

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH
MINUTES
MONDAY FEBRUARY 6, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER: (V.P. Nicholas Cost).

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

GUEST SPEAKER:

Rich Suraci, Director of Public Relations & Marketing from Kost Tire, shared upcoming plans for a self-help bike repair kiosk at the F.C. Kost Tire location. It should be completed in April and will offer easy access on the Turkey Hill side of the Kost building. Mr. Suraci went on to express Kost Tire’s commitment to the community and to local police departments through their “Kost for Cops” initiative. Meetings have been and will be held with police departments from Susq. County to Wilkes-Barre to support local law enforcement. He noted that Forest City is fortunate to have a fine crew who offer superb protection and thanked Chief Foley & Assistant Chief Dzanis for their service.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Vice President Cost, Council Members Bernie Scalzo, Chris DeGonzague, Amy Bean, Joann Matarese, Mayor Glinton, Solicitor McAndrew and Secretary/Treasurer S. Vannan. President Lesjack joined by phone.
Absent: Councilwoman Tracey Lazier.

OPENING REMARKS: (V.P. Cost)

V.P. Cost announced that an Executive Session had been held on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the proposal offered for Constable Coverage with the Borough’s Solicitor and any legal or liability concerns that may arise.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

John Kameen asked what information could be shared about their recent Executive Session. V.P. Cost asked Solicitor McAndrew to explain the purpose of the meeting. Solicitor McAndrew replied, “Obviously no decisions can be reached at an Executive Session, the purpose of the meeting was to answer some of council’s questions about potential liability issues, insurance, indemnification, and the authority of a constable in PA. The meeting was for informational purposes only.”

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)

Councilwoman Matarese made a motion to accept the Minutes from January 3, 2023, Councilman DeGonzague seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to accept the January, 2023 Treasurer’s Report with cash receipts totaling \$92,131.19 and Disbursements totaling \$106,452.37. Councilman DeGonzague seconded the motion. All Council members voted yes in a roll-call vote, six in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Matarese shared the 2023 Bidding Thresholds – \$22,500 & over requires formal bidding, \$12,200 to \$22,499 requires (3) three written/telephonic quotes and up to \$12,199 bidding is not required.

Reminder – Please turn in “Statements of Financial Interest”.

PUBLIC WORKS: (Councilman Scalzo)

Councilman Scalzo presented the Public Works report for January. The fire extinguishers throughout the borough properties, including the Police vehicles were serviced. A storm-drain on N. Main St, near the Market Place was repaired. Repaired and put the Holiday Lights from Main Street into storage. Collected the Christmas trees from the Main Street and transported to the garage’s yard waste area. Vandling borough purchased 5 bucket loads of cinder/salt mix at \$70/load.

JHA has not gotten any further on the Susq. Street, Main Street & Roxie Road projects They’re waiting for the weather to break and investigate some potential wet-land issues.

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BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Councilwoman Lazier)

Resolution #3_2023 – Pentecost Hall rental fees was presented. The new fee schedule is now set at a maximum occupancy of 120 people, for a cost of \$200 for up to three hours, then \$100 for each additional hour with no refund. Removal of trash & recyclables is the responsibility of the renter. A cleaning fee will be assessed for trash left behind and/or any damage to the premises. Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to adopt the resolution. Seconded by Councilwoman Matarese, Resolution #3_2023 was adopted by Council with a roll-call vote of six in favor, none opposed.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Councilwoman Bean)

The minutes from the Action Team’s January 2023 meeting and the agenda for February 2023 were distributed. An update on the Main Street Façade projects was given. Councilwoman Bean made a motion for additional funding for (8) eight more properties, reducing the match fund to \$2,000 plus 8% consulting fee for a total of \$17,280. Seconded by Councilwoman Matarese, the motion carried with a roll-call vote, six in favor, none opposed.

Councilwoman Bean reported that Paul Bechtel from McLane Associates, a landscape engineering firm, was contacted by Erin Debish. Paul has since replied with a proposal for the park design and deliverables. The total cost of this proposal is \$2,455.00. Most of this will be covered by the fund-raising efforts of the GFCBA.

A survey is being created to gather the opinions of the community about connecting the Trail to the Center Street Park. It will be distributed and put up on social media and the borough’s website when it is complete.

An application for handicap parking was submitted by Marylou Anderson of 801 Main Street. Several concerns were noted, most notably, Main Street is a State Route and a snow route with no overnight parking in the snow season. The alternative was a spot on the side of her house, which is a steep grade and would create problems for our trucks to safely plow. A motion to deny the permit was made by Councilwoman Bean, seconded by councilman Scalzo. All were in favor, none opposed, the permit was denied.

The next Action Team meeting is March 2nd, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at Elegante’s.

PARKS & RECREATION: (Vice President Cost)

Vice President Cost reported that no bids for the K.P. bathrooms were received.

Resolution #2_2023 – Fees to reserve K.P. Pavilion – A non-refundable \$50 fee to reserve the pavilion, submitted with the application. The kitchen/concession stand and building will no longer be available for rent. A motion was offered by President Lesjack and seconded by Councilwoman Bean. The roll call vote was six in favor, none opposed. Existing guidelines and rules of Ordinance #504 remain unchanged.

The Soup Cook-off will be Saturday, February 11th, 1st prize is \$75, 2nd prize is \$50, 3rd prize is \$25. \$5/person to sample all the soups, \$5/pint for soup to go at the end of the competition. Free hot chocolate and water will be provided. The Fishing Derby is cancelled due to unseasonal weather. The Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for April 2nd, more info to come. Pre-register on line at Forest City Parks & Rec.

COMMUNITY SAFETY & HEALTH: (Councilman DeGonzague)

Councilman DeGonzague announced that Hazard Mitigation meetings will be on 2/21 at 4 & 7 P.M. and 2/22 at 4 & 6 p.m. in New Milford. He and President Lesjack attended the last meetings. Participation is required for the 2023 update the County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

MAYOR’S REPORT: (Mayor Christopher Ginton)

The January Police Report was distributed for Council review.

A request for Chief Foley to attend the 37th Annual Police Expo June 27 & 28 was put before Council. Cost for room & mileage is \$536.70. Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilwoman Bean, it was approved six to zero.

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A request for the purchase of computers and data coverage was reviewed by council. Vice President Cost tabled the request until more information could be provided.

Chief Foley reported that he had submitted an application for an “Aggressive Driving Grant” from the Northumberland Regional Police Traffic Service Project to provide Roving DUI patrols on select shifts. The Officer would be paid an overtime rate that would then be reimbursed to the Borough through this grant.

Chief Foley was approached by the Superintendent of the F.C. Regional School District to assist the school in applying for enhanced Traffic Controls in the areas around the entrances to the Campus. The school would cover any costs associated with this and the Chief would offer his support. A motion was offered by Councilman Scalzo and seconded by Councilwoman Matarese. A roll call vote was six in favor, none opposed.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT: (Marissa McAndrew, Esq.)

Solicitor McAndrew prepared an amended Library Lease for the 1st floor, left side of the Borough Building. The Library board requested that the lease be separate from the lease for the right side (existing Library) and that the length of the lease be increased to 120 months (10 years). Councilman DeGonzague made a motion to accept the amendments to the new Library Lease, seconded by Councilwoman Bean, the motion passed six to zero.

CORRESPONDENCE:

A letter from the Endless Mountains Visitors’ Bureau was distributed concerning Susquehanna County efforts to leave the EMVB.

A letter from Bradford County supporting Susquehanna County’s efforts to separate from the EMVB.

An email from Lorne Powell was presented – commending Chief Foley for the “caliber of officers” in the force. She specifically mentioned Officer Jen Esterline who had responded to an upsetting experience she had. And, added that John Kameen shared her views saying the officer Esterline had us her paramedic skills to stabilize someone until the ambulance arrived. Mayor Glinton added how very proud he is of all the officers who serve on the force.

NEW BUSINESS:

Vice President Cost reminded everyone that the borough is still seeking a volunteer to serve on the Planning Board and encouraged anyone interested to please contact the borough office for information.

Council considered a donation to the Susq. Co. Conservation District for their annual Envirothon to be held April 28th at Elk Mountain. Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to donate \$100 to support this worthwhile conservation effort and environmental educational event. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. A roll vote found six in favor, none opposed. The motion carried.

CONTINUED BUSINESS:

Resolution #1_2023 supporting the creation of the Susquehanna County Tourism & Promotion Association as requested by County Commissioners Alan Hall & Judith Herschel. Commissioner Hall was on hand to answer questions. Councilwoman Bean expressed her concerns about jumping into this without first attending the upcoming public meeting and get more information before council adopts this resolution. Commissioner Hall shared his thoughts and defended the move, noting that a county based agency would serve Susquehanna County, the businesses and the tourism industry with a more dedicated approach. He stated that Bradford County had made this move five (5) years ago and have been quite successful. A letter from Bradford County was included in the correspondence at this meeting. Commissioner Hall added that this agency would bring more attention to non-profits. There would be no charge to businesses to participate and no membership fees, “we already have 65% of the communities in Susquehanna on board and we want Forest City to be a part of this.” Councilwoman Bean still expressed her desire to find out more and take the opportunity to meet with the EMVB and hear what they have to say. Vice-President Cost asked if there was a motion. Councilman DeGonzague made a motion to adopt Resolution #1_2023 and it was seconded by Councilman Scalzo. Five voted yes, Councilwoman Bean was the only No. The motion carried five to one.

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The tree removal on Delaware street was discussed. A bid from Mikloiche was submitted for \$1,800. Council decided to get more information before deciding. The bid was tabled.

A motion was made by Councilman DeGonzague to advertise for a Code Enforcement Officer, seconded by President Lesjack (participating by phone). A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed with a six to zero response. Ms. Vannan will put the job opportunity up on the website and submit an ad to the Forest City News for publication.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT:

Brian Fitzsimmons asked council to consider funding some needed materials for the Upper Field at Kennedy Park. He presented a quote from Martin Stone Quarries, Inc. for Custom Infield mix – 48 tons for \$3,264. He estimated that the cost for Prince Excavating to install the mix would bring the total up to around \$5,000. Following a review of the request, it will be added to the agenda for March 2023. Mr. Fitzsimmons said he would also be attending Vandling’s meeting to ask them to consider his request to also make repairs to the Vandling field for the T-Ball league. Vice President Cost asked if any fund raising was being planned. Mr. Fitzsimmons responded, “This is your field, the borough needs to maintain it, the league applied for two grants last year and were not chosen for either, but continue to pursue those and have gotten info from Christine Dettore and would seek her guidance.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next regular monthly Council Meeting will be on Monday, March 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilman Scalzo made a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Matarese seconded the motion. All responded “Aye” and the meeting ended at 7:50 p.m.