

**MONDAY – JANUARY 29, 2024 - 6:00 P.M.**  
**FOREST CITY BOROUGH SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING**

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

President DeGonzague called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: President DeGonzague, V.P. Cost, Council Members Bernie Scalzo, Tracey Lazier, Amy Bean, Mayor Ginton, and Solicitor McAndrew. Councilman Lesjack attended by telephone.

**OPENING REMARKS:** President DeGonzague welcomed everyone and asked Solicitor McAndrew to continue on his behalf for the selection process to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Councilwoman Joann Matarese.

Solicitor McAndrew reported that (5) Letters of Interest were received, in no particular order, they were: Jason Obelenus, Thomas Fitzsimmons, Sarah Woody, Michael Norella and Brian Widzon. Michael Norella and Brian Widzon were not in attendance. Solicitor McAndrew instructed the three candidates to step out into the hall so that each could come in separately to answer two pre-prepared questions – “What was their connection to the Borough? And, what did they plan to do to best serve the community as a Council Member?”

Mr. Thomas Fitzsimmons was the first to re-enter the room. Responding that he was a life-long resident of the borough and was bringing with him past experience of serving as a past council member and past president. V.P. Cost asked why after all these years he wanted to return to council. Mr. Fitzsimmons said he saw a need for improvements and wanted to try to help council move in the right direction.

Mr. Jason Obelenus entered the room and responding to the same questions, He has lived here for many years and is very community-minded. He wants to see the Borough grow. He has been active in the past with the Forest City Fire Department and still is with the Fire Department in Browndale. He recently retired from the state and says that he now has more time to give and has many plans and ideas to improve the borough and local government. Councilman Scalzo asked if he planned to run for the seat in the next election. He responded “yes”

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and added that we need new people in the borough who are willing to serve. V.P. Cost asked if he is around town and available any time. Mr. Obelenus replied that he would be available 24/7.

Finally, Ms. Sarah Woody entered to answer the same questions. She responded that she has lived in the borough for 22 years and wants to serve the community that she has chosen to be a part of. Her desires include supporting local businesses and unifying the council. She expressed her strengths having worked with two large teams, she possesses strong negotiation and communication skills. She has served as a coach and mentor, enjoys working with people and is a “cheerleader” for the town. Councilman Scalzo asked if she is available despite her work schedule. Ms. Woody replied that she works remotely and would be available whenever needed. Councilman Cost asked if she also planned to run for the seat in the future. She replied, “Yes”.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** The public was offered an opportunity to comment. None was offered.

**SELECTION TO FILL VACANCY:**

President DeGonzague asked if anyone was ready to make a motion. Councilman Lesjack made a motion to appoint Sarah Woody. Councilwoman Bean seconded the motion. Six members voted yes in a roll-call vote, none opposed, the motion carried. Solicitor McAndrew invited newly appointed Councilwoman Woody to join the table. Everyone applauded.

**OATH OF OFFICE:**

Mayor Glinton administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Councilwoman Sarah Woody. Again, congratulations were offered and applause were heard all around.

**CONTINUED BUSINESS:** (President DeGonzague)

Councilwoman Lazier began by offering a motion to appoint Fire Chief Paul Lukus as Fire Marshall, whose appointment was missed at

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the Re-Organization meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Cost. All responded aye, none opposed.

President DeGonzague announced his appointments to serve as Department Heads, as follows:

- Administration – Councilwoman Lazier
- Streets & Roads – Councilman Scalzo
- Community Health & Safety – Councilman Lesjack
- Buildings & Grounds – Councilwoman Woody & V.P. Cost
- Parks & Recreation – V.P. Cost
- Community & Economic Development – Councilwoman Bean.

The following committees will be announced at the Feb. 5, 2024 meeting: Finance, Personnel, Sewer/Garbage, Safety, Planning, Zoning and a Hearing Board(s) (Sewer, Garbage & Code Enforcement).

President DeGonzague asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The following announcements were made:

- The Bidding thresholds for 2024 were increased.
- The next Council Meeting is Monday, February 5, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

A motion to adjourn was offered by V.P. Cost and seconded by Councilwoman Lazier. All responded “Aye, in favor”, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.