

Pen Argyl Borough Council held their Meeting for December on Tuesday, December 10, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. in the Borough Social Hall.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Council President Joseph LeDonne opened the Council Meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Council Members present and responding to roll call: Joseph LeDonne, Tammy Kemp, Steven Goffredo, Scott Brumbaugh, Joann Anderson, John Apgar, Stephanie Cooper, and Josephine Hildabrant.

Also present were Borough Solicitor Peter Layman, Mayor Stephen Male, Borough Manager Robin Zmoda and Borough Secretary Juli Lemak.

Executive Session:

President LeDonne announced an executive session was held on November 26, 2024 at 8:00 P.M. to discuss litigation matters.

Public Hearing:

A public hearing was held to consider the adoption of Resolution 2024-06 which adopts the Slate Belt Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan consisting of maps, charts, and textual material covering the requirements set forth in the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code. President LeDonne stated this plan has been in discussion for the past few years, the plan ties the Boroughs of Portland, Wind Gap, Bangor, E. Bangor and Roseto, and Washington and Upper Mount Bethel Townships. The goal is to have new development zoning consistent in all the municipalities. Manager Zmoda stated that tonight is an opportunity for the public to further comment, ask questions, or voice their opinions and concerns to make known to Council for consideration. The 45-day comment period was from September through October. Joe Dotta, member of Lehigh Valley Planning Commission was present to answer questions or concerns. There being no further discussion, Councilwoman Stephanie Cooper made the motion to adopt Resolution 2024-06 adopting the Plan Slate Belt Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Councilwoman Joann Anderson. Unanimous by roll call.

Visitors:

Adrienne Borger, representative of Waste Management, gave a landfill update and requested a letter of support for their expansion in Plainfield Township. One Plainfield Township Planning Commission meeting was held, and another is scheduled in January. The review period for the application ends in February. Millie Beahn, 6299 Hower Road, Plainfield Township, Tom Carlo, 306 S Robinson Ave, Karen Fry, 912 E. Plainfield Ave and Ann Weaver, 600 Pen Argyl Street, expressed their concerns against the expansion. Andrew Nechetsky, 505 N Schanck Ave spoke in favor of the expansion. President LeDonne recommended to create a separate committee to review the facilities agreement and nuisance mitigations that need to be in place, and with their recommendation, Council will decide what type of letter will be sent to Plainfield Township.

Discussion and Final Adoption of Year 2025 Budget:

General Fund - \$2,574,640.00 - 13 Mills (No increase)
Sewer Fund - \$1,468,100.00
State Fund - \$264,093.00
Reserve Fund - \$2,714,672.00
Garbage Wealth Fund - \$540,000.00
Reserve Wealth Fund - \$800,000.00

Councilman Steven Goffredo made a motion to accept and approve final adoption of the year 2025 budget as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant. Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant expressed her concerns over the budget and Lobb Avenue. She commended Manager Zmoda for not increasing the taxes for five (5) years. Voting in favor of the motion were Council Members: Joseph LeDonne, Scott Brumbaugh, Steven Goffredo, Stephanie Cooper, and Josephine Hildabrant. Council Members Tammy Kemp, Joann Anderson, and John Apgar voted no. There being five (5) yes votes and three (3) no votes, the motion carried.

Tax Structure

Real Estate Tax Millage - 13.00 Mills (no increase)
Per Capita - None
Local Services Tax (LST) - \$52.00
Real Estate Transfer Tax - 1% - Shared Equally with School District
Earned Income Tax - 1% - Shared Equally with School District
Sewer Rental Fee - \$123.00 Minimum Quarterly Charge per Unit/10,000 Gallons
\$13.50 per Thousand Gallons over 10,000 Gallons
\$15.39 per body at Schools
\$184.62 per quarter for non-metered wells
Garbage fee- Garbage fee waived for the year 2025

Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant made a motion to accept and approve the Tax Structure for the year 2025, seconded by Councilman Steven Goffredo. Unanimous by roll call.

The Borough Assessment Valuation for 2025 is \$67,031,000 2024 was 66,900,200;
2023 was \$66,817,200; 2022 was \$66,969,800; and 2021 was \$67,093,100.

One (1) Mill equals \$67,031.00; less 5% uncollectible, collectible amount is \$63,678.45

Prior Years Millage: Years 2020 to present remains at 13 Mills.

Resolution #2024-07 for fixing the Year of 2025 Millage Rate:

Councilman Steven Goffredo made a motion to approve Resolution #2024-07 for the Millage Rate of 13.00 Mills for the year of 2025, seconded by Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant. Unanimous by roll call.

Ordinance No. 734 to increase the quarterly sewer rental fees:

Councilman John Apgar made a motion to adopt Ordinance #734 to increase the quarterly sewer rental fee increase to the quarter base rate 7.89% from \$114.00 to \$123.00, a 7.9% rate increase to the flat rate for unmeasurable water consumption from \$171.10 to \$184.62 and a 7.92% rate increase for the school charge per student from \$14.26 per quarter to \$15.39 effective January 1, 2025, seconded by Councilman Scott Brumbaugh. The motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance #735 for suspending the charges of residential dwelling units' collection of municipal waste for the year of 2025:

Councilwoman Joann Anderson made a motion to adopt Ordinance #735 to suspend the year of 2025's charges of residential dwelling units' collection of municipal waste, seconded by Councilman Steven Goffredo. Unanimous by roll call.

Resolution #2024-08 for Earned Income Tax, Local Services Tax (LST) and Property Transfer Tax for the Year of 2025:

Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant made a motion to approve Resolution #2024-08 for the Earned Income Tax of 1/2 of 1%, the Local Services Tax (LST) of \$52.00 and 1/2 of 1% Property Transfer Tax for the fiscal year of 2025, seconded by Councilman John Apgar. Unanimous by roll call.

Resolution #2024-09 to appoint Berkheimer Associates as Collector of the Local Services Tax (LST) and Keystone Collection Group as Collector of the Earned Income Tax for the Year of 2025:

Councilwoman Tammy Kemp made a motion to approve Resolution #2024-09 to reappoint Berkheimer Associates as Collector of the Local Services Tax (LST) and Keystone Collection Group as Collector of the Earned Income Tax for the fiscal year of 2025, seconded by Councilwoman Joann Anderson. Unanimous by roll call.

Public Works:

All Council Members received a copy of Public Works Director Steven Bender's November report to review.

Public Works con't:

All Council Members received a proposal from Snyder Technologies for \$15,867.00 for upgrades to the security camera system at Weona Park. Manager Zmoda commented that a few months ago a tree fell on the basketball fence at Weona Park and knocked out the security cameras, the insurance claim money would go towards part of a new security camera system and the Borough would pay for the rest, as outlined in the 2025 budget. The upgrade is necessary due to issues with the old system. Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant made a motion to accept the proposal from Snyder Technologies for upgrades to the security camera system at Weona Park for \$15,867.00, seconded by Councilwoman Scott Brumbaugh.

All Council Members received a copy of an update for the bathhouse renovation project provided by Alfero Company to Wallover Architects.

All Council Members received a copy of the second amendment to Contract No. C000083630, an extension to the Covid-19 ARPA pandemic recovery program grant of \$500,000.00 which is available to the Borough to spend until the year 2026.

Councilman Steven Goffredo made a motion to remove three (3) parking meters located on S. Robinson Avenue, just before the intersection of George Street and S. Robinson Ave, seconded by Councilwoman Tammy Kemp. Unanimous by roll call.

All Council Members received a copy of email correspondence from Van Cleef Engineering, providing an estimate for adding sidewalks to properties on Westbrook Avenue that currently lack them, as part of the storm replacement project. Additionally, the removal of a tree might be at risk due to disruption caused by the project. Councilman Steven Goffredo made a motion to not extend the sidewalk to properties currently do not have one, but to provide the option to remove the tree if it is in jeopardy for \$3,500.00, seconded by Councilwoman Tammy Kemp. Unanimous by roll call.

All Council Members received a copy of one (1) gas and oil bid for the year 2025 from Reimer Bros., Inc. Councilwoman Joann Anderson made a motion to accept the bid for gas and oil for the year 2025 from Reimer Bros., Inc., for 7,500 Gallons regular ethanol gasoline at \$2.358 per gallon, 1,000 gallons of Sunoco ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel winter blend at \$2.679 per gallon, and 5,000 gallons of heating oil delivered for \$2.569 per gallon, seconded by Councilman Scott Brumbaugh. Unanimous by roll call.

Zoning Report:

All Council Members received a copy of Zoning/Codes Office's November report and an article regarding Bangor Borough's enhanced disruptive conduct ordinance.

Zoning Report con't:

Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant made a motion to direct Solicitor Layman to draft an ordinance raising the fine for disruptive conduct to \$1,000 for the first violation, \$1,500 for the second violation and \$2,000 for the third violation, for review at the January regular council meeting, seconded by Councilwoman Joann Anderson. Unanimous by roll call.

Police Report:

All Council Members received a copy of the Slate Belt Regional Police meeting minutes from November 6, 2024 and November 21, 2024, and agendas from November 21, 2024, December 3, 2024.

President LeDonne commented that during the Police Commission's meeting they approved the meeting schedule for the year 2025 to be the first Tuesday and second Thursday of each month.

Fire Chief's Report:

Chief Dean Parsons was not present.

All Council Members received a copy of a notification from USDA that included a 3.875% interest rate for loans to construct/repair infrastructure, or repair equipment for the fire station. Manager Zmoda stated for the purchase of a new fire truck the Borough presently has \$892,395 in grant monies, \$20,000 promised by the Lookout Fire Station, leaving approximately \$168,000 needed to complete the purchase, money is due upon completion of the truck. No motion was made on this matter.

Councilwoman Tammy Kemp made a motion to purchase a 2025 Sutphen fire truck for \$1,080,432.40, seconded by Councilman Steven Goffredo. Voting in favor of the motion were Council Members: Joseph LeDonne, Tammy Kemp, Scott Brumbaugh, Steven Goffredo, Joann Anderson, Stephanie Cooper, and John Apgar. Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant voted no. There being seven (7) yes votes and one (1) no vote, the motion carried.

Minutes:

Councilwoman Tammy Kemp made a motion to approve the Minutes from the Council Meeting of November 6, 2024, seconded by Councilman Scott Brumbaugh. Unanimous by roll call.

Councilwoman Tammy Kemp made a motion to approve the Minutes from the Special Council Meeting of November 26, 2024, with the change under the heading, "Roll Call" to add "Joann Anderson" as present, seconded by Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant. Unanimous by roll call.

Council received the Park Board agenda from November 13, 2024 and minutes from October 9, 2024.

Correspondence:

Nothing.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Male thanked everyone for participating at the tree lighting ceremony, there was over 100 participants. He also thanked PA American Water and Broad Excavating for their collaboration on the project at Westbrook and Reservoir Avenues. He further acknowledged Steve Bender, Public Works Director, for his instrumental role in addressing issues related to the trash rack for the leaf collection and the unsafe stormwater pipes. The Slate Belt Council of Governments is sending Lance Prator as a representative to the PA Council of Governments meeting.

Planning Commission:

All Council Members received a copy of correspondence from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission to Plainfield Township and Wind Gap Borough, review of an application for 905 Pennsylvania Avenue, a Land Use of Regional Significance application.

Solicitor:

Councilwoman Tammy Kemp made a motion to approve to adopt Ordinance #733, amending section 79-6 of the Borough Code to delete the prohibition of carrying firearms in Weona Park, seconded by Councilwoman Stephanie Cooper. Unanimous by roll call.

Sanitation, Solid Waste & Recycling:

All Council Members received a copy of the Wastewater Treatment Plant November report.

306 E. Babbitt Avenue Sewer Connection:

Councilman Steven Goffredo made a motion to draft and send correspondence to Charles and Heather Snyder, 306 E. Babbitt Avenue, and directed Solicitor Layman to include in the deed covenant that the sewer connection requirement for their property may be delayed for one (1) year from the date of the correspondence to allow time to obtain the necessary funds to comply with the Ordinance, or in the event of the sale of the house, the sewer connection must be completed before closing, or if the current system fails, an immediate connection to the sewer system must be made, seconded by Councilwoman Tammy Kemp. Unanimous by voice vote.

Finance, Tax Exoneration, Insurance & Personnel:

Councilwoman Tammy Kemp made a motion to approve the November Treasury Report as submitted by Borough Manager/Treasurer Zmoda, seconded by Councilwoman Stephanie Cooper. Unanimous by roll call.

Councilman Steven Goffredo made a motion to approve the Agreement between Teamster Local 773 and Pen Argyl Borough, effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027, seconded by Councilwoman Josphine Hildabrant. Unanimous by roll call.

Borough Manager/Treasurer Zmoda announced she has received the \$2,500.00 annual donation from Blue Triton and the money is in the Reserve fund in the restricted account. The discussion regarding the placement of the donation was tabled.

Property & Utilities:

Nothing to report.

Community Outreach:

Borough Secretary Juli Lemak provided Council with the November feral cat report.

Councilwoman Tammy Kemp made a motion to sign the contract with FURR Fix, allowing no more than 10 cats neutered, for a rate of \$40 per cat for the year 2025, seconded by Councilwoman Joann Anderson. The motion passed unanimous by roll call.

Councilwoman Tammy Kemp made a motion to retain Hometown Press to make and distribute newsletters on behalf of the Borough in the year 2025, seconded by Councilwoman Joann Anderson. Unanimous by voice vote.

Councilwoman Tammy Kemp thanked everyone for participating in Cookies, Carols and Claus and baking cookies, everything went well.

Borough Manager's Report:

All Council Members received a copy of Borough Manager Zmoda's November report. She notified them that she attended the PennDOT Truck on Local Roads: Issues and Solutions class and will update the truck signs to make them enforceable.

All Council Members received a copy of the Slate Belt Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee Minutes from November 15, 2024.

Payment of Bills:

The following bills were presented for payment: General Fund, \$38,507.40; Sewer Fund, \$42,304.23 and Reserve Money Market Fund, \$331,907.77. Councilman John Apgar made a motion to pay the bills as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Tammy Kemp. Unanimous by roll call.

Special Note: Borough Secretary Juli Lemak left the meeting at 8:23 P.M. and the rest of the minutes were taken by Borough Manager Zmoda.

Executive Session:

Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss litigation, security arrangements, personnel, and real estate, seconded by Councilwoman Tammy Kemp. Unanimous by voice vote. Council went into Executive Session at 8:23 P.M. and reconvened at 9:32 P.M.

Lobb Avenue:

Councilman Steven Goffredo made a motion to direct Borough Manager Zmoda to sign the Lobb Avenue Settlement and Mutual General Release Document, seconded by Councilwoman Josephine Hildabrant. Unanimous by voice vote.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Seasonal Laborer:

Councilwoman Joann Anderson made a motion to hire Darren Yeisley as a seasonal laborer at the Wastewater Treatment plant, seconded by Councilwoman Tammy Kemp. Unanimous by voice vote.

Adjournment:

Councilwoman Steven Goffredo made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilwoman Joann Anderson. Unanimous by voice vote. Council meeting adjourned at 9:35 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Juli Lemak
Borough Secretary