

PRE-MEETING BADEN BOROUGH COUNCIL AUGUST 13TH, 2025

Council President Dave Trzcianka called the Pre-Meeting of Council to order at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Baden Municipal Building, 149 State Street, to conduct business of general purposes.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Joe Bosh, Becky Gallagher, Doug Miller, John Shelkons, Dawn Singleton, Michael Stuban and Dave Trzcianka

ALSO PRESENT: Fire Chief and Code Enforcement Officer Dennis Baker, Manager Elaine Rakovan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OTHER RECORDING DEVICES

AGENDA (Changes and/or Deletions)

VISITORS

Beverly Kotys asked for a clarification on the letter sent out to the residents regarding the PennVest waterline project. Manager, Elaine Rakovan explained that the letter is to notify residents who live on the streets where the project is taking place that they will be notified if their private waterline is lead. At that point, under the recommendation of the Federal Department of Environmental Protection, the homeowner is responsible for replacing their private waterline if they wish to do so.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Manager

1. PennVest Waterline Project Loans

MOTION by Michael Stuban, second by Becky Gallagher carried unanimously to sign the Legal Services Agreement for Bond Counsel with attorney John F. Salopek for the PennVest Loan Project.

Per the PennVest guidelines a letter was sent to all residents regarding the PennVest Waterline Replacement Project regarding the if lead service lines are discovered.

2. Non-Uniform Union Contract

Executive Session after meeting. Received request and sent receipt confirmation 8/12/2025.

Elaine Rakovan stated that two items regarding the pension audit need to be addressed. The pension rates need to be placed in an ordinance and advertised and the part of the contract stating that excess state aid must be placed into the non-uniform pension plan is not permitted and needs to be removed from the contract. She also noted that there will be no excess states aid going forward because the amount the borough places into the pension plan each year, far exceeds the state aid received.

3. 2026 Non-Uniform MMO

The amount that needs to be budgeted for the non-union pension plan for 2026 is \$95,846. State aid of approximately \$44,000 will cover a portion of this obligation. This will be added to the agenda for next week's meeting.

4. No Parking Signs

There are over 20 no parking signs in the borough that the road/area is not listed on a borough ordinance. Further research is needed to confirm what signs are needed. (i.e. No parking here to corner, No parking this side) Requesting the engineers be involved in this matter so that proper placement and signage is utilized. This will be added to the agenda for next week's meeting.

5. Auditor General Pension Plan Compliance Audit

The Non-Uniform and final Police Pension Compliance Audit has been completed. Findings within the Non-Uniform audit are: 1) An ordinance must be done regarding the pension contributions rates 2) The contract states that any excess state aid will go into the non-uniform pension plan. This is not permitted (will never have excess state aid) and must be removed from the contract.

6. Tax Exoneration

Ryan Oliver and Michael Pesce request the exoneration of parcel 13-003-0314.000 that they would like to purchase from the repository. It is a vacant hillside next to their property on Schiller Street. Taxes have not been paid since 1982. Will place on next week's agenda for action.

7. Building/Parking Lot Lights Replacement/ Repairs

Choice Contracting has supplied a cost to replace the borough building lights and fix the parking lot lights. To replace all ceiling lights in the office reception area, entrance way upstairs/downstairs, restroom areas and council chambers the cost is \$6,991. To repair the parking lot light \$1,680.

8. Sinkhole In Parking Lot (old Shiela's)

After obtaining copies of the original blue prints from PennDOT from when they put State Street in, the drainage pipe located on the previous Shelia's Restaurant was not installed by PennDOT. PennDOT installed a terracotta pipe under State Street for the natural water to run down the open ravine. The camera video clearly shows the terracotta pipe going under State Street and then turning to tin whistle where the open ravine once was prior to being filled in by a previous owner.

9. Multimodal Grant Application

The grant required a 30% match which we do not have. Did not pursue the grant.

10. PSAB Fall Leadership Conference

The conference is October 3rd to 5th at The Penn Stater, State College.

11. PennDOT Meeting

Michael Stuban will go over what was discussed in the meeting.

12. Back Door Replacement

The door has been ordered. We will be notified when they have an installation date.

NO UPDATE ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

13. Keyless Entry and Cameras

M&P Solutions is a COSTAR company. Reaching out to them for current pricing and options available.

14. Wall – Corner of Lincoln Avenue and Phillips Street

Our zoning attorney is communicating with PennDOT's and the property owner's attorney.

15. Grant Avenue

Paving of the end of Grant Avenue. A copy of the letter was given to council at the January 2025 meeting.

16. Street Opening Ordinance

Open item. Needs updated.

17. Ambridge Water Authority Rate Increase

Reached out to AWA asking them to update the contract and give calculations for our charges. No update.

Public Works (Written Report)

7/1/25-7/6/25

- Pumps and one calls
- Fix Legion garbage can
- Water work orders
- Lead Line Inventory
- Grass
- Meter re-reads
- Drop off wood chippings

7/7/25-7/13/25

- Pumps and one calls
- Water samples
- Repair Bryan Ave driveway
- Grass
- Jet Grant St
- Clean garage
- Lead Line Inventory
- Repair sink hole Mckee/Phillips St catch basin
- Phillips St storm sewers

7/14/25-7/20/25

- Pumps and one calls
- Water samples
- Grass
- Camera 65 and Grant St
- Flush hydrants
- Chipping job work orders
- 65 sinkhole

7/21/25-7/31/25

- Pumps and one calls
- Water samples
- 218 Oak St water break (**galvanized and lead service**)-entire service line replaced-Baden replaced their side, customer replaced theirs
- Grass
- Clean up from water break
- Clean mowers
- Fix catch basin on Oak St

Michael Stuban stated that we will camera the storm sewers on Phillips Street so that the engineer may determine if the lines need replaced or slip lined.

Fire Chief – Dennis Baker

Maintenance has been completed on all the vehicles. The ladder truck required a large expense that used up all of the budgeted maintenance. Dennis stated that after speaking to Michael Stuban, Dennis will pull from other budget line items to stay within the total 2025 budget.

Dennis Baker stated that when the next round of the AFG applications come out the fire department is going to do the application to replace the engine by downsizing the two other trucks. He will be writing the grant as a regional application with our mutual aid departments. If the grant is received the host applicant (Baden Fire Department) will own the apparatus and maintain all the costs after purchase. The application will include the data from the mutual aid departments to improve the chance of obtaining the grant.

Dennis Baker drafted a letter that he is sending to the fire departments (regarding supporting the grant application). He asked if council would support sending the letter to the municipalities as well. He stated that he would give the letter to council for review.

Dennis Baker gave the drawings for the fire department renovations to Elaine Rakovan for council review.

Dennis Baker stated that he has reached out to the larger businesses in town to see if they would support and donate funding for the purchase of a fire truck. Concordia pledged \$10,000 over the next three years for a total of \$30,000.

Code Enforcement – Dennis Baker

Dennis is in the process of trying to adjust to using the new SharePoint software which he stated is very useful. He was trying to transfer the information from the previous reporting software that the fire department used but it was very time consuming. He has revamped how his violations are being sent out, so now they can be seen on SharePoint. The fire inspections will remain under the fire department program.

Dennis stated that he met with Michael Stuban last week. Dennis tries to work with the residents to resolve code matters, but he will be more aggressive with issuing citations to non-compliant residents. He stated that there are citations from last year that have bench warrants on them for not showing up to the hearings.

Michael Stuban went over open complaints and the upcoming hearings.

Joe Bosh stated that he will put on Facebook and our website information about residents being responsible for maintaining their trees/vegetation that grows out onto the streets. The borough is no longer maintaining these areas. Joe also stated that there are some adjustment that need to made now that the system has been up and running.

Discussion took place regarding a property on Schiller Street. Dennis Baker stated that he feels the property needs to be condemned. He asked if the building inspector needs to get involved.

Dennis Baker stated that a letter has been sent to the owner of the theater regarding the condition of the building as well as a tree on his property.

A resident asked about the process used for code violations. Dennis Baker explained that everything must be documented and recorded in writing (letters/citations). He must try three (documented) times before a citation is issued.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance (John Shelkons)

General Fund Balance	\$242,518	Expenses	\$131,259
Water Fund Balance	\$245,504	Expenses	\$183,564

Public Works (Doug Miller)

Nothing to discuss.

Technology / Public Relations / Liaison (Library, Parks & Rec., M/A) (Joe Bosh)

Soliciting Applications

Joe Bosh asked if there were any soliciting permits issued. Elaine Rakovan stated yes. Joe told her that he needs to be given the information so that he may post to social media. Elaine stated that she was sending the information to the police and will make sure she includes him in the emails.

Library

Joe Bosh reported that there is now a Baden Free Food Pantry located in front of the library. The pantry was built and installed by Allie Carpenter through the Women's Club. Donations of school supplies, hygiene products or nonperishable food are welcome.

The Pennsylvania Library Association is going to start offering health insurance to the library employees within the state library system. This will be a great recruitment incentive when hiring.

Harvest Festival is September 13th.

Halloween Event is in the works.

Joe Bosh stated that this is the last year that he will be able to the council representative for the library board due to time constraints.

Technology

Joe addressed an email that the manager received from a company called OmniFiber. They are interested in doing business in Baden. Currently they are operational in Ohio. They want to supply internet services options to our community.

The Baden Video will be available after the meeting to view. Joe addressed placing it on social media. Elaine told him that the person who made the video may be able to assist with posting the video.

John Shelkons asked about the depth of the mulch required for the playgrounds. Discussion followed. Elaine stated that she will call and ask the insurance company

Administration / Personnel (Becky Gallagher)

Labor Relations

Becky Gallagher stated that there will an executive session after the meeting.

Ambridge Water Authority

Becky stated that she was informed that the Ambridge Water Authority (AWA) authorized fracking under the reservoir. John Shelkons stated that he heard that they were taking water from the reservoir for fracking. Elaine Rakovan stated that she did

contact AWA. The manager was not in the office, but the secretary confirmed the signing of a document, however she did not know the details. Elaine stated that she believes that AWA signed a royalty agreement for mineral rights. The well may be over 1 mile away. Harmony Township wants to get an injunction to stop the drilling. Discussion followed.

America 250

The Baden America 250 meeting is Monday, August 18th at 6:00.

Public Safety (Dawn Singleton)

BVPRD

Dawn Singleton stated that BVRPD Commission meeting is tomorrow (August 14th) at 6PM.

Michael Stuban commented that the police have been around more and issuing tickets.

Building / Grounds / Equipment (Michael Stuban)

Route 65

Michael Stuban stated that we had a meeting with PennDOT. Basically, PennDOT stated that it (storm sewer / drainage on Route 65, Phillips Street, State Street) is Baden's problem. We did address other issues to which PennDOT is trying to be more cooperative and work better with Baden. Representatives from Matzie's and Vogel's office were also in attendance and they are going to help with grants. How the Route 65 repair is going to be paid is not known, however we can assume it will be a Baden cost because PennDOT stated that we are responsible for the storm sewers that PennDOT installed years ago. Discussion followed.

Due to all of the storm sewer issues, Michael Stuban addressed revisiting the MS4 and creating a Storm Water Management Board. He stated that it would open up grant opportunities and bring in funding from tax exempt properties.

MAYORS REPORT

Not Present

Old Business Not on the Agenda, New Business or Unfinished Business

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Dave Trzcianka asked about pulling the signs down that are on the poles in own. After discussion, council decided to wait to hear from the solicitor since the poles are not owned by the borough.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Michael Stuban, second by Dawn Singleton, carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting and go into executive session regarding personnel at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted for approval,

Elaine K. Rakovan
Borough Manager