

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH
MINUTES
MONDAY NOVEMBER 4th, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER: (President DeGonzague, presiding).

President DeGonzague called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. He welcomed everyone. He then asked everyone to join in the “Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present: President DeGonzague, Council Members Bernie Scalzo, Sarah Woody, Robert Lesjack, Eileen Lynch, Mayor Glinton, Secretary/Treasurer Dennise Yankauskas, Solicitor Nathan Favreau. Absent was Solicitor Marissa McAndrew, Council Members Amy Bean and Tracey Lazier.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: (President DeGonzague)

President DeGonzague asked Councilwoman Lynch to read once again Forest City Borough’s Council’s Public Meeting Policy. Council will hold a 2025 General Fund & Sewer budget work session.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jason Obelenus of Railroad Street asked about the two Solicitor for the Borough. Jason stated that again there is duplication of services. He said on 7/11 you contacted one Solicitor for the exactly the same thing on 7/29. Then you called Karpowich four times within a week at continuously for an hour to two hours for \$150 an hour, you can’t get your eggs in all one basket and call once. You have to continuously call him. Also, Karpovich travel fees, \$450 to came to the meeting and that doesn’t include hours with the phone conversation. He asked since when can private citizens call the Solicitor and the Borough gets charged for it. The budget for 2023 for Solicitor was budgeted for \$4600, you spent over \$8100 that year, so far for this year you budgeted \$6100, with 3 months to go, you spent \$12,000, please tell me how this is helping the Borough. President DeGonzague stated that in the beginning Marissa agreed to have another lawyer to assist with code enforcement issues. Jason said he looked at the hours, there is 9 hours in a month. President DeGonzague stated if you have a problem take it up with Marissa. Jason stated no, I taking it up with you, that you are supposed to be in charge. Maybe we should go down to one Solicitor. President DeGonzague said then we will go down to one Solicitor then. Jason said you people are just looking for answers from different Solicitor. President DeGonzague said no we are not. Jason said according to these bills you are. Jason said, you are talking ordinance that Mrs. McAndrew wrote, and then you are going to the other Solicitor and answering that exact same thing. President DeGonzague said no its not, it’s about different issues. Jason said no it’s not, it’s the same thing, it’s right here in black and white in your bills. Jason read some of the billing from McAndrew Law, and then compare them to Karpowich billing. Jason said again you are using two Solicitor for the exact same thing. I don’t believe that Mrs. McAndrew can’t handle it or just go with Karpowich but you are wasting tax payer’s money and nothing is getting done. President DeGonzague said fine we will put it on next month’s agenda and see what council wants to do.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION: (Robert Lesjack)

Councilman Lesjack made a motion to accept the Minutes from October 7th, 2024 seconded by Councilwoman Lynch, all responded “Aye”, none opposed.

Council members reviewed the Treasurer’s Report for October 2024. Councilman Lesjack offered a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report for October 2024. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. The roll call vote was five in favor, none opposed.

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Councilman Lesjack read to review 2025 General Fund & Sewer Budget Drafts, if acceptable, move to advertise. Councilwoman Woody made a motion for a work session for review and more detail. Councilwoman Lynch seconded the motion. The roll call vote was four in favor, one opposed. Councilman Lesjack was informed from Secretary of the Sewer that you can't make a motion to advertise the tax levy with no increase without moving to advertise the 2025 budget. The tax levy was tabled until December council meeting. Councilman Lesjack made a motion to advertise the 2025 meeting schedule in the Forest City News. President DeGonzague seconded the motion. The roll call vote was five in favor, none opposed.

Councilwoman Woody was concerned about two different meeting, that the Secretary/Treasurer would have time to get everything finished in time. The Secretary/Treasurer stated that she would be ok with finishing on time.

The Sewer Secretary suggested to Councilman Lesjack to pick a date for the work session. Councilman Lesjack made a motion to advertise the special work session meeting for November 18th, 2024 at 6 p.m. Councilwoman Lynch seconded the motion. The roll call vote was five in favor, none opposed.

PUBLIC WORKS: (Bernard Scalzo)

The Public Works report for October 2024 was offered. Councilman Scalzo read the following into record: fixed a broken water line in ladies room of the library, cleaned miner's memorial, took air conditioners out of borough office, changed hydraulic fluid in plow for the F350 pick-up truck, cleaned the around the trees on Main Street, trimmed trees on the 800 block of Lackawanna Street, installed two new light at the garage, put insulation in borough garage, put out 27 barriers for the Steam Town Marathon, replaced two fuel filters in jet truck, cleaned all storm drains on Dundaff Street, repaired and replaced a bracket and belt on zero turn mower, fix floor in shed at K.P. where the zero turn mower in kept, replaced fuel filter on recycling truck, cleaned storm drains on Grand, South, North, and Susquehanna Streets. Councilman Scalzo also reported for the month of October, recycling donations were \$227. He stated there was no update on the storm water project or what going on at Center Street. He stated he has been in contact with the engineers. He said he wished things happened faster but it is not.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Sarah Woody)

Councilwoman Woody updated the community that the panic bar was installed on the children's side of the library.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Amy Bean)

President DeGonzague asked if anyone from Action Team was here. There are no updates from them. It was stated that Halloween on Main Street had a great turn out.

PARKS & RECREATION:

President DeGonzague asked Chairperson Kathy Murphy if she had anything to report, she stated nothing at the present time.

COMMUNITY SAFETY & HEALTH: (Tracey Lazier)

No Updates

CODE ENFORCEMENT (Robert Lesjack)

Councilman Lesjack read the Code enforcement monthly report for October 2024 for total calls of 47 for the month.

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MAYOR'S REPORT: (Mayor Christopher Glinton)

The October 2024 police report was distributed for review. He announced the Steam Town Marathon was a great success held on October 13th. He also announced the drug take back held on Saturday, October 26th took in 37.6 pounds of medicine at the take back.

Councilwoman Lynch made a motion to accept the resignation of part-time patrolwoman Mateyka due to personal responsibilities effective October 15th, 2024. President DeGonzague seconded the motion. A roll call vote was made, all in favor, none opposed. The Mayor also announced the no parking on Main Street is now in effect from 2 a.m. – 5 a.m. until March 31st, 2025. The Forest City Police Department offered a big THANK YOU to all first responders who assisted with traffic control for the marathon.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: (Solicitor McAndrew) (Solicitor Favreau)

No updates

CONTINUED BUSINESS: (President DeGonzague)

President DeGonzague asked for a motion to purchase a new computer for the sewer billing and payments. Councilwoman Woody question if there was money already set aside for this. President DeGonzague stated there is money already aside for this. Councilwoman Woody made the motion. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. The roll call vote was five in favor, none opposed.

President DeGonzague read a letter on behalf of Councilwoman Bean thanking the community and council for their support.

NEW BUSINESS: (President DeGonzague)

President DeGonzague opened the only sealed snow removal bid for Main Street for the 2024/2025 season. Mikloiche Timber & Construction came in at \$7000. President DeGonzague asked if anyone had a motion. Councilman Scalzo explained that the money comes out of meter's account. He stated that we have to be very careful because once the money runs out, that will end the snow removal. Councilwoman Woody question if that is just one time. Councilman Scalzo said no, that is per time we call him. President DeGonzague asked Mikloiche if that was each time to be sure. There was a little low spoken conversation among council, then the President spoke up that it is up to council what they want to do. Councilman Scalzo said again if we get a big storm that what that money is used for. Councilman Scalzo made a motion to accept the bid. The Mayor ask how much money is there in that account. The Secretary/Treasurer told him to look at your Treasurer Report. Councilwoman again stated it's \$7000 every time. Councilman Scalzo stated it was \$5000 last year, prayer for a warm winter. President DeGonzague stated there is \$20,000 in the budget, and Councilman Scalzo again said that's meter money and fines. Councilwoman Woody would like to make a motion to look at this and comparison to reestablish the budget. Councilman Scalzo stated we would be able to rebid this because it was open. Solicitor Favreau stated you would have to rebid the whole thing and go through the whole process again. President DeGonzague said it's up to council and the Sewer Secretary stated you have a motion. Councilman Scalzo said he made the motion to approve the bid, Solicitor Favreau there no seconded so it tabled. Councilman Lesjack said what are we going to do if we get a storm. The President said I will take a motion one more time for \$7000 from Mikloiche. The President asked the Secretary/Treasurer for a roll call, and she asked who seconded, Councilman Scalzo said no one so the motion dies. Councilman Lesjack spoke up and said I think I going to seconded it, because if we have snow from now until December 1st, we are in trouble. Councilwoman Lynch spoke and said what if we get three storms, we are over our budget, the Secretary/Treasurer stated that is the chance you got to take, you can't control mother nature. The roll call vote was taken, two in favor, three opposed. It was tabled and to rebid it.

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Councilman Scalzo made the motion to advertise again, Councilwoman Lynch seconded. The roll call vote was five in favor, none opposed. The cut-off date is November 27th, 2024 @ 4 p.m. Bids will be read at the December 2nd, 2024 meeting.

Councilwoman Lynch talked sewer and garbage bills to be included on the property taxes. She said she has information from the courthouse how it will work and she explained it. Councilwoman Lynch said she think it would be easier that, but didn't want to burden anyone. Councilman Scalzo suggested a note in the bills. Councilwoman Lynch suggested a poll. Sewer Secretary spoke about penalties and interest that the town will lose because residents do pay late, and you also have to figure out when is it going to be due. Councilwoman Lynch said it's probably a lot of overhead. She is waiting to hear back from the courthouse. Some residents favored leaving it alone. It will be discussed in more detail at a later time.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT:

Eric Burns asked that at the last meeting spoke about the Governor's website to look for information about the on-going problems with ATV's, I couldn't find anything about it. Councilwoman Woody said on Josh Shapiro's website, Eric asked where on the website, she said she wasn't sure, that she was talking to Director of Community & Economic Development. She stated that it is out there and, in the works, Eric stated there is nothing proposed to the law. Councilwoman Woody stated she would call him and ask.

Carla Stackhouse spoke again about ordinance 522 was inactive, that there has been people here at every council meeting bring up issue with the changes. I going to tell you right now that at least two times a week, a member of my family has almost been hit at that intersection. Although it is incorrectly written, you have intended to put a stop sign at the top of Erie Street where it meets Railroad Street, it is idiotic and even Steven will agree with me. If you stop on the corner in the winter time, you will be stuck on the hill, or sliding back down. You should repeal the changes you made and consult someone who knows what they are doing. You have a mess with the truck route, a mess on Higgins Street, Erie Street almost an accident every day. Ms. Stackhouse urged council to revisit it so it, so is not a danger to anyone, because I will tell you right now I will personally hold you, Mr. DeGonzague responsible if someone in my family gets hurt, because you change this and I don't think you know what your doing. President DeGonzague replied that he didn't change it alone that it was done with the Solicitor. Carla said that the Solicitor said you changed it and she just gave you advice. He said that the Action Team had ask to make it one way. He stated that the Action Team was getting grant money to pave that street and that's why I did it. Some yelling back and forth went on, the President DeGonzague finally told Carla to go sit down. President DeGonzague said to bring in the mistake on the ordinance and I will sit down the solicitor.

Carrie Kelleher started to speak when Councilman Lesjack asked if you're a resident here, she replied yes, I live with my mother here. So now going forward with my comment, there was an incident that occurred at Elegantes, where you, Christopher, he said this has nothing the borough. He stated he will not entertainment it. She tried to continue with a criminal complaint brought up against him, he quickly adjourned the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: (President DeGonzague)

The next regularly scheduled Council meeting will be, Monday December 2nd, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

President DeGonzague quickly adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.