

MOUNT PENN BOROUGH  
BOROUGH COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING  
APRIL 22, 2025

The Mount Penn Borough Council met for a Business Meeting on April 22, 2025, at Borough Hall at 200 N. 25th Street, Reading, PA 19606. Council President Rick Lombardo called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM and adjourned at 8:51 PM.

Council President Rick Lombardo, Council Vice President Roger Stief, Council Member Thomas Baer, Council Member Christine Dise, and Mayor Ryan Maurer were in attendance. Council Member Michael Kindlick joined the meeting at 6:50 PM, and Council Member Yrisol Garcia joined the meeting at 6:57 PM. Staff and Professional Members present were Borough Solicitor Tom Klonis, Borough Engineer Ty Leinneweber, Borough Manager Hunter L. Ahrens, Chief of Police Ray Serafin, and Codes Administrator Arthur Kelly, Jr.

Others in attendance were Donald Longlott, Kelly Dudash, and several community members.

### **Meeting Opening and Pledge to the Flag**

The meeting was called to order, and all present rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Conduct Interviews for Borough Council Position**

#### **Interview with Mr. Longlott**

Mr. Longlott was interviewed for the vacant position on the Borough Council. He confirmed that he met the legal qualifications, including being over 18, a registered voter in the borough, and having resided in the borough for at least one year.

Mr. Longlott described his background, which included 37 years of experience with the Reading School District and City of Reading as a union steward. He emphasized his experience in dealing with administrative matters, contracts, budgets, and personnel issues.

When asked about building effective relationships, Mr. Longlott stressed the importance of transparency, honesty, and common sense. He stated that he would handle disagreements during public meetings professionally, suggesting that issues be tabled for executive sessions when necessary.

Regarding the borough's future, Mr. Longlott acknowledged the challenges of changing demographics and landlord issues. He suggested focusing on beautification and attracting businesses through persistence and dialogue with business people.

On the topic of a potential police department review, Mr. Longlott expressed understanding of the officers' concerns but emphasized the importance of transparency and the potential benefits of the process.

Council members asked additional questions about Mr. Longlott's goals and interest in other borough positions. He expressed a desire to make Mt. Penn safe and welcoming to diverse residents while preserving its character.

#### **Interview with Kelly Dudash**

Ms. Dudash was interviewed for the vacant position on the borough council. She confirmed that she meets the legal qualifications for the role.

Ms. Dudash described her background, including a bachelor's degree in business administration and professional experience with Sodexo in hospital and school settings. She highlighted her involvement in local organizations, including the Antietam Valley Recreation Commission and the Water Authority.

Regarding building effective relationships, Ms. Dudash emphasized the importance of dialogue, transparency, and working towards common goals. She suggested addressing disagreements respectfully and in a formal manner during meetings.

Ms. Dudash expressed concern about the increasing number of rentals in the community and hoped to see more homeownership. She acknowledged both the pros and cons of a potential merger with Lower Alsace Township.

When asked about the proposed review of the police department, Ms. Dudash emphasized the importance of sensitivity and transparency in handling matters affecting people's livelihoods. She suggested being upfront with those involved to achieve better outcomes.

Council members asked additional questions about Ms. Dudash's goals and her thoughts on various borough issues.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment at this time.

### **Appoint a Candidate for Borough Council Vacancy**

Council members discussed the merits of both candidates. They appreciated Mr. Longlott's long-term residency and constructive approach to addressing concerns. Ms. Dudash was praised for her involvement in multiple borough organizations and preparedness for the role.

*Christine Dise made a motion to appoint Kelly Dudash to the vacant position of Borough Council for the remainder of the year. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5 in favor and one abstention. Messrs. Lombardo, Baer, Kindlick, and Stief, Mrs. Dise voting in the affirmative. Ms. Garcia abstained, citing her absence from the candidate interviews.*

It was suggested that Mr. Longlott be offered a position on the Planning Commission, which the council agreed to pursue.

### **Engineer's Report**

The borough engineer, Ty, presented two items related to road projects:

Endlich Avenue (Contract A): Allen Myers was the apparent low bidder at \$417,476. The borough has a grant of \$653,716, leaving a balance of \$236,240. The engineer recommended awarding the contract to Allen Myers, pending the solicitor's review.

*Roger Stief made a motion to accept the bid for Endlich Avenue under Contract A, pending the solicitor's approval. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Multiple Streets Road Project (Contract B): Allen Myers was also the low bidder at \$459,642. The grant amount for this work is \$800,000, leaving a balance of \$340,358. Discussion occurred about change orders to include work on Brighton Street and a portion of North 25th Street.

*Roger Stief made a motion to accept the bid for multiple streets under Contract B, pending the solicitor's approval. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Further discussion took place regarding the removal of trees at 236 Endlich and along Endlich from the DeTurk Property as impediments to the road projects and motorists' safety. The engineer also provided an update on the garage project, mentioning that they received the conservation district approval letter.

### **Executive Session on Personnel Matters**

The council went to an executive session to discuss personnel matters. The meeting was recessed at 7:21 PM. The Council exited Executive session and resumed the meeting at 7:55 PM.

### **Accept Employee Resignation and Approve Separation Agreement**

*Michael Kindlick made a motion to accept Mark Stufflet's resignation, effective May 1st. Roger Stief seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Roger Stief made a motion to approve the separation agreement. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Discuss and Consider Employment Action for Potential Borough Employee(s)**

*Roger Stief made a motion to approve the advertisement for the vacant Streets Laborer position. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Approval of Employee Handbook and Resolution No. 01-25**

*Yrisol Garcia made a motion to approve Resolution No. 01-25, Adopting A Revised Employee Handbook. Roger Stief seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Approval of Borough Job Descriptions for Manager, Street Foreman, and Street Laborer**

Mr. Ahrens explained that the job descriptions were updated to include physical requirements, position missions, and items from the ordinance.

*Roger Stief made a motion to approve the job descriptions for the Manager, Street Foreman, and Street Laborer positions. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Approve Professional Engagement Letter with Brumbach, Mancuso & Fegley, P.C. as Labor Counsel**

The council discussed the engagement letter from attorney John Scott, who has been acting as labor counsel. His hourly rate is \$250 per hour, with minimum charges for telephone calls and letters.

*Michael Kindlick made a motion to retroactively approve the professional engagement letter with Brumbach, Mancuso & Fegley, P.C. as Labor Counsel. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Approve Ordinance 905 Rescinding the Per-Capita Tax**

*Roger Stief made a motion to approve Ordinance 905, rescinding the per-capita tax. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Approve Resolution No. 02-25 Setting Refuse Charge for 2025**

*Roger Stief made a motion to approve Resolution No. 02-25, setting the refuse charge for 2025. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Discussion of Borough Council Self-Assessments**

The Council discussed the need to read and circulate a Harvard Review article on self-assessments before proceeding with the assessment process. Mr. Ahrens agreed to distribute the article to all council members and set up a survey for self-assessments.

### **Discussion of Handicap Removal Process**

The Council discussed the ongoing process of reviewing and potentially removing existing handicap parking spots. It was reported that 27 pre-existing spots from before 2002 were being reviewed, with residents given until May 11th to respond. The council decided to hold off on approving new handicap applications until the review process is complete.

The solicitor advised that removing handicap parking locations should be done through an ordinance, suggesting it be done annually rather than piecemeal to save costs. The council agreed to address both removals and new applications in the June meeting.

### **Discussion of Merger Meeting Invitation by Lower Alsace Township**

The council discussed the merger meeting invitation from Lower Alsace Township. They expressed concern that Lower Alsace had added additional questions beyond the initial six questions submitted by Mt. Penn. The council agreed to focus on addressing the fundamental issues first before discussing more in-depth topics.

It was decided that the proposed May 31st meeting date was premature. The council agreed to communicate with Lower Alsace that they should address Mt. Penn's initial concerns first before proceeding with further discussions.

### **Discussion of the Codes Presentation to the Codes Committee**

The Council briefly discussed the recent codes presentation to the Codes committee. It was noted that Mr. Kelly, the codes administrator, was doing an excellent job.

### **Updates on Traisr Software**

Mr. Ahrens reported that Lower Alsace had indicated they were not interested in the Traisr software due to concerns about cost and the adequacy of their current system. The Council discussed the possibility of exploring alternative options, including reaching out to AI Shade for a proposal on a custom solution that might be more cost-effective.

### **Discussion of Garage Lease with AVMA**

Mr. Ahrens presented a draft lease agreement for the garage with AVMA. The main point of discussion was the proposed 20-year term, which some council members felt was too short given the significant investment in the building. It was suggested to negotiate for a 50-year

lease or align the lease term with AVMA's charter. The council agreed to continue discussions and negotiations on this matter.

#### **Discussion of Borough Hall Lease with MPBMA**

Mr. Ahrens presented a draft lease agreement for the Borough Hall with MPBMA. The lease included provisions for internet, IT services, and other support services provided by MPBMA. The proposed lease was for three years at \$33,000 per year, or \$2,750 per month. The council discussed the history of the lease and the relatively small rent increase since 2004. No formal action was taken, as this was the first draft for review.

#### **Approve Meeting Minutes for March 25, 2025**

*Michael Kindlick made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for March 25, 2025. Roger Stief seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **Approve Meeting Minutes for March 31, 2025**

*Michael Kindlick made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for March 31, 2025. Yrisol Garcia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **Approve Meeting Minutes for Codes Committee on April 17, 2025**

*Thomas Baer made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for the Codes Committee on April 17, 2025. Yrisol Garcia seconded the motion. The motion passed with those present at the committee meeting voting in favor and others abstaining.*

#### **Approve the Treasurers Report for April 2025**

*Roger Stief made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for April 2025. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **Cancel April 29, 2025, Council Meeting**

*Roger Stief made a motion to cancel the April 29, 2025, Council Meeting. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **Reports**

##### **Fire Company**

It was reported that the final inspection of the new ladder truck would take place the following Thursday.

##### **Codes Committee**

The council reiterated that Arthur, the new codes officer, was doing an excellent job.

##### **Planning Commission**

No specific report was given.

##### **Police Commission**

It was noted that the next meeting would be on the first of the month.

##### **Mayor**

The Mayor had nothing further to report.

#### **Chief of Police**

The Chief reported that they were making progress but did not provide specific details.

#### **Solicitor**

The Solicitor provided clarification on the requirements for committee meetings, minutes, and open meetings. He explained that committee meetings with less than a quorum do not need to be open to the public or have minutes recorded.

#### **Borough Manager**

Mr. Ahrens discussed two items:

Animal Control: The City of Reading is considering establishing a regional animal control authority. The council expressed interest in learning more about this initiative and its potential benefits for Mt. Penn.

Awards: Hunter presented humorous awards to council members, including "Most Likely to Talk to You for Hours" and "This Conversation Could Have Been an Email."

#### **Finance Committee**

It was reported that the Finance Committee would be meeting the following day for a first-quarter review. They will report back to the council at the next public meeting.

#### **Ordinance Updates Pending**

No specific updates were provided on pending ordinances.

#### **Other Business**

The council briefly discussed the need for a new clock in the meeting room, with some members suggesting a digital clock for more precise timekeeping.

#### **Adjournment**

*Roger Stief made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 PM. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

The council announced that it would hold another executive session on personnel items, with no action to be taken.

#### **Executive Session on Personnel Matters**

The council went to an executive session to discuss personnel matters. No action was taken during this session.