

MINUTES – MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2020

FOREST CITY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

At 6:00 p.m. President Cost welcomed everyone. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present – President Nick Cost, V.P. Bernie Scalzo, council members Robert Lesjack, Joann Matarese, Chris DeGonzague, Tracey Lazier, Mayor Clinton, Solicitor McAndrew & Secretary/Treasurer S. Vannan. Councilwoman Amy Bean was unavailable.

PUBLIC COMMENT (*specific to agenda items*)

President Cost opened the floor for public comment, none offered.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from October 5, 2020. Councilman Lesjack seconded the motion. All replied in favor, motion carried.

Councilwoman Matarese motioned to accept the Special Meeting Minutes from October 27, 2020.

Councilman Lesjack seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Councilwoman Matarese offered a Motion to approve the October Treasurer's Report and authorize all disbursements for October 2020. Councilman Scalzo seconded. Roll call vote – 6 to 0 in favor.

The Budget request from the Mayor for the Police Department was discussed. Councilwoman Lazier offered a motion to address each item individually. Seconded by Councilman DeGonzague. All voted in favor. Item #1 – police vehicle purchase for \$41,165 over a three-year payment option. A roll call vote was taken – 5 voted no, 1 voted yes – the purchase was denied. Item #2 - \$1/hour increase for all part-time officers – roll call vote 5-yes, 1-no, rate increase approved for 2021. Item #3 - reinstatement of a Sergeant's position resulted in a tie vote, a "yes" vote from Mayor Clinton was the tie breaker. The Sergeant's position was approved. #4 – The current policy of a \$50 bonus to part-time officers for Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year's Day will continue. #5 - Add a \$25 bonus for vacation coverage for MLK Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day & Veteran's Day. The request was met with unanimous approval, roll call vote was six in favor, none opposed. Item #6 – A request to purchase new badges for all officers with 2020 surplus funds was approved five to one. Item #7 – Request the purchase of an FOP Associate Membership and FOP Legal Defense Plan for each part-time officer in recognition for their service during the pandemic at a cost of \$93/man. Four councilmembers voted yes, two no. The one-time purchase was approved for 2021.

Draft 2021 Budgets were distributed for review. Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to advertise the 2021 General Fund Budget. Seconded by Councilman Lesjack, all responded "aye", none opposed. Councilwoman Matarese motioned to advertise the 2021 Sewer Fund Budget. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. All voted yes, none opposed. Ms. Vannan will submit the ad to the Forest City News for publication and upload the budgets to the Borough website for public inspection. They will be considered for adoption at the December 7th meeting. With no tax increase anticipated, a Resolution for the 2021 Tax Levy will also be prepared for the December meeting.

PUBLIC WORKS: (President Cost)

President Cost offered the Public Works report:

- Installed a guide rail along the ditch in the entrance to Kennedy Park;
- Repaired a storm drains at 131 Grand Ave. and 105 Maxey Street, used 1,120 lbs. of Sakrete;
- Cleaned pavers at Miners' Memorial with jet truck;
- Installed a repaired stained-glass window in library;
- Collected five loads of yard waste;
- And accepted a delivery of 22 ton of road salt.

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BUILDINGS & GROUNDS (Robert Lesjack)

Councilman Lesjack asked if everyone approved of the new heat/air system installed. And noted the comfortable temperature. All agreed. Councilman Lesjack said he has been in discussion with President Cost about adding doors to the entrance of Pentecost Hall to secure the kitchen and bathroom areas. Councilman Lesjack motioned for approval to seek proposals for the purchase and installation of double entry doors. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Councilman Lesjack reported that he is working on a “Rental Agreement” for use of the Hall but needs to get a few more details. He then passed the floor to Gary Wilding from KBA to report on his progress with specs for the Borough roof.

Mr. Wilding reported that he is not ready with the specs, he is waiting for drawings from the state. He will put it out for bid as soon as he has the bid packet & specs ready as was already previously approved by council.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Amy Bean)

Councilwoman Bean was not available.

Rails Trails Representative Deb McNamara offered more details on the \$10,000 DCNR Peer-to-Peer Grant. The Contract Agreement between Forest City and Eastwick Solutions was distributed for all to review. Councilwoman Lazier made a motion to authorize President Cost to sign the agreement committing the Borough to a \$500 payment for their share of the cost. Vice President Scalzo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Six voted yes, none opposed. The motion carried.

PARKS & RECREATION (Tracey Lazier)

Councilwoman Lazier offered her thanks to all the volunteers and community support for all of the events held at Kennedy Park over the last few months. A special thanks to Zazzera’s Market, Amanda Howells, Megan Neubert, Sylvester Chevrolet, Zembrzycki’s Farm for donating pumpkins and everyone who’s worked so hard to make each event a success.

The third Annual Soup Cook-off will be on Saturday, January 30, 2021, sponsored by the F.C. Parks & Recreation Board. Watch for more details to come. Weather permitting, there may also be an Ice Fishing Derby, hosted by the Police Department.

Councilwoman Lazier reported, “There has been more vandalism at Kennedy Park. Thank you to Chris DeGonzague for repairs on the locks on the bathrooms. It’s felt that more lighting is needed to deter the vandals.” Councilwoman Lazier made a motion to purchase solar lights (at least 10) not to exceed \$200. Councilman DeGonzague seconded the motion. A roll call vote taken – six to zero in favor, motion carried. Councilman DeGonzague will provide information on the lights, Ms. Vannan will order through one of the Borough accounts.

CODE ENFORCEMENT - SAFETY & HEALTH (Bernie Scalzo & Chris DeGonzague)

Councilman Scalzo announced that the Recycling Center will continue to operate through the winter, but with reduced hours. The new hours will be 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. beginning the 1st Saturday in December.

Councilman DeGonzague thanked Stephanie Reisch for her efforts (when she served as Code Enforcement Officer) to get a grant through the Susq. Co. Housing & Authority for a demolition of a condemned structure at 517/519 Susquehanna St. Working with Bobbi Jo Turner of the Authority, a grant was approved through the CDBG Program for \$30,000. \$900 was used for asbestos & lead paint testing. The balance left is \$29,100 for demolition of the home. The low bid came in at \$34,175, which includes the removal of several trees on the property, creating a shortfall of around \$5,575.

Councilman DeGonzague made a motion to cover the shortfall to ensure the project moves forward under the Public Safety line item in Impact Fees. Councilman Scalzo Seconded the motion. All responded yes to a roll-call vote. Motion carried six in favor, none opposed. Ms. Turner administers

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the grant through the county and will submit an invoice to the Borough for the shortfall. Councilman DeGonzague again thanked Stephanie Reisch for her participation.

MAYOR'S REPORT: (Mayor Christopher Clinton)

October 2020 Police Report and the Vandling invoice for November patrols was distributed.

Mayor Clinton regrettably announced the resignations of two part-time officers, Jason Bell and Vincent Mezick. Councilman DeGonzague motioned to accept the resignation from Jason Bell, Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the resignation was accepted effective 10/16/2020. Councilman DeGonzague moved to accept the resignation of Vincent Mezick. Seconded by Councilwoman Lazier all voted in favor and the resignation was accepted effective 11/2/2020.

Mayor Clinton thanked Briechle Law for a generous monetary donation toward the Holiday Light Fund. The Halloween on Main Street brought in 23 sponsors and 38 participants collecting \$1,633 for the Holiday Light Fund.

The Mayor reported that the Drug Take-Back collected and turned over to the D.A. 42.31 lbs. of liquids & creams and 71.76 lbs. of pills. Again, a very successful effort by the police department.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: (Atty. Marissa McAndrew)

Attorney McAndrew presented Ordinance #520_2020 that upon adoption will increase the Tax Collector Commission from the current 2.5% (the lowest anywhere) to 5%. This increase does not take place until after the next election in 2022 with the start of the new term in January 2023. Councilman Lesjack motioned to advertise Ordinance #520_2020. Councilwoman Matarese seconded the motion. All voted in favor and motion carried. Ms. Vannan will place a legal ad in the F.C. News and the Ordinance will be voted on at the next meeting, December 7, 2020.

NEW BUSINESS: (President Cost)

President Cost presented Resolution #12_2020 adopting a revised fee schedule for Garbage/Recycling collection. County Waste has provided a five-year contract with an increase each year throughout the length of the agreement. The new garbage rates for borough property owners will be 2021-\$17/month, 2022-\$17.50/month, 2023-\$18.50/month, 2024-\$19/month & 2025-\$19.75/month. This rate change will take effect with the February 2021 invoice covering January, 2021 collections. Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to adopt Resolution #12_2020, increasing the monthly rates for garbage collection annually over the next five years. Councilman DeGonzague seconded the motion. A roll-call vote found five council members in favor and one (C. DeGonzague) opposed. The motion carried.

The Forest City Fire Department and Emergency Services recently approached the Borough about a monetary contribution to help defray some of their expenses. President Cost asked Council to consider the addition of a line item under Public Safety from Impact Fees to contribute \$10,000 annually to the F.C. Fire and Emergency Services upon their written request beginning in 2021. This item will be revisited if there is a reduction or loss of Impact Fees. Councilwoman Lazier offered a motion to add the line item under Impact Fees Public Safety for a \$10,000 annual contribution to the Fire and Emergency Services. Vice President Scalzo seconded the motion. All voted yes in a roll-call vote, 6 to 0. The motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: (President Cost)

President Cost read a letter from Stephanie Sojka-Reisch & Paul Kalasinski about the formation of a Neighborhood Watch. Their first meeting will be on Thursday, November 12 at 7:00 p.m. at Max's Deli. The public is invited to attend. There will be informational material available and plans for future trainings. Volunteers are needed. This group will observe and report suspicious activity to

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the 911 Call Center System of Wayne County. They will provide more information in the future to be posted on the Borough website.

PUBLIC COMMENTS or QUESTIONS: (President Cost)

Jason Obelenus, Railroad Street, asked each council member why they had voted against the purchase of a police car. Responses mainly focused on the recent 2020 purchase and questioning the need for three vehicles. Councilwoman Lazier, the only yes vote, felt that the 2014 should be replaced. This will be revisited at future meetings. The amount budgeted under the Impact Fees for Police equipment would be enough to cover a three-year agreement like the one proposed if the need becomes critical.

Jason Obelenus then noted that third floor needs to be brought up to code with fire extinguishers, panic push bars on the proposed door, lighted exit signs, etc. Councilman DeGonzague commented that these come under the building inspectors and Labor & Industry Code, not necessarily Code Enforcement. Ms. Vannan said she would contact NEIC to provide us with a report on what exactly is needed to bring the third floor up to code and safety standards when they return to do the final inspection on the Heat/Air Conditioning units recently installed. Waiting for Rockhill to schedule.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: (President Cost)

The next regular Council Meeting will be held on Monday, December 7, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. President Cost commented, “Tomorrow, November 3rd, is Election Day. If you haven’t already voted, please get out and vote.”

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilman DeGonzague made a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Matarese seconded the motion. All replied “aye” in favor of the motion and the meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.