

## **February 24, 2026 Business Meeting**

### Meeting minutes

The Mount Penn Borough Council met for the Monthly Business Meeting on February 24, 2026, at Borough Hall at 200 N. 25th Street, Reading, PA 19606. Council President Rick Lombardo called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Council President Rick Lombardo, Council Vice President Christine Dise, Council Member Thomas Baer, Council Member Kelly Dudash, Council Member Troy Goodman, Council Member David Korinchock, and Mayor Ryan Maurer were present. Council Member Michael Kindlick was absent. Staff and professionals present included Solicitor Tom Klonis, Esq., Borough Engineer Ty Leinneweber, Chief of Police Justin Johnson, Codes Administrator Arthur Kelly, Jr., and Borough Manager Hunter L. Ahrens. No members of the public were present.

#### **Meeting Opening**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM. All present were asked to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance, which was led by Mr. Lombardo.

#### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

#### **Engineers Report**

Engineer Ty Leinneweber provided updates on several ongoing projects. For Endlich Avenue, he issued a punch list to Allan Myers with three remaining items, primarily grass repairs along curb lines. The project is nearing completion with final payment applications pending. Mr. Leinneweber noted the need to calculate liquidated damages before processing final payments.

Mr. Lombardo inquired about using remaining grant funds for sidewalks and lighting improvements. Mr. Leinneweber confirmed this was possible and suggested identifying priority areas for sidewalk installation and ADA ramp improvements.

The Water Authority's emergency excavation on Endlich Avenue was discussed, with concerns raised about the warranty implications for the newly reconstructed road. Mr. Leinneweber will prepare a letter outlining the borough's expectations for proper restoration.

Regarding grant extensions, Mr. Ahrens reported that the LSA statewide grant cannot be amended, but Representative Bradford and Rusnock's offices indicated they would work to redirect unused funds to other projects after closeout.

For the municipal garage grant of \$400,000 expiring in June, Mr. Leinneweber emphasized the need for an extension to avoid losing the funding. The possibility of resuming partnership with Saint Lawrence Borough was discussed.

*Motion by Christine Dise, seconded by Kelly Dudash, to authorize approaching Saint Lawrence Borough for purposes of resuming the joint venture with the garage grant. Motion carried 5-1 with Mr. Baer, Mrs. Dise, Ms. Dudash, Mr. Korinchock, and Mr. Lombardo voting in the affirmative; Mr. Goodman voting in the negative.*

### **Discussion of 2026 Road Projects and Grant Projects**

Mr. Lombardo outlined the need for 2026 road projects, specifically one block of 25th Street between Endlich Avenue and Brooke Street, and a section of Brighton Avenue. The temporary fixes from previous work have deteriorated, creating urgent drainage concerns affecting residential properties.

Discussion centered on funding constraints with approximately \$70,000-75,000 available in liquid fuels. The full project cost was estimated at \$100,000-120,000. Council debated whether to proceed with partial work or seek alternative funding.

The need to replace a 2007 pickup truck was also discussed, with options including financing through liquid fuels or general fund allocation. Mr. Ahrens suggested coordinating both projects while considering the upcoming conveyance leaseback timeline.

*Motion by Thomas Baer, seconded by David Korinchock, to authorize Ty Leinneweber to proceed with preparing bid documents for the road project, with discretion to advertise based on financial feasibility determination. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Discussion of Zoning Ordinance Updates**

Mr. Baer indicated that zoning ordinance updates were progressing, with the primary outstanding issue being regulations for short-term rentals electronic signs. Lower Alsace Township advocated for prohibiting short-term rentals and any movement on signs. Mr. Baer shared that the Borough had proposed including the short-term rental use in districts R-5, C-1, and C-2. Mr. Klonis emphasized that the Borough and Township could not outright ban short-term rentals because it would open the ordinance up to a challenge. The suggested restrictions included 200 feet from intersections and prohibiting red, green, or yellow colors.

Council provided no objections to the short-term rental proposal and discussed allowing electronic signs in business districts while maintaining restrictions in residential areas to support local businesses.

### **Appointment of MPBMA Board Member**

Mr. Lombardo recessed the meeting to an Executive Session on personnel matters to discuss the candidates for the MPBMA Board Member appointment. The meeting was recessed from 7:54 PM until 8:12 PM. The meeting resumed at 8:12 PM.

*Motion by David Korinchock, seconded by Kelly Dudash, to appoint Kevin Blackburn to the Mt. Penn Borough Municipal Authority Board per Resolution No. 24-26. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Discussion and Consideration of Leaseback-Conveyance**

Mr. Ahrens presented a detailed organizational structure proposal for post-conveyance operations. Mr. Ahrens emphasized that this framework was not solidified and relied on input from Borough Council for the final structure.

The proposal included creating a transition committee with three council members and two authority board members, establishing a joint public works committee, and streamlining staff into a single organizational structure under the Borough and reducing task duplication.

The proposed leaseback amount was \$295,300 with 5% annual escalations in 2028 and 2029, with renegotiation scheduled for 2030-2032. A one-time transition cost of \$60,000 would be paid in July, with bi-annual payments in January and July thereafter.

Budget projections showed the borough achieving a \$180,000 surplus while the authority would operate with a \$559,000 deficit, 55% attributable to leaseback expenses, 45% attributable to current Authority decisions. The resulting rate increases that could become necessary were within the presented scenarios from PFM at the Borough's January 20, 2026, Townhall meeting.

The near-term timeline calls for completing due diligence by March 30th, with implementation beginning in June 2026 and staff transition effective January 1, 2027. Mr. Lombardo requested that the presentation and detailed memo be forwarded to Council for additional review and comment.

### **Discussion of Intern Hiring**

Mr. Ahrens proposed hiring an intern recommended from Senator Schwank's office, with costs shared between the borough and water authority. The intern would work from late May through August, providing additional support during the Conveyance-Leaseback transition period and project related work. Council requested detailed cost information for the next meeting and indicated they were supportive, but needed additional details.

### **Discussion and Consideration of Merger with Lower Alsace Township**

Mr. Korinchock suggested using available county funds to support merger communication efforts, including direct mailings to registered voters explaining key merger benefits. He

referenced a successful merger campaign in another municipality that achieved 80% voter approval through comprehensive public outreach.

Mr. Ahrens summarized the proposed discussions with Lower Alsace Township and the structure of a committee to steer the process. He shared that the next step was for Council to identify members to participate on that committee.

Council members David, Christine, and Rick were selected for the transition committee to coordinate with Lower Alsace Township representatives.

### **Discussion and Consideration of Employee Handbook Revisions**

This item was tabled pending further review and Personnel Committee Chair availability.

### **Discussion and Consideration of Electronic Payment of Utilities**

Mr. Ahrens recommended switching to electronic payments for utility bills due to ongoing mail delivery issues, including four uncashed checks to Met-Ed. Mr. Baer supported the change, noting improved tracking capabilities through electronic bank statements.

*Motion by Troy Goodman, seconded by Christine Dise, to authorize electronic payment of utilities. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Discussion of Codes Appeal Scheduling**

Mr. Ahrens shared that a codes appeal hearing needs to be scheduled for a property owner contesting the a rubbish violation. The appellant has threatened to bring an attorney, so Mr. Klonis will be present. The codes committee will coordinate scheduling.

### **Woodvale Avenue Parking Restrictions Ordinance**

Borough Council tabled a draft Ordinance for Woodvale Avenue parking restrictions.

### **Approval of Final Purchase Order for Code Enforcement Vehicle**

The previously approved codes vehicle became unavailable, requiring approval for an upgraded version costing \$26,975, an increase of approximately \$1,200.

*Motion by Troy Goodman, seconded by David Korinchock, to approve the final purchase order for the Code Enforcement vehicle at \$26,975. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Approval of PFM Financial Advisors Services Agreement**

Mr. Ahrens requested approval for PFM's Phase 2 services at \$29,500.00 for comprehensive financial analysis and due diligence for the conveyance leaseback. The cost represents insurance preparation if litigation arose and detailed document review beyond the initial analysis.

*Motion by Thomas Baer, seconded by David Korinchock, to approve PFM Financial Advisors Professional Services Agreement for \$29,500. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Minutes for January 27, 2026 Business Meeting**

*Motion by Troy Goodman, seconded by Kelly Dudash, to accept the minutes of the January 27, 2026 Business Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Minutes for January 29, 2026 Townhall Meeting**

*Motion by David Korinchock, seconded by Thomas Baer, to accept the minutes of the January 29, 2026 Townhall Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **January 2026 Treasurer's Report**

*Motion by David Korinchock, seconded by Kelly Dudash, to accept the January 2026 Treasurers Report. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **February 2026 Treasurer's Report**

*Motion by David Korinchock, seconded by Kelly Dudash, to accept the February 2026 Treasurers Report. Motion carried unanimously.*

## **Reports**

### **Fire Company**

Mr. Lombardo reported that the ladder truck is in service and the recent Fasnacht sale was successful on the first day, though 140 dozen remained unsold on the second day due to unfamiliarity with the traditional pastry.

### **Central Berks Regional Commission**

Mr. Maurer provided an update on the three strikes ordinance implementation, working with Officer Ernie on Excel reporting systems. Progress continues with weekend coordination sessions. The next commission meeting is scheduled for March 5th.

### **Public Works Committee**

Mrs. Dise commended the public works crew for excellent snow removal efforts, noting 900 truck loads of snow removal during the recent storm. Street sweeping is scheduled for Memorial Day preparation, with equipment reservations underway.

### **Codes Committee**

Codes Administrator reported 57 violations issued with 36 closed and 21 open cases during the reporting period. The rental inspection program is fully operational with 15 inspections completed. Winter weather public notices were issued regarding 24-hour snow removal requirements.

Discussion addressed ongoing trailer parking enforcement challenges, with Mr. Klonis noting ordinance ambiguities requiring revision. Mrs. Dise shared a specific incident involving

permitted construction activities, which highlighted the need for clearer regulations distinguishing between prohibited parking and legitimate work activities.

### **Chief of Police**

Chief Johnson reported on a Friday night shooting incident involving a 19-year-old with an illegally modified handgun who accidentally shot his girlfriend in the thigh. The investigation revealed multiple illegal modifications and switches, with the suspect facing numerous felony charges.

### **Other Business**

No additional business was brought forward.

### **Adjournment**

*Motion by Christine Dise, seconded by Thomas Baer, to adjourn that meeting at 9:20 PM.*

*Motion carried unanimously.*

Submitted by:

*Hunter L. Ahrens*

Hunter L. Ahrens (Apr 17, 2026 08:56:23 EDT)

Hunter L. Ahrens, MPA, SHRM-SCP  
Borough Manager






# January 2026 Reorganization Meeting - Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report

2026-04-17

Created:	2026-04-17
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## "January 2026 Reorganization Meeting - Meeting Minutes" History

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