

FOREST CITY BOROUGH
“SPECIAL MEETING” MINUTES
Thursday, July 19, 2018

CALL TO ORDER:

President Cost called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

The following council members were present: President Nick Cost, Joann Matarese, Chris Degonzague, Robert Lesjack, Tracey Lazier, Amy Bean, Solicitor Paul Smith and Secretary/Treasurer S. Vannan. Absent: Council member Bernie Scalzo.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

President Cost opened the floor for public comment specific only the purpose of this meeting which was to accept nominations and subsequently appoint a new Mayor.

Deanna Jonas asked why the previous mayor had resigned. President Cost replied, “Her resignation was in the F.C. News.” He had no other comment. Ms. Jonas also asked, “Are names of people interested in filling the Mayor’s position submitted, and are their qualifications checked, will you be reading off those qualification?” President Cost responded, “Council members are given the letters of interest submitted by each candidate and have time to consider each.” Rudy Peterka (Browndale) asked, “Do council members all know these people and their qualifications?” Solicitor Smith responded, “When the mayor’s resignation was accepted by a majority vote of council, an ad was published asking for anyone who would like to serve as mayor to make their interest known to council. Eight “letters of interest” were received and distributed to council members. This is done according to Borough Code, which says that Council will fill the seat by majority vote within a certain amount of time. Nominations are made at a public meeting. Then Council members vote. The seat is filled by that person who receives the majority vote, in this case, there are six members present, and so the nominee must receive at least four out of the six votes. This seat is for 18 months which means that there will be a 2 year term available at the next general election for 2020.

Todd Marz commented, “This is the talk of the town, can we know who was on this *nomination* list? And something about each?”

President Cost read from the list of interested candidates and offered each an opportunity to speak to the audience. Those present were Christopher Ginton, Barbara Mihelc, Carla Stackhouse and Councilmember Robert Lesjack. Not in attendance were Robert DeGonzague, Brian Karwowski, Avery Wagner and Linda Buck.

Christopher Ginton, “I’ve been a resident of Forest City since 1993 and I am a naturalized American Citizen originally from the Bahamas. If I’m appointed to this position, I will work very hard to bring this town back to what it was in the early 90’s. I will promote the town and ask that everyone work with me to accomplish this.”

Robert Lesjack, “I’ve served on Council for two years, I’ve lived in Forest City since 1971 with my wife Barbara. I have a degree in business from Lackawanna College and a degree from Syracuse Mortuary College. I’ve worked on Wall Street and believe that my experiences will help me to get people involved. I hope this Council will consider me for the Mayor’s seat.”

Barbara Mihelc, “I’ve served this town since 1985, as an assessor, an auditor, and a council person and feel qualified to take on this challenge. No matter who is selected, we will need to all work together and offer our support.”

Carla Stackhouse, “I was born & raised in Forest City. I am a teacher in the Scranton School District. Forest City has become a different place and everybody wants to bring it back. We need to bring back Forest City Pride and although I would like this opportunity to serve, I would feel very comfortable with any of these people who have expressed an interest in this position and would offer my support.

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President Cost thanked everyone, “If there are no further comments, we’ll move on to the nominations.”

NOMINATIONS:

President Cost opened the floor to council members for nominations. The first nomination was made by Tracey Lazier for Christopher Ginton. Councilmember Joanne Matarese nominated Barbara Mihelc.

There were no more nominations, so President Cost closed the nominations and asked for all those in favor of the first nominee, Christopher Ginton. With six members present, four of the six voted in support of Christopher Ginton. The four voting “yes” were Council Members Chris DeGonzague, Tracey Lazier, Amy Bean and President Nick Cost. The two opposed were Council members Joann Matarese and Robert Lesjack.

According to Borough Code, the voting was over with a majority vote for Mr. Ginton and he was officially appointed as the new Mayor of Forest City Borough to serve for eighteen months until the next general election.

SWEARING IN:

Solicitor Smith administered the “Oath of Office” to the newly appointed Mayor. A round of applause and congratulations from the audience followed.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Cost asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilman DeGonzague made a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Amy Bean seconded the motion. All voted aye and the meeting ended at 7:15 p.m.