

The City of Portland
City Council
April 20, 2026
5:30 PM

City Council was called to order by Mayor Jeff Westlake at 5:30 PM on Monday, April 20, 2026. Roll was called and present were members Kent McClung, Mike Aker, Ashley Hilfiker, Dave Golden, and Michele Brewster. Also, present were Attorney, Wes Schemenaur, and Clerk-Treasurer, Lori Phillips.
Absent: Matt Goldsworthy and Ron May

Pledge of Allegiance

Revised Agenda

Motion by McClung, seconded by Hilfiker to add an Employment Agreement with Meeks Cockerill to the agenda. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Approval of City Council minutes from April 6, 2026

Motion by Hilfiker, seconded by McClung to approve the City Council minutes from April 6, 2026 as presented. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Approval of the City Council Executive minutes from April 13, 2026

Motion by McClung, seconded by Golden to approve the City Council Executive minutes from the April 20, 2026 as presented. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Paul and Cindy Weitzel – Petition to vacate an alley

Motion by Brewster, seconded by Hilfiker to approve the Weitzel's move forward in the process to vacate the alley to the east of their property at 824 East Arch Street.

Council member Brewster is the representative in this district. She met with the Weitzel's and did not see and issue with the request. Weitzel's will need to provide an ordinance for councils to approval and a public hearing will need to take place. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Jodi Hayes, JCDC; FCC PP Tax Abatement

Motion by McClung, seconded by Golden to approve the FCC PP Tax Abatement. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Equipment: Productivity improvement equipment

Investment: \$8,038,634

Abatement: 5 years; Savings \$295,801; Taxes paid over 10 years: \$548,258

Jodi Hayes; Joyce Dayton PP Tax Abatement

Motion by Hilfiker, seconded by Golden to approve the Joyce Dayton PP Tax Abatement. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Equipment: MH63 Mill

Investment: \$896,607

Abatement: 3 years; Savings \$23,379; Taxes paid over 10 years: \$49,786

Jodi Hayes; Joyce Dayton PP Tax Abatement

Motion by McClung, seconded by Aker to approve the Joyce Dayton PP Tax Abatement. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Equipment: Miscellaneous manufacturing equipment

Investment: \$1,224,692

Abatement: 3-years; Savings \$31,872; Taxes paid over 10 years: \$68,062

Jodi Hayes; Joyce Dayton RE Tax Abatement - Amended

Motion by Hilfiker seconded by Golden to approve the amended RE Tax Abatement. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Amendment: Updated the equipment and total investment.

Investment: \$8,047,880

Abatement: 10-years; Savings \$1,101,109; Taxes paid over 10 years \$1,313,256

Jodi Hayes; Joyce Dayton PP Tax Abatement - Amended

Motion by Hilfiker, seconded by McClung to approve the amended PP Tax abatement. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Amendment: Updated the equipment and total investment.

Investment: \$1,986,491

Abatement: 3- years

Ordinance 2026-1; Prohibiting Harboring Livestock in the Corporate Limits – 2nd Reading

Motion by Hilfiker to amend Ordinance 2026-1 on the 1st reading; to increase the number of chickens allowed in corporate limits to 10. The motion was seconded by Golden. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Ordinance 2026-1; Suspend the Rules and Pass on the Same Night

Motion by Hilfiker, seconded by Golden to suspend the rules and pass amended ordinance 2026-1 on the same night. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Ordinance 2026-1; Prohibiting Harboring Livestock in the Corporate Limits – 2nd Reading

Motion by Hilfiker, seconded by Golden to pass amended Ordinance 2026-1 on the 2nd reading. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Ordinance 2026-2; Ordinance amending 2026 Payroll Ordinance – 1st Reading

Motion by McClung, seconded by Hilfiker to pass Ordinance 2026-2 on the first reading. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Amendment: Include the Judge to the exclusions for longevity pay.

2027 Fire Protection Contracts

Motion by McClung, seconded by Golden to approve the 2027 Fire Protection Contracts. Roll call vote. All present voted aye. 2027 township contracts (Wayne, Pike, Greene and Jefferson) increased by 2%.

Meeks Cockerill Employment Agreement

Motion by Golden, seconded by Aker to approve the Employment Agreement with Meeks Cockerill in the amount of \$225 per hour. He will provide services to the council on an as-needed basis. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

The City Council unanimously approved hiring an attorney for legal advice for future situations that may arise. The City Attorney represents the mayor and their visions have not aligned.

Discussion of the Current Trash Ordinance

Street Superintendent, Matt Shauver spoke to the council about the issues the sanitation crew are experiencing. Large items, multiple bags, piles of rubbish, junk, construction items and car parts are left out each week for trash collection. He noted the nearly 2/3 of the community is not following the trash

ordinance. Council noted their frustration with the mayor for instructing the Street Superintendent to pick up all items set out for trash collection. There was discussion of how to enforce the ordinance once it is revised. It was requested that the police chief, code enforcement officer and street superintendent be at the next meeting to discuss how everyone will work together and enforce the trash ordinance.

Lori will send out the ordinance along with all of the suggested revisions. Council will review all documents and respond with their suggestions. When these changes are received, Lori will amend the ordinance and present to the council for their review.

Council Comments

Ashley –

1. Thanked Matt and the Street Department for their service during city wide clean up.
2. Thanked the community support for the Jay County Cancer Society's fundraiser with the Dueling Pianos.

Dave –

1. Requested information on when and how employee evaluations will take place. The mayor noted that Tokio Marine suggested reviews be completed in the later part of the year; not impacting any city-wide wage increase. Lori noted that department supervisors will conduct the reviews on their employee in late November or early December.

Mike –

1. Questioned the mayor why the police decals have been removed from the chief, assistant chief and investigators vehicle. The mayor stated that he would look into it and report back to the council.

Kent –

1. Per Indiana Code, Kent requested the mayor provide the council with a written statement as to why he removed former fire chief, Mike Weitzel from the position.

Mayor's Report

Noted that he will be at a conference next week and the topic of conversation will be county and city working together on projects.

Clerk Treasurer's Report

1. Noted that USI Consulting will assist the city with 2027 CCMG.
2. In 2025, Portland Airport received \$1.2 million in grant funding. Within the next couple of months, the city will begin a federal audit for fiscal year 2025.
3. Noted the 30-day suspension of the state sales tax on gasoline. This will affect how much revenue will be collected in the MVH Restricted and Unrestricted funds.

Adjournment Motion by McClung, seconded by Golden to adjourn at 6:44 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:



Lori Phillips, Clerk-Treasurer



Jeff Westlake, Mayor