

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH  
MINUTES  
MONDAY, MARCH 5, 2018**

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**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 everyone to join him in the “Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

President Cost opened the floor for public comment.

President Cost recognized John Scepita. Mr. Scepita expressed concerns about the third floor renovations asking what the borough planned, “Has the borough applied for any necessary permits, considered the restriction on weight allowances, gotten the necessary Occupancy Permits from the building inspector and/or the Fire Chief. President Cost responded, “Thank you, John, we will certainly take all of this into account and look into your concerns.”

Abigail from the Barking Cupcake Bakery commented on some of the difficulties she has had in getting her business up and running. “Did council know that I’ve been paying rent for a year and a half and my opening was held up waiting for permits? The borough needs to improve their support of small businesses to get them into the town.” President Cost said, “We’re very sorry for any difficulties that you went through but hope that your business does well. Please don’t hesitate to call with any futures problems.”

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)**

In the absence of Councilwoman Matarese, President Cost offered the Minutes from February 2018 for review & approval. Council Member DeGonzague offered a motion to accept the minutes. Council Member Scalzo seconded the motion. All responded “Aye”.

Council members reviewed the Treasurer’s Report for February 2018. Council Member DeGonzague offered a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report and authorize disbursements of \$102,868.15. Total Receipts were \$88,325.02. Council Member Lazier seconded the motion. The motion carried with a roll call vote. Six Members voted in favor, none opposed.

**B. PUBLIC WORKS: (Bernie Scalzo)**

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

- Installed eight (8) chandeliers on third floor, thank you to Brian Bartholomay for the use of his 12’ ladder;
- Painted the Mayor’s office, added bar for overhead light;
- Used the backhoe to remove ice buildup in the 600 block;
- February recycling donations - \$196.00
- 2/27 & 2/28 – applied cold patch to streets not paved with the sewer project;
- Cinder/salt sold to Vandling – 12 bucket-loads.

Councilman Scalzo added, “We are receiving complaints about garbage cans knocked over with the recent plowing, the snow was very heavy and the cans are very close to the road. It is just unavoidable. Bob & Wally went out today to locate and pick up some of the cans. Apologies again for a delay in collections, but when County Waste gets backed up due to the weather, they do everything to return on Saturday.” Councilman Scalzo offered the suggestion that residents could shovel a spot to level the can and the use of can liners may help to contain the contents if the cans are knocked over. There was also a lot of wind, which also contributed to some of the problems.

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Councilman Scalzo talked about plowing alleyways, "Some are privately owned and are being reviewed to determine ownership. As requested, the alleyway near Sacred Heart, between Hudson & Delaware will be plowed for the rest of this season. President Cost stated, "This is something that will be studied and decided on in August 2018 together with snow removal and parking problems so that we are better prepared for next winter.

Councilwoman Lazier suggested a call to PennDot, John Kameen complained that it took PennDot over seven hours to respond to the recent snow. President Cost said he would contact the Susquehanna office to find out why they are not plowing curb to curb, when we have an ordinance to restrict parking on Main Street for that reason.

**C. BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Bob Lesjack)**

Councilman Lesjack reported that Councilman DeGonzague got two bids for the floor in the Senior Center. The bid from Phil Hodges was to supply and install VCT tiles over the existing floor - \$2,468. The bid from Home Depot included the Mayor's office and addressed the potential for removal of the existing floor and repairs to the sub-floor in the Senior Center - \$6,311. The Mayor said that she decided she did not need a new floor in her office. Councilman DeGonzague suggested that the change may bring it to around \$5K, but he will verify that before a vote is taken. There will be more information at the April meeting.

Councilman Lesjack responded to Councilwoman Bean's question from the February meeting about the chandeliers on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, "The cost of the chandeliers were in the proposal made to council and it was voted on and approved and the cost of the chandeliers came in well under what was quoted." Councilman Lesjack added that he is going to get prices for blinds in the Mayor's office. There were some issues pointed out that were unsatisfactorily addressed by the contractor in the second floor restrooms. Mr. Lesjack said he would take pictures and address these problems with the contractor.

Councilman Lesjack reported that he had an engineer look at the structural issues in the building. He had not received a written report as promised. President Cost stated, "These issues can't be addressed until quotes are obtained so repairs to the foundation and door will be tabled at this time."

Councilman Lesjack said, "I've been giving the renovations to the third floor a lot of thought and came up with an idea to remove the stage, making that area into a service kitchen and making the existing kitchen into a Coat Room for guests attending events." Councilwoman Bean responded, "I don't agree with that at all, you need a stage, what about a DJ or band. Isn't the stage part of the historical significance of the building? What do you hope to charge to rent out the hall?" Mr. Lesjack closed by saying that many things are being considered and he will be exploring many options.

**D. PARKS & RECREATION: (Amy Bean)**

Councilwoman Bean talked with the Sprint Tower Representative regarding a tower installation at Kennedy Park. They plan to do a site visit to tour the area. It seems the Recycling/public works garage area is too far west, but the upper field may be an option. Eric Burns representing the Little League questioned the size and location that was proposed. He asked, "How would a 50'x50' or 60'x60' fenced in area coexist next to the concession stand?" Councilwoman Bean asked Mr. Burns to join her and Councilman DeGonzague when they meet with the Sprint representative. Dan Prager noted, "These towers emit very low power and what is emitted is deflected upward, and migrates down at a distance, "the safest place is directly under the shields." Councilwoman Bean also invited Mr. Lesjack to join them. Councilwoman Bean said, "Obviously we'd prefer it in the Upper Field, but they hope to find other acceptable locations.

**E. CODE ENFORCEMENT: (Christopher DeGonzague)**

Councilman DeGonzague offered Stephanie Reisch's monthly report for review. She reported the following:

- Demo project complete on Delaware Street;

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- Investigated complaints about water problems on Main Street;
- Continues to work on “junk vehicle” complaints;
- Ms. Reisch attended one-day Code Enforcement seminar, which was very informative; Continues to follow-up on compliance with Ordinance #463 - Residential Rentals;
- Ms. Reisch is working with Chief Johnson on a questionable property, will follow-up.

**F. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

Councilwoman Tracey Lazier shared information provided by Art McLain, Main Street Coordinator. Unavailable for this meeting, he submitted a report stating that he is still reporting all positive events to local publications and local media. He continues to work with Rail Trail and the GFCBA on the August 4 Trail Town Festival. He sent a letter to the Barking Cupcake Bakery welcoming them to F.C. The owner reports not receiving it, it will sent again. Mr. McLain is exploring possibilities with Lackawanna College to offer classes in Forest City. Hoping to put together a “Marketplace & Gallery” in Forest City, he is working with local artisans. As always, he is looking for ideas. He will be updating the listing of available storefronts.

**MAYOR ROGALSKI’S REPORT:**

Mayor Rogalski provided the February 2018 police report and the bill for the Vandling police patrols.

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 and the need for all of his officers to carry the same weapon. Discussion followed but the council failed to propose a motion to approve the purchase.

Mayor Rogalski reported on the recent “Coffee with the Cops” event. The turnout was not what they had hoped. They will try to do more of these kinds of things in the future to help create a greater goodwill between the force and the community.

**SOLICITOR SMITH’S REPORT:**

President Cost presented the 2018 “Library Lease” prepared by Solicitor Smith for council’s approval. The document was not updated in many years. There were no material changes and the Library Board approved it. Councilman Scalzo made a motion to accept the lease renewal, followed with a second by Councilwoman Bean. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

President Cost reminded council about the GFCBA “Spring Mixer” on March 7 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Hornbeck Chevrolet. All had received an email on this because the RSVP date was 2/28/18.

President Cost shared the award letter from PennDot for the Multimodal Transportation Grant for \$273K for the streetscape on the East side of Main Street. Bidding on this will begin in the spring.

One more piece of correspondence was a notice from Susquehanna County announcing the adoption of House Bill #292 declaring a “Burn Ban” effective March 15, 2018 through April 13, 2018. This burn ban is in effect for all of Susquehanna County. “Open burning is never allowed in the borough by ordinance with or without a ban.”

**NEW BUSINESS:**

PA One-Call asked the borough to adopt a Proclamation declaring April as “Safe Digging Month”. Councilwoman Tracey Lazier offered a motion to adopt the proclamation. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

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A contract renewal for Transmission rates for electrical service to the borough was proposed by BidURenergy, Inc. Our current provider's contract will expire in June and now is the time to get in on the lowest rates. The rate now is \$0.06246 plus GRT, a commitment for another 36 months will keep us at a competitive rate of \$.06892. The PPL rate is \$0.07433. Councilman DeGonzague made a motion to accept the 36-month rate. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted in six members in favor, none opposed. The motion carried. Ms. Vannan will submit the signed contracts.

Joe Franceski formerly dba Franceski Waste & Recycling requested a letter from Borough Council officially releasing him from the Garbage contract. He had satisfied the request to purchase the unused garbage bags, and reimburse the borough for all bags that were sold to residents and subsequently refunded. This resulted in no loss for the borough and he requested that the borough acknowledge that so he could attempt to get a refund from his insurance carrier for the bond he had to provide for the contract. Councilwoman Bean offered a motion to approve the "Release Letter". Councilman DeGonzague seconded the motion. All voted "aye" and the motion carried. Ms. Vannan will prepare a letter for President Cost's signature.

**CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Pat McCabe, Delaware Street, commented on the Reader Board at the south end of Main Street. She feels that it should not be used for advertising and asked why a restaurant was on the board. Ms. Stone responded that we charge \$5 for one week and anyone is welcome to post messages on the board. The restaurant was celebrating their anniversary and wanted to announce that. The board is for public service announcements or personal messages (nothing inappropriate is accepted). The small fee charged is helping the borough recoup the cost of the letters and message board.

John Scepita asked if the borough is considering adopting a "Quality of Life" policy. Mr. Scepita said, "Dickson City has adopted it and it working very well for them, I know people there that can give us information." Councilman DeGonzague replied, "That's something we're looking into."

The conversation turned again to Susq. County Comm. Center v. Wayne County Comm. Center for 911 calls. Rachel Habetler reminded everyone that UGI was not notified when fires erupted in the borough and feels this should be addressed with Wayne County Comm. Center. President Cost said it would be.

Steve Tourje asked why Sprint had not considered the existing cell towers, NEP's in Browndale or the one at Blueberry Hill. Councilwoman Bean said that Sprint had determined that the Kennedy Park was the best location for their signal and would provide better service to the area. In addition, locating the tower on Borough property would be a source of income for the Borough that would benefit the park and the community.

Former President Bill Orasin spoke about his pride in what they had all accomplished during his time on council, noting the recent Multimodal Transportation Grant awarded to the Borough for \$273K for the replacement of sidewalks on the East side of the Main Street. Council will need to finish what was started with the sidewalks on the West side of Main, replacing parking meters, getting the lampposts installed, etc. He thanked Cindy Stone for her participation in the grant application process and noted, "This is a great opportunity for the borough to grow and be a place where people will want to come".

Mayor Rogalski requested a Safety Committee Meeting. Councilman DeGonzague offered to plan a meeting and let her know when it would be.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The next regular meeting will be on Monday, April 2, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Council Member Scalzo made a motion to adjourn. Council Member DeGonzague seconded the motion. All members responded "aye". The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.