

**PARKESBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**  
Wednesday, June 18, 2025  
7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Council President Todd Brade at 7:00 p.m.

Roll call was held. Council Members present were Council President Todd Brade, Council Vice-President Sharon Wolf, Council Member Mark Agen, Council Member Monique Baylor, Council Member David Mellema (7:06pm), and Mayor John P. Hagan, II. Also present were Police Chief Ryan Murtagh, Borough Solicitor John Carnes, and Borough Manager Rochelle Gresh. Council Member Nick Ohar and Council Member Margaretta “Rhett” Lipscomb were absent.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

A **MOTION** to approve the agenda was made by Baylor and seconded by Agen. All in favor.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A **MOTION** to approve the minutes of May 15, 2025, Regular Council Meeting was made by Baylor and seconded by Agen. All in favor.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**Mayor** – Mayor Hagan honored April Brade for her remarkable contributions to the community. Mrs. Brade is the founder and CEO of PARTNER (Parkesburg Area Trap Neuter and Release) Secretary of the Parks and Recreation Commission and organized the Battle of the Boroughs to assist the local food cupboard. For her dedication and unwavering commitment to helping others, Mayor Hagan presented April Brade with the “Mayor’s Fedora Award”.

**Proclamation Bicentennial Commemoration of the Lafayette Farewell Tour** -In Council Member Lipscomb’s absence, President Brade read aloud the proclamation to council members. The Parkesburg Borough Council is joining with the American Friends of Lafayette in celebrating the Bicentennial of Lafayette’s Farewell Tour of America. The Proclamation stated the borough would declare July 27, 2025, as “Lafayette Day”, a time to remember the high ideals of Lafayette and to celebrate his Farewell Tour within our municipality.

A **MOTION** to declare July 27, 2025, as “Lafayette Day” within the Borough of Parkesburg was made by Mellema and seconded by Baylor. All in favor.

**Municipal Collections and Liens – Kevin Buraks Portnoff Law Associates** – Kevin Buraks, esquire for Portnoff Law Associates (PLA), stated that the law firm has over 35 years of experience collecting delinquent real estate taxes and delinquent municipal claims. Due to legislation passed years ago, this allows municipalities to shift the fair and reasonable costs of collection to the delinquent property owner. Mr. Buraks stated this cost-shifting allows our clients to use PLA and still receive 100% of their money. At no additional cost, we will

administer a hardship program that is available to owner-occupants experiencing financial difficulty, allowing them to pay according to their means. The shifting of collection fees and costs provides a strong incentive for property owners to pay their delinquent accounts quickly and to pay future obligations on time. Mr. Buraks informed council members of the eight steps his firm utilizes to collect the money.

**PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY):** None

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**Engineer** - A written report was submitted to the council.

**Police Chief Report**- A written report was submitted to the council.

**Public Works Department**- A written report was submitted to the council.

**Fire Chief Report** – A written report was submitted to the council.

**Fire District Administrator**- A written report was submitted to the council.

**Code Enforcement -Code Inspections Inc.**- A written report was submitted to the council.

**Mayor** – A written report was submitted to the council.

**Borough Solicitor** – Borough Solicitor Carnes informed council members of a Zoning Hearing Board meeting on June 24, 2025. Carnes explained that the initial zoning permit was denied. A discussion was held about the hearing and whether the council would like to state a position on the matter.

**A MOTION** to send a letter to the Zoning Hearing Board stating Borough Council is not in favor of granting a variance was made by Baylor and seconded by Mellema. All in favor.

**Treasurer's Report** – Borough Manager Gresh reported the General Fund was \$254,757.04 and the General Reserve was \$829,506.70. Gresh stated that the final day for trash bids is Monday, June 23, 2025. There will be meetings scheduled with committee chairs to discuss options for trash services.

**Borough Manager** – Borough Manager Gresh informed council members that the Codes department has been issuing a significant amount of notice of violations to residents.

## **Business Items:**

**A MOTION** to approve the bill list as presented and payment of all recurring bills and payroll was made by Baylor and seconded by Agen. All in favor.

**A MOTION** to acknowledge receipt and accept the Treasurer's Report for May 2025 in the amount of \$1,416,526.66 was made by Agen and seconded by Baylor. All in favor.

**A MOTION** to appoint the firm of Portnoff Law Associates as a collection agency for unpaid trash accounts and tax collection for delinquent taxes for 2025 was made by Mellema and seconded by Agen. All in favor.

**A MOTION** to advertise for Collection Ordinance for Portnoff was made by Mellema and seconded by Agen. All in favor.

**A MOTION** to hire a full-time police officer, Joseph Capuano, was made by Baylor and seconded by Mellema. All in favor.

A discussion was held regarding borough finances. Borough Manager Gresh informed council members that the Borough Budget is anticipated to have a \$300,000 deficit for 2025. The Borough does not have any reserve funds to cover this deficit. For three years in a row, Gresh reported the borough has not been able to meet financial obligations. As a result, the borough is very close to Act 47. Gresh suggested to avoid Act 47, the borough could enter an Early Intervention Program with DCED. Gresh stated that DCED gives direction for distressed municipalities.

**A MOTION** to enter Early Intervention Program with the DCED was made by Baylor and seconded by Mellema. All in favor.

**A MOTION** for non-uniform employees to have June 19<sup>th</sup> off as a holiday each year effective June 18, 2025, but for the year 2025, employees have an option for a flex holiday instead was made by Baylor and seconded by Mellema. All in favor.

**A MOTION** to rescind the monthly municipality pension payments to uniform and non-uniform was made by Baylor and seconded by Wolf. All in favor.

A discussion was held regarding selling borough property and having appraisals completed.

**A MOTION** to have 211 Main Street and 419 West First Avenue appraised to sell was made by Baylor and seconded by Agen.

Council Member Mellema informed council members there were two properties (321 and 323 Front Street) he suggested should be added to the list of properties owned by the borough and be appraised.

**A MOTION** to have 211 Main Street, 419 West First Avenue, 321 Front Street, and 323 Front Street appraised to sell was made by Mellema and seconded by Baylor. Ayes - 4 Nays - 1

A discussion was held regarding trash services. Borough Solicitor Carnes informed council members that the Ordinances need to be amended. Currently, the Ordinance states residents are

allowed 3 trash containers for collection and cannot exceed 36 gallons in size. The issue of responsibility of totes was also discussed.

**Impact Church** – Borough Solicitor Carnes forwarded documents to the developer for use in preparing a Developer’s Agreement and Financial Security Agreement. Members of the church stated they are eager to get the project finished and are awaiting the approval of the land agreement. The building permit applications need to be filed. The final resolution for land development approval will be tabled to the July 17<sup>th</sup> council meeting.

**A MOTION** for borough council to authorize the church to make application build permits, condition upon the release of land development plans and waive obligations was made by Mellema and seconded by Baylor. All in favor.

Borough Manager Gresh informed council members of the Rental Ordinance that will be on the agenda next month. A Codes Appeal Committee will need to be created. Borough Manager Gresh questioned Borough Solicitor Carnes whether the UCC Appeals Committee members could serve on the Codes Appeal Committee.

**A MOTION** to approve the purchase of a 2025 Chevrolet Tahoe for police use was made by Baylor and seconded by Mellema. All in favor.

**Cell Tower** - Borough Solicitor Carnes informed council members that he reviewed the lease terms and revisions are being made to the agreement. The Zoning Ordinance was discussed and are moving forward with the project. The tower has been moved somewhat to the west to be within the bounds of the lumber yard and out of the old Right of Way on State Street.

**Handicapped application for 602 West Second Avenue** –

**A MOTION** to approve a handicapped parking space permit for 602 West Second Avenue was made by Baylor and seconded by Mellema. All in favor.

**Public Comments** (*Limited to three minutes*) - None

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**- Council Member Mellema informed council members that the VFW would like to hang a 3’ x 5’ banner for an event being held on June 28<sup>th</sup>. There was no objection from council members to post the banner. Vice President Wolf stated that Sunday, June 22, 2025, is Sam Martin’s birthday. She requested that anyone in the vicinity of 540 Rosemont Avenue to honk their car horn as they drive by on Sunday to celebrate Mr. Martin’s birthday.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** to adjourn was made by Baylor and seconded by Mellema. All in favor. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:52p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wanda Harner  
Borough Secretary

2025 Council Meeting Schedule:  
“3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month”  
Next Meeting: July 17, 2025