

MINUTES
FORD CITY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
Location: Ford City Public Library
October 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, October 12, 2015 will be audio taped by Ford City Borough and Lisa Bittner. Family Life Media audio and video taped the meeting.

Is anyone audio or video taping the meeting? Jonathan Weaver – Kittanning Paper and Julie Martin – Leader-Times are audio taping the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Bartuccio lead everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

Kathy Bartuccio, Gene Banks, Beth Bowser, Jerry Miklos, and Mayor Mantini were present. Josh Abernathy is absent and his resignation is dated 9-27-2015. Vicki Schaub is absent.

ATTENDANCE

Solicitor Anthony Vigilante, Borough Manager Eden Ratliff, Borough Secretary Lisa Bittner, Ed Schmitt – Gibson-Thomas, Julie Totos, Tom Ondrusek, Bill Oleksak, Skip Heffner, Amy Moody, Joann Scopel, Todd Kirkwood, Sandy Ritchey, Carol Fenyes, Rosemary Vasek, Sandy Hutchison, Steve Heffner, Barb & Paul Klukan – Ford City Renaissance, Tyson Klukan – Ford City Planning Commission, Caroline Hassa, Randy Swartz, Jonathan Weaver – Kittanning Paper, Julie Martin – Leader-Times, Ryan Bloser and Lou Vergari

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Bartuccio explained an Executive Session was held at 5:00 p.m. on Monday October 12, 2015 to discuss matters of potential litigation.

CITIZENS COMMENTS At this time agenda items only.

Lou Vergari asked, with regard to the agenda to reject all bids, if he same projects would be resubmitted?

Ed Schmitt explained it will be very similar but there will be some changes made. The primary purpose for the rebid is, they have become aware of additional funding. In order to get the funding they are required to make certain changes to the specifications and in the method that we bid and the requirements of the bids. That is the primary purpose we have additional funds available, grant funding. That is the primary reason there will be changes to the specifications, nothing major.

Solicitor Vigilante suggested the Borough Engineer complete his presentation and then the audience will be permitted to ask questions.

REPORTS

ENGINEERS REPORT Ed Schmitt – Gibson-Thomas

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Mr. Schmitt explained the bids came in and there was a shortfall of approximately \$700K [\$704,792.00] for the Water Treatment Plant Project. At that point in time there was an option to look for additional funding. Pennvest was amicable to look for additional funds through them. We checked on CDBG Funding. Generally CDBG and DCED have funding windows of April to October. We were in the middle of that window. I did not feel the funds would be available. Mr. Miklos made a call, it turns out they have changed their policy, there is now open season, they will take applications at any particular time. They have to be sponsored through the County and through DCED. This put us in a position where there is roughly \$750K coming available through DCED. That could bring us back to the original project financing package that we talked to you folks about back in the Spring. We started meeting with DCED and the County and received very good feedback. The project will have a very good chance of obtaining, its competitive funding, competitive financing. On one hand you do take a bit of a risk, although the feedback has been very, very good from everybody we have dealt with. Carmen Johnson from the County and the Commissioners up there have agreed to sponsor the request. The DCED people that we have spoken to in Harrisburg said it fits the bill very well. I have had discussion with Senator White's office and they are wholly behind us relative to that application. So, in effect we have a very, very good shot. At this point in time it is certainly worth \$750K to take the additional action that we are talking about. Does it affect our bids, obviously we have to go back out in the street and my recommendation tonight to Council will be to reject all bids and then get authorization to rebid after the DCED and CDBG funding comes in the picture somewhere around January February. In the mean time we will be doing application process meeting all the requirements that they have for that. The stipulations on our end of the project relative to Gibson-Thomas when we put a project out to bid, especially for Pennvest, we have certain criteria for the contractors. We had some of the criteria that DCED wants in there but not all of it. They require the job to be rebid to get the funding. At this stage of the game, considering the shortfall on the project concerning the opportunity to get that kind of grant money, our recommendation is to rebid that project. All bids have to be rejected, we had three bidders, Kukurin Contracting, Lanco Electric, and Newman Plumbing were the three bidders. Discussed the situation with the General Contractor, the biggest one, he's not happy. But, he will rebid the job. I expect the other two to do so also. The other thing that worked out very well is that Pennvest has a meeting in April that they would also consider any potential shortfalls. I'm gonna be up front with you, I can't tell you that if I put a job out in the street I will get exactly the same numbers. For example, let's be hypothetical, if we come up with an \$800K over on the next bid we cover it with the CDBG and we still need a few extra dollars, Pennvest will still consider that in their April meeting. They want us to go after the DCED money for an obvious reason, they would rather we get the grant money from DCED verses borrowing an additional \$750K or \$800K whatever it would be. I'm not happy the bids came in over. As I said I put the job on the street, I don't bid. It was very a good bid, a very competitive bid. We had a number of bidders. It was just higher than the original estimate that we did about a year and a half ago. Our recommendation and request tonight is to reject the bids and authorize us to rebid in conjunction with the DCED funding after the first of the year. We would be looking at a Pennvest closing somewhere around May. We would be ready for construction in the Spring, late Spring early Summer next year.

Lou Vergari suggested removing items from the project, for example the tearing down of the Old Water Plant.

Schmitt stated he does not want to remove anything from the project, it should stay the way it is. The demolition was \$112K. Do we take that out of the project? That plant needs to be taken down. We need space for the other things we are building there. That's part of the project. There are also interconnections to that tank buried inside that building. There are things that have to be done in order to do the project right. The scope of the project is not an issue. They approved the scope. They were aware of the scope that we presented to them. All the bids and specifications went through the process with DEP and with Pennvest. The scope of the project is not an issue.

Miklos made a motion to reject all bids received on August 5, 2015 for the Water Treatment Plant Construction the General/Mechanical and the Electrical, and the Remote Meter Reading System. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Miklos made a motion to authorize Gibson-Thomas to rebid the Ford City Water Treatment Plant Project. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Schmitt stated that Carmen Johnson [Armstrong County Planning] wants to meet with members of Council to go over some of the stipulations that she will need relative to the CDBG and DCED application. Eden was given some dates. Schmitt will be available to attend this meeting. This is more of an administrative issue rather than the application.

Mr. Schmitt leaves the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

POLICE REPORT

Mayor Mantini read the Police Reports for September 2015. (Attachments)

Bowser made a motion to accept the Police Reports for September 2015. Seconded by Banks.

Banks asked Mayor how many part time officers are on the roster? Mayor answers three (3).

Miklos explained to the Mayor that a Citizen asked him what happened to the two (2) large army trucks that were parked along 3rd Avenue. This was about six (6) years ago. The Citizen explained he had a discussion with you [Mayor] to have those trucks donated to the Boy Scouts. After that discussion, in about two (2) weeks they disappeared. Miklos asked Mayor if he remembered anything.

Mayor said he doesn't remember. Mayor advised to speak with the Sgts.

Miklos explained these were owned by the Borough. They were deteriorating in that location.

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT

Borough Manager Ratliff reads from a prepared statement compiled by Police Committee Member Vicki Schaub. (Attachment)

Bowser explained the job description for the Police Chief has been completed.

Miklos explained ads have been placed. There is a fairly extensive ad campaign going on.

Carol Fenyes asked how much will that cost? Miklos answered around \$1000.00. Fenyes asked when did Council vote on that? Borough Manager answered Spring 2014.

WATER COMMITTEE

Borough Manager reads the Water Reports for September 2015. (Attachments)

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Bowser made a motion to approve the Water Reports from CWM for September 2015, samples were taken on 9-8-2015, 9-14-2015, 9-17-2015, 9-21-2015 & 9-28-2015, all samples passed the Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection standards for Safe Drinking Water for total Coliform and E. Coli, reports are available in the Borough Office. Seconded by Miklos.

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Miklos made a motion to approve paying the bills in the amount of \$38,090.58 as approved by the Finance Committee. Seconded by Bowser. (Attachment)

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Miklos made a motion to ratify payment of the regular recurring insurance and utility bills in the amount of \$23,349.08 as approved by the Borough Manager. Seconded by Bowser. (Attachment)

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Miklos made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for July 2015. Seconded by Bowser. (Attachment)

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Miklos made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for August 2015. Seconded by Bowser. (Attachment)

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

BOROUGH MANAGER REPORT

Borough Manager Ratliff reads his September 2015 report. (Attachment)

Bowser made a motion to approve the Borough Manager Report for September 2015. Seconded by Miklos.

Banks asked if the rest of Council will be invited to sit in on Budget talks. Borough Manager answered yes. The public is welcome to attend too.

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Council President Bartuccio thanked everyone for attending the meeting and stated there are more people coming to the meetings. Council is getting more facts out and more people are trying to find out what is really going on in the Borough.

NEW BUSINESS

WOODLAND POWER PRODUCTS

Miklos made a motion to authorize payment in the amount of \$99.50 to Woodland Power Products for a new shoot for the leaf blower and the bolts to connect it. Seconded by Banks.

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

COUNCIL RESIGNATION

Miklos made a motion to accept the resignation of Joshua Abernathy from the Ford City Council. Seconded by Banks.

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Banks asked if Abernathy would be reimbursing the money that the Borough paid for him to attend Codes School? [\$375.00] He and Eden [Borough Manager] attended about seven (7) months ago. Miklos agreed and stated Abernathy stated he would. Miklos stated that is on record.

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Miklos made a motion to advertise for letters of interest for the 2nd Ward Council Vacancy. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

MINIMUM MUNICIPAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Miklos made a motion to authorize the Council President to sign the 2016 Minimum Municipal Obligation for the General Employee's Pension Plan the amount of \$24,103.00 Option C4- Not to reduce the amortization amount. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

Miklos made a motion to authorize the Council President to sign the 2016 Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Police Pension Plan the amount of \$51,597.00 Option C4- Not to reduce the amortization amount. Seconded by Bowser. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous (Attachment)

RESIGNATION

Miklos made a motion to accept the resignation of Officer Josh Stanga from the Ford City Police Department. Seconded by Banks. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

AVAILABLE OPERATOR REPORT

Banks made a motion to authorize payment to Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the amount of \$150.00 for the 2015 Available Operator Report. Seconded by Miklos. Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

NEXT PUBLIC WORK SESSION

Monday, October 26, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. in the Ford City Public Library.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, November 9, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Ford City Public Library.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Skip Heffner thanked Bowser for the information and expressed concern for the input Citizens may have on the selection process and asked if Citizens will know who the Candidates are for the Police Chief Position?

Bowser answered that has not be talked about by the Police Committee and suggested the job description be made Public.

Heffner asked what will the lengths of the contracts be for each individual? If you are going to hire a Police Chief, will there be a probationary period? Do you want somebody to come in and receive a contract for three (3) years?

Bowser stated this will be an administrative position, non-union position, it will be "at will" according to Pennsylvania Law. They are still working to finalize the part-time job description. The Chief of Police will be subject to a yearly evaluation.

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Heffner explained his concern is once the selections are made will they be brought to the attention of the Public? Will feedback from the Public be accepted on the selections that are made?

Bowser stated they expect the selection process to be lengthy. Bowser stated now is the time to bring concerns to the Police Committee about the new Police Chief.

Heffner asked if the Chief position is basically administrative, he won't be out there covering any beats? Miklos says no. What about if anybody needs backup?

Bartuccio asked he will be a working Chief?

Heffner asked how many part-timers will be hired? You talked about hiring a Chief and x number of part timers and backup support of the Pennsylvania State Police.

Bowser stated that is the option they would like to work with because of the cost involved. Without knowing the projections of the Chief, where he wants to take the department. Bowser stated she is not sure if the number of part-timers has been determined. Not sure of the number of officers interested that are currently in the department.

Heffner stated that is one of the reasons he is concerned. You only have three (3) part-timers now. What happens whenever somebody is sick? Will there be enough people to handle. Is the Chief going to be able to step in if necessary to take any police actions.

Borough Manager stated that it was discussed the job description calls for a working Chief. .

Banks asked Mayor how many part timers would it take to run the department? Mayor answered 17 – 20, these individuals are committed elsewhere. Many of these people can't give a commitment every day.

Bowser asked if that would be for a 24/7 police force?

Mayor stated that is probably for what we want to accomplish right now. Mayor stated the scheduling is not easy.

Miklos stated this is not anything we have been discussing. That is way off the sheet. We want to fully utilize each and every part-timer that we hire. We want to hire people that are going to work 32 hours a week. So that we get to know them and they get to know us. What the Mayor was talking about was not remotely close to what the Police Committee has been discussing.

Heffner stated he is trying to get a solid figure of the number of people that will be hired part time to cover the community.

Miklos stated 3-4.

Borough Manager stated last week the numbers presented were 6-9 for the 168 option.

Heffner explained these people will have to be scheduled. You will have sick time, court time, vacation time, you need to come up with a fixed number.

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Miklos stated that will be dependent upon the total number of hours that we patrol Ford City Borough with our people. With the 3-4, that is the 120 hours plan.

Borough Manager explained the range of part time officers depends on the number of hours. Depending on recommendations from the Chief, the numbers change.

Heffner stated the 6-9 number is more realistic, than a 3 to whatever.

Borough Manager stated the new Chief must be instrumental in this conversation.

Heffner asked, whenever this is brought up, will the Public be privy to this? Correct?

Miklos stated that depends on the plan that is adopted by this Council body. Whether it is 120 hours or a full time force. What we need to keep in mind is, that if we have these officers working 32 hours a week they are 8 hours shy of being full time officers.

Heffner stated you are still not covering for people that will be in court. This is probably where the Chief is going to have to come in. There will be a time where those people will have to appear for court. Is any contingency setup for that?

Bowser explained the Police Committee have set up a series of questions, you have seen them, we sent them to the surrounding police communities, asking them for their feedback. Which did address how do they handle coverage when a police officer is sick, jury duty? We haven't received any back yet. There was no deadline.

Tyson Klukan asked when will the Fire Hydrant at the 1300 Block of 4th Avenue being fixed? It has been out of service for the past two (2) years. Borough Manager stated it is next to be fixed.

Miklos asked Klukan if he has been aware of that for two (2) years? Klukan answered yes, and Council has been aware of it too. Bartuccio added that she thought Josh [Abernathy] had stated that before.

Klukan asked salt has been ordered, what is our salt supply? Was the salt bid approved? Borough Manager explained a contract [Morton] was approved for salt. Currently, our account is being setup. At which point we will have 100 ton of salt on order.

Klukan asked if the names of the Police Chief applicants will be read aloud? Solicitor Vigilante stated that is a good question. Council has a special solicitor for police matters, and Vigilante does not want to overstep his bounds. Vigilante has not been involved with this process at all.

TAPE BREAK 7:01p.m. - 7:09 p.m.

Amy Moody asked when Mr. Abernathy's resignation letter was received? Bowser stated she became aware of it last week. Borough Manager stated his resignation is dated 9-27-2015. Bartuccio added it was sent by email.

SOLICITOR COMMENTS

Solicitor Vigilante made comments that required no action.

BOROUGH MANAGER COMMENTS

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Made comments that required no action.

MAYOR COMMENTS

Mayor read from a prepared statement. (Attached)

Borough Manager explained the actuarial study [prepared by Mockenhaupt Benefits Group] from December 2014 is still accurate. The difference between the December [2014] to now is minimal. This was confirmed with our actuary Mockenhaupt, before that was presented, before we engaged in this. I asked the question, should we spend the Tax Payer money to have another actuary study done? Mockenhaupt said no that would not be necessary, the figures are not going to change. That is not a concern for the Tax Payers. We did contact the auditors, [the actuary] Mockenhaupt, regarding the pension plan and how to proceed with this. Which was the appropriate thing to do. None of us at the table are experts with pensions or the pension laws.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Banks had no comments at this time.

Bowser, Miklos, and Bartuccio made comments that required no action.

ADJOURNMENT

Miklos made a motion at 7:20 p.m. to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Banks.

Motion Carried. 4-0 Unanimous

Kathy Bartuccio
Council President

Lisa Bittner
Borough Secretary