**April 29, 2026 Business Meeting**

Meeting minutes

The Mount Penn Borough Council met for the Monthly Business Meeting on April 29, 2026, at the Antietam Senior High School Auditorium, 201 N. 25th Street, Reading, PA 19606. Council President Rick Lombardo called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Council President Rick Lombardo, Council Vice President Christine Dise, Council Member Thomas Baer, Council Member Kelly Dudash, Council Member Troy Goodman, Council Member Michael Kindlick, Council Member David Korinchock, and Mayor Ryan Maurer were present. Staff and professionals present included Solicitor Tom Klonis, Esq., Special Counsel Thomas Wyatt, Esq., Borough Engineer Ty Leinneweber, P.E., Chief of Police Justin Johnson, Codes Administrator Arthur Kelly, Jr., Streets Foreman David Okonski, Streets Laborer Richard Lombardo, III, and Borough Manager Hunter L. Ahrens.

Several members of the public were present including Heidi Fox, Patti Rose, and Tuan Duong.

**Meeting Opening**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. All present were asked to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance, which was led by Mr. Lombardo.

**Public Comments**

Prior to opening the floor for public comment, special counsel Tom Wyatt read a prepared statement on behalf of Borough Council summarizing the rationale for the ordinance under consideration. The statement outlined the borough's good-faith efforts to negotiate a conveyance leaseback framework with the Mt. Penn Borough Municipal Authority, the borough's loss of confidence in the authority's ability to serve as a reliable partner, and the legal basis and public protections underlying the proposed ordinance. Key assurances included that the action does not constitute a sale, that a binding no-sale provision would be included in any leaseback agreement, and that Pennsylvania Borough Code already requires a public referendum before any future sale of a municipal water system if the Borough owns the system.

Mr. Wyatt and the Mr. Ahrens responded to resident questions regarding the status of negotiations, the leaseback structure, continuity of water service, and protection of existing reserves. The Council President noted that a single authority board member had been acting without full board authorization, which had been a contributing factor in the breakdown of negotiations. Residents were encouraged to communicate directly with all members of the authority board.

**Discussion & Consideration of Ordinance 910 – Conveying Authority Assets to Mount Penn Borough**

Mr. Wyatt read the full title of Ordinance No. 910 into the record. The ordinance, properly advertised in its entirety, requires the Mt. Penn Borough Municipal Authority to convey its water system and all associated property and assets to the borough pursuant to Sections 5619 and 5622 of the Municipality Authorities Act. It requires a conveyance date to be established, authorizes the borough to assume the authority's financial and non-financial obligations, directs all parties to cease and desist from actions that could decrease the value of the water system or delay conveyance, and authorizes incidental action by specified borough officers.

Solicitor Klonis confirmed the ordinance had been properly advertised. Council proceeded to vote.

Motion by Thomas Baer to adopt Ordinance No. 910 requiring the Mt. Penn Borough Municipal Authority to convey the water system and all property and assets to the Borough of Mount Penn. Seconded by Michael Kindlick. Motion carried unanimously.

**Engineers Report**

The Borough Engineer reported on two matters. First, regarding the waterline replacement on Summit and Laurel Avenues performed by the water authority: the paving restoration on Summit and Laurel Avenues falls within the existing contract with Alan Myers, but approximately 184 feet of work on Oak Ridge Street is outside that contract. The engineer recommended that the authority be responsible for milling and overlaying Oak Ridge Street at an inch-and-a-half depth, in compliance with borough street ordinance, and that the authority bear the associated cost. Additionally, the authority's work extended into Cameron Street beyond the anticipated scope, which will affect the warranty on that newly constructed road. It was noted that per a prior agreement, the authority had already agreed to cover additional costs related to the project delay, including a change order of $22,000. A meeting was scheduled for the following week to finalize these matters. No formal action was required.

**Discuss and Consider Traffic Calming Options**

The Borough Engineer presented a recommendation to move forward with the installation of speed cushions at the approach of Endlich Avenue and Filbert Avenue, at a cost not to exceed $13,200 under the threshold bidding process. The devices were confirmed to be eligible for funding of liquid fuels. The engineer noted that a borough ordinance must be adopted prior to installation and that PennDOT requires a traffic speed study before approving the devices.

Ryan Maurer raised concerns regarding the potential impact of vertical traffic calming devices on residents with spinal conditions and disabilities, citing medical literature on the subject. He requested that Council pause installation and explore alternative measures, including enhanced signage, gentler speed tables, or chicanes, and that input from medical professionals be obtained before proceeding.

David Okonski clarified that the devices under consideration are speed cushions—not speed humps or bumps—characterized by a gradual, seven-foot-wide profile designed to reduce impact. Justin Johnson confirmed that enforcement alone is not a reliable solution given unpredictable staffing demands, and that traffic cameras are not available to municipalities of Mount Penn's size. Chief Johnson further confirmed that the cushions would not materially impede emergency vehicle response, as larger vehicles can straddle the devices. Mr. Klonis confirmed via phone that traffic cameras for enforcement are not permissible in the borough's jurisdiction.

Council agreed that the first necessary step is completion of a PennDOT-required traffic speed study, to be conducted using the borough's existing speed-tracking equipment. Mr. Ahrens indicated the study could be set up beginning the following week and that results could be available for the May meeting. Council also directed staff to obtain information from the Berks County Medical Society regarding the specific speed cushion design prior to the May meeting.

Motion by Christine Dise to authorize completion of the traffic speed study as required by PennDOT. Seconded by Thomas Baer. Motion carried unanimously.

**Discussion of Fleet Tracking Devices**

Mr. Ahrens presented a proposal from AT&T FirstNet for GPS fleet tracking devices for borough vehicles. Council discussed the benefits of a larger fleet purchase, noting that incorporating the water authority's vehicles—once transferred to the borough—would increase fleet size and potentially improve pricing and insurance considerations. The Council President expressed a preference to wait until all vehicles, including those from the water authority, are under borough ownership before proceeding, so that the purchase can be completed as a single unified deployment.

Regarding codes enforcement vehicles specifically, it was noted that the Police Commission had already discussed and indicated approval for tracking devices on those vehicles, which fall under the police department's codes division umbrella. No formal action was taken on the broader fleet purchase; the matter was tabled pending consolidation of the vehicle fleet.

**Approve Education Reimbursement Agreement**

Motion by Michael Kindlick to approve the Education Reimbursement Agreement for GFOA Courses for Hunter Ahrens. Seconded by Christine Dise. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reports**

**Fire Company**

Mr. Lombardo reported that the county's radio replacement program is progressing. The county anticipates reaching $18,000,000 in funding commitments, which could result in a discount of up to 60% per radio—an improvement from the previously communicated 45%. Radios purchased under the current program must be ordered by a revised deadline of March 30th. Because financing must be secured through the municipality to qualify for the discount, the borough will be responsible for facilitating the loan on behalf of fire and EMS. Mr. Lombardo indicated a joint meeting with Motorola, fire, police, and EMS representatives would be scheduled to determine equipment needs. The estimated cost for Mt. Penn's share, even with the discount, is expected to approach $150,000. Council discussed the possibility of spreading payments over seven years through county-arranged financing.

**Chief of Police**

Mr. Johnson provided an update on spring enforcement priorities, particularly regarding electric scooters and e-bikes. Officers have been briefed on a compliance-focused approach, including the use of a contact/education form for first encounters and escalating enforcement—up to and including confiscation and citations—for repeat offenders engaged in reckless behavior. Mr. Johnson also noted that recent proactive patrol efforts during car break-in season were effective in deterring criminal activity, with officers employing creative plainclothes and on-foot surveillance tactics.

**Public Works Committee**

Mr. Okonski reported that street sweeping is scheduled for the week of May 11th, with posting on Sunday and sweeping Monday through Thursday. Summer work will focus on crack sealing. Mr. Okonski also noted that a signal service call was made to Perkiomen Avenue for non-functioning school zone flashers, that the South 21st Street "opposing traffic does not stop" sign has been ordered and will be installed, and that the Borough is in the process of securing a tarp for the salt shed to prevent moisture damage that was raised in a recent state inspection at the AVMA Plant.

**Codes Administrator**

Arthur Kelly reported 124 notices of violation issued for the month of April and 266 cases handled from January 1 through March 31, 2026, with 34 violations issued. A property on the 100 block of Glen Terrace was noted as a continuing source of complaints involving neighbor disputes, with frequent police response required. Council and the Solicitor discussed the limited tools available to address escalating neighbor conflicts, noting that

enforcement actions must be grounded in specific code or criminal violations, and that consequences through the court system have been inconsistent.

**Borough Manager**

Mr. Ahrens indicated that work on implementing the ordinance would begin the following day. He noted plans to hold a meeting with water authority employees to assure them directly that their employment and compensation would not be adversely affected by the transition.

The Borough Manager also relayed that representatives from the Center for Excellence in Local Government (CELG) had approached council members at a recent event regarding a potential role as mediator between the Borough and Saint Lawrence Borough; the Solicitor and special counsel advised that no further outreach be made until St. Lawrence and the Authority clearly articulates its position and demands.

**Other Business**

Kelly Dudash raised a question regarding potential legal action by a board member of the authority acting without board authorization. Mr. Ahrens clarified that any executive session of the authority requires 24 hours' public notice, that any resulting action must be taken in a public meeting, and that the adopted ordinance includes provisions for removal of a board member who demonstrably violates its terms. Special Counsel Wyatt confirmed the Borough is in a strong legal position. Mr. Ahrens also noted that if the process requires completion prior to the PennVest loan entering the repayment window, the interest rate differential—from approximately 1.75% to potentially 4% or higher—could cost ratepayers hundreds of thousands of dollars, underscoring the urgency of cooperation from the authority.

**Adjournment**

*Motion by Troy Goodman, seconded by Michael Kindlick, to adjourn that meeting at 9:03 PM. Motion carried unanimously.*

Submitted by:

Hunter L. Ahrens
Hunter L. Ahrens (Jul 24, 2026 08:34:27 EDT)

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

# January 2026 Reorganization Meeting - Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report 2026-07-24

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## "January 2026 Reorganization Meeting - Meeting Minutes" History

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