



**Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2025**

On October 6, 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, Solicitor Michael Gaul, Tara Mezzanotte, Chief of Police Todd Pysher and Borough Secretary/Treasurer-Lori Sliker were present. Residents-Hubert McHugh, Kenny Golden and James Thorton were also present at the call to order, Fire Chief Potter arrived at 7:18 pm and Cindy Fish arrived at 7:47 PM.

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 is recording tonight’s 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. None were requested.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to approve October 6, 2025, agenda as posted, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Action on the Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2025: President Prator asked if there were any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of September 8, 2025. No changes were requested.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve September 8, 2025, Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Secretary/Treasurer Report:

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

Bills Presented for Payment:

Borough Operations	\$ 20,463.13
Sewer Operations	\$ 17,300.86
Garbage Operations	\$ 8,224.00
Estimate Payroll & Payroll Taxes, September 2025	\$ 6,300.00
Estimate WEX Sunoco Fuel, September 2025	\$ 550.00
Escrow –RPL (King Spry), Ultra Poly 3 (VanCleaf)	\$ 3,444.00
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$ 56,281.99</u>

Transfer \$60,000.00 from the Real Estate Fund to the General Fund to cover expenses-including authority pick-up.

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

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to transfer \$60,000.00 from the Real Estate Fund to the General Fund to cover expenses; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Solicitor Gaul asked if the authority pickup truck was approved at the last meeting; Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that at the last meeting they approved the purchase. The Borough received an acceptance letter from the Authority; they are awaiting a decision to see if any funds can be used in Liquid Fuels towards the purchase. Solicitor Gaul advised that the LST funds can also be used towards the purchase.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to authorize payment of \$27,000.00 to the Portland Borough Authority for the purchase of the pickup truck, with funds coming from the Liquid Fuels Fund, Local Service Tax Fund and General Funds, in that order of preference, to the extent the use is permitted and funds are available, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-1 (Lance abstained); Motion Carried.

Golden Property Maintenance Code Appeal-

President Prator advised that there has been progress at the residence; Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated that the most recent permit information indicated a permit for a garage/shed has been issued. Solicitor Gaul advised that Council needs an update from Tina (Keller Zoning) and asked whether Council would like to postpone this matter until the November council meeting. Council needs to know if Tina finds that the Golden property is in compliance and/or is going to withdraw the notice of violation.

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to postpone the appeal until the Council's first meeting in November, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Solicitor Gaul asked Mr. Golden if he understood that the appeal was being rescheduled to the Council's first meeting in November. Mr. Golden responded that he understood.

Public Comment: none

Route I80-Route 611 Updates: Tara Mezzanotte

Liaison-National Park Service-Gateway Community meetings liaison-Council President Lance Prator will be the liaison for Portland. Ms. Mezzanotte updated the Council on the gateway community information. DWGNRA-Gateway Community Program Webinar-The Department of Interior has requested information on how to improve visitors' experience; Ms. Mezzanotte read a letter she previously prepared for submission by October 10th. Council President Prator will make changes to the suggested letter, including other Councilmembers' individual input, and submit a final document to Ms. Mezzanotte.

A motion was made by President Lance Prator to appoint Lance Prator the Portland liaison for the National Park Service-Gateway Community and Councilmember Bruce Cialfi as the alternate, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

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A motion was made by President Lance Prator to approve submission of the letter to the Department of Interior with any changes in accordance with the previously discussed process; seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Ms. Mezzanotte advised that new signs have been installed on the Point of Gap light.

Borough Engineer's Report - Mark Bahnick, Van Cleef

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

Sewer Committee – Stephanie Steele

Commercial and Industrial customer required connection modifications – no update

Sewer Inspection Agreement– included in ordinance

PROPOSED SEWER ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-discussion and enactment of proposed Ordinance #2025-02 titled “AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF PORTLAND, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING BOROUGH ORDINANCE NO 2008-9, WHICH ESTABLISHED RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE UTILIZATION AND OPERATION OF THE “BOROUGH SEWER SYSTEM: AMENDING THE MANNER IN WHICH THE BOROUGH MAY CONDUCT INSPECTIONS OF ALL PRETREATMENT DEVICES AND AMENDING REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to ENACT PROPOSED sewer ordinance Amendment #2025-02 titled “AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF PORTLAND, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING BOROUGH ORDINANCE NO 2008-9, WHICH ESTABLISHED RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE UTILIZATION AND OPERATION OF THE “BOROUGH SEWER SYSTEM: AMENDING THE MANNER IN WHICH THE BOROUGH MAY CONDUCT INSPECTIONS OF ALL PRETREATMENT DEVICES AND AMENDING REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS”, which was reviewed and approved at the last meeting, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

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

Sewer Shut-Off's: Acct. 248-533 Delaware Avenue/ Acct. 321-300 State Street/ Acct. 123-101 Division Street- all accounts have been paid - there are no shut offs.

Martins Electrical Service-Mixer quote \$5,325.07.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the Martins Electrical Service quote for \$5,325.07 to rebuild the mixer, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Streets Committee:

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

Street Signs-Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that the previous company that made the street signs will no longer make them; the artwork for the signs has to be obtained and the Borough needs to find a vendor to make the signs.

Leaf Vac rental from COG (Date)-President Prator stated the Borough has to rent the leaf vac, Council decided on November 19, 20 & 21.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to rent the Leaf Vac from COG on November 19, 20 & 21, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

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Crack Sealing – Blocks (COG) – Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that Fred will be crack sealing the streets that are not covered by Liquid Fuels; the machine and blocks are in the garage.

Legal: no report

Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO):

RPL East, LLC Proposed Subdivision Plan -current deadline January 1, 2026.

RPL East, LLC Proposed Planned Industrial Park Plan-current deadline January 1, 2026.

President Prator asked the secretary to send an email to Mr. Bahnick in November for extensions. Attorney Gaul recommended that the extensions should be received in time for the Borough Council to act on them at the first meeting in November, because if they are not received by then, it could result in the Borough Council have to hold a meeting in late December to protect its review rights under the SALDO.

Zoning, Building and Property Management:

Municipal Building Ramp Replacement –nothing to report.

Slate Hills Enterprise (SHE) – none

Portland Borough Authority – President Prator advised that the letter for the authority truck was signed. As soon as the Authority receives the payment, the title will be given to the Borough; he also advised the Authority hired a new secretary.

Fire, Safety, Police:

September police report-Chief Pysher reviewed the police report with Council.

Chief Pysher and Mayor Fischer interviewed Christopher Molchan- and if Council approves would like to hire him part time contingent upon satisfactory background checks. \$24.00/hr up to 25 hours/week.

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to hire Christopher Molchan as a part time police officer at \$24.00 per hour, up to 25 hours per week, contingent upon clearances and background check satisfactory to the Borough Mayor and Chief of Police, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Raise the Holiday Pay from \$75.00 per shift to \$100.00 starting in 2026. Mayor Fischer advised that the holiday pay rate was reviewed in the beginning of this year and was advised to bring it back to Council towards the end of the year for consideration. Raise Officers pay rate \$1.00 per hour starting in 2026. Mayor Fischer stated the officers have not had a pay increase in 3 years. These increases will not change the police budget. Solicitor Gaul stated that once the budget is adopted then motions can be made to approve the increases.

Mayor's Report:

Founders' day preparations are going well; games will be at the Social Hall Parking Lot on the 18th 1-5 PM. Community Garden–Mayor Fischer advised that they received the initial grant for \$8,000.00, waiting on a scientist. Mayor Fischer advised she received a call and there will be an additional \$3,250.00 towards the grant for a total of \$11,250.00. Mayor asked what steps she needs to take to obtain the 30-40' plot of land for the garden; Mayor Fischer suggested a section of property where the old gymnasium stood, she will rope off an area for consideration. Solicitor Gaul stated the rules and regulations need to be established and how the grant funds are spent. Borough Council must approve the use of the property and program should be associated with the garden should be established. Council should approve the use of the property and designate the piece of land to be used. Solicitor Gaul stated the Gym demolition grant should be reviewed to see if there are any prohibited uses for the property. Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised Mayor Fischer to reach out to Slate Belt Rising as they have had a successful community garden.

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Ordinance Committee: none

Portland Community Events Committee:

Founders Day – 10/18/25 - Mayor Fischer previously discussed.

Trick or Treat – 10/25/25–4-6 PM. Councilmember Lisa Prator asked about the house decorating contest; Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated that she is willing to help if they can find a simple way of doing it. Councilmembers Lisa Prator, Stephanie Steele and Bruce Ciafli will work on a simplified way to do the house decorating contest.

COG: President Prator advised that the COG is looking for someone to volunteer 10-20 hours per week at the COG as Laura is leaving at the end of the year. COG's are now listed as a recipient for LSA grants and no longer need a host municipality to apply for grants. Dimes for Dollars will be on 10/24th at Dietz's and Broadway Pub in Bangor; for every dollar spent the COG will receive .10 cents. President Prator advised that he was elected to the PA COG Board for 2026.

Community Development & Grant Committee:

LSA Grant submission for statewide grant-sidewalks (submission fee \$100.00 each). Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that after reviewing the statewide grant information she feels it is too big to get everything together for this year; however, she will be gathering everything together to submit for next year. The police car LSA Grant applications were submitted, and the secretary has copies of the information.

Post Foundation grant generator procurement—President Prator advised they are still looking for electricians to check the electric for possible upgrade. Chief Potter asked why the borough is looking at a propane generator; propane will get used up quickly and delivery could take several days but if you run out of diesel it can be picked up. President Prator will send out a new RFP with a diesel generator. Solicitor Gaul cautioned Council that the existing quotes are close to the bid threshold. Councilmember Stephanie Steele asked the Solicitor if the RFP can be posted on the website; he responded yes it can.

Councilmember Lisa Prator left the meeting at 8:28 PM; returned at 8:31 PM.

Councilmember Susan Ivancich left the meeting at 8:36 PM; returned at 8:38 PM.

Sanitation Committee: none

Budget, Finance, Insurance & Cable TV Contract:

Councilmember Stephanie Steele provided Council with a draft budget to review; the current recommendations are an increase in Sewer from \$88.00 to \$90.00 per EDU; Sanitation budget should be fine, and she is looking for comments on the general budget. She would like to advertise the budget in November, and adopt it the first meeting of December.

Plan Slate Belt:

President Prator advised there is a meeting scheduled for Oct 27 at 7:00 PM to discuss the plan; Solicitor Gaul was invited to attend the beginning of the meeting.

Resolution #2025-08 – Plan Slate Belt Implementation Agreement

Slate Belt Rising:

Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated there is nothing new; they need to start working downtown.

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Personnel Committee –

Councilmember Stephanie Steele advised that Tami Chipko started cleaning the downtown restroom.

Liberty Water Gap Trail Alliance:

Cindy Fish advised the next meeting will be on October 15th 9:00 AM-Portland. There is a large paving project for next year, but they have not received any information on who to contact. Cindy advised that she saw on Facebook the work on Rt. 611 one-way light will not be completed until 2031.

Old Business:

Public Restroom Signage – President Prator advised he is working on getting signs.

Motor Cycle Club events – executive session

Trailer for speed signs – President Prator advised the Borough trailer could work but they need to find a welder to attach the sign.

Park & Ride–the tree roots are pushing up the blocks which is causing a trip hazard. Solicitor Gaul stated that the grant for the Park & Ride should be reviewed to see what the tree requirements are if any; and if the trees can be replaced with bushes. Chief Potter advised that there are 3 or 4 trees that should be removed; quotes will need to be obtained for the tree removal.

Randi Snook – keys – executive session

Authority letter for pickup truck – President Prator stated the letter was signed/received.

New Business: none

Public Comment Non-Agenda:

Resident James Thornton, 510 Northampton Street asked Council if two-25 mile speed limit signs could be placed on Northampton Street as there are currently none. Chief Pysker and Solicitor Gaul stated we have to follow Penn Dot regulations when placing the signs.

Councilmember Lisa Prator left the meeting at 9:02 PM and returned at 9:05 PM.

A motion was made by President Prator to install 2–25-mile speed limit signs in accordance with Penn Dot regulations on Northampton Street, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Cindy Fish stated a meeting will be held on October 25 at 9:00 AM in the Social Hall to begin planning for the 131st Fire Company Anniversary Celebration and invited the Borough Councilmembers to attend. The celebration will be held on October 17, 2026, and asked the Borough Councilmembers to attend the meeting.

President Prator stated he received a complaint about an All American Asphalt truck leaking black goo and tar all over downtown; he asked the Chief of Police to check into it.

Executive Session: –

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to enter Executive Session at 9:19 P.M. to discuss legal matters with the Solicitor, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to return from Executive Session at 9:33 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

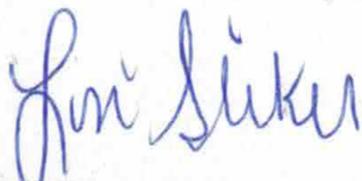
President Prator asked if there was any action to be taken out of Executive Session. – no action.

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A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

**Reminder: Next meetings: Monday, October 27, 2025
 Monday, November 3, 2025**

Respectfully Submitted,



Lori Sliker, Borough Secretary

