

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH
MINUTES
MONDAY, April 2, 2018**

CALL TO ORDER: (President Nick Cost)

President Cost called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked all to join him in the “Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Council Members Nick Cost, Bernie Scalzo, Chris DeGonzague, Joann Matarese, Tracey Lazier, Amy Bean, Bob Lesjack, Mayor Tammy Rogalski, Solicitor Smith and Secretary/Treasurer Sharon Vannan.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

President Cost opened the floor for public comment.

President Cost recognized Barbara Mihelc of White Street who expressed her objection to placing a cell tower at Kennedy Park, “Money is nice, but I’m not even sure I’d want it in the Upper Field.” Councilman Scalzo asked if disguising would dispel her objections. She replied, “Just not the place for it.” President Cost thanked Mrs. Mihelc and said, “This will be discussed further under the Parks & Recreation section of the meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)

Councilwoman Matarese offered the Minutes from March 2018 for review and a motion to accept the Minutes as written. Council Member DeGonzague seconded the motion to accept the minutes. All responded “Aye”.

Council members reviewed the Treasurer’s Report for March 2018. Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report and authorize disbursements of \$89,724.27. Total Receipts were \$142,380.45. Council Member Amy Bean seconded the motion. The motion carried with a roll call vote. All members voted in favor, none opposed.

B. PUBLIC WORKS: (Bernie Scalzo)

Vice President Scalzo read the Public Works report for March 2018 into the record. Bob Tedesco reported the following:

- The crew worked on the 3rd floor renovations;
- due to weather conditions – lots of plowing;
- 10 bucket loads of cinder/salt mix sold to Vandling borough;
- March & April recycling donations will be combined in the April report;
- Still working on ideas for a snow ordinance to be reviewed in August for the 2018/2019 season;
- Removed signs, but will be replacing the Loading Zone sign in the front of the building;
- Attached the sweeper broom to the backhoe – will start sweeping the streets, weather permitting.

C. BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Bob Lesjack)

Councilman Lesjack reported that all second floor bathroom repairs are completed. The Chandeliers are up. Bob and Wally have started the third floor painting. Next purchase planned is tables & chairs. He will contact BIU to find out the occupancy allowance and what permits we need. Mr. Lesjack will have more information for the next meeting.

D. PARKS & RECREATION: (Amy Bean)

Councilwoman Bean reported that she is still waiting for a walk around with the representative to see if any other spot would work. The upper field may be an option and the amount of radiation is minimal. Mr. Lesjack indicated his opposition to the cell tower.

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Councilman Scalzo asked about disguising the tower to create less of an impact. Councilwoman Bean said, "I'm still gathering information and will report back after we've toured the area to see if any other spot is a possible option."

E. CODE ENFORCEMENT: (Christopher DeGonzague)

Councilman DeGonzague offered Stephanie Reisch's monthly report for review. She reported that she is working on Non-traffic violation ticks for nuisance properties. The 500 block of Main Street will see another demolition. The permit is submitted. Residential Rental Ordinance states that if the owner of a rental property lives more than 20 miles from the borough, a local property manager must be on record. Letters have gone out and ½ of the owners have responded. She will be following up on this.

Councilman DeGonzague, as "Health & Safety" chair, is working on the items related to the building's recent Risk Management inspection. He is seeking bids for a safety gate at the bottom of the Fire escape at the back of the building. He got a price for the cost of repairs to the front door and windows at the Senior Center from Mesko Glass for \$6,400 and a price from Home Depot for the floors in the Senior Center. Councilman DeGonzague made a motion to accept the quote from Home Depot to replace the Senior Center floor to include the kitchen area for \$5,300. Tracey Lazier seconded the motion. A roll call vote found seven in favor, none opposed. The motion carried. Councilman DeGonzague then made a motion to accept the bid from Mesko Glass for the replacement of the front door entrance, side and transom windows to the Senior Center at a cost of \$6,280. Councilwoman Matarese seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Seven members in favor, none opposed. Councilman DeGonzague will make arrangements for the work to begin.

The last item reported was concern about the buildup of icicles around the building. He and Nick Cost will be working on that for the next meeting. Risk Management recommended regular maintenance to remove the icicles as quickly and safely as possible to avoid potential injury to pedestrians.

F. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Councilwoman Tracey Lazier deferred to Art McLain who reported that the Memorial Day ceremony and parade was in the planning states. President Cost asked Councilwoman Lazier to work with Art on details for Memorial Day and find out what they could do to organize the parade.

Mr. McLain reported that he and president Cost would be participating in a panel discussion with Representative Jonathan Fritz. Also participating would be one of the Clifford Twp. Supervisors and a representative from the Northern Tier. Council member Lazier, as Comm. & Econ. Development Chair was asked to attend.

Mr. McLain was offering to make a proposal to available storefront rental property owners to attend an "Open House" to

MAYOR ROGALSKI'S REPORT:

Mayor Rogalski provided the March 2018 police report and the April bill for the Vandling police patrols. The Mayor recommended that the crosswalks be repainted and that pedestrian safety signs be purchased warning drivers to stop for people in the crosswalks.

The Mayor submitted a request to purchase guns and accessories at an approximate cost of \$5,480. The request was for eight 9mm handguns, mag pouches and holsters. Chief Johnson offered a persuasive argument supporting the purchase. Following much discussion, a motion was not offered to approve the purchase, the request was tabled. At this point, Mayor Rogalski stood up and left the meeting.

Chief Johnson presented two quotes for gun mounts from General Sales Administration and installation from Mol Communications for the Chevy Impala and the Ford Explorer SUV. Total cost is \$1,387. Councilman Scalzo made a motion to approve the purchase. Councilwoman

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Matarese seconded the motion. A roll call vote found six members in favor, one (Councilman DeGonzague) opposed. The motion carried.

SOLICITOR SMITH'S REPORT:

Solicitor Smith presented a "Release & Hold Harmless" Agreement between the Borough and Zazzera's Market permitting police vehicles to park on Zazzera's property on Center Street. Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to approve the Agreement. Councilwoman Matarese seconded the motion. All voted "aye" and the motion carried.

Solicitor Smith offered Resolution #4_2018 – Adopting a 20% Administration fee on building permits issued by BIU of PA, Inc. This will defray the cost of processing payments and quarterly state reports by the Borough office staff that were done by the previous building permit providers. Atty. Smith said that this is the standard average and reasonable fee charged by other municipalities. Councilman DeGonzague proposed a motion to approve Resolution #4_2018. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Solicitor Smith presented the Police Contract for Lee Rowan. This is a five-year contract retroactive to January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2022. Mr. Kameen of the Forest News interrupted with a request for details of the Contract. Solicitor Smith responded, "There are no significant changes, only that it is a five year, rather than three year contract. Wages will increase by 2.5% for each of the first three years of the contract, then by 2% for the 4th & 5th years." Councilwoman Lazier made a motion to accept the five-year employment contract for Assistant Chief Rowan. Councilwoman Matarese seconded the motion. All members voted yes to a roll call vote and the motion carried. Assistant Rowan will receive an adjustment to the upcoming payroll check for the 2.5% increase for all wages received since January 1, 2018.

CORRESPONDENCE:

President Cost shared several pieces of correspondence:

A letter from Dianne Junior of the F.C. Library requesting permission to do repairs to a wall in the library, the cost to be covered by the F. C. Lions Club. Councilperson Bean offered a motion to approve the work. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. All responded "aye" and the motion carried.

Letters were received from the F.C. Historical Society and the Rail-Trail Council expressing concerns about anticipated on Main Street and asking Council to avoid work during the Rail Town Festival planned for August 4, 2018.

An invitation was received for the Spring 2018 PennDot CAB meeting on 5/7/18 at 1:00 p.m. in Tunkhannock, PA. Anyone planning to attend, please rsvp by 4/11/18

All members received an invitation to attend the PA One Call "Safety Day Conference" at Mohegan Sun Arena on 5/17/18 from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A complimentary lunch will be served.

Everyone received an invitation to attend the governor's "Cabinet in your Community" event to be held April 16, 2018 beginning at 10:45 a.m. in the Dietrich Theater, Tunkhannock, PA. Please rsvp by 4/11/18.

NEW BUSINESS:

Councilman DeGonzague made a motion to purchase a wall-mounted lockbox for the borough entrance at the bottom of the stairs. This will eventually replace the two post office boxes currently paid for at the F.C. Post Office. A one-time cost of \$80 for the mailbox vs. an annual fee for both boxes totaling \$148/year. Residents have been asking for a lockbox at the bottom of the stairs for many years to deposit their sewer payments. Councilwoman Bean seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken, all members voted yes.

A request was made for the purchase of road signs. One for the "drop off & pick up" area on Main Street in front of the borough building and a Handicap Parking sign for Center Street,

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not to exceed \$25 per sign. Councilman Lesjack offered a motion to purchase the two signs. Councilman DeGonzague seconded the motion. A roll call vote found all members in favor, none opposed.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT:

Resident Rachel Habetler voiced concerns about mold in the basement of the borough building; the smell is in the library and asked council to look into having the building tested. Ms. Habetler also commented on the weapons purchase asking, "Why do they need approval if it's already in the budget?" She added, "It's easier to purchase ammo and less expensive." She also noted that she knows of a campground where the guards there all carry the same weapon. Council Member Scalzo said, "Jim made some good points, but they should provide their own guns, especially if they would be using them elsewhere. Councilwoman Lazier expressed opposition saying, "They should purchase their own gun. There is money in the budget, but that has to last the year, what if something comes up later on, it's only April." Councilman DeGonzague asked Asst. Chief Rowan how old his gun is, Rowan responded, "Twenty years."

Brian Weis of the Barking Cupcake Bakery, as an avid hunter, expressed his support for the gun purchase and increased training for the police "to add to their feeling of safety as civil servants, they deserve this."

Dan Prager, "If the officer is drawn away from his vehicle, he needs the extra security of a sidearm." Councilwoman Bean said, "The officers should have their own guns with their own ammo, but other departments do not provide these for their officers and we shouldn't either."

Barbara Mihelc asked, "Are these guns taken home by the officer for their personal use or to use with other departments?" Chief Johnson replied, "They would be taken home by the officer, but the officer would be penalized for the loss or damage of the weapon which would still belong to the department.

Anthony from the Elegante Restaurant noted, "PSP uses a 45 caliber, why not use what PSP uses?"

Linda Buck added, "Instead of buying new guns, why not buy extra magazines & clips for the guns they already own?"

Moving on to another topic, John Scepita asked if any more information was available on the occupancy capacity of the third floor. Solicitor Smith responded that this would be followed up on with our new inspectors, BIU. Councilman DeGonzague added that he has been working with Lee Bautista of the BIU for work on the senior center and would contact him about the occupancy issues.

Pat McCabe expressed her thanks to Cindy and Sharon for getting her a new garbage can.

Councilwoman Lazier asked about parking at the corners on Main Street, which is causing a hazard to drivers trying to enter Main Street from a side street. If the state cannot guide us on this, maybe bubble mirrors or someone directing traffic would be helpful. Councilman Scalzo said he would check into this and see if signs pushing vehicles back from the corners could be an option.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next regular meeting will be on Monday, May 7, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Council Member Bean made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Matarese seconded the motion. All members responded "aye". The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.