

**CITY OF PORT REPUBLIC
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 11, 2025 – 6:30 pm**

Adequate notice of this meeting was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. On the motion of Council President Pro Tempore Allgeyer, seconded by Councilmember Turner and carried to close the workshop portion of the meeting.

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Steven Allgeyer, David Crawford, Eugene Hawn, Donna Riegel, Jeffrey Ropiecki, Michael Turner

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Roger Giberson

MAYOR: Monica Giberson

MUNICIPAL CLERK: Brandy M. Blevin, RMC

ATTORNEY: William J. Kaufmann, Esq.

Council President Pro Tempore Allgeyer called the meeting to order and lead the flag salute. This is to advise the general public and to instruct that it be recorded in the minutes, in compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, entitled the “Open Public Meetings Act”. The Municipal Clerk of the City of Port Republic posted at City Hall, 143 Main Street, Port Republic and mailed and/or faxed to the Atlantic City Press and the Hammonton Gazette, a meeting notice setting for the time, date, and location of this meeting.

MOTION TO APPROVE FEBRUARY 11, 2025, CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:

On the motion of Councilmember Ropiecki, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to approve the February 11, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN: Riegel

MOTION TO APPROVE MARCH 2025 BILL LIST:

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Riegel and carried to approve the March 2025 Bill List.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO PAY ALL SIGNED BILLS:

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Riegel and carried to pay all signed bills.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

BUDGET 2025

Resolution 47-2025 Resolution Authorizing the Budget be Read by Title Only

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to adopt Resolution 47-2025.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

Auditor Sbrolla shared with Mayor and Council that the budget presented stands at 1.3 cent increase. She understands that the school has requested additional funding, and if Council was to approve that it would be a 1.8 cent increase.

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to open public portion to Port Republic School Board Members only.

School Board Member Kevin Wessler spoke to Mayor and Council regarding the various increases the school is facing. Increases include health insurance costs and tuition due to Greater Egg Harbor. There have been meetings to discuss the formula that determines the tuition the school board needs to pay to Greater Egg Harbor. It is a work in progress.

Councilmember Riegel questioned the increase which was received in State funding. Mr. Wessler explained that it was an increase received for choice students. Councilmember Riegel explained that the printout she had was showing an increase in total fees received.

There was discussion on the reason why Port Republic is paying tuition as a sending district to the high school rather than becoming part of the Greater Egg Harbor Regional.

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Crawford to move forward with the budget at a 1.3 cent increase.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel

NO: Ropiecki, Turner

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

Resolution 48-2025 Resolution Authorizing Introduction of the 2025 Municipal Budget

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to adopt Resolution 48-2025.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Police/Emergency Management:

No report.

Administrative/Personnel:

Mayor and Council received monthly reports from the Municipal Clerk and Tax Collector.

The Municipal Clerk's report for February 2025 showed a total amount received of \$14,849.01.

The Tax Collector's February 2025 report showed a total amount received of \$310,086.42.

Councilmember Ropiecki reported that all employees are going a good job.

Public Works:

Council President Pro Tempore Allgeyer reported that everything is going well. They are working on repairing roofs of sheds and cleaning up the garage area.

Recreation:

Councilmember Turner reported that the Recreation Committee held a meeting on March 6th with the various baseball teams that applied to utilize the field for the Spring season. The meeting went great and all teams agreed to pay the \$400 fee due to the City and would also help with the Jersey Genesis Triathlon.

The baseball field is currently being worked on. New infield mix has been delivered and a new backstop will be installed soon.

Fire and Ambulance:

Councilmember Hawn reported that 2025 has been a busy year thus far. There was recently a house fire in Smithville and trees down with the recent storms. It has been busy, but the Fire Company is doing well.

Planning Board:

No report. There will be a Planning Board Meeting in April.

Construction/Code Enforcement:

Construction Official Richard Stevens submitted reports for the month of February.

During the month of February, a total of 16 inspections were done, and the following permits were issued:

- 4 Alterations
- 0 Demos
- 0 New
- 2 Additions
- 2 Zoning Permits

- 1 CO Inspection for Resale
- Total of 9

The following code enforcement issues were notated:

- 233 Main Street – open foundation – abated

Land Use:

No report

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION:

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to open public portion.

Amanda Redrow, newly appointed Superintendent of Port Republic School introduced herself to Mayor and Council.

Leah Kaithern, Ecogrit Mechanical Dredging, worked with Mobile Dredging to submit a proposal for the Redevelopment Area is 400 English Creek Road. She asked Mayor and Council what the status of the plan is currently and if the agreement and lease have been signed.

Attorney Kaufmann explained that the conditional redeveloper submitted their redevelopment agreement and lease agreement with requested revisions. Mayor and Council will be reviewing both documents during the Executive Session of the meeting.

CLOSE TO PUBLIC PORTION:

Hearing nothing more from the public, on the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to close the public portion.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

RESOLUTIONS:

49-2025 Resolution to Support Publishing Legal Notices on Official Government Websites
On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to adopt Resolution 49-2025.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

50-2025 Designating Daniel's Law Redactor *namely Brandy M. Blevin*

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to adopt Resolution 50-2025.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

51-2025 Resolution of the City of Port Republic Supporting New Jersey's Third Legislative District Bill A5255 Prohibiting Electric Public Utilities from Charging Household Rates Exceeding the Consumer Price Index

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to adopt Resolution 51-2025.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

52-2025 Appointing Municipal Housing Liaison *namely Brandy M. Blevin*

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to adopt Resolution 52-2025.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

53-2025 Authorizing City Clerk to Advertise for Receipt of Bids on Adams Avenue Reconstruction Contract

On the motion of Councilmember Hawn, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to adopt Resolution 53-2025.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

ORDINANCES – 1ST READING/INTRODUCTION:

None

ORDINANCES – 2ND READING/ADOPTION:

02-2025 An Ordinance Establishing the Salaries and Wages of Certain Officials, Officers and Employees of the City of Port Republic

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded by Councilmember Turner and carried to open for public hearing.

Hearing nothing from the public, Councilmember Riegel moved, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to close the public hearing.

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to adopt Ordinance 02-2025.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- Tennis/Basketball/Pickleball Courts – project will tentatively begin on March 17th

NEW BUSINESS:

- 2025 CDBG Kickoff Event – March 18, 2025, at 10 am via Zoom
- Rabies Clinic – March 29th at the DPW Garage – 11:00 am – 12:30 pm
- Heritage Society Chinese Auction Fundraiser at the Carriage House – March 29th 4 pm – 8 pm

MAYORS REPORT/PROCLAMTIONS:

Mayor Giberson reported :

- She attended a meeting at the Atlantic County Board of Taxation. They are trying to figure out the most advantageous way to reassess and reevaluate each municipality. This will cost the City approximately \$68,000.00.
- She attended a meeting regarding the Atlantic County Central Municipal Court. Northfield has pulled out and have joined with Hammonton. There will be no increase in the 2025 budget for Port Republic.
- She also attended a meeting regarding Affordable Housing. The NJDCA updated their numbers, and we are now mandated to have 10 units. The Planning Board will be discussing this and can make recommendations on where these units should be.
- During the Recreation Committee Meeting, the coaches had some suggestions on how we could obtain grants for lighting of the field and possibly a scoreboard.

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION:

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded by Councilmember Ropiecki and carried to open the public portion.

Jill Yochim, Port Republic School Board Member, clarified that for the 2025-2026 school year Port Republic School received an increase in State Aid of \$12,913. She expressed that when you look at the growth in the budget, this number is not significant.

Someone in the audience questioned what the tax increase will be. Councilmember Riegel responded it will be 1.3 cents for the City portion. He asked if there was an idea yet of what the school increase would be. Mayor Giberson responded that right now, they are estimating a 7.7 cent increase. This does not include a bond to repair the school building. The audience member questioned who would pay for the bond. Mayor Giberson responded that the taxpayers would be responsible to pay for that.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the Port Republic School's budget.

CLOSE TO PUBLIC PORTION:

Hearing nothing more from the public, Councilmember Turner moved, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to close the public portion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

ES 3-2025 Authorization to Enter into Executive Session Regarding:

1. Redevelopment of the 400 English Creek (Block 24, Lot 34) Redevelopment Area

Attorney Kaufmann informed the public that at the close of executive session there is a possibility that official action may be taken.

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to adopt Resolution ES 3-2025.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded by Councilmember Turner and carried to close executive session.

YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded of Councilmember Riegel and carried to adopt Resolution 54-2025, Rescinding Conditional Redeveloper Designation for 400 English Creek Road Redevelopment Area.

YES: Crawford, Riegel, Turner

NO: Allgeyer, Hawn

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN: Ropiecki

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandy M. Blevin, RMC
Municipal Clerk