

**Penbrook Borough
Council Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2026
6:30 PM**

1. Call to Order

- a. On July 6, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. President Newcomer called the Borough Council to order, followed by a salute to the flag and a moment of silence.

2. The roll was taken. Newcomer, Dry, Stokes, Lovejoy, Seaman, the Mayor, and the Solicitor were present. Borough Manager/Chief Joseph Hogarth and Assistant Borough Manager Bailey Welch were also in attendance. Shaw, Burdine, and Moore were not in attendance.

3. At 6:32 p.m. the public meeting was adjourned for an executive session to discuss a personnel matter. The public meeting resumed at 6:42 p.m.

4. Citizen Comment on Agenda Items: N/A

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes

- Council Minutes from June 1, 2026

- b. June 2026 Treasurer's Report

- c. Approval of bills to be paid

- d. Approval of the CDBG Subrecipient Agreement for the \$75,000 grant that will be used for the Ferndale sewer and stormwater project.

- e. Motion is needed to accept the resignation of Isaac Tritt effective July 4, 2026.

Robin Dry made a motion to approve the consent agenda as is. Denise Lovejoy seconded. No discussion and the motion carried unanimously

6. Reports

- a. Mayor's report: Reviewed the monthly police stats.

- b. Manager's report: Hogarth noted two grants to review. The first was a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), considered to be a small water grant for the Ferndale project. Hogarth noted that the Borough is working with RETTEW to

establish timeline for the project. The second was a PCCD Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) with a \$250,000 maximum reward that Hogarth hopes to allocate toward funding a co-responder for the Borough to ride with police and assist with mental health/crisis response. Newcomer expressed support for this position.

Welch provided the following updates:

- i. The Little Valley Park Grand Re-Opening has been planned and advertised for July 16 at 11:45 a.m. A press release has been shared, and folks such as Representative Fleming, Senator Kim, a representative from DCNR, JT Dorsey Foundation, St. Margaret Mary School, and so on have been invited to attend.
- ii. Updates to the website and Facebook page are occurring regularly.
- iii. The Borough will be seeking feedback from the community regarding communication and social media preferences. Plan to push out the survey in the fall newsletter and at Fall Fest.
- iv. The resources page on the website has been completed. Planning to include information about this in the fall newsletter and push out on Facebook.
- v. The Borough will begin planning and preparing for the 2027 budget, including seeking input from all areas.
- vi. Different platforms/software are being explored for codes, property maintenance, licensing, and permitting.

Newcomer recommended updating what items are anchored on the website.

c. Solicitor – No report.

d. Fire Chief: Not present; no report.

e. Committees:

- i. Codes – Welch provided an overview of primary concerns including high weeds and grass, and condemned properties that have either been purchased or are being planned to be demolished.
- ii. Public Safety – Seaman discussed updates with police staffing. Hogarth discussed the candidate pool and viable candidates from the most recent posting. One new hire began the Academy today (7/6/26) and will graduate in December. This hire will be at a future meeting for the Oath of Office. Hogarth noted that the open positions will be posted again to

try to hire. Discussed a potential candidate with some experience who may be a good hire, at least part-time to start.

Newcomer discussed suggestions for addressing weather-related public concerns, such as cooling centers. Newcomer proposed a discussion regarding the use of the Borough Building as a potential cooling center for these types of circumstances.

- iii. Parks and Recreation – Newcomer highlighted Little Valley Park Grand Re-Opening event coming up. Noted the transformation of the Little Valley Park and how nice the park looks now.

Discussed Little Valley Summer Program, thanked Mayor for presence and participation. Praised Sabrina Herb for her work running the program, highlighted JT Dorsey Foundation for being part of the program.

The estimates for the 3 phases of the Community Park revitalization plan have been received. Hoping to get full plan from RETTEW as soon as possible. Hoping to secure as much funding as possible for Community Park. Inquired about whether the LSA funding has been received.

- iv. Public Works – Welch provided overview of Public Works efforts including mowing, curb painting, and clean up from recent storms. Welch noted that a property was mowed by the Public Works department and the owner was billed for the cost. The bill has been paid. Welch gave kudos for the Public Works crew working during the hot temperatures recently.
- v. Finance and Administration – Newcomer discussed committee plans and working with Welch to complete various tasks.
- vi. Community and Government – Dry discussed the bookbag collection efforts. Dry noted that she is working with Borough Administrative Assistant Becky Ramper to send a letter to local businesses (who are in good standing with the Borough). Dry will hand-deliver to the businesses to garner support. Partnering with Southside Elementary School to get the filled bags to the students who need them.
- vii. Technology – No update.
- viii. Penbrook Authority – Dry noted that the next meeting will be held on July 15, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. and that the June meeting had been cancelled. Dry noted that the upcoming date was the meeting advertised in the letters that went out regarding the updated Stormwater Fee. Dry noted not

being sure what to expect in regard to attendance. Kara Kalupson from RETTEW will be in attendance to answer questions. In October another letter outlining the actual fee amount for a property will be sent. Newcomer inquired about the 6-month break (July-December 2026) where no payment is due, and Dry confirmed that was accurate and that bills will be sent in January.

- ix. Planning Commission – Stokes noted that the draft of “Penbrook 2030” has been created and is being refined. Will be reaching out to committees to contribute to the plan. Hope to bring revised draft for Council review during October Council meeting. Hope to adopt the plan in early 2027.

7. New Business

- a. A discussion regarding the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective January 1, 2027 through December 31, 2030 between the Teamster’s, who are representing the Police Department, and the Borough was held. Solicitor Kern commented that upon review, there were elements from a previous side letter of agreement that were not incorporated in the proposed CBA. Solicitor Kern recommended that approval should be contingent upon updates to articles 10, 16, and 17, which should incorporate the side letter of agreement pertaining to the lateral hiring incentive program. A motion to approve the proposed CBA, contingent upon the aforementioned updates, was made by Stokes. Seaman seconded. There was no further discussion, and the motion carried unanimously.
- b. Newcomer reviewed the proposed process, including the timeline and important dates, for the 2027 budget. Newcomer noted that the purpose of the revised timeline is to streamline the process, make it more efficient, and reduce the number of meetings that may not always be needed. Newcomer expressed his hope to present the data in charts, tables, and narratives that may be more digestible for folks who may not enjoy spreadsheets as much. Newcomer also wants to be more mindful of grant funding and spend more intentionally/proactively on a timeline that is better aligned with awarded grants.

Newcomer noted that the Finance and Administration Meetings were scheduled. Newcomer discussed the Budget meetings starting on August 10, which will be held on the advertised dates, and will be on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. and are open to the public.

- c. Dry discussed business cards for Council Members to be able to provide to Penbrook residents who have inquiries that Council might be able to assist with. “Get It Now” has a template for the Borough and folks can order business cards if interested.

Newcomer recommended all Council emails being shifted to names rather than "Ward#Letter" for ease of contact. Council members voice support for this. Hogarth noted that MIS would be contacted to complete this.

8. Citizen Comments

- a. Stephen Garisto (2531 Boas St.) inquired about the Mayor's report and the information provided. Garisto addressed his previous request for something to be included in the newsletter and that not happening. Garisto noted that we just celebrated the 250th anniversary of America, which was founded on prayer. Garisto discussed an issue with parking and his driveway being blocked when he returned from work. Garisto inquired as to whether someone could park in the driveway of a deceased individual in the Borough. Hogarth noted the situation would need a "victim." Garisto asked about the lighting on 26th St and whether there was an update from conversations with PPL. Garisto recommended additional lighting in this area for safety and reduction of crime. Garisto recommended additional patrol in this area, as people drive through stop signs.

Newcomer noted that all of Council approves the newsletter and to direct any concerns to him. Newcomer recommended the Public Safety meeting to discuss lighting concerns.

Seaman noted that the vehicle parked in the driveway Garisto referenced belongs to his son and permission was granted by the owner to do so.

- b. Clyde Bateman (2615 Boas St.) thanked the Mayor and the Mayor's son for cutting his neighbor's grass. Bateman thanked Ben Stokes for assisting him with a situation. Bateman brought up the church on 28th & Walnut St. and the lighting being very bright.

9. Council Comments

- a. Dry discussed the Fall Newsletter and noted that articles are due 8/7/2026. Dry requested input from committees. Dry would like information for Codes, fall street sweeping, etc. Dry requested that the newsletter funding topic to be added to the July Caucus meeting agenda.
- b. Seaman noted a perceived high number of accidents at 28th & Boas St. and inquired if there was a concern regarding the safety of this intersection. Hogarth clarified some of the details regarding the accidents and the circumstances that led to these accidents. Hogarth noted it does not seem to be a result of the conditions of the intersection in particular. A brief discussion regarding a study of the intersection was held.

- c. Lovejoy noted a concern regarding people driving the wrong way down a one-way street by her property.

10. At 8:12 p.m. a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Lovejoy and seconded by Dry. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted and attested,



Bailey Welch
Assistant Borough Manager and Municipal Secretary