

CITY OF PORT REPUBLIC COUNCIL REORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 6, 2026 – 6:00 pm

Municipal Clerk Brandy M. Blevin 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.

INVOCATION:

Invocation given by Monica Giberson

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE:

Monica Giberson, Mayor, term commencing 1/1/2026, term expiring 12/31/2029

Oath of Office administered by Municipal Clerk Brandy Blevin

Eugene Hawn, Ward I, term commencing 1/1/2026, term expiring 12/31/2028

Oath of Office administered by Mayor Monica Giberson

Donna Riegel, Ward II, term commencing 1/1/2026, term expiring 12/31/2028

Oath of Office administered by Mayor Monica Giberson

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 Kaufmann, Esq.

NOMINATION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT

On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded by Councilmember Hawn and carried to nominate Roger Giberson for Council President.

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

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE FOR COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

Due to absence, Councilmember Giberson did not take the Oath of Office and will be sworn in at a subsequent meeting.

NOMINATION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE:

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded by Councilmember Crawford and carried to nominate Steven Allgeyer as Council President Pro Tempore.

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

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE FOR COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE:

Oath of Office administered by Mayor Monica Giberson

MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS:

State of the City Address given by Mayor Monica Giberson:

Last year, in 2025, we put our priorities on taking care of what we have in the City of Port Republic primarily using COVID money that we had left over. Both the interior and exterior of City Hall were painted. New lighting was installed in Council Chambers. The infield gravel was replaced, along with a new baseball backstop. A new to us, refurbished trash compactor was installed at the transfer station at half the price of a new one. A brand-new half a million-dollar project of the Tennis, Pickleball and Basketball Courts was completed with no taxpayer money needed through grant money and open space funding. Our emergency operations plan was completed. A pirate ship playground was installed thanks to the Smallwoods and the Athletic Foundation for the enjoyment of our younger residents, and their parents. We currently are in the process of applying for a recreation grant so we can continue to add to our park area. I am very proud of all these accomplishments.

This year we will be repaving a portion of Adams Avenue with grant money funding. In the preliminary budget the Central Municipal Court is keeping our budget the same as last year. We just renewed our cell tower contract which has basically doubled the past revenue with a 20-year commitment.

This year is the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. We have a committee of people who have met a few times to discuss ideas for this event which will take place during Port Day, June 20th. If you would like to be on the committee, please let me know. Our next meeting will be Thursday, March 19 at 10 am at City Hall.

As a city we have a lot of challenges coming up. Insurance prices are increasing beyond our control. No one wants life to change in Port Republic, but in all reality, it will be increasingly difficult to run the City primarily on property tax funding and still make Port Republic an affordable place to live. We need to get very creative this year to find methods of gaining revenue without changing the way of life in Port. I am confident that there are good answers for us, it is just a matter of putting all the pieces together.

We are so fortunate to have an excellent team of Council Members, volunteers, paid professionals and Brandy, our City Clerk, in place that work well together for the good of Port Republic. I look forward to working with all of you this year to continue to make Port Republic an amazing place to live.

Consent Agenda: *All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by this City Council and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.*

RESOLUTIONS

- No. 1-2026 Approving Temporary Budget for 2026
- No. 2-2026 Authorization of Cash Management Plan
- No. 3-2026 Establishing Depository Funds for 2026
- No. 4-2026 Authorization of Petty Cash Fund in the amount of \$100.00
- No. 5-2026 Establishing Charges for Municipal Public Records
- No. 6-2026 Governing Body Certification Pursuant to P.L. 2017, C. 183 of Compliance with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's "Enforcement Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964"
- No. 7-2026 Resolution Indicating the Schedule of Regular City Council Meetings for the Year 2026
- No. 8-2026 Establishing Rules of Order
- No. 9-2026 Annual Appointments
- No. 10-2026 Appointment of Auditor *namely Nancy Sbrolla, CPA, RMA of Ford, Scott & Associates, LLC*
- No. 11-2026 Appointment of City Solicitor *namely William Kaufmann, Esq. of Nehmad, Davis & Goldstein, PC*
- No. 12-2026 Appointment of Conflict Municipal Attorney *namely Joseph McGroarty, Esq. of Fitzgerald McGroarty*
- No. 13-2026 Appointment of Planning Board Solicitor *namely Joseph McGroarty, Esq. of Fitzgerald McGroarty*
- No. 14-2026 Appointment of Bond Counsel *namely Joel Fleishman, Esq. of Fleishman Daniels Law Offices, LLC*
- No. 15-2026 Appointment of Risk Management Consultant *namely John D'Agostino*
- No. 16-2026 Appointing Fund Commissioner *namely Monica Giberson*
- No. 17-2026 Appointment of Public Safety Director *namely Scott Winneberger*
- No. 18-2026 Appointment of DPW Consultant & Stormwater Management Coordinator *namely Bill Montag*
- No. 19-2026 Appointment of PACO *namely Brandy M. Blevin*
- No. 20-2026 Appointment of Animal Control Company *namely A-Academy*
- No. 21-2026 Appointment of Cleaner for City Hall *namely Maria Hamill*
- No. 22-2026 Authorizing an Agreement with Electronic Recyclers International
- No. 23-2026 Authorization to Perform Aerial Applications for Mosquito Control
- No. 24-2026 Authorizing an Agreement with Deer Carcass Removal Service
- No. 25-2026 Authorizing a Cooperative Service Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture
- No. 26-2026 Fixing the Rate of Interest to be Charged on Delinquent Taxes and Setting the Grace Period
- No. 27-2026 Authorizing Cancellation of Certain Taxes with Delinquent and Credit Balances Under Five Dollars
- No. 28-2026 Authorizing a Tax Sale Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:5-19
- No. 29-2026 Authorizing Tax Assessor to Act as Agent and to File Petition(s) of Appeals to Increase Tax Assessment
- No. 30-2026 Authorizing Tax Assessor to Act as Agent and to File Petition(s) of Appeals to Decrease Tax Assessment
- No. 31-2026 Designating an Official Newspaper (*The Press of Atlantic City*) and Authorizing Municipal Website Publication of Public Notices
- No. 32-2026 Designation of Secondary Newspaper - *The Hammonton Gazette*
- No. 33-2026 Designation of Shelter for Stray Animals – *The Humane Society of Atlantic County*

No. 34-2026 Volunteer Tuition Credit Program
No. 35-2026 Approving Discharge of Fireworks
No. 36-2026 Establishing Bid Threshold and Authorizing Purchases, Contracts and Agreements Not Exceeding the Local Public Contracts Law Bid Threshold Without Public Advertisement

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded by Councilmember Riegel to adopt Consent Calendar Resolutions 1-2026 through and including 36-2026.

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

NO:

ABSENT: Giberson

ABSTAIN:

MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Giberson made the following appointments:

- Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator (1 year appointment): William Montag
- City Council Liaison to the Planning Board (1 year appointment): Donna Riegel

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Council President Giberson will work on committee assignments and should have them finalized by the next meeting.

Comments from Mayor and City Council:

There were no comments made.

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION

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

Doris Bugdon, 14 St. John's Lane, commented that she was unable to hear the meeting proceedings and stated that she has previously requested the use of a sound system to improve audibility. Mayor Giberson said this would be looked into when they start discussing the budget.

CLOSED TO THE FLOOR FOR TOPICS FOR PUBLIC PORTION:

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

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded by Councilmember Crawford and carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandy M. Blevin, RMC
Municipal Clerk