

MINUTES
FORD CITY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
LOCATION: FORD CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY
JULY 13, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Bartuccio called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and advised the audience that the meeting for Monday, September 14, 2015 will be audio taped by Ford City Borough and Lisa Bittner. Julie Martin – Leader-Times and WTYM are audio taping the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council President Bartuccio lead everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Gene Banks, Kathy Bartuccio, Jerry Miklos, Vicki Schaub and Mayor Mantini were present. Josh Abernathy was absent. [Scott Gaiser submitted his letter of resignation on May 11, 2015 resigned on and his replacement has not been appointed.]

ATTENDACE

Solicitor Vigilante, Borough Manager Eden Ratliff, Borough Secretary Lisa Bittner, Caroline Hassa, Gary Stivason, Carol Fenyes, Jamie Thompson, Dean Hutchison, Lou Vergari, Paul Klukan, Mark Brice, Wakefield, Mark Brice, Stacy Gladysiewski, Bryan & Casey Gilbertsen, and Julie Martin - Leader-Times.

CTIZENS COMMENTS - At this time agenda items only.

Lou Vergari asked with regard to the Paving has anyone spoken to John Poproch [Penndot District 10]? Borough Manager answers yes.

Vergari asked if the agreement with the new accountant covers mileage? Borough Manager answered yes.

Vergari stated the former accountant was paid \$1100 per month, which is \$13,200 per year. Is the new accountant limited to \$13,200 a year? Borough Manager stated the new accountant will cost the Tax Payers less than what the current account does.

MINUTES

Banks made a motion to approve draft #2 of the June 29, 2015 Special Council Meeting Minutes as presented, this is the Final Draft. Seconded by Schaub. Motion Carried 4-0 Unanimous

REPORTS

POLICE REPORT

Schaub made a motion to accept the Police Reports for June 2015. Seconded by Miklos. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous (Attachments)

WATER COMMITTEE

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Approved 3-14-2016

Banks made a motion to accept the Water Reports from CWM for June 2015 all samples pass the PA Department of Environmental Protection standards for safe drinking water for total coliform and E. Coli. Seconded by Schaub. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous
Miklos stated the New Water Plant is officially out for bid and the bid opening is 8-5-2015. [Bid opening 11:00 a.m. - Borough Office]

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Schaub made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for April 2015. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

Schaub made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for May 2015. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

Miklos made a motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$94,900.97 as approved by the Finance Committee. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - NON-PROFIT EVENT

Council Vice-President Miklos explained he and Councilman Abernathy discussed some ideas to promote Ford City Borough. All Businesses in Ford City Borough were invited to the CU Club for a meeting. The meeting was very productive. Also, spoke about meeting with non-profits in and around Ford City Borough. Criteria would be those organizations that help promote the Borough. Miklos explained he and Councilwoman Schaub will be sending out a letter this week to all of the non-profits inviting them to a meeting. There will be brainstorming for ideas to help their organizations raise money and at the same time help promote Ford City Borough.

BOROUGH MANAGER REPORT

Banks made a motion to approve the Borough Manager Report for June 2015. Seconded by Miklos. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

OLD BUSINESS

SALT BID

Banks made a motion to reject all salt bids. Seconded by Miklos. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Miklos made a motion to re-advertise for salt bids and for a public bid opening. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

WEB SITE

Banks made a motion to advertise the Borough is accepting proposals to build a Ford City Borough Web Site. Seconded by Schaub. Motion Carried 4-0 Unanimous

PENNSYLVANIA STATE FLOOD MITIGATION GRANT

Schaub made a motion to ratify the Council President signing a second letter for the Pennsylvania State Flood Mitigation Grant committing \$89,000 to the total project cost which is 15% of the total grant amount and the project will be part of the 2016 budget, this action changes the action that was taken on 6-29-2015 to approve an amount of \$75,000. Seconded by Miklos. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

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NEW BUSINESS

CURB CUT REQUEST

Schaub made a motion to grant the request of Bobbi & Erik Poorman, 1416 3rd Avenue, Ford City, for a curb cut at their property located at 1416 3rd Avenue as approved by the Street Committee. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

POLICE DEPARTMENT – EQUIPMENT DESTRUCTION

Schaub made a motion to destroy the attached list, Destroy List 7-13-2015, of Police Department Items as approved by Mayor Mantini. Seconded by Banks. (Attached)

Schaub and Miklos expressed concern that there might be some historic value or monetary value to the items listed.

Solicitor Vigilante advised Schaub to withdraw the original motion and make another.

Schaub withdraws her motion.

Schaub made a motion to destroy the attached list, Destroy List 7-13-2015, of Police Department Items as approved by Mayor Mantini pending review by the Police Committee. Seconded by Miklos. Motion Carried. 3-1 Banks is opposed.

TRAIN – FORD CITY CHOO CHOO

Miklos made a motion to authorize the Council President to sign for a duplicate title for the Train at no cost to the Borough. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

TAPE BREAK

MULTIMODAL GRANT – HANDICAP RAMP PROJECT

Miklos made a motion to authorize the Council President to sign the resolution authorizing Gibson-Thomas Engineering to submit an application for the MultiModal Grant, Handicap Ramp Project, in the amount of \$455,625 with a Local Contribution in the amount of \$50,000 from the 2016 Budget. Seconded by Schaub. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

FORD CITY HOSE Co. #1 and FORD CITY RENAISSANCE

Schaub made a motion to grant permission to Ford City Hose Co. #1 and Ford City Renaissance to hold their annual Heart & Sole 5K Run/ 5K Walk on Saturday, August 29, 2015. Seconded by Miklos. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

HANDICAP SIGN

Banks made a motion to authorize a handicap sign to be placed on the east side of the 1100 block of 6th Avenue as recommended by the Handicap Committee. Seconded by Miklos. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

5K RACE

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Miklos made a motion to authorize the Armstrong County River Hawks football boosters to hold a 5k race on Saturday July 2, 2016. Seconded by Schaub. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

2015 PAVING PROGRAM

Miklos made a motion to authorize Gibson Thomas Engineering to advertise for bid the proposed 2015-paving project. Seconded by Schaub.

Borough Manager suggested holding off on the 2015 Paving Project because it is already July. Push this project to next year, 2016. It will cost more for the contractors to bid on the work at this time of year. Time is needed to make sure all of our utility lines are [Miklos adds the word] functional. The Sewage Authority needs time to look at their lines. Our water lines need looked at. Maybe West Penn Power can be convinced to place their lines underground? In the long run this will be a much more efficient way of doing things. There is nothing stopping us from doing corners this year. This can be an efficient way to be a year ahead of the game. This is my recommendation and Gibson-Thomas stands behind me in this recommendation.

Motion Fails. 1-3 Bartuccio, Miklos and Schaub are opposed.

REPOSITORY AUCTION

Banks made a motion to authorize the Council President to sign the agreement with Armstrong County Tax Revenue Department regarding the repository auction pending Solicitor approval. (Attachment) Seconded by Miklos. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

ACCOUNTANT

Miklos made a motion to authorize the Council President to sign the employment agreement with Virginia Finnegan hiring her as the borough Treasurer/Accountant at the rate of \$35.00 an hour for the first month and \$42.50 thereafter effective July 14, 2015. Miklos stated he would like to change the wording to “with an effective date based on the Finance Committee decision”.

Banks asked wouldn't that be Personnel Committee?

Miklos answers she is an Accountant.

Solicitor Vigilante suggested giving the current Accountant what your decision is and move forward. I think you need to pick a specific date.

Miklos stated the old Accountant will work with the new Accountant through a transition period. We don't know how long that will be.

Vigilante suggested doing another motion to give the Borough Manager the authority to the current Accountant notice of termination of services. Because that way whenever they feel there is enough time for this dual system, he can just write or call her and say this is what's happening.

Borough Manager stated at the committee level there was a conversation about a 30 day transition period. Unless it was deemed necessary to be less than that.

Vigilante stated he doesn't think anybody wants to waste money. But I think to give Eden the authority to give notice to the current Accountant gives you enough latitude that you can have the services and

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have the working back and forth until you need it. I would vote on you want to leave the effective date July 14, 2015, vote on it as is. Do another motion authorizing the Borough Manager to give notice to Susan Wolf the current Borough Accountant.

Borough Manager adds she has an agreement.

Vigilante continues with pursuant to the written agreement. That's what I would to approve this woman [Finnegan] get her started. Give Eden the opportunity to give her [Wolf] notice pursuant to the agreement. If she has a written agreement, you have to follow the terms of it. I don't know what it says.

Borough Manager stated he thinks 30 days.

Banks asked why do my colleagues think we need a new Accountant? This lady, Ms. Wolf, has been here 20 some years, never had a bad audit with the lady, we are getting ready to get in some big things, Water Plant, EDA breathing down our necks. Why would you want to change in the middle of the stream? This lady has been with us. She knows Ford City like the back of her hand. Shouldn't we keep her on at least until we get a bite on this stuff we are getting ourselves into....Water Plant, EDA, Paving. Why would you want to change right in the middle? There is a new Council coming next year. Seems senseless. This lady has done nothing. She applied for the job.

Schaub stated she wants a hands on person. She wants someone to be physically here.

Miklos stated he doesn't like the Borough Accountant being based out of Florida. The Borough Accountant should be based out of the Borough Office.

Banks stated this is a new day and a new time. They are things electronically now. It's done every day. Knowledge is value.

Mayor asked how many were interviewed? Mayor asked Banks if he was involved in the interview process?

Banks answered he never met Virginia.

Mayor added Ms. Wolf came at a very trying time in the Borough years ago.

Borough Manager added all members of Council were invited to the interviews. It was a long Saturday that was spent interviewing everyone.

Banks stated that was a day he was visiting his grandkids. He would have like to have something in his box. Never say a resume or application. You [Borough Manager] told me. I like to see things in writing. Abernathy is not here tonight, but I bet he knows. How come I was never relayed about this lady Virginia?

Miklos stated Banks is afforded the same information he is.

Bartuccio called for a vote.

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Miklos reads the motion to authorize the Council President to sign the employment agreement with Virginia Finnegan hiring her as the borough Treasurer/Accountant at the rate of \$35.00 an hour for the first month and \$42.50 thereafter effective July 14, 2015.

Miklos asks what is the first month, just to clarify, the first 30 days?

Borough Manager states it is 30 days from the date of her hire. Borough Manager states 30 days from her start date.

Miklos reads the end of the motion. First month 30 days from her start date and \$42.50 thereafter effective July 14, 2015.

[Miklos makes the motion to authorize the Council President to sign the employment agreement with Virginia Finnegan hiring her as the borough Treasurer/Accountant at the rate of \$35.00 an hour for the first month 30 days from her start date and \$42.50 thereafter effective July 14, 2015. Seconded by Schaub.]

Motion Carried. 3-1 Banks is opposed.

Vigilante suggested Council do what he suggested giving authority to Eden. Vigilante suggested the next motion. Motion to authorize the Borough Manager to notify the Borough Accountant Susan Wolf, pursuant to her employment contract with termination of services. That leaves it open that he can do that whenever it's necessary.

Miklos stated he would make that motion. Seconded by Schaub.

Bartuccio called for a vote.

[Miklos made the motion to authorize the Borough Manager to notify the Borough Accountant Susan Wolf, pursuant to her employment contract with termination of services. Seconded by Schaub.]

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Schaub made a motion to advertise a Special Council Meeting to take place on July 20, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Ford City Public Library to fill the Council vacancy and address any other borough business.

Banks asked how many applicants. Borough Manager answered three (3).

Seconded by Miklos.

Miklos asked what is the dates that the position must be filled?

Solicitor Vigilante explained he discussed this with the Borough Manager. Council has 45 days to accept Mr. Gaisers's resignation or it would be deemed accepted. Then you have 30 days to appoint somebody.

Borough Manager stated the date Saturday the [July] 25th.

Bartuccio called for a vote.

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Miklos stated we should do everything we can to make sure everyone in the Second Ward is aware of this [opening].

Discussion takes place about advertising this opening.

Miklos asks what are the problems if we wait another week? Since it falls on a Saturday, couldn't we go to Monday?

Solicitor Vigilante stated he doesn't think when you are calculating days like that. When you calculate court filings I'd agree with you. If it falls on the weekend or Saturday it goes to the next Business day. When you are talking about general dates that have long periods of time for something like this I think you have to operate and get it done by that date.

Miklos asked in the interest of affording every single resident of the Second Ward the knowledge and opportunity of having a seat on Council, what are the repercussions? The 25th falls on a Saturday you have Sunday, we have a meeting on the 27th.

Solicitor Vigilante stated theoretically I mean you are supposed to have, you accept his resignation, you have 30 days, if that doesn't happen, in theory, you are supposed to have a Vacancy Board. That Vacancy Board is supposed to make recommendations. My understanding is you don't have a Vacancy Board right now. The fact that you don't have one, I'd be concerned could a resident go and petition the court cause the Vacancy Board if they don't get that position filled they're supposed to petition the court to get the judge to appoint somebody. Since you don't have the Vacancy Board, could somebody in the community do it? What's better for the community? Having the interviews and picking somebody that everybody agrees on or having one person that has the ability or the know-how to go file the court to get on Council. I just think it makes more sense you are talking about a few days. Do it on or before the 25th.

There was no vote taken.

NEXT PUBLIC WORK SESSION

Monday, July 27, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. in the Ford City Public Library

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, August 10, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Ford City Public Library

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Stacy Klukan [Shade Tree Commission] thanked everyone for their help trimming the trees on the trail. Undercutter Trees performed the work. There are more plans to trim other trees. A bee hive was found. Extra helper assisted with the Gazebo area and War Memorial. Klukan asked if the Multimodal grant application is being coordinated with the County?

Borough Manager stated we will be putting the County on notice we are applying for the grant.

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Klukan stated she thought there might be some electric lines in the park that might need cut.

Lou Vergari handed letters of interest for the Council position to the Council President and the Borough Secretary.

SOLICITOR COMMENTS

Solicitor Vigilante explained he has some prepared Ordinances which he will give to Eden. Regarding, there was an issue with junk, junk cars. It was brought up, Paula [Willyard] advised me of that. Also, there was a question about changing the Ordinance for occupancy getting occupancy permits. Based on a conversation he had with Paula, who attended the last meeting, Vigilante explained he is a bit confused. Whether we really want these Ordinances changed or whether we are more concerned about just general maintenance of properties? Do you want to go in and inspect every sale of every home or are you worried about just ones that are a problem? There might be another avenue to address that. Maybe the Borough can look into, you have a building code. But, there is also a maintenance code.

Borough Manager added the Borough adopted the Property Maintenance Code.

Vigilante stated that might just address your problems. Vigilante stated he will talk to Eden about this.

BOROUGH MANAGER COMMENTS

Borough Manager made comments that required no action.

MAYOR COMMENTS

Mayor Mantini made comments that required no action.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Schaub, Banks, and Bartuccio made comments that required no action.

Miklos had no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Schaub made a motion at 7:50 p.m. to adjourn. Seconded by Banks.

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Kathy Bartuccio
Council President

Lisa Bittner
Borough Secretary