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**PORTAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL AGENDA**

**February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Regular Meeting**

**Please make sure to silence your cell phones during the meeting**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Roll call and Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. REPORTS**

a) Borough Manager

**3. CORRESPONDENCE**

No Correspondence received.

**4. CITIZENS INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

A period of not more than five (5) minutes will be allowed per visitor.

**5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Minutes from the February 2, 2026 Council meeting were distributed prior to the meeting.

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**MOTION:** To approve the minutes from February 2, 2026 meeting as presented.

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. TREASURER'S REPORT AND BILLS TO BE PAID**

*Treasurers Report – February 2 – February 16, 2026:*

Tax Collector-Real Estate	\$ 2,115.44	Special Tax Collector-EIT/LST	\$
Meter Collection	\$	Permits/Licenses/Cable	\$9,714.81
Fines, Forfeitures	\$234.11	Intergovernmental/Misc	\$7,414.10
Charge for Services	\$	Sanitation	\$
Donations	\$50.00		

**Total Revenue: \$19,528.46**

**7. MOTIONS**

- a) A Motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report as presented

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

- b) A motion to approve the list of bills to be paid in the amount of \$29,458.30. Hydrant amount has not been updated and remains at \$13,162.68. This number is not included in the bills to be paid and will not be paid. (A list of bills to be paid was presented, which were distributed prior to the meeting).

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

- c) A motion to approve the report from the Portage Public Library Board of December 17, 2025.

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

**8. DISCUSSION**

Discussion Items are meant for information purposes for Council & Residents.

- a). Discussion on the process of Right-to-Know Requests and the current status and financial impact of RTK processing.

The Pennsylvania Right-to-Know Law is codified at **65 P.S. §§ 67.101 – 67.3104**.

Topic	Statute Citation	Key Requirement
Presumption of Openness	65 P.S. § 67.305	All records in a borough’s possession are presumed public unless exempt under Section 708, other law, or privilege.
Definitions	65 P.S. § 67.102	Defines "Record" and "Local Agency." Boroughs are classified as Local Agencies.
Open-Records Officer	65 P.S. § 67.502	Boroughs must designate an Agency Open Records Officer (AORO) to receive and track requests.
Response Time	65 P.S. § 67.901	Requires a response within 5 business days. Failure to respond is a "deemed denial."
Extensions	65 P.S. § 67.902	Allows a 30-calendar-day extension for reasons like legal review, redaction, bona fide staffing, or remote storage.
30 Specific Exceptions	65 P.S. § 67.708(b)	Lists the 30 legal reasons to deny a request (e.g., (b)(6) for personal ID, (b)(10) for internal deliberations).
Redaction	65 P.S. § 67.706	If a record contains both public and non-public info, the borough must redact the exempt parts and release the rest.
Creation of Record	65 P.S. § 67.705	A borough is not required to create a record that does not exist or format data in a way it doesn't currently use.
Fee Structure	65 P.S. § 67.1307	Authorizes the OOR to set a fee schedule. Boroughs cannot charge for "review and redaction" time.

Appeals Process	65 P.S. § 67.1101	Requesters have 15 business days to appeal a denial to the Office of Open Records (OOR).
Penalties	65 P.S. § 67.1304	Courts may award attorney fees and impose fines of up to \$1,500 for bad-faith denials.

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a) Update on the Parks and Recreation Director position – one application received and being reviewed by Mayor Fox for potential interview.
- b) Borough building roof – no response to counteroffer.
- c) Update on 2021 PennDot MTF grant for phase 5 Sidewalk Replacement - in the engineering and design phase.
- d) Update on the Sonman Ave Bridge 12 Year Plan – no update.
- e) Update on 2023 CFA MTF Phase 4 lighting grant – work has been substantially completed.
- f) Update on 2023 PennDot MTF Grant for Phase 5 Sidewalk Lighting – in engineering and design stages.
- g) Update on Portage Municipal Authority regarding hydrant fees and maintenance – no update and nothing from their Solicitor.
- h) Update on the Waterline Project for the Portage Municipal Authority – pre-construction meeting held on January 28, 2026.
- i) Update on LSA Grant for license readers for the Police Department – grant awarded.
- j) Blair Street truck restrictions: Cost estimate was provided by Mr. Shura in the amount of \$2,500.
- k) Discussion on current status of Parking Lot Behind the Borough Building.

A question came up at last meeting regarding the parking behind the Borough building. The Borough owns the lot. Our ordinance also says that Businesses may rent spaces with Borough approval, and residents may rent spaces with borough approval; both must have proper signage.

We have not had updated agreements since 2023.

**§ 703. RESERVED PARKING SPACES FOR BUSINESS USE.**

Businesses may rent spaces for use by customers for \$5.00 per month. The business must erect a sign, approved by the Borough, on each rented space stating "Parking for Customers Only" and giving the name of their establishment.  
(Ord. 3-1999, 4/5/1999)

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**§ 704. PARKING PERMITS FOR RESIDENTS.**

Residents who live along Branch Street or Central Alley may purchase a parking permit for \$5.00 per month and must display a permit sticker on their vehicle. The Borough will assign their parking space and the resident must erect a sign, approved by the Borough, stating "Rented Parking Space."

(Ord. 3-1999, 4/5/1999)

**Ordinance Update Process**

To update the parking ordinance under the Portage Home Rule Charter, the process begins with the Borough Solicitor drafting an amendment to the Borough Code. Once drafted, the proposed ordinance must be formally introduced at a public Council meeting and made available for public inspection at the Borough Secretary's office. A legal notice summarizing the parking changes must then be published in a local newspaper at least seven days prior to the final vote. During a subsequent public meeting, the Borough Council must hold a discussion and allow for public comment in accordance with the Sunshine Act. Following the public forum, a majority of the Council must vote to adopt the ordinance, which is then sent to the Mayor for an official signature. The Borough Secretary then records the enacted law in the official Ordinance Book and files it with the county or state as required. To ensure enforceability, the Borough must then install any necessary street signage reflecting the new regulations. Finally, the updated ordinance is sent to the borough's codifier to be integrated into the online digital archives for resident access.

**9. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a) Review and approve Portage Women's Club donation.

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The Women's Club of Portage has hosted this annual Easter Egg hunt for the kids in our community for many years. The Borough is happy to continue to support these efforts to provide safe and fun recreation activities for our young residents. The Borough has historically donated \$100 and it has been budgeted for the year 2026. If anyone else is interested in giving a donation, it may be made via the club Venmo @Portage-Womens-Club and also by check - mailed to: Women's Club of Portage, PO Box 13, Portage, PA 15946.

**MOTION:** To approve \$100 donation to the Women's Club of Portage to support the annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

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- b) Review and approve LED Streetlight Conversion and Repair Program.

**MOTION:** To approve the Agreement, as presented, between the Borough of Portage and FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company to provide street lighting services to company-owned street lighting facilities located in Portage Borough..

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

- c) Discussion and Motion to Approve and Advertise the Borough Secretary position with the presented updates.

It has been difficult to find qualified candidates for the Secretary position. Deciding to offer Part-Time or Full-Time and more flexible hours will widen the pool of applicants for the position. The Borough wishes to recruit a qualified individual who has a high-level of integrity, knowledge of finances, ability to learn quickly, and a candidate to best serve Portage Borough. We invite applicants to apply and interview and ask questions about the position.

An example of a flexible (part-time) schedule could be, 4 days a week for 6 hours a day. Another example could be 5 days a week, 4 hours a day. Whatever is decided upon between the Manager and the candidate and advertised for public transparency and knowledge will reflect exemplary public service with an arrangement and candidate choice that serves the Borough with professionalism, positivity, and productivity.

**MOTION:** To approve and advertise the Borough Secretary position with the presented updates.

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

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- d) ~~Resolution 7-2026 – Berkheimer Tax Service~~

**MOTION:** To approve Resolution 7-2026 authorizing, empowering and directing the proper officers of Portage Borough Council to appoint a liaison between it and Berkheimer, the duly appointed collector of local taxes for the Borough, for the express purpose of sharing confidential tax information with the Borough for official purposes.

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

- e) 2026 Rate Proposal for Traffic Signal Maintenance

**MOTION:** To approve the 2026 Rate Proposal for Traffic Signal Maintenance received from Kuharchik Construction with charges as follows: traffic signal crew (port to port), \$255/hour; traffic signal supervisor (port to port), \$146/hour; bucket truck, \$58/hour; line truck, \$108/hour; materials, cost plus 25%.

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

- f) PSAB Annual Conference and Voting Delegate

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**10. CITIZENS INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

A period of not more than five (5) minutes will be allowed per visitor.

**11. GOOD OF THE BOROUGH:**

**12. ADJOURNMENT:**

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Aff \_\_\_\_\_ Nay \_\_\_\_\_ Abs: \_\_\_\_\_

Adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_ PM

Respectfully Submitted,



Dr. Makayla (MK) Zonfrilli-Lang  
Borough Manager  
Portage Borough



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## Statement on Municipal Capacity and Transparency

February 17, 2026

### To the Residents and Council of Portage Borough:

As your Borough Manager and designated Open Records Officer, I am committed to a simple standard: **excellence in public service**. However, to serve this Borough with the high level of professionalism and results you deserve, I must address a growing challenge that is directly impacting our ability to move Portage forward.

The Right-to-Know (RTK) process is a vital tool for democracy, and we respect it as such. We are public servants, and we are not here to hide information. However, the sheer volume and complexity of recent requests have become arduous and incredibly labor-intensive.

**The Reality of our Resources** We are a small, dedicated team. Every hour I spend on exhaustive document reviews and legal redactions is an hour **stolen** from securing the future of this Borough. Specifically:

- It takes me away from aggressive **grant writing** that brings outside tax dollars into our community.
- It halts critical **legal research** necessary to protect the Borough's interests.
- It prevents our staff from maintaining the **financial books** and daily operations with the precision required for a healthy municipality.

**The Ripple Effect of Appeals.** Furthermore, the trend of appealing our responses creates an even deeper service impact. These appeals demand even more administrative time and often incur legal costs that are borne by you, the taxpayers.

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**Our Commitment to Growth** We want to be more transparent, not less. Over the next few months, we plan to evaluate our transparency levels and implement new ways to make information more accessible to you proactively. We want to build a "Transparency Hub" that gives you answers before you even have to ask.

**However, we need time to build those systems.** If my staff and I are spending "hours and hours" reacting to voluminous requests, we cannot be proactive in providing you with the additional services you expect. We cannot provide excellence if we are constantly inundated.

I am asking for the community's patience and cooperation. Let us focus our energy on the projects that improve our roads, our parks, and our financial standing. My door is open to those with genuine questions about our operations, and I look forward to continuing to serve Portage Borough with the focus and dedication it deserves.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Dr. Makayla (MK) Zonfrilli-Lang  
Borough Manager  
Portage Borough



**TO:** Mayor, Borough Council, and Residents of Portage Borough  
**FROM:** Dr. Makayla Zonfrilli-Lang, Borough Manager  
**DATE:** February 17, 2026  
**SUBJECT:** Borough Manager's Report – February 2026

## **1. Introduction & Operational Philosophy**

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my first report as the Borough Manager for Portage Borough. My first week has been dedicated to immersing myself in the daily operations of the Borough, reviewing current procedures, and identifying the immediate needs of our community. My management philosophy is rooted in a balance between rigorous operational efficiency and open, transparent accessibility.

To serve the taxpayers effectively, I must dedicate focused time to administrative duties, such as grant writing, financial analysis, and strategic planning, while remaining available to hear resident concerns. To achieve this balance, I have established specific office hours designed to accommodate working residents.

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### **Manager Availability**

I've set aside in-office administrative hours to include most Monday nights from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Wednesdays from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm (if needed and/or by appointment), and most Saturdays from 9:00 am – 11:00 am.

To ensure that our time together is productive, I kindly ask that you schedule a time slot with me in advance for evening and Saturday hours. You may reach me via text at **814-979-3616** or by email at [mklang@portageboropa.gov](mailto:mklang@portageboropa.gov). I am happy to meet outside of these designated times if advance notice is given. I am also happy to schedule a virtual session and/or a phone call.

## **2. Strategic Roadmap: A 90-Day Vision**

To ensure a smooth transition and immediate momentum, I have developed a 30-60-90 day strategic plan. This roadmap is designed to stabilize our operations, modernize our systems, and position Portage for future growth.

### **First 30 Days: Foundation & Compliance**

My immediate priority is to build a strong foundation. This begins with **personnel and relationships**. I will be meeting individually with all staff members to build rapport and understand their operational challenges.

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Simultaneously, we will begin the recruitment process for a new **Borough Secretary** and a **Parks & Recreation Director** to ensure our team is fully staffed and capable.

On the administrative side, I am prioritizing our financial and regulatory health. This involves filing all necessary reports with the **Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)** and preparing thoroughly for our annual audit. To improve communication, we will launch an official **Portage Borough Facebook page**, providing residents with a reliable source for real-time updates. Finally, I will be contacting the **Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)** to clarify the status of our current Parks & Recreation grant, ensuring we do not miss any opportunities for funding.

### **60 Days: Modernization & Technology**

As we move into the second month, the focus will shift to training and modernization. Once the new Borough Secretary is hired, I will personally oversee their training to ensure seamless office operations. We will also begin a comprehensive review of our current ordinances to identify outdated regulations that may be hindering progress.

Transparency is a key goal of my administration. I will be working with our IT provider, **Aerial Communications**, to implement a system for live-streaming our public meetings via Facebook, Microsoft Teams, or a similar platform. This will allow residents who cannot attend in person to remain engaged with local government.

Additionally, I am currently evaluating the **DCED Main Street Matters** initiative. This grant program is designed to support the revitalization of central business districts like ours. It provides funding for facade improvements, streetscape enhancements (such as better lighting and sidewalks), and marketing strategies to attract small businesses. Securing this grant could be a catalyst for economic development in our downtown corridor.

### **90 Days: Strategic Planning & Community Partnership**

By the three-month mark, I intend to have a steady operational rhythm established. This will allow us to pivot toward long-term planning. I will begin drafting the Borough's **Strategic Plan** and **Capital Improvement Plan**, ensuring we are looking 5, 10, and 20 years into the future. Working with our Public Works Director, we will develop a prioritized **Sidewalk and Road Maintenance Plan** to address infrastructure needs systematically.



Community strength lies in partnership. I plan to meet with key stakeholders—including the **Sewer and Water Authorities, Portage Township Supervisors, Fire Chiefs, and the School District**, to foster a spirit of collaboration. I will also introduce myself to our State and County representatives to ensure Portage has a strong voice at higher levels of government.

### **3. Special Project: Parking Lot Revitalization**

One specific operational task I have identified involves the parking lot behind the Borough Building. Currently, the management of this asset is fragmented, leading to confusion for tenants and potential revenue loss for the Borough.

Over the next 90 days, I will be conducting a full audit of this issue. This will include:

- a) **Reviewing the current lease agreement** and providing a synopsis to Council.
- b) **Meeting with all current Tenants** to verify their status.
- c) **Creating a dedicated revenue account** in the General Ledger to track income transparently.
- d) **Assessing physical needs**, such as new signage and fresh line painting.

My goal is to propose a streamlined process and updated agreement for Council's consideration, ensuring this asset is managed fairly and profitably.

I look forward to working with all of you to move Portage Borough forward.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MK Lang".

**Dr. Makayla Zonfrilli-Lang**  
*Borough Manager Portage Borough*

# BOROUGH NEWS

## Transporting History

PA TURNPIKE INNOVATION THROUGH THE DECADES

**Striking a Balance**  
BETWEEN ROUTINE MAINTENANCE & EMERGENCY REPAIRS

**The Value of Local Parks**  
INVESTMENTS IN QUALITY OF LIFE



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Borough Council Assem. Members  
CRL0T 0013A\*\*C014  
2700 Monroeville Blvd  
Monroeville Borough  
Monroeville PA 15146-2388



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## E-Scooter Regulation Legislation Introduced


Electric scooters have proliferated in communities across the Commonwealth in recent years. As there is no state-wide law regulating or allowing e-scooters, the power to regulate e-scooters lies in the hands of local government officials. E-scooters are not authorized for use on roads under current Pennsylvania law and boroughs have the right to enforce the illegality of e-scooters in their communities.

Pennsylvania's General Assembly is considering multiple bills that would make electric scooters street-legal while imposing different safety requirements. Summaries of each of those proposals are below.

**Senate Bill 1008**, sponsored by Senator Tim Kearney (D-Delaware), would establish statewide operating rules for the use of e-scooters in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This legislation would treat e-scooters similarly to electric bikes with rules such as a 20-mph speed limit, a prohibition for use by individuals under the age of 16, a helmet mandate for individuals under 18, and the ability for local governments to pass ordinances with enhanced penalties for violations of the law. Senate Bill 1008 awaits consideration by the Senate Transportation Committee.

**House Bill 2040**, sponsored by Representative John Schegel (R-Lebanon), would establish fines for the operation of an electric scooter on a highway, including the right-of-way or sidewalk. The legislation would also create a fine for the "careless operation of an electric scooter with disregard for the safety of another person." House Bill 2040 awaits consideration by the House Transportation Committee.

**House Bill 1633**, sponsored by Representative Emily Kinkead (D-Allentown), seeks to amend Title 75 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to formally define shared electric low-speed scooters. The bill would establish rules for scooter-sharing programs, place scooters under the "special vehicles and pedestrians" section of the vehicle code and impose penalties for violations. House Bill 1633 awaits consideration by the House Transportation Committee.

For more information regarding the various laws surrounding different modes of micromobility, please refer to PennDOT's Micromobility Fact Sheet found on the PSAB website under "Links of Interest" in the Legislation section. 

## Important Sunshine Act Update - PA Supreme Court Reverses Commonwealth Court on Public Meeting Agendas

By Samuel E. Wiser, Jr., Chair of Salzmann Hughes, P.C., Municipal Practice Group

On November 24, 2025, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court issued its much-anticipated decision in *Coleman v. Parkland School District*, wherein the Court ruled that the plain text of Section 7121 of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act is unambiguous and creates four freestanding exceptions regarding actions involving agenda items. The decision confirms that a municipality can amend the agenda at a public meeting and act on the amended agenda items.

In *Coleman v. Parkland School District*, 305 A.3d 238 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2023), the Commonwealth Court held that Section

7121 provides only three (3) exceptions to the public notice (agenda) requirements: (1) for emergency business, (2) for de minimis business not involving fund expenditure or entering into a contract that arises within 24 hours preceding meeting, and (3) for de minimis business raised by resident or taxpayer during meeting that does not involve fund expenditure or entering into a contract. The Commonwealth Court's interpretation of the Act's amendments to the Sunshine Act wholly removed the exception which allowed for a municipality, with majority consensus, to amend the agenda and subsequently act on an item. In overturning the Commonwealth Court's decision, the Supreme Court held that "the Commonwealth Court essen-

