



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

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

Others Present – Mayor Heather Fischer and Borough Secretary/Treasurer-Lori Sliker were present. Also, present- Borough Solicitor-Michael Gaul, Borough Engineer-Mark Bahnick, Chief of Police Todd Pysner, Hubert McHugh and Kenny Golden.

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 said she is recording the meeting for her own 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.

President Prator asked that Public Comment-Non-Agenda be moved to Public Comment to advise that Mr. Thornton sent him with some baked goods for the board and audience.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to move Public Comment-Non-Agenda to Public Comment, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

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 November 3, 2025, agenda as posted, with the movement of the Public Comment-Non-Agenda, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Action on the Meeting Minutes of October 6, 2025: President Prator asked if there were any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of October 6, 2025. No changes were requested.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to approve October 6, 2025, Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Secretary/Treasurer Report:

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

Bills Presented for Payment:

Borough Operations	\$ 72,183.94
Sewer Operations	\$ 22,773.72
Garbage Operations	\$ 8,224.00

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Estimate Payroll & Payroll Taxes, November 2025	\$ 6,300.00
Escrow-RPL (King Spry), UMBT & Ultra Poly 3 (VanCleaf)	<u>\$ 1,249.00</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	\$ 110,730.66

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the October 2025 Financial Report, as presented, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to pay the Borough bills, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Golden Property Maintenance Code Appeal- Solicitor Gaul asked the Council if anyone has spoken to the Zoning Officer regarding Mr. Golden's property; they responded no. President Prator advised that there are tarps hanging up to hide the stuff but that is not cleaning it up; and while there was some progress it has seemed to have stopped now. Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated that residents were giving Billy cans for recycling; Solicitor Gaul advised that a recycling center cannot be operated out of a residence. Mr. Golden has received a permit to build a shed/garage; President Prator asked the secretary to have the zoning officer take pictures of the property, document the condition and attend the next Council meeting on December 1, 2025. Solicitor Gaul asked if postponement of the appeal hearing until December 1, 2025, would be considered to allow for compliance. The consensus of Borough Council was that a postponement to the Council's first meeting in December would be appropriate.

Solicitor Gaul asked Mr. Golden whether he understood and agreed with a postponement. Mr. Golden responded that he did.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to postpone the appeal hearing until the Council's December 1, 2025, meeting, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Public Comment:

Mr. Thornton-Northampton St. will be attending the next Council meeting to discuss an organic farmers market.

Route I80-Route 611 Updates: Tara Mezzanotte

President Prator stated that Ms. Mezzanotte is at UMBT meeting and will be here later.

Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River:

Resolution reaffirming Portland Borough as a Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River Municipality and endorsing the addition of new eligible segments and the Jacoby Creek- President Prator stated that this agenda item would be moved to the end of the meeting, as Ms. Mezzanotte had not yet arrived.

Borough Engineer's Report - Mark Bahnick, Van Cleaf

Sewer Committee – Stephanie Steele

Commercial and Industrial customer required connection modifications – work in progress

Proposed Borough and Township Intermunicipal agreement on Sewer Service-waiting for feedback from DEP and Lamtec.

WWTP Effluent line from River Rd to Delaware River discharge-Mr. Bahnick provided the Council with a plan showing the location of the effluent line and advised that DEP/DRBC is willing to consider the proposed option. Survey crew will be there on Friday to verify what can be built; they will need at least 1 DEP permit

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for the headwall. Once the survey is completed, we will have more information, and the easement will be staked out while they are there. Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer asked if the work has to be done before the ground freezes; Mr. Bahnick replied that the work can be completed even if the ground freezes.

Straw, seed and stone for WWTP – estimate from Marki and Son was received today-\$5,950.00 to stone, seed and straw the area by the WWTP effluent line.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the Marki & Son quote for \$5,950.00, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to authorize VanCleaf Engineering to conduct the survey not to exceed \$3,000.00; seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Sewer Shut-Off's: Acct. 321-300 State Street–President Prator advised that there is one shut off.

A motion was made by President Lance Prator to shut off the water for non-payment of sewer-Account#321-300 State Street, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Dunkin Donuts-Rt. 611 paving - President Prator advised that the Water Authority will have to move two valves before DEP paves the road. Mr. Bahnick advised they have to contact PennDOT regarding this issue and speak to Drew about Dunkin.

Mark left at 7:33 PM.

Streets Committee:

Garage ceiling inhouse estimated materials - \$2,113.00-pending
AMS Crack Sealing \$1336.50

A motion was made by President Prator to approve the payment of AMS Crack Sealing for \$1,336.50 payment from General Funds, seconded by Councilmember Stephanie Steele. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

COG-9 Blocks \$40.00ea.- \$360.00-President Prator stated there was some confusion regarding the tar blocks. **A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the payment to Council of Governments for \$360.00, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 4-0-1 (Lance abstained); Motion Carried.**

Request to rent a drivable lift- not to exceed \$2,000.00-Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated that to install the roof on the salt shed and repair the gutter on the municipal building a lift is needed; she will contact Ultra Poly to ask to borrow their lift and UMBT to see if they can pick-up and drop-off the lift for Portland. But if we cannot borrow the lift, she would like a motion to rent one.

A motion was made by President Prator to rent a drivable lift not to exceed \$2,000.00 unless Ultra Poly will donate the use of their lift, seconded by Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Legal: _no report

Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO):

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

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

President Prator asked if there is a maximum number of extensions; Solicitor Gaul stated there is none. If Portland does not accept an extension, then Portland is required to make a decision. Under the MPC, if the Borough decides to deny the applications, the Council must state in a written decision the specific SALDO sections of the proposed Plan failed to meet.

Zoning, Building and Property Management:

Municipal Building Ramp Replacement – no report.

Slate Hills Enterprise (SHE) – none

Portland Borough Authority:

President Prator stated a letter to reappoint James Potter will be provided for the December meeting. Mr. Thornton is excited to be on Portland Borough Authority; he is a hydrogeologist. Solicitor Gaul stated that Council should send a formal letter to the Authority notifying it of Mr. Thornton's appointment and the remaining term.

Fire, Safety, Police:

October Police Report-Chief Pysher reviewed his October Police report with the Council. Chief advised that the paperwork has been submitted for the potential new police officer.

Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer asked if the Council meeting times could start a little earlier (6:00 or 6:30 PM); she will email anyone who is not present to check with them. Solicitor Gaul stated that the changed hours would need to be advertised and it would be effective January 1, 2026.

Councilmember Stephanie Steele asked Chief Pysher to assist her with prices on portable speed sign trailers.

Mayor's Report:

Community Garden-Mayor Fischer stated that she did not expect the Community Garden to take this long to get the project going and asked how she can ensure it continues. Solicitor Gaul stated that Council can appoint her to oversee the Community Garden Project; a formal description will be developed outlining the project leader's responsibilities.

Ordinance Committee: none

Portland Community Events Committee:

Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony -November 30th at 6:30 PM.

Founders Day-Mayor Fischer advised that Founders Day went well, everyone showed up and had a great time.

COG: President Prator stated that at the next COG meeting they should find out what was earned at the dimes to dollars event; he reached out to several companies to see if anyone would sponsor light stands for COG.

Community Development & Grant Committee: none

Sanitation Committee: Councilmember Stephanie Steele asked the Secretary to pull the sanitation contract to see if there are any extension periods.

Budget, Finance, Insurance & Cable TV Contract:

Approval of proposed Borough Budgets for year 2026 (General, Sewer and Sanitation): Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated the proposed budgets were included in the packets. With the current issues with the sewer system perhaps the budget should be increased by \$5.00 per month. The general budget and the sanitation budget have no increase, but discussions should be held for the sewer budget.

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General and Sanitation Budgets:

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the Proposed 2026 Budgets for the General Fund and Sanitation Fund as presented, and the advertising of their availability for inspection, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

President Prator stated that because of the issues with the sewer system right now the \$5.00 per month increase should be considered. Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated the monthly EDU with a \$5.00 increase would be \$93.00 per month/per EDU; the increased funds will be placed in the Capital Expense Fund. Solicitor Gaul advised that sewer prices can be increased at any time.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the proposed sewer budget with an increase of \$5.00 taking the EDU's to \$93.00 per month, increased funds to go to Capital Expense Fund, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to approve the advertising of the availability of the 2026 Proposed Budget for the Sewer Fund for inspection, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Plan Slate Belt:

President Prator advised that there is a meeting on Thursday, November 6, 2026.

Slate Belt Rising: Councilmember Stephanie Steele stated she will be taking the kayaks down for the winter.

Personnel Committee – none – received an application for maintenance worker but have not met yet.

Liberty Water Gap Trail Alliance:

President Prator advised the next meeting is November 19th at 9:00 AM-Delaware Water Gap. Signage is going up for National 911 Trail which includes Liberty Water Gap Trail.

Old Business:

Public Restroom Signage-President Prator is checking prices for signs.

Trailer for speed signs – previously discussed

Park & Ride tree removal –Councilmember Stephanie Steele would like Fred/Jimmy to mark the trees they want removed before getting proposals for tree removals.

New Business:

Bangor Borough manager called President Prator to borrow the new bucket truck on November 17th. The tags/license plate have not been received yet; he asked Bangor to see if there is an intermunicipal agreement with Portland. Councilmember Stephanie Steele asked if we are lending the equipment with or without an operator. President Prator will speak to Stephen about this tomorrow.

Solicitor Gaul asked if the Auditor information has been received it has to be added to the December agenda. Secretary received a letter today from the Auditor; it will be placed on the December Agenda.

Public Comment Non-Agenda:

None

Executive Session:

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A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to enter Executive Session at 8:39 P.M. to discuss legal matters with the Solicitor, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to return from Executive Session at 8:42 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

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

Resolution 2025-12 - Resolution Reaffirming Portland Borough as a Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River Municipality and Endorsing the Addition of New Eligible segments and the Jacoby Creek:

President Prator noted that Ms. Mezzanotte still had not arrived. The consensus of Borough Council was that Ms. Mezzanotte's attendance was not necessary for Council consideration of the proposed resolution, as Ms. Mezzanotte had already explained the purpose at a prior Council meeting and had reviewed the draft resolution and stated that the document was in satisfactory form.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stephanie Steele to adopt Resolution #2025-12-Resolution Reaffirming Portland Borough as a Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River Municipality and Endorsing the Addition of New Eligible segments and the Jacoby Creek, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

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

**Reminder: Next scheduled meetings: Monday, November 24, 2025
 Monday, December 1, 2025**

Respectfully Submitted,



Lori Sliker, Borough Secretary

