

November 5, 2025, Council Meeting
Minutes

The regular meeting of Clarion Borough Council was held on November 5, 2025, in the Clarion Free Library. President Lapinto called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmembers present were Ms. Whitling, Mr. Garbarino, Ms. Logue, Ms. Roberts, Mr. Montana, and President Lapinto. Mr. Aaron was absent. Mr. Preston, Mr. Colosimo, Mayor Fulmer Vinson, Chief Peck, Mr. Wolf, Solicitor Marshall, and Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston were also present.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Roberts, approving the October 7, 2025, Council Meeting, minutes, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Whitling to amend the agenda to include under Housing and Zoning a request from Fred. L. Burns to close Madison Road from 5th Avenue to Jefferson Place for 3 weeks and also the sidewalk along 5th Avenue from Main Street to Madison Road for 3 weeks starting on Monday, November 10, 2025.

Ms. Logue noted this is related to the Courthouse construction.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items Only

Mr. Richard Bowman, 627 South Street, Clarion, addressed Council in reference to an abnormally long curb located at South Street and Dietz Place, which is causing a lot of issues with traffic. Many citizens have run over the curb. Mr. Bowman provided Council with some photographs of people turning from Dietz onto South, which could result in hitting a parked car or making a side turn into South Street causing a possible liability. The speed limit is 25; however, a lot of motorists drive more like 30-35 mph. Mr. Bowman stated that curb is about 10 foot and feels removing a portion of that curb to reduce it to 5 foot would resolve the issue. This shouldn't cost the Borough a lot of money to do, and Liquid Fuels funding could be used to pay for the work. In closing, by removing that curb, Mr. Bowman thinks it would be good for the community in the sense of allowing free-flowing traffic without running over the curb, causing damage to their vehicles, and or hitting a parked or moving vehicle along/on South Street. Living in that area for 2½-3 years, deterioration is occurring on that curb, which could cause a tire to puncture and an individual to freak out and cause a bad situation. Mr. Bowman asked Council to deeply consider looking into this and approving at next month's meeting to deal with the removal of the additional curb.

Mr. Preston reported that curb was designed by an engineer in a previous project to stop water and guide it to the catch basins.

Mr. Bowman asked how long ago that was completed?

Mr. Preston stated over 12 years ago.

Mr. Bowman commented standards have changed since 12 years ago for zoning changes and state guidelines for PennDOT. Curbs no longer have to be that long. If everyone would look down South Street, those curbs are relatively newer and are about 5 foot.

Mr. Colosimo stated that was part of the South Street Reconstruction Project in 2010. If there is a good engineering reason to reduce the length of the curb, it would be possible to do so. Grant funding was used for this, but it's been long enough to change if there is a good reason.

President Lapinto informed Mr. Bowman a decision cannot be made tonight but promised that the Public Works and Administration Committees will discuss it this month and get back to him with an answer.

Mr. Bowman stated that was fine and repeated it would not be a significant impact, probably only \$5,000-10,000, on the budget for the Borough. Liquid fuels could be used for this project.

ADMINISTRATION

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Roberts, approving the appropriations for the month of November, was carried with a vote of six yea.

For Council's review, President Lapinto reported the Treasurer's Report of Fund Totals and Budget Analysis are included in the packet.

President Lapinto stated the second meeting will be held on November 18, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library, if necessary. At this time, President Lapinto doesn't think there will be a need.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston agreed but added the second meeting in December will need to be held. The Borough hasn't received the certified taxable assessment from the County yet. The County has until the 15th of November to provide it to the municipalities. Even if it is received before the 15th, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston doesn't think responsibly Council could meet by November 18th.

In September, President Lapinto reminded everyone Council approved the minimum municipal obligations for the pension plans for 2026. Since that time, the Borough received revised minimum municipal obligations from Acrisure (formerly Mockenhaupt Benefits Group) to approve.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Roberts, approving the revised Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Police Pension Plan in the amount of \$5,343 (previously approved \$0), was carried unanimously.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Logue to approve the revised Minimum Municipal Obligation for the General Employees' Pension Plan in the amount of \$69,534 (previously approved \$68,976). The motion carried unanimously.

President Lapinto commented next are several resolutions to apply for Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant to be used to purchase equipment.

Before moving on, Ms. Logue clarified the Borough applied in 2024 for several grants this year. Since there hasn't been a state budget passed, the Borough hasn't received any word on them. The deadline is coming up to apply for next year's grants, which is what Council is doing now.

If the budget doesn't get passed, President Lapinto added they may not approve any of the grants. Council is being proactive by doing these now.

Ms. Roberts asked if the Borough will receive the grant fully or would a match be required?

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston believes full funding would be approved.

President Lapinto reported there is \$100 application fee to apply.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Mr. Garbarino, approving Resolution #2025-509, a resolution requesting a Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant to be used for the purchase of a truck with snow plow and salt spreader in the amount of \$122,885.39, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Roberts to approve Resolution #2025-510, a resolution requesting a Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant to be used for the purchase of a police vehicle and equipment in the amount of \$58,955.59. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Whitling, approving Resolution #2025-511, a resolution requesting a Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant to be used for the purchase of a fire equipment UTV for the Clarion Fire and Hose Co. No. 1 in the amount of \$75,880.44, was carried with a vote of six yea.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-President stated the fire company will provide the \$100 application fee to the Borough.

President Lapinto commented a request from the Clarion Area Chamber of Business & Industry's special event request for free parking was received and asked for a motion with denial afterwards.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Logue to approve the Clarion Area Chamber of Business & Industry's special event request for free parking – Main Street from 3rd Avenue to 8th Avenue from Friday, November 28, "Black Friday" and Monday, December 1 until Friday, December 26, 2025.

Ms. Logue thinks this should be to deny as Council will be approving free parking later in the meeting for the entire Borough.

Solicitor Marshall agreed.

Ms. Roberts and Ms. Logue both agreed to amend the motion to deny the Chamber's request for free parking. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Whitling with a second by Ms. Roberts to approve the Clarion Area Chamber of Business & Industry's special event request for the 5th annual Ugly Sweater Christmas Parade to be held December 6, 2025 (line-up at 6 p.m. and parade step-off at 6:30 p.m.).

Ms. Logue inquired when light-up night will be held? Last year, it was held the same night.

Mr. Jim Crooks doesn't believe there will be one.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stated the Chamber's request only asked for the 5th annual Ugly Sweater Christmas Parade.

Ms. Roberts thinks the tree in the park is usually lit that night.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Mr. Montana had nothing to report.

BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE

President Lapinto reported something exciting will be coming soon.

DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN

Mr. Crooks reported this year Christmas decorations will look different this year. About \$5,000 was raised at the Bingo Bonanza event, which enabled the Committee to purchase 14 new wreaths and 10 new stars. There are 22 poles where wreaths will be placed back-to-back instead of just facing one direction. In between, there will be 36" snowflakes. Where the cameras and speakers are located, 24" snowflakes will be placed. So, this will be a different variety and look this year. If anyone is available tomorrow night, Mr. Crooks invited anyone to come and help decorate all the wreaths and get everything ready. A map is ready and has been discussed with Mr. Preston as to where everything will go.

President Lapinto asked Mr. Preston to explain the lighting of the little trees?

Mr. Preston announced the Department installed new receptacles on all the trees outside. Once the lights are on the trees, the Borough employees will plug them in. Last year, there were 2 receptacle fires.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston sent an email to Mr. Crooks, Ms. Cindy Staley, and Ms. Tracy Becker to make sure that everyone knows lights are allowed this year but that the Public Works employees will be the ones to plug everything in.

Mr. Crooks stated that will be discussed tomorrow night and questioned if the lights in the trees can remain or do they have to be removed and replaced?

Mr. Preston stated they can plug the lights in to make sure they work. If they do, they won't need replaced.

Mr. Garbarino informed everyone the time tomorrow night is 6:30 p.m.

President Lapinto congratulated Mr. Crooks on Lydia being a celebrity.

Mr. Crooks stated it would have been nice if she won the money.

PUBLIC WORKS/STORM WATER AUTHORITY

Mr. Montana reminded everyone fall leaf pick up will be every Monday and Tuesday, through November 25, 2025, and is for leaves only. No grass, limbs and/or branches can be taken. Also, leaves are to be placed at curbside and not on the roadway, around road signs/telephone poles, and/or parking stalls.

On a motion by Mr. Montana with a second by Ms. Logue, approving the 2026-2029 Public Works Contract, was carried with a vote of six yea.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Roberts reminded everyone that the Snow Removal Ordinance begins December 1, 2025 through April 1, 2026.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Garbarino to approve free parking throughout the Borough on Monday, November 24th – Customer Appreciation Day and November 28th – Black Friday through and including December 26th. The motion carried unanimously.

LIBRARY REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson reported the Autumn Leaf Reception was a wonderful evening. Clarion River Brewing Company went above and beyond by donating the food and beer for the event. The beer is amazing. Mayor Fulmer Vinson commented that CRBC will also donate a percentage to the library as it is sold at their location.

Ms. Logue stated the Stew and Brew is coming up as well.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson agreed that will be held Thursday, November 13, 2025, at Mechanistic and should be a fabulous time. Everyone should come out and taste the food, which will raise funds for the Library.

HOUSING AND ZONING

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Mr. Garbarino, approving the request of Fred L. Burns Inc. to close Madison Road from 5th Avenue to Jefferson Place and the sidewalk along 5th Avenue from Main Street to Madison Road, beginning November 10, 2025, for 3 weeks for continued work on the Courthouse Project, was carried with a vote of six yea.

RECREATION

Ms. Roberts had nothing to report.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston commented work has begun on the 2026 Budget. Council will give permission at the December 2nd Council Meeting to advertise it for adoption at the second Council Meeting to be held on December 16th.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston welcomed the two newly-elected Councilmembers Helen Hampikian and Andrew Harbaugh and stated they will be involved with the budget meetings as well.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson also welcomed Ms. Hampikian and Mr. Harbaugh and is looking forward to working with both in the new year. Also, Mayor Fulmer Vinson thanked all the individuals that took time to go vote and also the poll workers. Mayor Fulmer Vinson is very thankful for being elected to serve another 4 years.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Non-Agenda Items

There was none.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Roberts, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Linda LaVan-Preston, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary