ETNA BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 21st, 2025, at 7:30 P.M For approval on March 18th, 2025

The regular meeting of the Etna Borough Council was held on January 21st, 2025. President Becki presided and called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Roll was called, and members present were Mr. Burke, Mrs. Rothmeyer-McElhaney, Mr. Trader, Mrs. Gabriel, Chairman Becki, Ms. Schaefer, Mr. Iannuzzi and Ms. Semler was absent, she had attempted to Zoom into the meeting, but she he could not get in. Also present were Mayor Tuñón, Manage, Police Chief Rodman, Administrative Assistant Birks, Shaler Hampton EMS Executive Director Eric Schmidt, and Solicitor Rushford. The following people were absent from the meeting Ms. Semler, Manager Ramage, Public Works Director Joe Balistrieri, and Assistant Fire Todd Lunn.

Mayor Tuñón led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Becki welcomed everyone and stated that he would like to begin the meeting with informing everyone that former long-term Chairman Pete Ramage passed away. He added that this would be a huge hole for the community. He asked those presents if they were so inclined to please bow your head in prayer. Mayor Tuñón read a prayer for Pete: "Lord, for Peter Ramage. We ask for your mercy and grace as he begins his journey into eternal life. Please bring him into your almighty arms and grant him peace and protection. We ask for your loving embrace to surround his grieving family, and to comfort our community in the morning. Please help us to find hope in your constant presence and to promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. AMEN." Finally, Chairman Becki asked for a moment of silence for Pete.

President Becki told the audience two stories about Pete Ramage. One was one about the flood in 1990 and the second how he was supposed to be attending a conference in the Poconos, and he did not have a car because he had wrecked his, Pete lent him his car so he could still attend the conference. The second story was about the Chairman Becki had fallen off his ladder and broke his wrist and two elbows. Pete showed up at Dave's house with a bottle of his favorite liquor and to express his concerns about his accident.

He added that Pete did a lot for this community, for his church and his family. Dave remembered how kind and compassionated he was, and he'll never forget those examples. The other thing he remembered was the patience Pete had when he presided over Council meetings. He watched him deal with the residents while he was on the Etna Borough council for the past 32 years and stated that he will be greatly missed.

President Becki stated that Council received a copy of the Treasurer's Report and asked if there were any questions. There being none, the accounts are reported as follows:

Fund 01 General Account	\$ 655,608.75
Fund 05 Education Account	\$ 986.82
Fund 03 Payroll Account	\$ 279.89
Fund 04 Police Fund	\$ 20,815.69
Fund 21 Hockey	\$ 4,068.86
Fund 30 Capital Improvement	\$ CLOSED
Fund 33 Christmas	\$ 8,650.78
Fund 34 Etna Senior Center Fund	\$ 2,886.17
Fund 35 Liquid Fuels Account	\$ 52,965.90
Fund 36 War Memorial Fund	\$ 5,448.19
Fund 38 Sanitary Trunk Line Account	\$ 165,921.11
Fund 39 Middle Street Escrow Account	\$ 6,746.76
Fund 42 Capital Reserve	\$ 340,973.43
Fund 44 Sewer Account	\$ 89,440.66
Fund 45 Project Escrow Account	\$ CLOSED
Fund 46 Riverfront Park & Trail	\$ 474.27
Fund 48 Etna Green Streetscape	\$ 1.00
Fund 50 GI Account	\$ 1,216.41
Fund 51 Fire Escrow Account	\$ 37,865.21
Fund 52 Infrastructure Account	\$ 70.05
Fund 53 Youth & Recreation Fund	\$ 4,562.63
Fund 54 American Rescue	\$ 353,985.62

Fund 55 Etna Center for Community

\$

0.00

A motion to accept and file the Treasurer's Report was made by Councilwoman Gabriel and seconded by Councilman Trader. Motion carried.

A check register by fund (bills already paid) as well as outstanding accounts payable (bills due) were given to each member of Council.

Total Owed	\$ 461,539.98
Total Bills Paid	\$ 288,178.40
Total Balance Due	\$ 173,361.58

A motion to pay the bills was made by Councilman Burke and seconded by Councilman Trader. Motion carried.

Police Chief's Report

Police Chief Rodman provided his monthly report which included: provided police stats for 2024, Police Committee Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 5 at 4:30 p.m., hiring process update that the borough received 3 applicants, mandatory police training for the year, end of year overdose counts, 16 non-fatal and 3 were fatal, and an arrest was made for the person breaking into unlocked vehicles.

The Chief stated that he would like to schedule interviews for the applications that were received. The interviews are scheduled to take place on February 25, and the time of the interviews to be determined.

President Becki advised Chief Rodman that he is going to delay the scheduling of the Light Up Night wrap up meeting and the Emergency Operations Committee meeting until after the closing of the new building.

Engineer's Report

Engineer Robert Maher had provided their monthly report which included the following: Source Flow Reduction Order Compliance, Pine Street Bridge Rehabilitation, CDBG Year 50 Paving Contract Administration/ Inspections, 51 Bridge Street Development Plan Review and Stormwater Applications, Dewey & Spring Street Sewer Separation Project, Streetscape Phase 4, Streetscape Phase 5.1, Streetscape 5.2, Act 152 County Demolition Grant, and 2023 Etna 2024 MS4 Program.

Public Works Directors Report

Public Works Director Joe Balistrieri submitted his monthly report which included: snow removal, vehicle and equipment maintenance and repair, Borough Building Maintenance, replaced damaged road signs, answered complaints and Emergency Calls, Parker Street ice removal, patched potholes, CSO meter reading, cleaned overflow on Bridge Street, replenished salt, regular maintenance throughout the Borough.

Fire Department Report

Etna Volunteer Fire Department (EVFD) Chief Porter provided the monthly report which included: fires – 8, Overpressure – 2, Rescue & Emergency Medical Service – 20, Hazardous Condition – 8, Service Call – 3, Good intent Call – 1, False Alarm & False Call – 13, Special Incident – 1, and the total number of incidents for the month 56. The officer meeting was held on 12/9/2024. President Becki explained that no one was present tonight from the fire department because they are all in training.

Hampton Shaler EMS Report

Hampton Shaler EMS Report was provided by Director Eric Schmidt and included the following information: Year in Review, 57 Calls for the Month, 2 Canceled, 4 Canceled Enroute, 1 DOA Resus Attempted, 1 Lift Assist, 3 No Patient Found, 8 Refused, 26 Transported ALS, 10 Transported BLS, and 2 Transported BLS after ALS Evaluation. Provided Guidelines and Response Standards.

Director Schmidt gave his condolences to all those who knew Pete Ramage and Mary Ellen and their family and all those in this room that knew him.

He added in his report he included some extra data for the end of the year. As far as hours the EMS put in 62,843 paid staff hours, 1,116 Volunteer hours and 3,957 hours done by 58 students throughout the year. The EMS answered 6,678 calls for Etna Borough and transported 4,799 patients. The department only has one ambulance with staff Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. The EMS attend 41 community events. At the end of December, he added, the EMS received their new ambulances that were ordered in

2022. One of the ambulances was funded by a grant for \$291,000. These new ambulances are equipped with up-to-date equipment.

Councilwoman Gabriel asked if the software in these ambulances will let you know ahead of time if a hospital is busy before you and Director Schmidt replied yes and said that this was critical.

Solicitor Report

The Solicitor Rushford's report included information on the following: Right to Know, Tax Collector Salary Resolution, Kostov V. Reserve Police, Etna Police, and Officers in their official capacities, Police request for Union Recognition, Porky's, Wilson Street Lot, Fire Escrow matter, 30 Pine Street, MOU with ECO for Administration of RCAP Grant, and Council Inservice Training

Agenda

1. Permit Parking Ordinance

President Becki reported that a letter was sent out on December 18 to all residents on Pine Street by Manager Ramage. No replies were received in opposition. He then asked for a motion to advertise the change to the parking ordinance. A motion was made to advertise an amendment to the parking ordinance to eliminate Pine Street_from the ordinance by Councilwoman Gabriel and seconded by Councilwoman Schaefer. Motion carried.

2. Penn Dot Traffic Study

President Becki reminded everyone that about six to seven months ago, the borough consulted with the state about possibly changing Bridge Street & Freeport Street to a one-way street and they wrote back indicating the traffic would flow counterclockwise, meaning that Bridge Street would go up and Freeport Street would go down. Businesses and residents on those streets would be notified about the hearing and meeting. The borough would also need to contact vendors to receive a cost analysis on changing the timing on the lights and changing the signs to reflect the direction of the streets. The traffic study shows that this project can move forward with the changes.

Chief Rodman said signs will need to be added to indicate where trucks will be able to turn due to trucks turning radius.

President Becki said the borough is also looking a diagonal parking on Bridge Street, so that there will be more parking available. The cars would be parked on the Westinghouse side of the street where it would provide more spots because there are no driveways to worry about.

3. New Jr. Councilperson

President Becki said that the borough has been lucky over the years that Shaler Area High School is able to post for the borough that the borough is looking for a Junior Councilperson. The borough received a letter from Grace Helbling. Grace is very engaged in her school and lives in Etna, and she stated she was anxious to participate. President Becki stated that being on this council, she will learn how local government runs and contributes. He added that if she heard the council speaking about something about recreational programs, or anything her and her friends have an opinion on she should feel free to raise her hand and chime in. A motion was made to appoint Grace Helbling as the new borough Junior Councilperson by Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney and seconded by Councilwoman Gabriel. Motion carried.

Mayor Tuñón then administered the following Oath of Office to Miss Helbling. She was congratulated by all present.

President Becki then said she will now receive packages delivered to her house with all the paperwork to be discussed at the council meetings. He added that she is permitted to speak at any of these council meetings, and that she is not permitted to vote on items because she was not an elected official, but she was now an appointed official. He ended up telling her to have fun with this experience and relax as no one is grading her.

4. Megan Tuñón Resignation

President Becki said he received the letter of resignation from Councilwoman Tuñón from Bourgh Council because of her increasing duties as the Etna Community Organization Director and the revamping of the building which will become the new community center and library. The letter had been provided in everyone's packet. A motion was made to accept the resignation of Councilwoman Tuñón and send a letter of sincere thanks for all her efforts over the past seven years by Councilwoman Gabriel and seconded by Councilwoman Schaefer. Motion carried.

President Becki then explained what this resignation means to the borough by state law. He added that within thirty days after the borough accepts a resignation from someone on the Council, the borough was required to fill the position. In other words, he explained that thirty days from tonight, February 25th, Council must appoint a replacement. He continued that if the process goes correctly at the February the borough would legally be within the timeframe to appoint a replacement for Mrs. Tuñón. Since she resides in the 1st Ward, she must be replaced by a resident in the first ward. He also asked if anyone was interested in running for Mrs. Tuñón position or being considered to the position they must be a registered voter and at least live in the borough for one year by state law. He continued that if a person fills a position on council in the middle of a term, the person will then need to run in the next election in November to fill the position. He pointed out that the person would have to decide very quickly because it is an election year and petitions would need to be filed. He included that the borough would post the announcement on social media and on the borough building doors. The interest letter must be received by close of business day on February 7th. The interviews will be scheduled for Thursday, February 13th, time to be determined, depending on the number of candidates.

5. RCAP Fiscal Sponsorship MOU

President Becki stated that Etna Community Organization had been received a large amount of funding from outside the borough (a federal grant) to complete the transformation of the library building. One of the grants required them to have a fiscal sponsor and the borough has done this in the past and will do it for this grant as well. He added that Manager Ramage and Mrs. Tuñón have sat down and worked out an agreement that is in front of you to cover this arrangement. The agreement states that the ECO will pay the borough \$10,000 to be their fiscal sponsor, which may involve some bookkeeping. A single audit will be required and performed because of the sum of the grant which is required by the State and federal laws. A motion was made to open this account for ECO by Councilman Trader and seconded by Councilwoman Schaefer. Motion carried.

6. Bond Issue Update

President Becki said the next item on the agenda was the bond issue, which would cover the purchase of the building within the next 30 to 40 days on Pine Street. The bond will be floated for 30 years. This bond will allow the borough to acquire the money needed to buy the building and make the necessary renovation and repairs needed in the area around the new facility, including possibly road improvements to Pine Street. The bonds were expected to go our for sale on January 28th. Hopefully, he added, the bonds will be purchased, and the borough has little time to either buy it or reject the offer. A motion was made to allow the proper officials to accept the bond purchase and sign the signature pages by Councilwoman Schaefer and seconded by Councilwoman Gabriel. Motion carried.

7. Tri-Cog Land Bank

President Becki stated that the Tri-Cog Land Bank is an organization that is used by many municipal governments to acquire undesirable, dilapidated or abandoned properties The Tri-Cog will either rehab, demo or put them back on the tax roll. As part of participation in Tri-Cog delegates and alternates are appointed to represent the community. He added that since Megan was one of the delegates, the borough will need to appoint a new one. He added that the organization meets four times a year on Thursdays. A motion was made by Councilwoman Schaefer and seconded by Councilman Burke to appoint Councilwoman Gabriel as the delegate and Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney as the alternate for the Tri-Cog. Motion carried.

8. Deck Hockey

President Becki stated that in the packets a letter from Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney requesting the use of the playground and Deck Hockey and the facilities for the spring season.

Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney stated that Deck Hockey has a registration event at the borough Building on January 25, and she was hoping to get some fresh faces to the organization. She added that if anyone knows of any players that are interested in playing send them her way and that if anyone is interested in helping, please reach out to the organization. A motion was made by Councilman Trader and seconded by Councilman Burke to allow the use of the Deck Hockey facility and concession stand. Motion carried.

9. Tax Collector Salary Increase

President Becki said the borough tax collector serves a 4-year term and is paid by the Shaler School District and the Borough. By law, anytime the term is in its last year, the borough can decide whether to keep the same salary or to increase the salary. He added that any increase in salary would not go into effect until next year. The borough has not increased the tax collector's salary by at least 8. The greater share of the payment for the tax collector's salary comes from the Shaler School District not from the

borough. (I removed as I don't know what it means, and neither will someone read it. He then added that a resolution recommending the borough increase the annual salary from \$5,627 to \$6,189, which is a 10% increase was on the agenda for action this evening. A motion was made to increase the tax collector's salary for next year and every year after by Councilwoman Gabriel and seconded by Councilman Iannuzzi.

OFFICIAL

BOROUGH OF ETNA

RESOLUTION No. 2025-

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ETNA, ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, TO INCREASE THE SALARY OF THE BOROUGH'S ELECTED TAX COLLECTOR EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2, 2026

WHEREAS, the Borough seeks to increase the salary of its elected tax collector from \$5,627 to \$6,189 per annum effective January 2, 2026, which date being the first day of the elected Tax Collector's next term; and

WHEREAS, the Local Tax Collection Law (72 P.S. §5511.36(a) and 53 P.S. § 13403) allows changes to the Tax Collector's salary to be adopted via resolution prior to the fifteenth day of February of the year of the municipal election.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Etna that, effective January 2, 2026, the salary for the office of elected Tax Collector shall be increased from \$5,627 to \$6,189 per annum.

DULY ADOPTED this 21st day of January by the Council of the Borough of Etna, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, in lawful session duly assembled.

Mary Ellen Ramage, Borough Manager/Secretary	David Becki, Council President
EXAMINED AND APPROVED this 21st day of J	January 2025.
By: Robert Tuñón, Mayor	
, , ,	

President Becki said Solicitor Rushford drafted a new ordinance regarding the extension of cooking premises and he will let him explain those changes. Solicitor Rushford stated that this ordinance would allow businesses to have food preparation and dining permitted on the sidewalk similar to the one the city of Pittsburgh uses. They would require handicap access of at least four feet.

President Becki asked Solicitor Rushford to provide a draft to show the codes and types of changes that would make Etna a retail distension. The solicitor will revamp the ordinance. He added that Porky's asked for a time frame of six months so they can change their smoker.

Solicitor Rushford refers to the city of Pittsburgh area of Bloomfield and Downtown Penn Avenue where they added more seating on the streets and their sidewalks.

11. War Memorial

President Becki said that the borough received a donation to clean the borough's War Memorial because of the age the borough is investigating on how to clean it property. The borough cannot bring in a sandblaster and start sandblasting the memorial cause that could be complete failure. He added that this memorial had not been cleaned over the years. He stated that this is just a report that the borough accepts the lady's donation. The Public Works Director is looking into what can be done professionally to clean

this monument. President Becki stated Manager Ramage had also brought up that she had been approached about adding some new plaques to the memorial. He stated that there were specific rules for putting a name on a war memorial you need to confirm that soldiers were properly discharged from their military services and had been inducted from ETNA

12. Police Pension Board Meeting

President Becki reported that a meeting of the Police Pension Board was scheduled for January 30th. At that meeting the board members will review the PNC Investment year-end reports.

13. Council Assignments

President Becki made the following appointments:

Tim Miller was reappointed to the Zoning Hearing Board as his term had expired and he agreed to serve another three-year term.

President Becki stated that Councilwoman Schaefer has agreed to be on the Planning Commission Board for another 4-year term, so she was reappointed.

President Becki asked if anyone had a suggestion for an alternate for the Zoning Hearing Board. The purpose of an alternate is in a small town like Etna where you may have a zoning hearing where one of the three current members personally knows the applicant and might have to recuse themselves from serving on a particular hearing. Carol Kristoff had sold her house and moved out of her area, so he added she would need replaced the Zoning Hearing Board. He asked those on council if they knew of anyone that is interested in joining the board, to please let him know. He also stated that the zoning and hearing board cannot have elected officials on the board.

He added the Human Relations commission still needs a new board member since Councilwoman Semler stepped down last year. Again, he asked if anyone had any suggestions for a candidate for a three-year term, to please let him know. This could be any resident or a member of council to fill this position.

A motion was made to reappoint Tim Miller and Colleen Schaefer to their appropriate commissions and boards by Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney and seconded by Councilwoman Gabriel. Motion carried.

President Becki said he is reappointing himself to Police Pension Board for another five years.

President Becki said the 3 Rivers Basin District Group is a group that was set up when ALCOSAN first was cited by the EPA for their violations, but it still exists. He is reappointing himself as the delegate, and Councilwoman Gabriel as the alternative.

President Becki said MRM Insurance Liability / Workers Comp. which holds one meeting a year. President Becki is the delegate, and the alternative is Councilwoman Gabriel.

President Becki said the Connect Organization of Pittsburgh helps with programs and grants (Solar), He reappointed Manager Ramage as the delegate and Councilwoman Gabriel and Councilwoman Semler as alternatives.

President Becki has reappointed Manager Ramage to the Managers Advisory Board and Councilman Iannuzzi as the delegate and Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney as the alternate to the Executive Board of the North Hills Council of Governments.

President Becki said next on the list is Hampton Shaler EMS and he appointed Chief Rodman as the delegate and Councilman Burke as the alterative.

President Becki said next on the list is Allegheny County Boroughs Association, and he is reappointing himself as the delegate, and the alternative is Councilman Burke.

President Becki reappointed Manager Ramage as the delegate for Pennsylvania State Boroughs Association and the alternative is Councilman Trader.

He added that the council assignments will be done at the February meeting.

14. Upcoming Election

President Becki said as a reminder to council, he wanted to remind those on council that the petitions to run for elected office will be available at the Allegheny County Bboard of Elections starting on February 18th, 2025, and the petition must be returned to the office by March 11th, for your name to be listed on the

primary ballet. He added that in Ward 1 Councilwoman Gabriel's term is expiring. There will be a special two-year term on the ballet for whoever fills the vacancy for the board in Ward 1. They will have the opportunity to fill the three years of a four-year term. The following Council members will be up in the other two wards. In ward 2, Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney and Councilman Burke, in Ward 3, Councilwoman Schaefer, and Council President Becki. The Mayor's and the Tax Collectors' terms also expire at the end of the year, so anyone interested in running will need to get a petition by March. He added that if anyone needs a form, please contact the Allegheny County Department of Elections not the Borough. If you are filing, he added you will need to complete the financial report which needs summitted with your petition. Ask Manager Ramage if you need any advice about that document.

Council / Mayor and Manager Reports:

Manager Ramage's report was not summited.

Council/Committee Members Reports

Councilman Burke said good things are happening and he is excited to see that.

Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney said Condolences to the Ramage family. She said if it wasn't for Pete Ramage retiring this position would have never opened in ward 2, and she would not be on the council today, it is a blessing to sit here on council. She thanked the council for their support. She added that she hopes to see everyone this Saturday at Undercliff Fire Hall at their cash bash. This is the fire department's largest fundraiser. The Street Skate is coming up next month with EEDC, the borough, and Deck Hockey.

Junior Councilperson Helbling passed.

Councilman Trader said he attended a special needs event at Pine Township with 30 participants and would maybe like to have a future event here in Etna. He asked if the Emergency Radio Channel can be used for power outages. President Becki and Solicitor Rushford said utilities laws are complicated and that is the short answer 'no'.

Councilwoman Gabriel said the Borough had a lot of love and a lot of it has to do with the work that Pete Ramage put into the borough. So, she knows all of us are thinking about him and his family and Mary Ellen right now. She wanted to remind everyone the winter yoga continues at 1st Congregational Church through the end of February every Thursday from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. She added that you can bring your kids, and they have a very small room in the church. She added that this coming Friday Etna Heart and Soul will be at Costar Brewing for an event. You can email or you can scan the code on the flyer on the door to sign up. The group has a few people who have already signed up. It is going to be like a storytelling where people can tell their five-minute story about why they love Etna, or they can just hang around and listen. There will be a free drink for everyone that shows up and a free drink if you tell a story in front of the group.

Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney said she attended the 125th Anniversary at the Emanual Lutheran Church. It was a nice event, so Happy Birthday to Emmanual Lutheran. She would also send condolences to the Ramage family. She also welcomed Grace to the council.

Councilwoman Schaefer said my condolences to the Ramage family and welcomed Grace.

Councilman Iannuzzi said he extends his condolences to the Ramage Family. If it wasn't for Pete, he wouldn't have got my start in public works. He added that Pete hired him as the Public Works Director at the borough back in 2020. He said Pete was just a good guy, a man of faith, and he lived his life through his faith, he was just a good man.

Mayor Tuñón that that first condolences to the Ramage family. He thanks the borough staff for who have been doing an excellent job, public works, police and the administration. He added that he was sad about Megan but also excited about everything she does at the ECO organization. He shared that ECO has a new Board Chair, Bridget Barrett. There are 4 new board members and 6 new committee members. This group is going through a great big transformation. He said that the rear of the proposed library building located on locus street is about halfway demolished and should all be down by the end of the week. The area will be cleared up and the interior will be mostly demoed. He added that you will also see a change on the front side of the building later in January, and that starting next month it with be in full renovation. The project is moving ahead of plans. He then welcomed Grace and thanked her for joining Council. He concluded by thanking Megan for her service and stated that she will be missed.

Public Comment

President Becki asked if there were any comments from the audience and there were none.

Chief Rodman added that the Open Gym at Saint Mathew's church is phenomenal. He added he hasn't seen so many old and young kids coming to the gym to play basketball, charging their phones or just having a good time. This gym is getting 40 kids a night. They can always use volunteers. It is great seeing kids doing activities and bonding together and sharing the gym with the kids and playing together there is absolutely beautiful, seeing all these kids play together.

Mayor Tuñón stated that it has really been more successful than they could have ever imagined. The biggest thing is the teenagers really have something to do. There are about 20 to 25 that rotate through, and they stay for 3 hours. It is wonderful to see these kids 6 to 12 years of age having so much fun.

President Becki congratulated the Mayor for getting the gym up and running

A motion was made by Councilman Iannuzzi and seconded by Councilwoman Schaefer to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Time: 8:50 p.m.

Mary Ellen Ramage, Manager