CITY OF PORT REPUBLIC
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 8, 2026 – 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 Allgeyer and carried, the workshop portion of the meeting was closed.

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Steven Allgeyer, David Crawford, Roger Giberson, Eugene Hawn, Donna Riegel, Jeffrey Ropiecki, Michael Turner
COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT:
MAYOR: Monica Giberson
MUNICIPAL CLERK: Brandy M. Blevin, RMC
ATTORNEY: William Kaufmann, Esq.

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.

MOTION TO APPROVE AUGUST 11, 2026, CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:
On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded by Councilmember Allgeyer and carried to approve the August 11, 2026, City Council Meeting Minutes.
YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner
NO:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO APPROVE SEPTEMBER 2026 BILL LIST:
On the motion of Councilmember Ropiecki, seconded by Councilmember Allgeyer and carried to approve the September 2026 Bill List.
YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner
NO:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO PAY ALL SIGNED BILLS:
On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded by Councilmember Allgeyer and carried to pay all signed bills.
YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner
NO:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Police/Emergency Management:
No report.

Administrative/Personnel:
Council President Giberson reported that Mayor and Council received monthly reports from the Municipal Clerk, Tax Collector and CFO.

The Municipal Clerk's report for August 2026 showed a total amount received of $16,105.46.

The Tax Collector's report for August 2026 showed a total amount received of $1,199,326.00.

The Chief Financial Officer provided a Budget to Actual Report Through August 31, 2026.

Councilmember Ropiecki reported everything is going well.

Public Works:
Councilmember Allgeyer reported he was advised by DPW that stone was needed in an area near the Pomona Avenue paving project. Everything else is running smoothly.

Recreation:
No report.

Fire and Ambulance:
Councilmember Hawn reported everything is going well.

Planning Board:
No report.

Construction/Code Enforcement:
Construction Official Pat Naticchione submitted a report for the month of August 2026.

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

- 10 Alterations
- 0 Demos
- 0 New
- 0 Addition
- 2 Zoning Permits
- 3 CO Inspection / Resale
- Total of 15

The following code enforcement matters were noted:

- 57 Riverside Drive – N.C.A.
- 57 Pomona Avenue – broken windows, rear door open, sent violation 8/31/26

Land Use:
No report.

School Finance Committee:
No report.

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION:
On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded by Councilmember Turner and carried to open public portion.

Bill Smallwood, 122 Clarks Landing Road, provided Mayor and Council with an update on the Port Republic Athletic Fund's efforts to purchase playground equipment for the garden area. Mr. Smallwood explained that, following the Jersey Genesis Triathlon, the organization did not meet its fundraising goal to purchase the small playhouses originally planned. He discussed the possibility of instead purchasing playground equipment geared toward younger children.

Mr. Smallwood also shared that he and his family are considering retiring the Jersey Genesis Triathlon and transitioning the event to a foot race in the future, potentially including a children's race. Mayor and Council thanked Mr. Smallwood and his family for their continued contributions to the community and expressed support for the proposed change to the event.

Joe Martin, 5 Mill Street, asked whether there had been any updates from South Jersey Gas regarding the potential expansion of natural gas service into Port Republic. Council President Giberson stated that the City had not received any recent information from South Jersey Gas but would follow up on the matter.

CLOSE TO PUBLIC PORTION:
Hearing nothing more from the public, on the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded by Councilmember Crawford and carried to close the public portion.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- NJDOT – 2027 Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Request for Applications – dated August 17, 2026

  Acknowledged

- USDA – Final Report for Goose Work – dated August 24, 2026

  Acknowledged

- ACUA – Collection Services – dated August 13, 2026

  Acknowledged

RESOLUTIONS:

76-2026 Governing Body Certification of the Annual Audit

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded by Councilmember Ropiecki and carried to adopt Resolution 76-2026.
YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner
NO:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

77-2026 Granting Raffle License to Port Republic Heritage Society, a NJ Nonprofit Corporation

On the motion of Councilmember Crawford, seconded by Councilmember Allgeyer and carried to adopt Resolution 77-2026.
YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner
NO:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

ORDINANCES – 1st Reading/Introduction:

05-2026 An Ordinance Amending and Supplementing Ordinance 72-1986, as Amended and as Codified in Chapter 201, Recreation Areas and Parks

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded by Councilmember Crawford and carried to introduce Ordinance 05-2026.
YES: Allgeyer, Crawford, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner
NO:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

ORDINANCES – 2nd Reading/Adoption:

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- 400 English Creek Road – Redevelopment Agreement

  Attorney Kaufmann provided an update regarding the proposed Redevelopment Agreement and Lease with Cultivate Power for 400 English Creek Road. Cultivate Power submitted redlined versions of both documents within the requested timeframe, which included several proposed revisions. Attorney Kaufmann advised that he would be meeting with Cultivate Power and its legal counsel to discuss the proposed changes and address outstanding concerns, including provisions related to potential environmental conditions on the property. He anticipated continuing negotiations with the goal of having an agreement available for Council's consideration prior to the next Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Discussion Regarding Permitting and Establishing a Liquor License within the City

  Councilmember Turner distributed a written statement outlining his position regarding the establishment of liquor licenses within the City and made a motion to introduce both a package goods license and a retail liquor license for the City of Port Republic, consistent with the maximum allowable number of one of each. Upon the recommendation of City Attorney Kaufmann, Councilmember Allgeyer seconded the motion to allow for Council discussion.

  Attorney Kaufmann explained that liquor licensing could be pursued through the adoption of an ordinance or through the petition and referendum process. He further explained the Mayor's veto authority, Council's ability to override a veto by the required two-thirds vote, and the public's ability to pursue a referendum following adoption of an ordinance. Council also discussed the requirements and timing associated with a referendum.

  Mayor Giberson expressed her preference that the matter be decided by referendum to allow residents to directly weigh in on the issue. Council discussed potential financial impacts to the City, public safety and traffic concerns, necessary zoning amendments, potential economic benefits and job creation, and the potential for an increased State Police presence. Attorney Kaufmann advised that the City's zoning regulations would need to be amended as part of the process. He also addressed questions regarding how frequently the issue could be reconsidered following a referendum.
  Following discussion, Councilmember Crawford made a motion to table the matter, seconded by Councilmember Allgeyer. The motion to table carried, with all members voting in the affirmative except Councilmember Turner, who voted no.

- Saturday, September 19th – Duct Tape Boat Regatta Event

- Friday, September 25th – Fall Citywide Cleanup

MAYOR'S REPORT/PROCLAMATIONS:

Mayor Giberson reported:

- There are currently 108 students enrolled at Port Republic School.
- The Duct Tape Boat Regatta will be held on September 19, and volunteers are needed for the event.
- The Fall Citywide Cleanup will be held on September 25.
- Fall Fest and Movie Night will be held on October 24.
- Heritage Day will be held on October 3. The event will begin with a Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) presentation of a Liberty Tree at the monument and will include an appearance by George Washington. Port Republic School students will also participate in an art and essay contest.

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION:
On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded by Councilmember Crawford and carried to open the public portion.

CLOSE TO PUBLIC PORTION:
Hearing nothing from the public, Councilmember Allgeyer moved, seconded by Councilmember Crawford and carried to close the public portion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:
ES 9-2026 Authorization to Enter into Executive Session Regarding:

1. N/A

ADJOURNMENT
On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded by Councilmember Crawford and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandy M. Blevin, RMC
Municipal Clerk