Borough of Portland Council Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2026

On September 14, 2026, 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 – Council President Stephanie Steele called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call – Council Members: Stephanie Steele, President, Bruce Cialfi, Lisa Prator, Karen Pfeiffer, Susan Ivancich and J. Kelly Thornton were present.

Others Present – Borough Secretary/Treasurer-Lori Sliker and Mayor Lance Prator were present. Also, present-Borough Solicitor-Michael Gaul, Borough Engineer-Michael Nolf, Police Chief-Todd Pysher, Tina Serfass-Keller Zoning & Inspections, Kay Bucci, Holly O'Brien, David Brands, and other members of the audience. Sewer Solicitor Steve Boell joined Zoom.

Announcement of Recording – President Steele 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. None of the attendees stated they were recording tonight's meeting.

Editor's note: Recording the meeting by the Mayor, Borough Council members or members of the public is for personal use only, and does 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 Steele asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. No amendments were requested.

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to approve the September 14, 2026, agenda, as presented, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Action on the Meeting Minutes of August 3, 2026: President Steele asked if there were any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of August 3, 2026. No corrections were requested.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve August 3, 2026, Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Action on the Meeting Minutes of August 14, 2026: President Steele asked if there were any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of August 14, 2026. No corrections were requested.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve August 14, 2026, Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Secretary/Treasurer Report:
The Secretary presented the August 2026 Financial Report for review/approval.

Bills Presented for Payment:

Borough Operations	$ 24,288.04
Sewer Operations	$ 14,818.10
Garbage Operations	$ 9,230.20

Estimate Payroll & Payroll Taxes, September 2026	$ 6,300.00
Escrow	$ 201.50
TOTAL	**$ 54,837.84**

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve the August 2026 Financial Report, as presented, seconded by Councilmember Kelly Thornton. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

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

Golden Property Maintenance Code Appeal-Solicitor Gaul advised this can be removed from the agenda. Ms. Serfass, Keller Zoning and Inspections stated the property has been cleaned up; some concerns were expressed that the situation will continue and that periodic checks should be made on the property. President Steele advised that residents should be educated that they should not allow private individuals other than the official Borough collector to collect their garbage and recyclables from the curb, or other unwanted items from their property. Solicitor Gaul stated that if the situation continues, Keller Zoning or the Borough Police, as the case may be, may issue a notice of violation, and if necessary, the Borough can institute a lawsuit to obtain the assistance of the Court in enforcing the Borough Ordinances. Due to its limited resources, Portland essentially has a complaint-based system; upon receipt of the complaint, they are forwarded to either the Police or Keller Zoning. If the Borough Council desired Keller Zoning to more actively patrol the Borough for Zoning, Property Maintenance Code, and other Ordinance violations, the Borough Council should provide guidance to Ms. Serfass, due to the potential costs involved. Ms. Serfass stated she can only observe from the street; she cannot look over the fence or go onto someone's property. Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer asked how long a building permit can be open for; Ms. Serfass advised a permit is good for 5 years. Remove from the agenda but Council will monitor.

The consensus of the Borough Council was that Keller should maintain the same enforcement approach. No Borough Council member made a motion to change the status quo of Keller's enforcement procedures.

Public Comment:
Kay Bucci-enforcement of ordinances & Toll Bridge Commission: Ms. Bucci stated that property maintenance has been a problem; there are laws and ordinances on the books which should be enforced by the Police and Keller Zoning. Ms. Bucci and Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer rode around and went over the list of complaints; Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer will be updating the list and sending it to Keller Zoning for review. Ms. Bucci would like Council to contact the DRJTBC to request a sign be installed for the Portland-Columbia Foot Bridge; the secretary will send a letter.

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to have the Secretary send the DRJTBC a letter requesting signage for the Portland-Columbia Foot Bridge, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Holly O'Brien-vacating end of Hazen Street-Ms. O'Brien advised that she has recently had property surveyed and discovered that her garage is not on her property. Ms. O'Brien provided Council with a drawing of the area indicating the shaded area would need to be vacated. Solicitor Gaul explained that when a road is vacated, the adjacent property lines are extended to the middle of the vacated road; thus, each half of the street is added to the immediately adjacent property, but subject to any remaining private access rights over the area. The street vacation eliminates only the Borough's rights and obligations over the street, and not any private rights. When a resident requests a street vacation, the Borough would expect the homeowner to pay for the cost of the proceedings (ex: ordinance, advertising fees), and identification of adjacent property owners; there would also need to be an agreement that the adjacent property owners agree not to sue the Borough for the vacation. Solicitor Gaul suggested that Ms. O'Brien review the

information she received tonight and consider the options. Solicitor Gaul also noted that street area in which her garage was located was not adjacent to Ms. Hazen's property. As a result, the area would not be added to her property unless she and her neighbor agreed to a lot line adjustment, which would require a plan, Borough approval, and recording.

Route I80-Route 611 Updates: Tara Mezzanotte-no update

Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River: Tara Mezzanotte-no update

Groundworks–Mark-Groundworks Representative provided Council with a brief overview of their product and how it works. Considering this product for use on Delaware Avenue Baptist Church and near the mayor's house-concrete roadway. The product is a PennDOT approved material allowing for the costs to be paid out of the liquid funds account; the work should be completed before December. Quote will be on September 28th agenda for consideration.

Liberty Water Gap Trail Alliance: Cindy Fish
Mayor Prator advised the next meeting is Wednesday, September 16th – UMBT Park-9:00 AM.

Borough Engineer's Report – Van Cleef Engineering
COVID Grant Project-Stormwater – Michael Nolf advised that the stormwater project is moving along and 90% of Market Street is complete; they will be finishing up and moving on to Main Street which should be completed within 3-4 days.

Main Street Storm Sewer Replacement Project-Payment Application #1-$39,150.00-Approval to sign Grant Payment Request form and submit payment request form for grant reimbursement.

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to approve the payment application #1-$39,150.00-approval to sign grant payment request and submit for grant reimbursement, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

COVID Grant Project–Sewer Update-WWTP Mechanical Fine Screen Replacement Project Retainage payment application #2-$7,064.50 approval of final payment.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve the payment application #2-$7,064.50 final payment, seconded by Councilmember Kelly Thornton. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

WWTP Costars membranes Riordan Quote 1-$102,009.70 / Quote 2-$145,926.90-President Steele advised that Tyler Evans-VanCleef Engineering sent out a spreadsheet indicating the status of grant funds and the match fund balances; some additional match will be added from paid solicitor invoices. The Borough/Sewer Funds should not be more than $30,000.00 to order obtain another set of membranes if Council wants to utilize the remaining grant funds.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve the use of the remaining grant funds to purchase another set of sewer membranes and the outstanding Borough/Sewer funds will not exceed $30,000.00, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to approve the Riordan membranes quote-$102,009.70, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Discuss/Approval for Borough President to sign application for WWTP Membrane submission for grant reimbursement.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to authorize the Council President to sign the application for WWTP Membrane submission for grant reimbursement upon Engineers/Portland contractor approval, seconded by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Lamtec Sewer Connection – DEP Sewage Planning Module Review- no update
Portland-UMBT Sewer Service Intermunicipal Agreement- President Steele will review agreement.

Indemnity Agreement –Solicitor Gaul advised that the Borough should require Dunkin's owner to sign an Indemnity Agreement with the Borough regarding the design and construction costs of the intended Traffic Signal Modifications. Borough representatives and Dunkin's owner met before the meeting. The meeting was productive. A draft Indemnity Agreement will be sent to Dunkin's owner for review and any comments, before it is presented to the Borough Council. The Borough should require a signed agreement before submitting or allowing the submission of any requested application to PennDOT for approval of traffic signal modifications.

PennDOT needs to be advised who will be maintaining the traffic light. Signal Service has agreed to provide preventative maintenance for $525.00 per year, and responsive maintenance billed as needed. Signal Service 2-year agreement is currently dated May 1, 2026. Solicitor Gaul recommended that it be update to October 1, 2026. Mayor Prator asked if any changes would be included, such as a crosswalk being moved or another pole added; Solicitor Gaul stated these are a separate scope of work and price could change based upon those new things, but these would need to be discussed with Signal Service.

Resolution #2026-__; Authorizing the Execution and Submission of a Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement and future modifications to the Agreement, and future Applications for Traffic Signal Approval to the Department of Transportation- Tabled

Approval of a Contractor Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement-Signal Service 2-year contract

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to approve the Contractor Traffic Signal Agreement Signal Service effective October 1, 2026, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Approval of Application for Traffic Signal Approval -tabled

TE 160 form – Dunkin Donuts-Tabled

Sewer Committee – Stephanie Steele
Commercial and Industrial customer required connection modifications–Tabled
Proposed Borough and Township Intermunicipal agreement on Sewer Service-Tabled

WWTP update on plant operations-President Steele advised the sewer plant has seen some heavy-duty cleansers recently; additional testing is being done.

DABCO Manhole letter-to be discussed in Executive Session. Mr. Brands provided a statement to Council indicating there is one parttime employee at the business who mows and cleans; he requested the Manhole requirement be withdrawn. Mr. Brands indicated he may be liquidating the equipment and selling the

business. Councilmember Lisa Prator asked if the business is sold will the next owner be required to install the sampling manhole; Solicitor Boell indicated yes, they will.

Sewer Shut-off's – President Steele advised that there are no shut off's this month.
Request for Sewer Service reservation-will be discussed in Executive Session.

Executive Session: legal matters

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to enter Executive Session at 8:32 P.M. to discuss legal matters with the Sewer Solicitor, and Borough Solicitor, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Michael Nolf – left at 9:12 PM.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to return from Executive Session at 9:12 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Kelly Thornton. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

President Steele asked if there was any action to be taken out of Executive Session:

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer stating that the Borough Council hereby grants DABCO Industries a temporary deferral of the requirement to install a monitoring manhole at the property, subject to the condition that DABCO executes and records a Deferral Agreement, in a form acceptable to the Borough Solicitor; to be drafted by the Borough Solicitor at DABCO's expense, which shall run with the land. The Use Restriction Agreement shall provide that neither DABCO nor any future owner, successor, assign tenant or occupant shall conduct any commercial or industrial activity at the property until the required monitoring manhole has been installed and accepted by the Borough as compliant with all applicable Borough requirements. The Borough's deferral shall remain in effect only so long as the Use Restriction Agreement remains in full force and effect. Failure to execute and record the Use Restriction Agreement or any violation of the Agreement shall render this deferral null and void, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Mr. Brands asked what evidence is there that they are dumping in the sewer system; President Steele stated industrial waste is getting into the sewer system, and they are working through the process to determine where it is coming from. Phase 2 is the installation of the sampling manholes; Mr. Brands asked if an inside trap could be used to obtain samples. Solicitor Gaul stated that sampling manholes are typically located outside the building for ease of accessibility and to avoid disruption of business operations inside the building. President Steele advised Mr. Brands that he can contact FLB with any questions.

Streets Committee:
First Energy (Met Ed) LED Street Light Agreement-President Steele advised that First Energy responded to the secretary's inquiry, stating that if the agreement is not signed the lights will be replaced with LED bulbs as needed.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to authorize the Council President to sign the First Energy (Met Ed) LED streetlight agreement, seconded by Councilmember Lisa Prator. Vote 5-1-0 (K. Thornton opposed); Motion Carried.

Post & Signs-Reliable $1,706.00-liquid fuels-Councilmember Bruce Cialfi advised that the Borough is down to one post, and we need to order five (5) signposts with an approximate cost of $500.00.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to order five (5) signposts not to exceed $500.00, seconded by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Leaf Pick-up–reserve the leaf vac-3rd week of November/need to check Maintenance Crew availability-add to next agenda.-Tabled
6 Ton Weight Limit Sign (Delaware Avenue)-12x24"-$28.50-discuss under parking ordinance.
Groundworks update (representative) – previously discussed.

Zoning, Building and Property Management-none

Fire, Safety & Police: Police Chief Pysher/Fire Chief Potter
August Police Report- The police report was in the packet for Council review.
Yellow Dot Program-Chief Pysher stated he received the Yellow Dot Program pamphlets which can be filled out and placed in a car glove compartment for when a driver is unable to communicate the emergency response personnel can pull the pamphlet.
Police Holiday Pay from $75.00 to $100.00-defer to the Fire, Safety, Police Committee to discuss.
2025-01 Parking Ordinance:

Handicap Parking Request-new resident on Washington Street has requested a handicap parking spot in front of her home-she does not have a driveway. Solicitor Gaul advised that the Borough may already have an ordinance on handicap spots. Borough officials should review the ordinance book, and if an ordinance already exists on the subject, Council and Chief Pysher should review it before deciding the future steps that should be taken. While handicap spots can be made; anyone with a handicap plaque can park in the spot. Chief Pysher asked if a permit number can be issued; Solicitor Gaul will have to research it. The ordinance will be pulled and reviewed.

Discuss no trucks on Delaware Avenue/local delivery only. – GVW 6 ton-no truck traffic over 6 tons on Delaware Avenue (only local deliveries); Solicitor Gaul advised the ordinance would need to be reviewed to see what restrictions are stated. Council would like to have new signs from Rt. 611 to Township line; Council requested the Solicitor to work on.

No Parking Northampton Street (Sipley House-Main Street) amend the ordinance–residents are parking in the street; could designate section of the road as no parking by number of feet.

A motion was made by Councilmember Karen Pfeiffer to have the Solicitor work on an amendment to the parking ordinance to include a section (designate the number of feet) of no parking from Main Street to Northampton Street and no trucks except local delivery on Delaware Avenue from downtown to the township line, seconded by Councilmember Kelly Thornton. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Legal:
Resolution establishing a policy & procedure for the management of Borough Non-Police staff-tabled

Draft Resolution #___ Consenting to limited one-time waiver of section 5 of the first amended and restated intermunicipal agreement solely with respect to the Borough of Portland's appointment of Christopher Cook as Lower Mount Bethel Township's designated representative to the Board of the Bangor Area Commercial and Industrial Development Authority. Tabled.

Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO):
RPL East, LLC Proposed Subdivision Plan -current deadline November 30, 2026.
RPL East, LLC Proposed Planned Industrial Park Plan-current deadline November 30, 2026.

Portland Borough Authority:
Gateway Antenna update-Mayor Prator advised they are at a standstill looking for a new location to put the antenna.
Intermunicipal Agreement between Borough & UMBT-Police to cover Authority property-no update

Mayor's Report:
Mayor Prator advised that at the PA COG meeting data centers were discussed; there are currently 3 data centers in Lehigh Valley that people are unaware of. The Mayor will send the information from the Northampton County COG. Mayor Prator advised that he has signed up for multiple training classes; and he attended the last UMBT meeting.

COG: Mayor Prator stated August 26, 2026, meeting minutes were in the packet for Council review. The next meeting is September 23rd at 7:00 PM; the light stands are on order.

Portland Community Development & Community Events Committee:
Founders Day: October 17th-Noon to 5 pm-Councilmember Lisa Prator provided an update to Council. Post on the Portland page to promote our neighbors' events and more to push Portland Facebook page, post join Portland Facebook page in the post office and the newsletter. There are 20 vendors signed up including resource tables, the Corvette Club will be downtown and would like to promote the walking bridge and the local businesses. President Steele stated the Fire Company has "slow traffic ahead" signs; or have the police car out. Discussions were held regarding allowing alcohol in open containers to be consumed in public places, such as "sip and stroll". Solicitor Gaul cautioned that the Borough did not have the power to authorize liquor licenses to take actions beyond what their current license permitted, or to relax state liquor laws. Further, if a liquor licensee did want to obtain a special permit from the PLCB to sell alcohol in a manner differently than their usual license, the licensee may need to file an application for approval 30 days in advance of the event, which was relatively soon. Thus, if a licensee has not yet acted, they may need to act quickly. In addition, the Borough may have its own Ordinance rules restricting or prohibiting consumption of alcohol in public places. Thus, the Borough Ordinance book should be reviewed to see if any restrictions exist, and if so, what needs to be done to allow a one-day exemption.
Halloween – 10/31/2026-no update
Tree Lighting- 11/29/2026–no update

Solicitor Gaul left at 10:06 PM

Grant Committee:
Post Foundation Grant Generator -President Steele advised there were two quotes in the packet for the generator project. The quote needs some revisions and can be approved by Council subject to Solicitor review. The Shafnisky proposal is intended to be through the COSTARS program. The documentation will need to be revised to reflect that the purchase of the generator and installation services is through the COSTARS program.
Shafnisky Electrical Quote – generator- $18,100.00 Modern gas Quote - $2,400.00

A motion was made by Councilmember Bruce Cialfi to accept the Shafinsky Electrical Quote not to exceed $20,000.00 and Modern Gas Quote $2,400.00-total of $20,500.00, subject to Solicitor review, seconded by Councilmember Kelly Thornton. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.
Municipal Building ADA Complaint ramp/lift-President Steele advised there were 2 quotes in the packet from 101 Mobility Ramp - $52,974.50 / 101 Mobility Lift Quote - $77,805.00 and $5800.00 from Hallett Paving to pave under the old ramp-tabled.

Sanitation Committee: none

Budget, Finance, Insurance & Cable TV Contract: President Steele advised that the Borough has received more than usual tax certification requests recently and due to some prior payment issues the Borough will not do certifications without payment upfront. President Steele asked if Council would be willing to accept online payments for other fees in addition to sewer/sanitation (permit fees, fines and tax certifications), which is already permitted. The consensus of Council was to accept online payments; President Steele will contact the Fidelity Bank to see about setting these payments up and report back to Council.

Mayor Prator will be sending a Power Point for declining franchise revenue for cable tv and how to offset that money for Council review.

Personnel Committee: none

Policy/Procedure/Ordinance Committee: none

Plan Slate Belt: President Steele advised the September 3, 2026, meeting information was provided in the council packet; and asked that Council please review the information. The packet included the combined zoning information and the definitions of uses; what does Portland want in the Borough

Slate Belt Rising: President Steele stated Slate Belt Rising has officially hired a new manager who will be located in the Bangor office.

Old Business: none

New Business:
Solicitation/peddling within the Borough–Ordinance? President Steele asked if Council would like to consider a peddler's permit–not at this time.

Public restroom vandalized (picture in the packet)–President Steele advised the public restroom was vandalized but the section of the wall needs to be repainted with graffiti proof paint; discussed the possibility of placing an internet box in the back room of the bathroom and a camera on the outside door.

Public Comment Non-Agenda : none

Executive Session: none

A motion was made by Councilmember Lisa Prator to adjourn the meeting at 10:32 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Kelly Thornton. Vote 6-0-0; Motion Carried.

Reminder: Next meetings: **Monday, September 28, 2026**
Monday, October 5, 2026

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Sliker

Lori Sliker, Borough Secretary