

**MOUNT PENN BOROUGH MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY**

**MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**JANUARY 14, 2026**

The regular meeting of the Mount Penn Borough Municipal Authority was held on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, and called to order at 7:02 p.m. in the meeting room of the John A. Becker Municipal Building, 200 North 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Reading, PA 19606.

The meeting was called to order by Solicitor Mark Merolla.

The following Board members were also present:

Vice Chairman Joseph Boyle  
Kelly Dudash, Treasurer  
Troy Goodman  
Al Worrall, Assistant Treasurer

Also present were the following:

Christeena Hauck, Office Manager  
Mark Merolla, Solicitor  
Matt Hauck, Superintendent  
Steven Riley, Engineer

**REORGANIZATION-**

Nominations were opened for the office of Chairman. Al Worrall nominated Joe Boyle. Troy Goodman nominated Al Worrall, who declined the nomination.

The motion passed unanimously.

Troy Goodman nominated Josh Nowatarski for Vice Chairman. The motion passed unanimously.

Troy Goodman nominated Kelly Dudash for Treasurer. The motion passed unanimously.

Kelly Dudash nominated Troy Goodman for Secretary. The motion passed unanimously.

Joe Boyle nominated Al Worrall for Assistant Secretary/Treasurer. The motion passed unanimously

Joe Boyle moved to continue retaining the following professional services, seconded by Al Worrall. The motion carried unanimously.

Mark Merolla of Brumbach, Mancuso & Fegley as Solicitor.

Roger Krause as Auditor

Entech Engineering, with Steven Riley as Engineer

### **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION-**

Hunter Ahrens addressed the board and thanked Christeena for taking the lead on sending flowers for Paul Janssen's funeral. He noted that they were the only municipality to send flowers and commended Christeena for taking charge on that initiative. He mentioned that there was discussion about donating to pancreatic cancer research on behalf of Mr. Janssen, and that some borough representatives would be happy to partner in that effort.

Motion by Joe Boyle to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2025, meeting, seconded by Al Worrall. Motion carried unanimously.

### **TREASURER-** Kelly Dudash

The Board reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Troy Goodman noted that the Treasurer's Report was incorrectly dated December 2024 instead of December 2025.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for December with correction of the year was made by Joe Boyle, seconded by Troy Goodman. The motion carried unanimously.

### **ENGINEER-** Steve Riley

Steve Riley began his report by thanking the board for their reappointment and continued trust in him and Entech Engineering.

### **Laurel Ave Water Main Project Contract**

Steve Riley reported that the contract documents for the Laurel Avenue water main project from Barasso Excavation had been reviewed by both Entech Engineering and the solicitor and were ready for signature. He recommended proceeding with the base bid for now, noting that an alternate item for installing a temporary water system could be handled as a change order later if deemed necessary after further discussion with Matt Hauck.

Steve Riley explained that the temporary water system would cost an additional \$9,500 and while he and Matt were leaning toward including this option, they wanted to work through a few more details before making a final recommendation. He noted that the work would likely take up to two weeks, depending on digging conditions, and they wouldn't be able to start until after the snow season, probably around April 15th.

Discussion followed regarding the impact on fire hydrants, with Matt Hauck confirming that two hydrants would be affected, though they are low-flow hydrants that the fire department typically does not use anyway. The board discussed the importance of including Allen Myers in the pre-construction meeting.

Joe Boyle made a motion to move forward with the recommendations of Steve Riley on the Laurel Avenue Water Main Project contract base bid. Kelly Dudash seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Steve Riley noted that they were approximately \$5,000 under budget on the combined design and bidding phase of the project.

### **Oley Turnpike Road Creek Crossing WM Project – LSA – Next Steps**

Steve Riley informed the board that the Commonwealth Financing Authority did not approve grant funding for the Oley Turnpike Road Creek Crossing project. He shared statistics showing that only about 40% of applicants received funds, with \$1.34 billion in requests competing for \$268 million in available funding.

Steve Riley noted that they did receive the GP-5 creek crossing permit from the Berks County Conservation District. He recommended considering moving forward with the project despite the lack of grant funding, emphasizing that the infrastructure is significant and directly impacts fire flow into St. Lawrence. He estimated the Oley Turnpike Road crossing would cost about \$250,000, while the Parkview Road extension (which could be delayed) would cost around \$300,000.

The board discussed the importance of the creek crossing for fire flow and service to St. Lawrence. Matt Hauck explained that since the creek crossing has been out of service for about 15 years, they've experienced pressure issues when opening hydrants near the stadium and Lausch school.

Troy Goodman made a motion to authorize Entech Engineering to proceed with final design and bidding for the Oley Turnpike Road Creek Crossing. Mr. Worrall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **PFOA/PFAS Wells 3/6**

Mr. Riley mentioned that Mr. Boyle had arranged to visit the Perkasie Regional Water Authority to see their installation of carbon filters for PFOA and PFOS removal. He noted that the current EPA timeline for compliance is 2029, with a potential amendment that would extend the deadline to 2031. Mr. Riley cautioned that treatment costs would depend on multiple factors including water chemistry, and that the \$2.9 million cost referenced for Perkasie might not be directly comparable to the MPBMA needs.

## **WATER SYSTEM** –Matthew Hauck

Matt presented the December monthly maintenance report, noting it was "the season" for water main breaks. He reported three main breaks, a service leak at 22 Marshall Avenue, and several additional breaks since he had been off. His report included information on:

- Met-Ed augured through a service line that was repaired
- Delivering shutoff notices
- Refinishing the inside of Wellhouse 14
- Vehicle maintenance on trucks
- Marking out a large Comcast underground boring project in St. Lawrence
- Issues with the new generator at Carsonia Booster Pump Station

Matt also discussed an ongoing issue with a service line on Friedensburg Road that feeds three homes, explaining that there's uncertainty about responsibility for the line. He plans to coordinate with the solicitor to research easements and will bring more information to the next meeting.

Matt then presented a proposal for purchasing a 10,000-pound mini excavator at a municipal price of \$67,000 (compared to \$88,000 retail), with additional costs for attachments bringing the total to approximately \$117,000. A trailer would cost an additional \$20,000, bringing the total investment to around \$138,000.

Matt explained how the equipment would help with intricate digging and reduce the frequency of calling in outside contractors like M&A Excavating, potentially paying for itself within 2-3 years. The board discussed storage options for the equipment, with Matt suggesting a carport or temporary lean-to at Well 14.

After discussion, Kelly Dudash asked to table the decision until February to allow time for the review of the capital improvements budget and consider how this purchase would fit alongside other planned projects.

COMPLETE MAINTENANCE REPORT ATTACHED

## **SOLICITOR-** Mark Merolla

- Rules updates: Mark Merolla mentioned the need to update rules regarding wholesale customers and meter testing procedures.
- Employee safety: The board discussed procedures for employees entering homes, particularly for after-hours service calls. They agreed that employees should contact police for assistance when entering homes alone after normal working hours.
- Collections: The board discussed the possibility of local municipalities denying permits to property owners with past due water bills. They also addressed the property at 29 Midland Avenue with a significant outstanding balance, where the owner has been unresponsive despite numerous notices and a judgment. The board agreed to proceed with preparing the property for sale to enforce the judgment.

## **BUSINESS OFFICE-** Christeena Hauck

Christeena reported that:

- The Statement of Financial Interest forms were distributed and need to be completed and returned by May 1
- Water bills were mailed on January 8<sup>th</sup>
- The office experienced server and computer issues on Monday, which highlighted the need for a backup laptop with billing software
- Mount Penn Borough received grant money to upgrade the computer server, which was last replaced in 2017

## **SOURCE WATER PROTECTION-** Joe Boyle

Joe Boyle reported that a tree had fallen on the pollinator field on the Whitman parcel, and he would contact Mr. Whitman about having it removed. He also mentioned that Larry Lloyd is removing invasive species in preparation for Phase 2 of the constructed wetland project.

## **BOROUGH OF MT. PENN-**

### **Mt Penn conveyance-leaseback**

Hunter Ahrens, Manager of Mt. Penn Borough, discussed the ongoing consideration of a conveyance-leaseback arrangement between the Borough and the Authority. He mentioned that a town hall meeting was scheduled for the following Tuesday and that they were working on a rate study to show how rates might be affected, using an \$800,000 capital spending figure.

Hunter emphasized that the Borough Council was serious about the proposal but that it wasn't a foregone conclusion, and they valued the Authority as a partner in the process. He indicated that the potential leaseback amount was estimated at 8-10% of the budget, approximately \$200,000-\$240,000.

The discussion explored various aspects of the potential arrangement, including:

- The possibility of a simple contractual arrangement instead of full conveyance
- The importance of including AVMA in future public works consolidation
- Questions about governance structure, personnel decisions, and equipment ownership
- Concerns about maintaining the Authority Board's independence while integrating with Borough operations
- The need for board members who understand water operations when making decisions

Hunter acknowledged Matt Hauck's concerns about governance and decision-making, suggesting that having members serve on both boards could be a potential solution in the leaseback agreement.

## **ANTIETAM VALLEY MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY (AVMA)-**

No Report.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS-**

#### **PA American Water Rate Structure/Contract**

Mark Merolla reported that they had sent the contract to PA American Water but had not yet received comments back. He noted that the contract has an April 1 start date, so he wasn't surprised by the delay given that it was sent at the end of December.

#### **AVRCC**

Mark Merolla reported that the AVRCC lease had been finalized after meetings with Josh Nowatarski and Troy Goodman in December. Key terms include:

- A three-year term
- AVRCC responsibility for landscaping maintenance of the pool area and front side of the lake (not the back of the lake)
- An \$800/month rental payment if maintenance isn't performed
- AVRCC responsibility for the sidewalk on the Byram St side
- AVRCC setting aside \$25,000 for capital improvements, which they will fund through a portion of center rental fees

Lower Alsace Township is donating money and/or services for the hockey court and basketball areas and wants a separate maintenance agreement to clarify they are volunteering services without being tied to the lease.

Joe Boyle made a motion to approve the AVRCC lease pending the solicitor's final approval after any minor editing. Al Worrall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS-**

The board decided to maintain the same committee assignments as the previous year:

- Personnel Committee: Joe Boyle and Al Worrall
- AVRCC Liaison: Troy Goodman and Josh Nowatarski
- Finance Committee: Al Worrall and Kelly Dudash

Joe Boyle called for an Executive Session at 8:56 p.m to discuss litigation. Regular Session resumed at 9:01 p.m. No action was taken.

Motioned by Kelly Dudash, seconded by Al Worrall, to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 p.m. All were in favor.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 11, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Christeena Hauck*  
Office Manager