

RIDGWAY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
Ridgway Moose Lodge
237 N. Broad Street, Ridgway, PA 15853
February 16, 2026

The Ridgway Borough Council meeting was called to order by Steve Caggese at 6:00 p.m. at the Ridgway Municipal Building.

PRESENT: Council members – Chris Matheson, Steve Caggese, Abbi Peters, Lauren Stark, Steve Lawrie, Brent Kemmer, Zack Pontious

Also in attendance were Borough Manager Mike Handley, Mayor Ray Imhof, Environmental Manager Josh Quattrone, Police Chief Ken Hinton, Fire Chief Jeff Yeager, and Recording Secretary Cari Amacher.

Councilwoman Stark made a motion to approve the regular council meeting minutes as scheduled on January 19, 2026. Councilman Lawrie seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

Councilman Pontious: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilman Matheson: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilwoman Stark: Aye

Public Comment (Agenda Items Only)

Sara Frank, ECCOTA's Executive Director, requests permission to use the Ridgway Mills property for the Ridgway Farmers Market from July to October.

Councilwoman Peters made a motion to approve ECCOTA to use the Ridgway Mills property for the Farmers Market from July to October. Councilman Pontious seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

Councilman Pontious: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilman Matheson: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilwoman Stark: Aye

Terry Hertzog discusses the upcoming Blizzard Fest, detailing the permits and insurance that have been approved for temporary building use. Hertzog is requesting 2 dumpsters to be donated from the Ridgway

Borough as well as renting barriers for parking for the three day event. He spoke about the Blizzard Fest event which includes 6 bands scheduled to play and around 60 vendors, along with food, crafts, etc. He said for more information or to volunteer, search Elk County Blizzard Fest on Facebook.

Councilwoman Peters made a motion to waive the tipping fees for 2 dumpsters for Blizzard Fest.

Councilman Pontious seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

Councilman Pontious: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilman Matheson: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilwoman Stark: Aye

Finance Department

Councilwoman Stark made a motion to pay the bills. Councilwoman Peters seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

Councilman Pontious: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilman Matheson: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilwoman Stark: Aye

Mayor

Mayor Imhof praised the Borough crew for their work on snow removal and plowing during the winter storm. He also mentioned Coffee with the Mayor is this Saturday from 9am-11am at the Creative Cup.

Councilman Caggese also commended the crew for working hard to address the recent water leaks.

Police Department

Report in packet.

Chief Hinton reports on recent police activities, including three drug-related investigations and a successful fire department banquet. He discusses the potential cost savings of switching to a new body camera system and the benefits of incorporating it with the in-car camera system. Chief mentions attending a webinar on training officers for self-help and policy writing. He participated in a chili and soup cook off as well as a fun day for the local schools. Chief Hinton highlights the issue of false alarms at two particular addresses and the need for corrective action from property management. He also discusses the possibility of adopting a 72-hour parking ordinance to address abandoned vehicles.

Fire Department

Report in packet.

Fire Chief Yeager provides statistics on false alarms at the two addresses, noting that most are smoke-related.

Police Chief Hinton explains the current policy of fining property management for false alarms and the potential for citations if corrective action is not taken. He mentions ongoing communication with property management and the fire chief to address the false alarm issue.

Environmental Manager

Josh Quattrone said both plants are running at 100%. He also mentioned receiving reads from the township flow meters.

Correspondence/Petitions

Handley spoke about the 2 letters of correspondence received. One is asking for a 2-way street to be changed to a 1-way street in which Handley recommended reviewing with Chief Hinton and the Mayor, then referring to the Traffic and Parking committee. The second letter was from ECCOTA, which was just addressed.

Borough Manager

Handley reported Kylee Mader was hired as the Ridgway and Johnsonburg Borough's Community and Economic Development Coordinator. Kylee starts today, February 16, 2026. She will be working out of ECCOTA, as the borough office is under renovation.

Handley discusses the planning for the canoe launch's location. He mentions actively pursuing funding for the launch.

Handley spoke about the approval of Ridgway's downtown decorating committee's request to celebrate America's 250th Anniversary with red, white and blue lights.

Handley mentions the acquisition of two properties and the need to decide on their future use, including potential sale or redevelopment. Councilwoman Peters inquires about the conditions for selling the properties and the possibility of evaluating bids based on both price and use.

Handley offered to collect more information regarding the properties and report to the planning, grants, and recreation committee.

Committee Reports

Councilwoman Peters reported on the Planning, Grants and Recreation Committee meeting held on February 4, 2026. The committee discussed the red, white and blue lights for America's 250th as well as vigorous conversation with LEC and Rotary regarding the empty lot on Main Street including planning and community focused ideas.

Old Business

Ordinance 600

Handley explains the current Ordinance 600 regarding the EDU's and sewer capital replacement (SCR) fees and the potential for reducing fees for vacant properties. He inquires about adding a temporary condition to the ordinance in which vacant properties could ask for a waiver with provisions.

Quattrone discusses the challenges of enforcing SCR fees and the importance of maintaining fairness in billing.

Handley outlines the ordinance's three conditions for reducing SCR fees and the process for property owners to request reductions.

Council members had a lengthy discussion with Handley and Quattrone regarding the EDU's and SCR fees. Ultimately, council decided not to make a motion to vote on amending Ordinance 600.

MPOETC Grant Funding

Police Chief Hinton discusses the potential savings of paying for a cadet's \$6,000 tuition and \$15.00 an hour for wages through the MPOETC grant, which would result in significant reimbursement. He explains the MPOETC grant reimbursement to capture the available 75% tuition and 45% wage reimbursements. Chief Hinton provides an update on the status of the grant and the importance of following the grant's requirements for reimbursement.

Councilman Pontious made a motion to pay for Cadet Swanson's wages and tuition for the academy to qualify for the MPOETC grant funding reimbursement. Councilwoman Peters seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

Councilman Pontious: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilman Matheson: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilwoman Stark: Aye

New Business

ECCOTA Farmers Market property use request approved previously.

Blizzard Fest refuse services use request approved previously.

Public Comment

Terry Hertzog suggests options for property owners to reduce their SCR fees.

Liz Boni, Director of the Chainsaw Carver's Rendezvous, requests the use of the Ridgway Mills building for this year's rendezvous and inquires about the logistics and requirements for using the space if needed. She emphasizes the importance of having indoor options for vendors and the need for clear communication and planning to use that building if necessary. Liz also requested the use of barriers, dumpsters, and the Mills property.

Council will send the request to the Planning, Grants and Recreation committee for further discussion.

Council Discussion

None

After there was no further discussion, President Steve Caggese adjourned the meeting at 7:05 pm before going into executive session.