting.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to carry over the appeal to the first meeting of October, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

President Prator advised that COG does have an appeals board for property maintenance code issues which Portland can adopt; Solicitor Gaul stated the Ordinance, and the process will have to be reviewed. President Prator will have the COG secretary send the Ordinance to the Solicitor.

Public Comment: none

Route I80-Route 611 Updates: Tara Mezzanotte – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that paving is tentatively scheduled from Rt 512 to the Train Trestle and then Fire house to where they left off (4.5 miles stretch). Wild and Scenic Delaware emails were sent out and Council should review.

Borough Engineer's Report - Mark Bahnick, Van Cleef

President Prator advised that Mr. Bahnick had a prior commitment and unable to attend.

Sewer Committee – Stephanie Steele

Commercial and Industrial customer required connection modifications – no update

Sewer Inspection Agreement – no update

Amended Sewer Ordinance – no update

Proposed Borough and Township Intermunicipal agreement on Sewer Service. -no update

Lamtec – VanCleaf letter-authorize for President to sign planning module. – Tabled

Computer Chairs for WWTP (2) – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that they are requesting two (2) computer chairs; after some discussions one chair was approved not to exceed \$150.00.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to purchase one office chair not to exceed \$150.00 for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Sewer Shut-Off's:

Acct. 248-533 Delaware Avenue–Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that this account was paid-there are no shutoffs.

Waste Water Treatment Plant – President Prator stated a fan went down at the plant and needs to be replaced-put on next agenda.

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Streets Committee:

Garage ceiling in house estimated materials - \$2,113.00-pending

DRJTBC auction bid not to exceed amount – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the auction begins on the 15th and if Council wishes to bid on a bucket truck or van a do not exceed amount should be established. President Prator stated there are 3 bucket trucks, and a van available-listing price is \$1,200.00 each. Fred Farleigh stated the bucket van is in Phillipsburg; it is his understanding that UMBT is going to bid on the bucket truck and the van with the ariel lift would work. President Prator advised he received a call from UMBT and if they get the bucket truck, we can use it. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that they are looking to purchase the Water Authority truck, and the Borough does not have enough funds to purchase all three; only host municipalities are provided with the opportunity to bid for the first week, beginning the 15th. Fred Farleigh stated that he can use the bucket truck/van daily.

Bucket Truck –2005 Ford F550 super duty bucket truck–13674098 – opening bid \$1,200.
Bucket Van – 2004 FE350 Van with mounted arial lift-13670711 –opening bid - \$1,200.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to bid on item #13674098 - 2005 Ford F550 super duty bucket truck, bid amount is not to exceed \$2,000.00, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

President Prator asked Mr. Farleigh for an update on the salt bin; Mr. Farleigh stated he needs to pick up 2 more blocks and then work can continue; he will need a lift to do the roof.

Park and Ride–Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that tree roots are lifting the landscaping blocks; will need to be removed; the blocks fixed-replaced. Councilmember Lisa Prator asked if the tree could be repurposed. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Legal:

PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2025-01 – AN ORDINANCE REGULATING VEHICLES, TRAFFIC AND PARKING IN THE BOROUGH OF PORTLAND, PRESCRIBING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS, AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS.

Solicitor Gaul advised that Notice of the Borough’s intent to enact the proposed Ordinance had been advertised, and proof of publication received. Solicitor Gaul presented the original draft ordinance that had been advertised, the new revised ordinance with changes in redline, and a clean copy of the final Ordinance. Solicitor Gaul reviewed with Council and the Mayor the changes, which were minor, and constituted only clarifications or corrections.

Mayor Heather Fischer asked if there is a process to follow when a street or parking lot is closed temporarily, for example for a parade. The Solicitor stated that there is not an official process that he is aware of, but putting up signs closing off the streets and posting notices closing the parking lots 24 hours prior to the event made sense, so as to provide notice to the residents and visitors of the restrictions. If the parade would go through a state highway, the Borough would need to obtain permission from the state. Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer asked if Council wanted to change the park and walk regulations, what was involved; Solicitor Gaul advised that the grant agreement would have to be reviewed, and the regulations would need to be changed through an ordinance.

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to adopt proposed Ordinance #2025-01 titled “An ordinance regulating vehicles, traffic and parking in the Borough of Portland, prescribing penalties for

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violations, and providing for other miscellaneous matters," as revised, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO):

RPL East, LLC Proposed Subdivision Plan -current deadline October 1, 2025. The Borough received an offer of extension through January 1, 2026, 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 January 1, 2026, for Borough review and decision on the Plan; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Ciafli. Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.

RPL East, LLC Proposed Planned Industrial Park Plan-current deadline October 1, 2025. The Borough received an offer of extension through January 1, 2026, 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 January 1, 2026, for Borough review and decision on the Plan; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Ciafli. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Zoning, Building and Property Management:

Municipal Building Ramp Replacement – Councilmember Bruce Ciafli advised he received two quotes from American Lift. Back stairwell chair lift - \$7,000 and aluminum ramp replacement \$54,500 (removal of existing ramp by Portland). The back stair well needs to be cleaned - tabled to discuss at the next meeting. Slate Hills Enterprise (SHE) – none

Portland Borough Authority – President Prator reviewed the Portland Borough Authority letter advising that the asking price for the pick-up truck is \$27,475.00. The Council discussed that the old truck is rusted out and the Authority truck is in good shape, limited miles, a snowplow and we know the truck history. Solicitor Gaul advised that the pick up can be bought through the Authority without bidding.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to purchase the Portland Borough Authority 2017 Ram pickup truck for \$27,475.00, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Ciafli. Motion was amended by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer and Bruce Ciafli to submit a counteroffer of \$27,000.00. Vote 5-0-1(President Prator abstained); Motion Carried.

Mr. Farleigh stated the tractor could be sold on Municibid for \$14,000.-\$18,000.00. Solicitor Gaul advised that to sell on Municibid it has to be advertised.

A short recess was taken to change the battery in the recorder at 8:03 PM.

Fire, Safety, Police:

Chief Pysher reviewed the police report which was distributed in the packet.

Northampton Street Speed Sign – the police department received a complaint that there are no speed limit signs on Northampton Street. President Prator advised that when there is no speed limit signs then the default limit is 25-miles per hour. A notice will be placed in the next newsletter and posted on social media.

Chief Pysher provided quote to lease new Taser's 10 for \$14,794 (2,958.84/year-5 years); he provided a comparison of the current taser cost and the new tasers. Portland Police Officers have been trained by Officer Gregory Dean; there is a virtual trainer for the new Taser's training.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to lease the Taser's 10 for \$2,958.84 per year for 5 years, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Ciafli. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

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Chief Pysher advised that Bangor school bus cameras are being monitored; if a vehicle passes a bus with their lights on; the monitoring company will issue a \$300.00 fine. If the police issue a ticket, they get a \$300.00 fine and points against their license.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Fischer, Susan Ivancich and Bruce Cialfi met regarding Founders Day. The Community Garden is moving along; they will have a scientist to help with the land, watering system and how to begin. Mayor Fischer suggested the parcel of land where the old gym stood; it will get plenty of sunshine.

Ordinance Committee: none

Portland Community Events Committee: Founders Day – Mayor Fischer asked for a motion to pay the Founders Day expenses out of General Fund while awaiting reimbursement from Hotel Tax; there is no motion needed.

COG: President Prator stated that Laura McLain has resigned as the COG secretary; Lisa Prator is willing to fill the secretary position. The COG may host a pregame party for the Pen Argyl-Bangor High School football game as a fundraising event; for every dollar spent, the COG will get .10 cents.

Community Development & Grant Committee:

LSA Grant – Borough Truck & Police Car – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that support letters will be needed for the Northampton and Monroe County LSA Grants and a motion will be needed to submit the grant applications at \$100.00 each for a new police car. There is no match for these grants.

A motion was made by President Lance Prator to submit the applications for the Northampton County and Monroe County LSA Grants for a new police vehicle, each submission is a \$100.00 fee, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Chief Pysher stated they will be looking for support letters from surrounding Townships/Boroughs, Police Departments and Congressman McKenzie.

Post Foundation Grant Generator-President Prator advised that the original price quotes were not comparable quotes. A request was sent out for comparable quotes-generator specifications: 24 KW air cooled propane auto genset, gen concrete pad, 200A serv ent rated.

Hunter & Sons - \$18,348.00 (this quote does not state electrical upgrade needed).

ABP Mechanical - \$24,000.00 (this quote included electrical upgrade).

Solicitor Gaul asked if the Borough needed a permit to do the work; Councilmember Stephanie Steele will ask Tina Serfass at Keller Zoning to come out and see if an electrical upgrade is needed; quotes will be forwarded.

President Prator advised that 3 support letters were requested for Emergency Vehicle Preemption (EVP) system/equipment by the Borough of Pen Argyl for LSA grants.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to sign the Borough of Pen Argyl support letter for the LSA Grants, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Solicitor Gaul asked if Portland had considered looking into a Statewide LSA grant; Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated she will look into it.

Hotel Tax Extension Letter: Letter of extension is required to finish processing 2024 Hotel Tax reimbursement.

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A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to authorize the secretary to submit an extension letter for the 2024 Hotel Tax Grant, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Assessing traffic impacts in your community email: Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that LVPC reached out and requested that someone from the Borough attend this training. September 10 and 11th. Council discussed reimbursing the \$30.00 fee to our council members and Mayor if they sign up to attend.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve the Borough reimbursing any council member and the Mayor the \$30.00 to attend, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Sanitation Committee: President Prator stated that Les Moore from Sanico asked if the Borough would provide them with a reference for another municipality; he has not received a call yet. Solicitor Gaul advised it would be a personal reference.

Budget, Finance, Insurance & Cable TV Contract: none - need to schedule another committee meeting.

Plan Slate Belt:

Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement-discussions.
Resolution #2025-08 – Plan Slate Belt Implementation Agreement - Solicitor Gaul advised the agreement was returned to Plan Slate Belt with comments. The Solicitor reviewed some of his concerns and items that could affect Portland. Portland only approved the plan, nothing else has been signed. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that an email was received this past week asking us to provide Portland's approved/signed resolution. Tabled until the next meeting & October 6th meeting.

Slate Belt Rising: Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated the reclaimed river rock is very dirty; and costs \$35.00 per ton; it is a work in progress.

Personnel Committee – executive session.

Liberty Water Gap Trail Alliance: Cindy Fish stated the next meeting is September 17th at 9:00 AM Upper Mount Bethel Township Building; October will be the quarterly meeting. Ms. Fish will be reaching out to the National Park Service Superintendent regarding the roadway reconstruction.

Old Business:

Public Restroom Signage – President Prator spoke to Councilmember Stephanie Steele about potential downtown locations for the public restroom signage.

A motion was made by President Lance Prator to purchase public restroom signage for downtown not to exceed \$400.00, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried

New Business:

BACIDA – East Bangor representative Laura McLain resignation
BACIDA – East Bangor letter to appoint Nikki Huggan.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to accept Laura McLain resignation from the BACIDA Board, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

