

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH  
MINUTES  
Tuesday, January 3, 2023**

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**CALL TO ORDER:** (President Robert Lesjack).

President Lesjack called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., welcomed everyone. All stood for the “**Pledge of Allegiance**”.

**GUEST SPEAKER:**

President Lesjack introduced Paul Castline, PA State Constable, owner of E. Donegal Constable, LLC. Constable Castline explained the services his company was offering to serve the community as Code Enforcement Officers and assist the police with other duties as needed. He offered a six-month contract at \$60/hour, starting with one-day per week. He provided a handout listing what services his staff could provide. Council asked several questions. President Lesjack said that Council, the mayor and the police would review the information and after conferring with our solicitor would get back to him at a later date.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: President Lesjack, Council Members Nick Cost, Bernie Scalzo, Chris DeGonzague, Tracey Lazier, Amy Bean, Joann Matarese, Mayor Ginton, Solicitor McAndrew and Secretary/Treasurer S. Vannan.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public comment.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)**

Councilwoman Matarese made a motion to accept the Minutes from 12/5/22, Councilwoman Bean seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to accept the December Treasurer’s Report with cash receipts totaling \$78,925.00 and Disbursements totaling \$102,610.86 Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. All Council members voted yes in a roll-call vote, seven in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to approve annual salary increases for the clerical staff effective January 1, 2023. The motion was seconded by V.P. Cost. All responded yes in a roll call vote, seven in favor, none opposed.

**PUBLIC WORKS: (Councilman Scalzo)**

Councilman Scalzo presented the Public Works December report. The plow blade was changed on the pickup, evening and weekend plowing was needed due to several storms during December, purchased four cutting blades for the F550 and the pickup truck. Supplied Vandling with ten (10) bucket loads of cinder/salt mix.

Councilman Scalzo responded to the complaint about plowing not being done in the cemetery. The Cemetery is private, owned by the church and they’ve indicated that they prefer not to plow it due to some problems they’ve had with damage to the property.

Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to approve the annual salary increase for the public works staff effective January 1, 2023. Seconded by V.P. Cost, the motion carried seven to zero.

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Councilwoman Lazier)**

Councilwoman Lazier presented a Lease Agreement prepared by Solicitor McAndrew for the rental of the unoccupied section of the Borough building on the ground floor, formerly occupied by the Senior Nutrition Center. This will double the size of the exiting library and give them the ability to hold classes, expand their children’s programs and serve the community in many more ways. Councilwoman Lazier offered a motion to accept the lease. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. All voted yes in a roll call vote, seven to zero. The lease will be sent to Jim O’Pecko and Fred Cicilioni for the Library Board’s review.

Pentecost Fee Schedule is still a work in progress. Will be revisited at the February meeting.

Councilwoman Lazier presented a bid from Tony Wilcox to paint the sign over the stage for \$1,200. She offered a motion to accept his proposal. Councilman DeGonzague seconded the motion. All voted yes in a roll

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call vote, seven to zero. The down payment will be processed and Mr. Wilcox will be given the go-ahead to proceed.

**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Councilwoman Bean)**

The minutes from the Action Team's December 2022 meeting and the agenda for January 2023 were distributed. An update on the Main Street Façade project was presented – Several other projects have been advised to proceed.

Councilwoman Bean requested that V.P. Cost attend the next Action Team meeting.

**PARKS & RECREATION: (Councilman Cost)**

Councilman Cost reported that the specs for the K.P. bathrooms are ready and offered a motion to advertise for sealed bids. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken – seven in favor, none opposed.

Councilman Cost also reminded everyone that the Winterfest, featuring the Annual Soup Cook-Off will be held at Kennedy Park on Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Registration begins at 10:00 a.m. The Ice Fishing Derby is planned, weather permitting, to kick off at 9:30 a.m.

An Easter celebration is planned for April 2<sup>nd</sup> at K.P. The Vendor Market will be held in May, July and September, with dates to be announced.

**COMMUNITY SAFETY & HEALTH: (Councilman DeGonzague)**

Councilman DeGonzague reported that the Hazard Mitigation Survey has been completed and submitted to County Emergency Management as required.

There will be a Cyber Security webinar on January 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. If anyway is interested, please contact Councilman DeGonzague for details.

**MAYOR'S REPORT: (Mayor Christopher Ginton)**

The December Police Report was distributed for Council review, as well as the Annual Police Report and the 2022 Annual Fire/Emergency Call Report.

Mayor Ginton requested Council's approval for rate increases for the Part-time officers and the rate increases for full-time officers per their contract effective January 1st. Councilwoman Lazier offered a motion to approve the annual rate increases for all full and part-time officers. The motion was seconded by Vice Pres. Cost. Seven voted in favor, none opposed.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT: (Marissa McAndrew, Esq.)**

Solicitor McAndrew had nothing to report.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

President Lesjack announced that a volunteer is sought to serve on the Planning Commission sadly due to the recent passing of Peggy Brager who had served on the commission for many years. Current members are Paul Dovin and Eric Bennett. Council will be seeking a third person to fill the vacancy. Anyone interested is encouraged to contact the borough.

Resolution #1\_2023 supporting the creation of the Susquehanna County Tourism and Promotion Association and for Susquehanna County to withdraw from the Endless Mountain Visitor's Bureau was presented for discussion and council consideration. Concerns were expressed about the plan and the item was tabled until more information is received.

**CONTINUED BUSINESS:**

A decision to advertise for a Code Enforcement Officer was tabled. President Lesjack expressed his desire to look into the Constable Program presented by Constable Castline earlier and thought the borough should

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hold off on seeking a CEO. Other members agreed.

**CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Clayton Steckert from Hudson Street reported that the water buildup on his street was a potential hazard and that it continues to run from a property that installed a driveway without permits, even when there is no rain. Hudson Street is a state road so he has contacted PennDot and is waiting for their response. V.P. Cost and Councilman Scalzo will go to the location and see if there is something that can be done. Mr. Steckert emphasized that this is really a safety & health issue and hopes the Borough can help out with this problem. He asked if a storm drain could be installed.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

President Lesjack announced that the sewer fee remains unchanged for 2023 at \$30 per residential unit (not \$60 as reported recently in the News). The garbage fee will increase from \$17.50 to \$18.50 per month per residential unit for January 2023, to be billed in February, 2023. Mr. Kameen apologized for the error and said he would print a correction.

An Executive Session will be held on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. to review the contract for Constable Services with the Borough's Solicitor.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Councilwoman Lazier made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Cost seconded the motion. All responded "Aye" and the meeting ended at 8:03 p.m.