

**MINUTES**  
**FORD CITY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**Location: Ford City Public Library**  
**January 12, 2015**

- CALL TO ORDER** Council President Bartuccio called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. and advised the audience that the meeting for Monday, January 12, 2015 will be audio taped by Ford City Borough, Eden Ratliff, and Lisa Bittner. Is anyone audio or video taping the meeting? Jonathan Weaver – Kittanning Paper is audio taping.
- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Bartuccio led everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.
- ROLL CALL** Josh Abernathy, Kathy Bartuccio, Gene Banks, Scott Gaiser, Jerry Miklos, Vicki Schaub and Mayor Mantini were present.
- ATTENDANCE** Solicitor Anthony Vigilante, Eden Ratliff – Borough Manager and Lisa Bittner- Borough Secretary, Dean Hutchison, Caroline Hassa, Gary Stivason, Adam Boguslawski, Sandy Hutchison, Tom Ondrusek, David Milito, Julie Martin – Leader-Times and Jonathan Weaver – Kittanning Paper were also present.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS** Borough Manager reminded everyone the [annual] Landlord License and Business License are due 1-31-2015. Asked to check on neighbors during the cold weather. Asked to not shovel the snow into the Streets.
- CITIZENS COMMENTS** There were no citizen comments at this time.
- FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**  
Schaub made a motion to approve the bill list for the amount of \$41,045.48. Seconded by Banks. There was discussion to put numbers on all vehicles so the bill list reflects which vehicle items purchased are to be used on.  
Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous (Attachment)
- Schaub made a motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report for November 2014. Seconded by Abernathy.  
Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous (Attachment)
- BOROUGH MANAGER REPORT**  
Banks made motion to approve the Borough Manager report for January 2015. Seconded by Miklos.
- Banks asked that a report be provided about the meeting with DEP. Banks stated he would stop in the office to obtain this report. Borough Manager will provide this report.
- Secretaries worked diligently when the office was closed Friday to get the business licenses done. There is an ordinance for snow removal on to the streets and the police will enforce that. Miklos wants a report of last four (4) years delinquents.

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Borough Manager added every time we've [Banks] talked I answered all your questions. Banks agreed, we sit and talk, you have even been down to my house.

Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

## ENGINEER REPORT

Miklos made a motion to approve the Engineer report for January 2015. Seconded by Schaub.

Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

## WATER REPORT

Gaiser made motion to approve the Water report for December 2014. Seconded by Miklos.

Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

## POLICE REPORT

Abernathy made motion to approve the Police report for December 2014. Seconded by Banks.

A discussion took place concerning the odometer light [2009 Crown Victoria]. Miklos stated he thought the light did not have to work in order to obtain the mileage. Mayor explained according to the report it can't be read. Schaub stated Mike Toy [of Mike's Towing] is able to obtain a reading when the car is in the garage for anything. Mayor will find out. Miklos asked if anybody will actually get an answer.

Schaub stated that when this vehicle is in for any repair, we should make sure there is mileage recorded on the invoice.

Mayor stated to Miklos, wished he would be just as diligent when almost \$1,000,000 walked out of this Borough under your former Council presidency and your land deal up the river with Rails to Trails.

Miklos responded that is a lame excuse.

Motion Carried. 5-1 Miklos is opposed because the Mayor can't answer the questions. Miklos requested his reason for opposing be noted.

Mayor stated we are under an arbitrator's decision, where are we in the hiring process for the benefited Police Officer we are supposed to hire? Has this been started?

Miklos said to the Mayor, you said you want to help the tax payers at least that was the Police Department's position. How is forcing us to hire another full time officer ... [Mayor and Miklos speak at the same time]

Mayor asked what did this cost the Borough? Miklos stated it was filed by the Police Department. We didn't force you into this. The Police Department did this. The Borough didn't want to go to arbitration. We had no intention of going to arbitration.

Mayor stated he has been here nine (9) years with no Chief of Police and never had a grievance until January 2014.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

Borough Manager explains there were changes made to the Complaint Form involving internal controls

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and tracking of the completed form. The response time is 30 days. There were no complaints for January 2015. Miklos asked how many were outstanding. Borough Manager answered seven (7) or eight (8) submitted to the Police Dept. Miklos stated we are always waiting. Mayor asked to the Council President, didn't I try to call you. Mayor stated they [responses] are done and he will speak to the Borough Manager tomorrow. Mayor to meet President 4:30 tomorrow. Schaub asked Mayor will this be resolved tomorrow. Mayor replies it will be resolved tomorrow.

## COMPLAINT

Abernathy made a motion to approve the minor changes to the complaint form (Form #042814). Seconded by Schaub. Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

## PAY ESTIMATE – METER VAULT PROJECT

Miklos made a motion to approve Pay Estimate #4 to Mortimer Excavating for the Meter Vault Installation Project in the amount of \$20,545.02 as recommended by Gibson Thomas Engineering. This is for the completion of the project with the exception of a \$1,000 retainage for a few restoration items that will be completed in the spring.

Banks asked about the status of the fifth (5) Meter Vault. Borough Manager explained we will have a credit with L/B Water. There was an illegal connection, between the Raw Water Line and the Treated Water Line. The illegal connection was discovered by the current engineer [Gibson-Thomas] and fixed by grant money so there was no cost to the Tax Payers.

Seconded by Schaub. (Attachment)

## BOROUGH ASSOCIATION MEETING

Abernathy made a motion to authorize any of the current Council members, Mayor Marc Mantini, and Borough Manager Eden Ratliff to attend the Borough Association meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup> at the cost of \$20.00 per person payable to the Armstrong County Associations of Boroughs. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

## TRASH DAYS – ADVERTISEMENT

Banks made a motion to advertise for trash days to take place the week of June 15<sup>th</sup> for the first ward and the week of June 22<sup>nd</sup> for the second ward. Trash will not be collected on the weekends. Seconded by Schaub.

Discussion of options takes place.

Miklos asked the Recycling Committee to come up with a plan.

Motion Carried. 5-1 Miklos is opposed

## STREET SWEEPING SCHEDULE

Abernathy made a motion to advertise for Street Sweeping to start on Thursday April 9<sup>th</sup> beginning with Avenues. Street sweeping will conclude on Thursday November 12<sup>th</sup>. Seconded by Banks.

Abernathy suggested to cut down how often streets are swept to save on fuel, labor, wear and tear on the truck.

Motion Fails 0-6

**POLICE CAR**

Abernathy made motion to advertise for bids for a police package unmarked police car. Bids should be sent to Borough Manager Eden Ratliff at the Ford City Borough Office and received no later than Friday January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015. There will be a bid opening at 12:00 p.m. on Monday February 2, 2015 in the Ford City Borough office. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

**FORD CITY BOROUGH SEWAGE AUTHORITY – VACANCY**

Miklos made motion to advertise for the two vacant positions on the Ford City Sewage Authority Board. Seconded by Abernathy. Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

**ORDINANCE – OWNER/ TENANT OCCUPIED PROPERTIES**

Banks made a motion to authorize the Solicitor to work with the Borough Manager in reviewing related ordinances that pertain to inspection of owner or tenant occupied properties and recommend changes in regards to requiring an occupancy permit anytime there is a change in occupant or transfer of real-estate. Seconded by Abernathy. Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

**ELEVATED STORAGE TANK SENSOR**

Abernathy made motion to authorize the purchase of a ultrasonic sensor for model 9140 controller in the amount of \$550.00 from Inventron for Ford City Elevated Storage Tank as recommended by Gibson Thomas Engineering. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

**INSURANCE DEDUCTIBLE**

Abernathy made a motion to authorize payment of an amount not to exceed the \$5,000 deductible to Marshall, Dennehey for our representation in the case of Sulava, James A. v. Ford City Police Department. Seconded by Banks.

Solicitor Vigilante stated he has had conversations with representatives from Marshall, Dennehey.

Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

**DEP FINES**

Abernathy made a motion to authorize payment of \$63,250 to the Department of Environmental Protection for fines associated with a failure to abide by a consent order relative to the Ford City Water Filtration Plant pending negotiations with DEP. Seconded by Schaub.

Borough Manager explains we are authorizing the worst case scenario.

Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

**SHADE TREE MEETING DATES – 2015 ADVERTISEMENT**

Miklos made a motion to advertise the Shade Tree Commission meetings to take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month at 4:00 p.m. in the Borough Office. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

**PARKS & RECREATION MEETING DATES – 2015 ADVERTISEMENT**

Schaub made a motion to advertise the Parks and Recreation Committee meetings to take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month at 5:00pm in the Borough Office. Seconded by Abernathy.

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Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

#### PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATES – 2015 ADVERTISEMENT

Abernathy made a motion to advertise the Planning Commission meetings to take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm in the Borough Office. Seconded by Banks.

Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

#### BEREAVEMENT – MILITO

Abernathy made a motion to authorize payment of \$25 to the Ford City Public Library to place a book in memory of Erma Milito who is a Grandmother of current employee David Milito. Seconded by Banks.

Schaub asked how is the policy coming? Borough Manager answered it will be ready for the work session.

Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

#### PENNSYLVANIA BUILDING INSPECTOR CLASS

Schaub made a motion to authorize payment in the amount of \$750.00 to the Pennsylvania Construction Codes Academy for Eden Ratliff and Josh Abernathy to attend the Building Code Official Certification Academy. Eden and Josh will both work with codes enforcement for Ford City at least until the cost of the academy is made up in revenues received from their services. Seconded by Miklos.

Abernathy explained this would enable the Borough to step up a Codes Division and do this “in house”. This would allow the Borough to get the full amount [of the inspection fee]. A division could be set up to do all the building codes. To start the process you have to attend the week long class. As long as one of us is here to oversee that, the Codes Division. We can do it “in house”.

Borough Manager stated this would be more beneficial to the residents of Ford City and will result in more revenues being brought in.

Mayor asked why do two people need to go to this course?

Banks asked if it was a conflict of interest for a Councilman to be a Codes Enforcement Officer?

Solicitor Vigilante reminded everyone the payment is for going to the class.

Abernathy added there are a lot of Councilmen and Township Supervisors that go to this class.

Mayor asked Abernathy if he will be moving. Abernathy stated even if he moves he can still do this for the town.

Borough Manager stated this is setting the foundation [for in house Codes Division].

Mayor stated we need a Compliance Officer, one not two

Miklos explained the Borough is just paying for the cost of the course. There are other expenses not being incurred by the Borough. Miklos stated Eden has more than a full time job here as the Borough

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Manager. If he is not able to do things in a timely manner, we will have someone else that can do that. And vice versa. From a cost standpoint I don't see this as a negative

Miklos asked Gaiser if he would be interested. Gaiser answered no he wouldn't have the time.

Abernathy stated he will not be charging the Borough to issue these permits. We are trying to set the whole thing up. Fee structures and everything they are going to teach at this class. We can hire people to do this, it will all be in house.

Schaub stated it was agreed Josh would stay thru to make sure the Borough received the \$375 back.

Abernathy explained the class is in Harrisburg and it is only offered twice a year.

Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

#### PART TIME POLICE OFFICERS

Banks made a motion to reallocate monies to the Public Safety fund so the Ford City Police Department can fill currently vacant part-time shifts. Seconded by Gaiser.

Banks asked if this will open up the budget. Borough Manager answers it is not. This would reallocate monies to Public Safety.

Solicitor Vigilante explained this is supplemental appropriation. Vigilante reads from a passage in the Borough Code "The Council in its reasonable discretion may in any year by motion modify the budget after final adoption" You can shift money around, reallocate. This is kind of unusual because the budget was just authorized. There is a provision under a new Council after advertisement, they may open the budget.

Miklos stated he has no understanding why this would happen at this point in time.

Abernathy asked what are we going to cut. We already laid someone off in the Street Department. Are we going to lay someone else off?

Miklos stated another Street Worker could be laid off.

Abernathy stated we are not getting the stuff done now.

Motion Fails. 0-5-1 Abernathy abstains.

Borough Manager reads the next motion and it fails because no one makes that motion.  
Motion to hire part time police officers if necessary to fill currently vacant shifts.

NEXT PUBLIC WORK SESSION: Monday, January 26, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. in the Ford City Public Library.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: Monday, February 9, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Ford City Public Library.

#### CITIZENS COMMENTS

**Melvin Merin** suggested charging a minimal amount to pay someone to sit there during Trash Days.

Miklos made a motion to have the Recycling Committee study this problem and come up with a plan. Seconded by Schaub.

Borough Manager stated you are making the minutes a disaster. That's on the record. Borough Manager asked for a repeat of the motion.

Miklos made a motion to have the Recycling Committee study this issue "Trash Collection" and propose a plan to Council to adopt. Seconded by Schaub.

Miklos stated this doesn't have to be done this year.

**Tom Ondrusek** suggested doing what Ford Cliff does. They have a community yard sale the week before they have their Trash Days.

**Sandy Hutchison** suggested having the trash picked up in the alley. A lot of people did their shopping.

**Melvin Merin** explained there could be a rat infestation problem on you property with trash and high grass. Merin warned you could still be cited.

Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

#### SOLICITOR COMMENTS

Solicitor Vigilante appealed to the two reporters in attendance to hold off putting in their papers the action Council took tonight to pay the DEP. Wait until after the negotiations take place to put in the paper. It's a little hard to leverage position when it's already in the paper.

#### BOROUGH MANAGER COMMENT

Ratliff made comments that require no action.

#### MAYOR COMMENTS

Mayor made comments that required no action.

Mantini stated he vetoed the Budget. Then was told by the Solicitor he could not veto the Budget. I'm in charge of protection and welfare of the citizens of this community.

#### SOLICITOR COMMENT

Solicitor Vigilante responded to the comment made by Mayor Mantini. They spoke prior to the meeting. There were amendments to the Borough Code in 2012. That is one of the things that changed. The veto power of the budget doesn't rest with the Mayor.

#### COUNCIL COMMENTS

Abernathy made comments that required no action.

Gaiser had not comments.

Banks and Schaub made comments that required no action.

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Miklos stated this is a new year and he would like to call on the Mayor to truly try to work with Council to provide information that Council has requested and the Mayor has thus far refused to supply. So I'd like to call on the Mayor to cooperate so that we can move forward here and also to cooperate in getting complaints resolved that are related to the Police Department. There is no doubt Council is more than willing to work with the Mayor. We need his cooperation to get some of this stuff done.

Miklos credited the Kittanning Paper and Leader Times for fine articles about Manor Township. I would like to make the public aware of some of these points. More importantly make Council aware of some of the things that Manor Twp. has done and is doing. Manor is holding the line on property taxes. Leader Times, says for the ninth (9) year the Kittanning Paper says for the 11 year, but regardless that is a long time to hold the line on property taxes. Manor Twp. Supervisors approved a \$2.3M budget, which is very similar to Ford City's. Until this year it was little bit less than Ford City's, we cut about \$400,000 this year. So now theirs is a little bit more. But, not that much difference. But, they have a surplus of about \$1M, and their township tax rate is being kept at 6 mills. They attribute this to living within their means. I think that is the key to everyone's personal and it's certainly key to the public budget. We must live within our means. They also cite practical efforts, stating they are frugal. Their maintenance guys do all of their repair work. They don't send anything out unless no one can fix it "in house". The Townships Police Budget is being increased from \$50,000 a year to \$52,000 a year. I think we can see that all relates to Ford City's situation. I think that is important to keep that in mind and asked that his comments be recorded in the minutes.

Bartuccio made comments that required no action.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

Borough Manager stated that Council will hold an Executive Session immediately after the meeting to discuss matter of personnel and litigation.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Miklos made a motion at 7:35 to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Abernathy.  
Motion Carried. 6-0 Unanimous

Kathy Bartuccio  
Council President

Lisa Bittner  
Borough Secretary