

CITY OF PORT REPUBLIC **BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES** **JANUARY 27, 2026 – 6:00 pm**

Adequate notice of this meeting was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE FOR COUNCIL PRESIDENT ROGER GIBERSON:

Oath of Office administered by Mayor Monica Giberson

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Steven Allgeyer, David Crawford, Roger Giberson, Jeffrey Ropiecki

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Eugene Hawn, Donna Riegel, Michael Turner

MAYOR: Monica Giberson

MUNICIPAL CLERK: Brandy M. Blevin, RMC

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: Amy Stover, CMFO

MUNICIPAL AUDITOR: Nancy Sbrolla, CPA, RMA

Council President Giberson called the meeting to order and led 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 forth the time, date, and location of this meeting.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Auditor Sbrolla explained the following:

- The budget, at its starting point, is at a 10.2-cent tax increase. The City is starting the budget \$51,000.00 over the tax levy cap.
- The City ended 2025 with a surplus balance of \$335,911.00. The budget presented tonight is using \$150,000.00 of that surplus.

Chief Financial Officer Stover and Auditor Sbrolla went over the budget with Mayor and Council, the following are changes from last year's budget:

- Municipal Clerk Salaries and Wages – decreased by \$6,000.00
- Municipal Clerk Other Expenses – increased by \$4,000.00
- Audit Service – increased by \$1,750.00
- Tax Assessment Administration Other Expenses – increased by \$300.00
- Legal – decreased by \$3,000.00
- Engineering Service and Costs Other Expenses – increased by \$20,000.00
- Liability Insurance – increased by \$5,500.00
- Group Insurance Plan for Employees – increased by \$4,856.00 (The rest of the increase was outside the cap.)
- Health Benefit Waiver – decreased by \$4,999.00

- Grant Writer Other Expenses – increased by \$4,000.00
- Monitoring of Wells – increased by \$1,000.00
- Buildings & Grounds – increased by \$500.00
- Dog Regulation Other Expenses – increased by \$160.00
- Parks & Playgrounds Salary & Wages – decreased by \$5,000.00
- Motor Fuel – increased by \$500.00
- Public Employee Retirement System – decreased by \$12,387.00
- Social Security System – decreased by \$7,000.00
- Unemployment Compensation Insurance – increased by \$9,250.00
- LOSAP Contribution – Fire – increased by \$1,700.00

Auditor Sbrolla explained that \$19,000.00 was included in the budget to raise the funds for Ordinance 05-14 which had not been raised previously. The last \$19,000.00 will need to be raised in the 2027 budget.

They added \$50,000.00 in expected revenue from the Local Recreation Improvement Grant that the City will be receiving back once requested.

They utilized another \$25,000.00 of surplus, using a total of \$175,000.00.

There was discussion regarding the truck needed by Public Works. There is currently \$60,000.00 in the capital fund that can be used towards that purchase.

The workshop concluded with a proposed 1.4-cent tax increase. Council President Giberson stated that this would be shared with the rest of Council. Auditor Sbrolla shared that the budget does not need to be introduced until March.

Mayor and Council thanked Auditor Sbrolla and Chief Financial Officer Stover for all their hard work.

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION:

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

James Laughlin, 34 Maple Branch Court, expressed appreciation to Clerk Blevin for her dedicated service. He voiced concerns regarding the City operating with minimal staffing, noting the potential for employee burnout due to limited staffing. Mr. Laughlin also commented on the County's response to the recent snowstorm, observing that some roads remain untreated. Additionally, he suggested potential cost-saving measures, including having residents transport brush and branches to the ACUA or Mannis facilities, rather than the City incurring expenses to manage these collections.

CLOSE TO PUBLIC PORTION:

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

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded by Councilmember Crawford and carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandy M. Blevin, RMC
Municipal Clerk