

MOUNT PENN BOROUGH
BOROUGH COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING
September 30, 2025

The Mount Penn Borough Council met for a Business Meeting on September 30, 2025, at Borough Hall at 200 N. 25th Street, Reading, PA 19606. Council President Rick Lombardo called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and adjourned at 9:19 PM.

Council President Rick Lombardo, Council Vice President Christine Dise, Council Member Thomas Baer, Council Member Kelly Dudash, Council Member Troy Goodman, and Council Member Michael Kindlick were present. Mayor Ryan Maurer arrived at 7:03 PM. Council Member Yrisol Garcia was absent. Staff and professional members present were Solicitor Thomas Klonis, Chief of Police Ray Serafin, Deputy Chief of Police Justin Johnson, Borough Engineer Ty Leinneweber, Codes Administrator Arthur Kelly, Borough Manager Hunter L. Ahrens, Streets Foreman David Okonski, and Streets Laborer Richard Lombardo, III. Several community members were also in attendance, including John Hoffert of Hoffert Surveyors and Lind Dapcic-Angst.

Attendance Roll Call

The meeting was called to order, and a roll call was conducted. Six members were present, establishing a quorum. Yrisol Garcia was absent.

Public Comment

Linda Dapcic-Angst, 2529 Perkiomen Avenue – Ms. Dapcic-Angst appeared before Council regarding an issue with stairs on her property. She explained that she had begun work to replace her rotted staircase and landing with approval from Matt Davenport of SDE but then received a cease and desist order. She showed pictures of the project and noted that the contractor had made drawings that were approved. She stated she never received communication that additional information was needed for her to continue work.

Mr. Ahrens explained that SDE found the initial plot plan insufficient. Council member Lombardo identified that the drawing appeared to be missing railings on both sides of the stairway. Council advised Ms. Dapcic-Angst to contact SDE to confirm what additional information they needed to approve the permit and approve the continuation of work.

Discuss Updates for Allan Myers Project and Consider Pay Applications

Mr. Okonski and Mr. Leinneweber provided an update on the Allan Myers road project. Staff met with Allan Myers representatives earlier that day to discuss outstanding issues. The contractor expressed safety concerns about gas line depths, and proposed spending three days with a vacuum truck to verify utility depths at a cost of \$4,500 per day (\$13,500 total).

They had requested that the Borough pay for that work and had requested other changes and the Borough identified several areas of concern. Key discussion points included:

- Allan Myers damaged a pipe that will cost \$7,800 to repair;
- The contractor wants to mill roads to 6 inches instead of the contracted 12 inches due to utility depth concerns;
- Council expressed frustration that the contract clearly states the contractor is responsible for locating utilities;
- Multiple curbs that were recently installed were damaged during construction and must be replaced; and,
- The contractor did not properly apply the leveling and wearing courses as specified in the contract.

After extensive discussion, Council discussed proposing that Allan Myers could apply the \$7,800 they owe for the damaged pipe against the \$13,500 test hole expense, making the net additional cost \$5,700. The consensus of Council was to have the contractor be responsible for the cost consistent with the contract's requirement that the contractor be responsible for locating utilities.

Mr. Leineweber reported that the pay applications submitted by Allan Myers showed discrepancies in material quantities, particularly in the wearing and leveling courses.

Richard Lombardo moved to table the pay applications for Allan Myers pending resolution of the identified issues. Mr. Kindlick seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Consider Final Plan Approve for Faith Lutheran Subdivision Plan

John Hoffert, Hoffert Surveyors – Mr. Hoffert, representing the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Faith, presented a two-lot subdivision plan to separate the parsonage from the church facility. He explained that due to dwindling congregation size, the church has decided to sell the parsonage and use the funds to support the church. The subdivision plan had previously received approval from the Zoning Hearing Board and a unanimous recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Christine Dise made a motion to approve the Faith Lutheran Subdivision Plan. Thomas Baer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Consider Repair to Mt. Penn Memorial Clock

Mr. Lombardo, III presented quotes for repairs to the Mt. Penn Memorial Clock. He explained that the clock faces are turned inside the housing, and the lenses are cracked and aged. Two quotes were provided:

- \$11,820 for replacement with heavier-duty, longer-lasting parts
- \$10,500 for standard replacement parts

Additional costs for a new enclosure and outside power would be needed regardless of which option was chosen. Council agreed to table the decision to explore potential grant funding from the Veterans Memorial Fund.

Consider Pay Application for Summit Valley Outdoor Solutions (SVOS) [Sinkhole Project]

Mr. Leinneweber presented the final invoice for the Brook Street stream bank erosion project, totaling \$9,814 for additional wooden guide rail, stone, and riprap needed to stabilize the road bed and stream bank. The total cost for the entire repair project was \$96,999.22. It was noted that the borough could not use liquid fuels funds for this project because they did not submit for approval before the emergency work began.

Thomas Baer moved to approve the pay application for the sinkhole project in the amount of \$9,814. Michael Kindlick seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion followed regarding the impact on the borough's fund balance policy, which requires maintaining approximately \$343,000-350,000 in reserve. Mr. Maurer expressed concerns that this large expenditure might put the borough below its required fund balance threshold. He suggested considering borrowing to replenish the fund balance before the end of the year.

Consider Pay Application for Folk Paving [N. 25th Street Project]

Mr. Leinneweber presented a pay application for Ronald C. Folk Paving (Folk Paving) for work on the first block of North 25th Street in the amount of \$21,787. This was an emergency repair that PennDOT declined to reimburse because they determined the bids weren't comparable (Folk Paving doesn't charge mobilization fees, while other bidders did).

Christine Dise moved to approve the pay application for Folk Paving in the amount of \$21,787. Michael Kindlick seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Review September 2025 Engineers Report

Mr. Leinneweber provided updates on ongoing projects. He noted that inspections at the school project were completed, and a certificate of occupancy was issued two days prior to the meeting.

Discuss Engineering Project Philosophy and Associated Costs

Ms. Dudash initiated a discussion about whether more thorough engineering work, including surveys, should be done at the start of projects to potentially avoid costly surprises later. Mr. Leinneweber explained that for the road project, core borings were done, but full surveys were only performed on some streets due to cost considerations.

The engineering cost for full surveys would have been approximately \$60,000, which would have been a significant additional expense. Mr. Leinneweber explained that for standard road milling and paving projects, such extensive surveys are not typically recommended. For projects involving handicap ramps or utilities, more detailed engineering might be warranted.

Ms. Dudash suggested that Council consider more upfront engineering for future large projects to potentially reduce unexpected issues.

Consider Health Insurance Changes for Non-Union Staff

Mr. Ahrens presented an option to move non-union staff to the Water Authority's health insurance plan. This change would save approximately \$7,500 in the budget, potentially up to \$10,000 by the end of next year. He noted that the Water Authority's plan is less comprehensive than the Teamsters plan currently used, but an HRA (Health Reimbursement Account) could be established to offset some of those differences.

Council expressed concern about the impact on employees, particularly regarding dental and vision coverage. They requested more detailed comparisons before making a decision at the next meeting. The Water Authority would need to approve adding borough employees at their next meeting on the second Tuesday of the month.

Consider Economic Development Task Force

Mr. Ahrens and Mr. Baer introduced a proposal to create a five-person Economic Development Task Force focused on improving Perkiomen Avenue. The task force would include a council member and the borough manager, along with community volunteers, particularly business owners. The goal would be to prepare a grant application by September of the following year to fund planning for economic development initiatives.

Troy Goodman made a motion to approve Resolution No. 13-25 to create an Economic Development Task Force. Kelly Dudash seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Approvals

Kelly Dudash moved to approve trick or treat hours for October 31, 2025, from 6:00-9:00 PM. Christine Dise seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Michael Kindlick moved to approve the meeting minutes for August 26, 2025. Christine Dise seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Michael Kindlick moved to approve the meeting minutes for September 23, 2025. Thomas Baer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Thomas Baer moved to approve the September 2025 Treasurer Report. Christine Dise seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Fire Company

The Council President mentioned that he would look into arranging a CPR class for employees and council members, noting that the cost had increased from \$25 to \$45 per card.

Central Berks Regional Commission

Mr. Maurer reported that the Commission's next meeting would be on October 2nd.

Community Relations Liaison

Mrs. Dise reported that the newsletter had been approved by Mr. Ahrens.

Codes Committee

Mr. Kelly reported for the month of September:

- 150 notice of violation cases
- 76 closed cases, 39 open cases, 5 inspections
- Issues at several properties, including:
- 2500 block of Perkiomen Avenue: work being done without a valid permit
- 200 block of Endlick Avenue: unsafe rental property (tenants being evicted)
- 2200 block of Perkiomen Avenue: unpermitted basement work
- Ongoing issue with unhitched trailers improperly parked on borough streets

Personnel Committee

Mr. Kindlick reported they had reviewed the borough manager's contract and approved the changes, bringing it forward to Council for awareness.

Borough Manager

- Completed two grant applications totaling nearly \$800,000 for Lower Alsace Ambulance and Central Berks Police Department.
- Received support letters from neighboring municipalities for that grant.
- Discussed utility billing challenges related to recycling and trash fees.
- Highlighted Codes staff productivity with a significant increase in cases compared to previous years.
- Sent a CY 2025 budget draft to council.

Adjournment

Michael Kindlick made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kelly Dudash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 PM.

Executive Session

Following the regular meeting, the council went into an executive session to discuss personnel matters and strategy in connection with potential litigation.