

## CITY OF PORT REPUBLIC COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 12, 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 Giberson, seconded by Councilmember Crawford and carried to close the workshop portion of the meeting.

**COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:** David Crawford, Roger Giberson, Eugene Hawn, Donna Riegel, Jeffrey Ropiecki, Michael Turner

**COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT:** Steven Allgeyer

**MAYOR:** Monica Giberson

**MUNICIPAL CLERK:** Brandy M. Blevin, RMC

**ATTORNEY:** William J. Kaufmann, Esq.

Council President Giberson 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 JULY 8, 2025, CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:**

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to approve the July 8, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes.

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

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

### **MOTION TO APPROVE AUGUST 2025 BILL LIST:**

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

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: Crawford, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Police/Emergency Management:**

Mayor Giberson reported that there have been issues at the beach and at Fireman's Pond late at night. The State Police have been notified, but she plans to follow up with them.

Councilmember Hawn reported that there were complaints of the Marine Police stopping people in the waterway beyond the Hanselman's residence and not in the area that was requested between the bridge and the beach. Councilmember Riegel said that they did those checks last year as well. Councilmember Hawn did speak with Scott Winneberger regarding the complaints.

### **Administrative/Personnel:**

Mayor and Council received monthly reports from the Municipal Clerk, Tax Collector and Chief Financial Officer.

The Municipal Clerk's report for July 2025 showed a total amount received of \$31,592.89.

The Tax Collector's report for July 2025 showed a total amount received of \$67,496.30.

The Chief Financial Officer provided a Budget to Actual Report Through July 31, 2025.

Councilmember Ropiecki reported that everyone is doing a great job. He added that the City was made aware of a program through the County where they would pay salaries for up to 5 months to fill job vacancies. We do not have a need for this at this time, but the information was forwarded to the school so they could see if this program would be beneficial to them.

### **Public Works:**

Council President Giberson reported that the department has been busy and everything is going well.

### **Recreation:**

Councilmember Turner reported that the basketball, tennis and pickleball courts are nearly done. They turned out great and people have been utilizing them already. There have been requests for lighting, so he would like to possibly budget for that next year or at least look into it.

Council President Giberson thanked Councilmember Turner for spearheading the project and dealing with the contractor directly. It saved the City money by not having to go through our City Engineer. He added that the project itself was zero cost to the taxpayers and was completed with grant funding.

### **Fire and Ambulance:**

Councilmember Hawn reported that things are running smoothly at the Firehouse. The big call for the month was the fire at Viking Yachts, which was contained quickly.

### **Planning Board:**

Councilmember Riegel reported that the Planning Board met on August 11, 2025, for a C2 Variance Application to increase the height of an accessory building. It was unanimously approved.

### **Construction/Code Enforcement:**

Construction Official Pat Naticchione submitted a report for the month of July 2025.

During the month of July, a total of 22 inspections were done, and the following permits were issued:

- 1 Alteration
- 0 Demos
- 0 New
- 1 Addition
- 1 Zoning Permit
- 1 CO Inspection / Resale
- Total of 4

The following code enforcement issues were notated:

- 233 Main Street – sent letter (pending)
- 291 Old New York Road – closed
- 2 Houses on Clarks Landing Road – waiting on owners to finish cleaning up

**Land Use:**

They will discuss the status of the Redevelopment Plan under Unfinished Business.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION:**

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

Gary Kirschenmann, 16 Maple Branch Court, spoke to Mayor and Council regarding a claim he submitted for an incident that occurred at the Transfer Station on March 5<sup>th</sup>. His claim was denied by the insurance company and he doesn't understand why. Council President Giberson replied that we would look into this.

Mr. Kirschemann then asked about the increase in his taxes this year. Council President Giberson explained that the increase last year was from the referendum which was voted for. This year the school received something from the State which allowed them to increase their budget by \$300,00.00 because, according to them, the taxpayers were not funding the school properly.

Barbara Lang, 116 Main Street, asked for clarification again on the tax increases from the school. Council President explained the increase in 2024 as well as the additional increase in 2025.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the school tax increase. Residents were encouraged to attend the school board meetings for more information.

**CLOSE TO PUBLIC PORTION:**

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

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

- Letter from Genevieve Clifton, Director, NJDOT, Maritime Resources and Construction Support Regarding Application for Maintenance Dredging for Nacote Creek (State Navigation Channel #166) and Nacote Creek Basin Channel (State Navigation Channel #167) - *(written comments must be submitted within 15 days of receiving this letter)*

*Acknowledged*

- Letter from Matthew DeNafo, ACUA Regarding Collection Service Increase

*Acknowledged*

**RESOLUTIONS:**

69-2025 Resolution Authorizing the Tax Collector to Extend the Third Quarter Grace Period  
(extended until August 28, 2025)

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Ropiecki and carried to adopt Resolution 69-2025.

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

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

70-2025 Authorizing Extension of Term Lease of Municipally-Owned Property for Use as  
Telecommunications Tower Site for a Period Not to Exceed Six Months (Block 38,  
Lots 1 & 2)

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Hawn and carried to adopt Resolution 70-2025.

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

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

71-2025 Authorizing Lease of Municipally-Owned Property for Use as Telecommunications  
Tower Site (Block 38, Lots 1 & 2)

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to adopt Resolution 71-2025.

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

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

72-2025 Granting Raffle Licenses to Port Republic Heritage Society, a NJ Nonprofit  
Corporation

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Ropiecki and carried to adopt Resolution 72-2025.

YES: Crawford, Giberson, Hawn, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN: Riegel

73-2025 Requesting School Board to Reconsider Funding Recommendation Received from  
New Jersey Department of Education

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Crawford and carried to adopt Resolution 73-2025.

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

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

**ORDINANCES – 1<sup>ST</sup> READING/INTRODUCTION:**

None

**ORDINANCES – 2<sup>nd</sup> READING/ADOPTION:**

None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- Redevelopment Plan – 400 English Creek Road

Council President Giberson explained that Scarborough Marine Group reached out with another proposal. The new proposal would make the permitting process much easier. Council would need to deed restrict a 5-acre portion of the property. The restriction would make that piece of land unable to be developed in the future. Council is not interested at this time. Council President Giberson will reach out to Mr. Scarborough to see if there are any other options as they are not interested in deed restricting any part of the property.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Code Enforcement Complaint – Block 5, Lot 11

Council feels this is a neighbor dispute. The City will not be getting involved further with this complaint.

- Control Burn Application – *if interested in applying, location needed*

Council does not wish to apply this year.

**MAYORS REPORT/PROCLAMTIONS:**

Mayor Giberson reported the following:

- She attended a meeting held by the Atlantic County Board of Taxation with Clerk Blevin and Tax Assessor Johnson. Port Republic, Mullica Township and Estell Manor are being requested to complete a reevaluation and reassessment by the State. The Board is considering asking the County to fund the tax map updates needed for all municipalities. There are two companies in the State that are qualified to do reevaluations and reassessments and they are currently booked out until 2028.
- September 14, 2025, will be the Duct Tape Boat Regatta.
- October 25, 2025, will be the Fall Fest/Movie Night.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION:**

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

Kathy Cox, 123 Moss Mill Road, commented that she has attended City Council Meetings for years and while Council kept tax increases down, the contributions that the City has made added nothing to the school budget. They now have a budget that doesn't amount to what it takes to run the school. A large amount of their budget is spent on sending the high school students for their education. If elementary students are also sent out she feels they will be way over the amount currently being spent. Council President Giberson responded to Mrs. Cox that he does not want her to be upset by the work that she is doing on the School Board. He understands what the Board is up against. He feels that we need to stand up and force the State to properly fund our schools. He reiterated the concept of "State mandate, State pay".

Barabara Lang, 116 Main Street, asked how the City not funding the additional \$250,000 to the school would force the State to do what we want them to do. Council President Giberson responded with, State mandate, State pay. If they want to keep adding mandates that are pushing these schools into default or bankruptcy, then they need to pay for them. Mrs. Lang asked if the local Mayors could come together to go to the State level. It was explained that this has been happening for many years.

**CLOSE TO PUBLIC PORTION:**

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

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

ES 8-2025 Authorization to Enter into Executive Session Regarding:

1. N/A

**ADJOURNMENT**

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded of Councilmember Riegel and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandy M. Blevin, RMC  
Municipal Clerk