

MOUNT PENN BOROUGH  
BOROUGH COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING  
March 26, 2024

The Mount Penn Borough Council met for a Business Meeting on March 26, 2024, at Borough Hall at 200 N. 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Reading, PA 19606. Council President Troy Goodman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and adjourned at 9:08 PM.

Members in attendance were Mayor Ryan Maurer, Council President Troy Goodman, Council Vice President Roger Stief, Council Member Thomas Baer, Council Member Christine Dise, Council Member Michael Kindlick, and Council Member Richard Lombardo. Staff and Professional Members present were Borough Manager Hunter L. Ahrens, Solicitor Zak Morey, Chief of Police Ray Serafin Engineer Ty Leinneweber, and Traffic Engineer Christopher Williams. Council Member Yrisol "Iris" Garcia joined the meeting at 7:14 PM.

Others present included two members of the public.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Preliminary Business Actions**

Mr. Stief indicated that he would be resigning from Council Vice President effective immediately. Mr. Stief indicated that he would like to nominate Mr. Lombardo as Vice President of the Council.

*Roger Stief made a motion to amend the agenda. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.*

Mr. Goodman and Mr. Morey believed accepting Mr. Stief's resignation would be appropriate.

*Thomas Baer motioned to accept Roger Stief's resignation as Council Vice President. Richard Lombardo seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was not agreed to 3-3, with Messrs. Baer, Lombardo, and Stief voting in the affirmative; and Mrs. Dise, and Messrs. Goodman and Kindlick voting in the negative. Being equally divided, Mayor Maurer rejected the motion.*

Mr. Stief commented that he felt he should resign from Borough Council in response to that vote. Mr. Ahrens and Mrs. Dise commented that the Council should retake the vote.

*Thomas Baer motioned to accept Roger Stief's resignation as Council Vice President. Troy Goodman seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was not agreed to unanimously.*

*Roger Stief motioned to nominate Richard Lombardo as Council Vice President. Troy Goodman seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was not agreed to unanimously.*

**Discussions with Traffic Engineer**

Mr. Ahrens introduced Christopher Williams, P.E., as the Borough's appointed Traffic Engineer. Mr. Ahrens commented that Mr. Williams was present to answer the Council's questions about the Antietam School District's required traffic study and the permit parking program in the abstract. Mr. Williams introduced himself and his company, Bowman Consulting, where he serves as a Regional Director for the Mid-Atlantic region and does significant project work for public agencies in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Williams recalled the scope of the traffic study work that Bowman recommended. Mr. Williams commented that the scope was focused on repurposing the existing buildings and managing that traffic, as opposed to a traditional traffic impact study. Mr. Williams outlined the three steps required by the study scope: one, what is going on today with traffic flows under the current configuration; two, estimating the change and potential traffic movement under a future configuration; three, complete a traffic management plan that would align activities and plans to policies.

*Mrs. Garcia joined the meeting at 7:14 PM.*

Mr. Williams referenced that student/parent surveys would be conducted by the district in partnership with their traffic professional over the summer to get better estimates for step two final work. Mr. Williams commented that there would be a preliminary report completed towards the end of May, and there would also be an ongoing plan that would be adjusted with the experience in the early Fall of 2024.

Borough Council, Mr. Ahrens, and Mr. Williams discussed the specifics of the proposed traffic management plan. That included whether the district was obligated to participate in this ongoing work, which Mr. Williams indicated would be part of the preliminary plan they would submit. Mr. Williams commented that the ongoing work needs to be a partnership because none of these activities would be exclusively the Borough's or District's responsibility.

Mr. Kindlick commented that the district is not formally obligated to participate in ongoing responsibilities to maintain an ongoing Traffic Management Plan. Mr. Morey commented that an ongoing document could compel the district to participate actively and abide by the recommendations of the Borough.

Mr. Leinneweber commented that the traffic management plan would be the best way to get the district's participation in improving the local traffic conditions. The Borough could then consider ordinances to regulate the traffic patterns to create the most orderly program. Mr. Williams commented that the process of identifying the best pattern would be in October at the earliest, but the management plan should maintain flexibility so that it can be adjusted to the community's needs. Mr. Williams asked if there was a parking challenge; the Council responded that there was one daily. Mr. Williams counseled the Borough to wait for the study to determine the permit parking plan.

There was additional discussion with Chief Serafin and the Council about who would enforce a permit parking ordinance in the future. An extended discussion was about utilizing parking boots, barnacles, and tickets.

### **Engineering Items**

Mr. Leinneweber shared that he was developing a bid for 40 ramps to cover Cumberland, Filbert, and other areas in the Borough. He shared that there would be an additional discussion about the cost cutoff because inflation will affect how much each ramp costs, and the total cost of all ramps together is intended to be covered entirely by existing grant funds.

Mr. Leinneweber shared that the Borough had been awarded a PennDOT Multi-Modal Grant for repaving Endlich Avenue in excess of \$650K. That grant has a 15.00% match from the Borough. Work would begin to evaluate the area of improvement. Mr. Goodman and Mr. Lombardo indicated the need to coordinate the roadwork with the Authorities and UGI. Mr. Ahrens confirmed that he would make all three entities aware.

Mr. Leinneweber discussed whether the Borough Council wanted to consider regulating VRBO, AirBnB, and other short-term rentals. There was discussion about whether any regulation needed to include a Zoning Ordinance Amendment or could be done in a standalone ordinance. The consensus of the Council was to address the process later this year. Mr. Goodman commented that there were other priorities, and this may be something that the STMP work group could address.

### **Action Items**

*Richard Lombardo motioned to approve the January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Business Meeting Minutes. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was not agreed to unanimously.*

*Richard Lombardo motioned to approve the February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was not agreed to unanimously.*

Mr. Goodman commented that the size of the Finance Report was a little bit large; Mr. Ahrens responded that the level of detail in the financial reports showed details of the Borough's multiple funds. Mr. Ahrens commented that based on prior events in the Borough, it was important for the Borough to see a greater level of detail.

*Richard Lombardo motioned to approve the March 2024 Finance Report. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was not agreed to unanimously.*

### **Reports**

Mr. Ahrens shared that the Mount Penn Borough Municipal Authority had additional steps they needed to fulfill to meet federal regulations for Lead Pipeline replacements, and they would be sending further details to the Borough.

Mr. Goodman shared his conversation with the STMP work group and said he was excited talking to their staff and looking forward to getting their responses. They will provide a more comprehensive picture of the Borough's operations and recommendations over the next five years. Mr. Goodman also mentioned that they would opine whether a municipal merger with Lower Alsace Township was appropriate.

Mr. Ahrens shared that he had discussed follow-up discussions with representatives from DCED to be held with Lower Alsace Township and Mt. Penn Borough. DCED believes having a check-in meeting with all parties would be helpful, but Mr. Ahrens shared that the Borough would benefit from waiting until the STMP work group returned with their findings. Mr. Ahrens shared that Mr. Goodman had secured additional funds from Berks County to pay for activities within a municipal merger if it becomes a possibility.

There was some discussion about the collective thanks of the Borough Council towards State Representative Mark Rozzi and State Senator Judy Schwank for securing grant funds for the Borough.

Mayor Maurer commented that after a resignation from the Police Commission, another member needed to be appointed.

*Thomas Baer motioned to nominate Troy Goodman as the third representative to the Police Commission. Richard Lombardo seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was not agreed to unanimously.*

Mr. Lombardo shared that the Hometown Hero Banners were hanged. Mr. Goodman thanked Mr. Stief for his efforts in leading the program. Mr. Lombardo also shared that the Borough had secured an additional \$400K grant to build a new municipal garage at the Antietam Valley Municipal Authority property.

Mr. Ahrens shared that the garage project needed to be bid on in each part to meet the Borough's requirements under state laws and regulations.

Mr. Goodman and Mr. Ahrens also shared about an LSA Statewide grant program that State Representative Rozzi had secured for the Borough that could potentially pay for additional vehicles, technology, facilities renovations, and other items. Mr. Maurer emphasized the importance of investing in the Borough's streets.

Mrs. Dise reported that Solid Waste activities have been working well, and she and Mr. Ahrens would be setting a time to discuss a potential grant to purchase new recycling bins for residents.'

Mr. Kindlick shared that Robert Half had billing issues, which the office handled.

Mr. Lombardo shared about code appeals for the Rental Program that were held recently, where the Borough rejected one and upheld two appeals based on factors discussed. The Council engaged in some discussion regarding the regulations of the rental properties, specifically whether family members are exempt from the requirements.

Mr. Goodman noted that there would need to be updates to the Borough's Committee listings on the agenda, website, etc.

Mr. Ahrens reviewed the Borough Manager's report.

### **New Business**

*Richard Lombardo motioned to accept Calvin Hess, Jr.'s resignation from the Zoning Hearing Board. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was not agreed to unanimously.*

Mr. Maurer commented that the Borough should fill the position before future hearings. There was some discussion about whether Tianna Schaeffer, an alternate on the Zoning Hearing Board, would be interested in the role because she indicated that she preferred to be an alternate for the Board. Mr. Kindlick volunteered to contact Ms. Schaffer and discuss that with her.

Mr. Ahrens shared that Hera Registry was interested in supporting the Borough's Foreclosure and Vacancy registration program, which would create a new revenue stream and not cost the Borough any money. Mr. Ahrens sought a consensus to let him discuss the matter with the company. The Council agreed to permit that discussion to go forward.

**Adjournment**

*Richard Lombardo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 PM. Christine Dise seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.*

Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hunter L. Ahrens".

Hunter L. Ahrens  
Borough Manager