

MOUNT PENN BOROUGH
BOROUGH COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING
February 18, 2025

The Mount Penn Borough Council met for a Business Meeting on February 18, 2025, at Borough Hall at 200 N. 25th Street, Reading, PA 19606. Council President Troy Goodman called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM and adjourned at 9:08 PM.

Council President Troy Goodman, Council Vice President Rick Lombardo, Council Member Thomas Baer, Council Member Christine Dise, Council Member Michael Kindlick, Council Member Roger Stief, and Mayor Ryan Maurer were in attendance. Staff and Professional Members present were Borough Manager Hunter L. Ahrens and Chief of Police Ray Serafin.

Several other community members were present.

Public Comment

No one had signed up for public comment. The council president noted that the Center and Glen parking issues had been ongoing for about a year, and no one was present to address it at this meeting. Mr. Stief suggested not entertaining further discussion since residents had ample opportunity to voice concerns.

The council president commented that ADA compliance requirements necessitated changes to the turn radius onto Center Street from Cumberland Avenue, which shortened the turning radius of the turn. He stated this was done to meet federal requirements after a resident filed an ADA claim. The council president expressed that while he sympathized with residents' concerns, the changes were necessary to ensure emergency vehicle access.

Approve Advertisement of Road Work Bids for Endlich, Summit, Laurel, Cameron, Oak, and Brooke Streets

Motion by Rick Lombardo to approve advertisement of road work bids for Endlich, Summit, Laurel, Cameron, Oak, and Brooke Street. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Extension of Antietam Valley Municipal Authority Charter

The solicitor presented Ordinance Number 904, which had been discussed at the previous meeting and duly advertised. The ordinance would extend the Antietam Valley Municipal Authority Charter period by 50 years from the date of filing the articles of amendment.

Motion by Rick Lombardo to adopt Ordinance Number 904 extending the Antietam Valley Municipal Authority Charter. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Borough Manager requested ink signatures on the document to return it to the Authority as soon as possible.

Engineer Updates

The engineer reported that the only action item was the advertising of documents, which had already been addressed. The Borough Manager thanked the engineer for his work on a

large project for the Borough, which was probably the largest road project in the Borough's history.

Discussion of Grant Reimbursements for Garage Project

The Borough Manager presented a report from QuickBooks showing \$17,226.10 in expenses incurred for the building project, primarily consisting of engineering fees and submission fees for various reviews. The manager sought direction from the council on how to handle reimbursement, as the funds are currently in the capital fund but are showing as an expense in the general fund.

After discussion, it was decided to wait until construction commences to reimburse the general fund from the capital fund. Mayor Maurer suggested tying reimbursement to when construction bills come in, given the borough's cash basis accounting.

Discussion of General Parking Restrictions

The council discussed the enforcement of parking restrictions, particularly regarding yellow curbs and fire hydrants. The Chief of Police clarified that signage is required for enforcement, not just yellow paint. The solicitor confirmed that the borough ordinance, consistent with state law, prohibits parking within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.

The council also discussed the possibility of using painted crosswalks instead of signs to restrict parking near intersections. The Chief of Police agreed that pedestrians and motorists would more easily recognize crosswalks.

Discussion of Visitor's Parking Permits

The council discussed concerns about the potential abuse of visitor parking permits. The Borough Manager explained the current online application process and suggested adding a field for vehicle ownership information to help detect misuse. The solicitor advised that this additional information could aid in enforcement if discrepancies are found.

The council debated setting limits on the number of visitor permits issued annually but decided against it. Instead, they agreed to rely on the Borough Manager's judgment in identifying patterns of abuse.

Discussion of Municipal Merger and Authority Resolutions

The merger ad-hoc committee presented recommendations for a potential merger with Lower Alsace Township:

- Form of government: Second Class Township
- Representation type: At-large districts
- Total membership of governing body: 5 elected members
- Potential names: Mt. Penn, Lower Alsace, Antietam Valley, Penn Alsace
- Form of financial review: To be discussed if staff can handle it internally

The council agreed to adopt the recommendation letter and send it to Lower Alsace Township.

Rick Lombardo motioned to accept the letter with merger recommendations to send to Lower Alsace Township. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Repeal of Per Capita Tax Ordinance

The solicitor prepared an ordinance to repeal the per capita tax, which is ready for advertising.

Rick Lombardo made a motion to advertise the repeal of the per capita tax ordinance. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Street Sweeping Quote for May 2025

The Borough Manager presented a quote for street sweeping services at \$3,250, under the budgeted amount of \$3,500. The rental would be for a smaller sweeper from May 19th to May 23rd, 2025. The public works director emphasized the importance of sweeping this year due to the amount of material laid down for snow.

Thomas Baer made a motion to approve the street sweeping quote. Rick Lombardo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Signal Service Quote for Traffic Light Repair/Replacement

The Borough Manager presented a quote for replacing a malfunctioning video detector at a traffic light, costing slightly over \$4,000. The expense would be covered by liquid fuels funds, but it would reduce the budget for further repairs.

Rick Lombardo made a motion to approve the traffic light repair quote. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The council discussed the possibility of applying for grants to upgrade all traffic lights in the borough, particularly to add emergency vehicle preemption capabilities and battery backups.

Approve Minutes for January 28, 2025, Meeting

This item was tabled as the minutes were not yet prepared.

Reports

Fire Company

The Fire Chief reported a false alarm a week and a half ago.

Water Authority

The Borough Manager reported that the Water Authority agreed to suspend payment for hydrants on the condition that the borough does not raise its rent this year. The council discussed making this arrangement permanent in the future.

Planning Commission

A meeting was scheduled for February 26th.

Borough Council President

The council president reported that the audit was currently the top priority.

Personnel Committee

An executive session was scheduled for later in the evening.

Codes Committee

The committee was waiting for a meeting to be scheduled.

Finance Committee

The committee discussed the need to adjust the formula for allocating delinquent tax collections to apportion money to the newly separated solid waste fund properly. The Borough Manager was directed to consult with the auditor for guidance on the best method to handle this allocation.

Community Relations Liaison

The liaison reported a positive interaction with the school district in addressing a complaint during a recent snow day. The issue was rectified promptly, demonstrating improved communication between the borough and the school.

Merger Ad-Hoc Committee

There is no additional report beyond the earlier discussion.

Borough Mayor

No report.

Chief of Police

No report.

Codes Administrator

No report.

Solicitor

No additional report.

Borough Engineer

No additional report.

Borough Manager

The Borough Manager reported that the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) had flagged the borough's account, preventing the receipt or execution of grant contracts until the 2022 audit is completed. The manager estimated the audit would be completed by May 2025.

Ordinance Updates Pending**Dumpster Permit Ordinance****Road Closure Ordinance****Street Access Ordinance****Noise Ordinance**

Handicap Ordinances

Other Business

The council discussed the non-functioning clock at Howard and Dengler Streets. The clock, estimated to be nearly 100 years old, was considered a historical part of the borough. The council agreed to investigate finding someone who can restore old clocks and obtain repair cost estimates.

Announcement of Executive Session on Personnel Matters on February 13, 2025

The council announced that the Personnel Committee had held an executive session on personnel matters on February 13, 2025.

Adjournment

The council moved to enter an executive session to discuss personnel matters. The Executive Session lasted from 8:10 PM until 9:08 PM. The public meeting was then adjourned at 9:08 PM.