

December 2, 2025, Council Meeting
Minutes

The regular meeting of Clarion Borough Council was held on December 2, 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. Whitling, approving the November 5, 2025, Council Meeting, minutes, was carried with a vote of six yea.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items Only

There was none.

ADMINISTRATION

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

President Lapinto stated the Treasurer's Report of Fund Totals and Budget Analysis are included in the packet.

President Lapinto announced the second meeting will be held on December 16, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library. The main purpose is to adopt the 2026 Budget.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Logue, to approve Resolution #2025-512, establishing the real estate tax rate for the year 2026 following a County-wide reassessment, was carried unanimously.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Whitling to give permission to advertise the 2026 proposed Budget.

President Lapinto asked Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston for any comments.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston pointed out there will not be a tax increase and highlighted some of the following items: wages, benefits, and utilities; the firehall roof will be replaced; the purchase of a new truck, plow, and spreader using Liquid Fuels allocations unless the LSA grant applied for last year is approved; the purchase of a police car and accessories; and, the big one for the Recreation Fund is the Playground Park Project, which the County approved the Borough's request earlier this year for some CDBG money to use towards the project (\$40,730 will be received).

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Whitling, giving permission to seek request for proposals for a 2026 Tax Anticipation Note in the amount of \$300,000, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Logue, approving Resolution #2025-513, a resolution disposing of Borough records, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Whitling to give permission for Todd Colosimo to request Clarion County to drawdown CDBG funds to reimburse the Borough's General Fund in the amount of \$1,186.98 for Todd Colosimo's CDBG wages from November 24, 2024, through November 22, 2025, (\$1,135.98) and engineering fees (\$51).

President Lapinto reported \$8,000 remains in CDBG, but there is not enough time to complete a project.

The motion carried unanimously.

President Lapinto announced the terms to expire at the end of 2025: Zoning Hearing Board, 3-year term, Pete Bauer; Planning Commission, 4-year term, Jennifer Fulmer Vinson and Lee Krull; Police and General Employees' Pension Committees, 3-year term, Barry Sweet; and Library Board, 3-year term, Simon Aristeguieta-Trillos, and asked Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston to contact each one to see if they are interested in being reappointed.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Logue, giving permission to advertise January 5, 2026, Organization Meeting to be held at 6:45 p.m. with the regular Council Meeting to begin at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Whitling to approve The Local Clarion County's special event request for Clarion Summer Fest 2026 to be held June 6, July 11, and August 8, 2026, and for the closure of 6th Avenue from Main Street to Merle Road. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Whitling to approve Resolution #2025-514, a resolution that the license fee for pop-ups and food vendors be reduced from \$50 to \$10 for the Clarion Summer Fest Event to be held June 6, July 11, and August 8, 2026.

Mr. Garbarino reminded everyone the reduction of the fee is not being contentious against the Autumn Leaf vendors but these are all local vendors.

President Lapinto agreed and stated Council encourages new groups and/or entrepreneurs to maybe get them in a brick-and-mortar building.

Ms. Logue added it helps establish Clarion Summer Fest as it is a new event. Autumn Leaf is established already.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Whitling, approving County Seat Restaurant's special event request for permission to block the alley beside their building to put up a tent on December 6, 2025, from 12-8 p.m. to offer kettle corn during the Christmas Parade and to waive solicitation fee, was carried unanimously.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Mr. Montana had nothing to report.

BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE

On Saturday, December 6th, at 11 a.m., Ms. Logue announced the Blueprint Committee is holding the naming ceremony at the Park and unveiling of the new gates. After that, people are encouraged to go Downtown Clarion to see the pop-ups that will be there all day and end the evening with the Ugly Sweater Parade.

DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN

Mayor Fulmer Vinson thanked the Public Works Department for getting the wreaths and snowflakes put up and noted they look amazing.

Mr. Preston pointed out that a letter was sent out to the organizations that no one was supposed to plug the lights in around the trees and/or in the planters. They were to contact the Borough to have the maintenance employees to do it.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson misunderstood and thought it was only for the live trees not the ones in the planters. Sponsoring a tree with the Girl Scouts decorating it, there was no indication that was not allowed. It was not relayed to their organization.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston reported the email was sent to Tracy Becker, Cindy Staley, and Jim Crooks that no lights were to be plugged in by anyone else other than Public Works. The reason is all the receptacles, even the ones in the planters which hasn't been very long ago, needed to be replaced.

President Lapinto asked Mr. Preston how many trees caught on fire last year?

Mr. Preston stated 2.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson absolutely understands and appreciates that and will remember for next year. It would have been a good idea to note that on the light boxes so the decorators would have known. There are a lot of different organizations, and coordination could have been handled better.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston thinks each receptacle cost about \$35 each and isn't sure who all to reach out to, which is why she emailed it to the ones in charge of the Chamber and the Downtown Committees. Mr. Crooks did send a notice to all businesses.

Mr. Garbarino applauded Linda for trying to get the word out to everybody.

PUBLIC WORKS/STORM WATER AUTHORITY

Mr. Montana reminded everyone Council will appoint/reappoint one position on the Clarion Borough Stormwater Authority Board at the January 5, 2026, Council Meeting.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston relayed that Darren Frederick's term expires January 5, 2026, and does not wish to be reappointed. Anyone interested in serving on the Clarion Borough Stormwater Authority Board should reach out to the Borough Office. The term is 5 years.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Roberts reminded everyone that the Snow Removal Ordinance began yesterday and will continue through April 1, 2026. Residents are encouraged to pay attention and to park accordingly to avoid receiving a ticket.

Ms. Roberts also reminded everyone free parking is throughout the Borough until and including December 26th.

LIBRARY REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson reported a person has been found to redo the front steps of the Library, which will be done in the spring.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson stated some may have seen on Facebook that the Clarion Free Library, and all libraries for that matter, are losing their ability to issue passports. An email was received by the library indicating that they did not realize that for 20 some years non-profits were not allowed to do this. Again, Mayor Fulmer Vinson reported this is affecting a lot of libraries and different organizations and encouraged everyone to reach out to the policy makers in DC to try to get them to change this policy. Clarion Free Library will lose approximately \$15,000 from being able to issue passports, which is a huge hit to their budget.

Ms. Logue recalls being able to go to the Prothonotary's Office to be issued a passport.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson mainly wished to bring awareness to this issue.

HOUSING AND ZONING

Ms. Logue reminded residents/business/property owners must remove snow and ice from their sidewalk within 24 hours of the last snow fall.

RECREATION

Ms. Roberts had nothing to report.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston thanked all Councilmembers, the Mayor, newly-elected Councilmembers, and everyone involved with the preparations and discussions on the 2026 Budget and for listening to her go on and on. It is much appreciated and would not be possible without their help.

Mr. Garbarino stated the thanks goes to Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stressed it is a team effort.

President Lapinto agreed everyone spends a lot of time going over the budget.

Newly-elected Councilman Harbaugh doesn't know how Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston does it.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Just as a follow-up to what Ms. Logue was saying about Saturday, Mayor Fulmer Vinson encouraged everyone to come out and enjoy the event at the 2nd Avenue Park, the pop-ups during the day, and the parade at night.

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. Whitling, the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Linda LaVan-Preston, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary