

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH  
MINUTES  
MONDAY - MAY 1, 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**”.

**ROLL CALL:**

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

**KBA PRESENTATION:**

Tony Grizzanti, KBA Engineering, provided information on the progress KBA has made with the Eastside Main Streetscape project. He distributed partial sidewalk plans for the 400/500 blocks of Main Street. He explained that the borough’s grant will only cover the two blocks and that work will not begin until 2024 due to PennDot’s schedule. He noted that the cost to do the westside of Main Street a few years ago was \$90-95/sq. ft., but the cost now is \$195/sq. ft. Mr. Grizzanti also noted that the discovery of several vaults beneath sidewalks in the 500 block may be structurally unsound and will have to be addressed first. KBA Engineer Dennis Kutch will follow up with recommendations. Mr. Kameen, F.C. News, expressed his dissatisfaction with the plans and wanted to know why the 400/500 blocks were chosen and not the 600 block. V. Pres. Cost explained that the funding available was not enough to do all three, Council will seek other grants for the 600 Block.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public comment offered.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)**

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

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to accept the April, 2023 Treasurer’s Report with cash receipts totaling \$202,226.70 and Disbursements totaling \$214,555.78. Vice President Cost seconded the motion. Motion carried in a roll-call vote, five in favor, two opposed. Council members Bean and Degonzague opposed without comment.

**PUBLIC WORKS: (Councilman Scalzo)**

Councilman Scalzo provided the April Public Works Report: Water was turned on at Kennedy Park; 15 tons of pea stone was delivered to the Dog Park, Councilwoman Matarese had volunteers from the Forest City High School spread the stone. A hole was patched in the road near the Dollar General. It was found that the area beneath the road in that area is eroding causing the road to sink. This is a section of Rt. #171, PennDot inspected the area and will get back to the borough with their findings. The storm drains were cleaned on Dundaff Street. As Maintenance supervisor, Wally participated in the interviews of several candidates being interviewed for the Public Works position.

The Personnel Committee recommended Kyle Keiper to fill the position of full-time Public Works/Maintenance Worker effective 5/15/2023 at \$17.50/hour with full benefits effective 6/1/2023. Councilman Scalzo made a motion to approve the hire, seconded by Councilwoman Joann Matarese. He was approved with a six to one vote in favor. The only opposition, Councilwoman Lazier.

The Personnel Committee recommended Amanda Zang for the part-time janitorial position at \$14/hour, non-benefitted for approx. 10 hours per week effective 5/3/2023. Motion made by Councilman Scalzo, seconded by Councilwoman Matarese, roll call vote taken, seven in favor, none opposed.

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

Councilwoman Lazier had nothing to report.

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

The minutes from the Action Team's April 2023 meeting and the agenda for May 2023 were distributed. The next Action Team meeting will be on May 4th at Elegante's Restaurant.

Councilwoman Bean had no update on the Main Street Façade Project. She will follow-up with Gus Fahey for June's meeting.

Dr. Katie Zefran, Outdoor Town Action Team, updated everyone on their projects, asking Council to permit the Team to move forward with applications for a mini-grant for the Sculpture Trail and the Greenways Trail Grant from DCED, due at the end of May. Architectural renderings of the park plans were distributed. President Lesjack asked if there were any pictures of the sculptures. Dr. Zefran responded, there are no pictures yet, but the plan is for the first sculpture to be placed at the Trail head with a goal set at five sculptures leading to the Center Street Pocket Park. The sculptures will denote the various phases of growth in the Borough since its founding in 1864. She reported that the welcome arch and one of the sculptures are already being constructed. Council stated that they have a number of costly projects which must be addressed in the future. The cost of a new roof for the Borough Building has escalated over the past three years to more than \$500,000. Councilwoman Joann Matarese noted that she hasn't even used Boro funds to spread stone in the already-existing Dog Park.

Project #1 – Center Street Pocket Park Grant - A suggestion to use some of the funding originally budgeted for the steel stair replacement was made and the use of COVID ARPA funds, or Impact Fees might be used on the project as well. Dr. Zefran stated it was possible that not all of the \$250,000 grant would be approved by the state, and if so, the project may be scaled back. This would mean, she said, the Borough would not be required to come up with the entire \$37,500 match. Councilwoman Matarese expressed concerns about the blighted properties on either side of the park, suggesting that these properties need to be addressed with the owners. Discussion continued. A motion was offered by Councilwoman Lazier and seconded by Councilwoman Bean to support the Action Team's application for the Greenways & Trails Grant from the DCED for up to \$250K which would require a 15% match by the Borough, capped at \$37,500 covered by ARPA funds and/or Impact Fees. A roll call vote was taken that found seven members in favor, none opposed.

Project #2 – the Sculpture Trail to be submitted for the mini-grants program through the Endless Mountains Heritage Region. This grant would require a 100% match, but the Action Team had already received a \$500 commitment from the GFCBA and were reaching out to Kost Tire who has expressed interest in becoming more involved with community projects. This application is due May 8<sup>th</sup>. Nothing will be asked of the borough, a commitment from the Mountain View Garden club for planting around the sculpture and a donation of security cameras has also been secured. Councilwoman Bean offered a motion to approved the application for the Endless Mountains Heritage Region grant for the Sculpture Trail. Seconded by Councilwoman Lazier, a roll-call vote was taken finding seven in favor, none opposed.

Dr. Zefran reminded everyone that the Action Team meetings are the first Thursday of each month at Elegante's.

**PARKS & RECREATION: (Vice President Cost)**

V.P. Cost offered a report supplied by Parks & Recreation Board Chairperson Kathy Kernoschak. Easter Egg hunt was a huge success, attended by approximately 215 kids. Thank you to the community and all of the supporters for their donations and volunteering their time. The next event at Kennedy Park will be the first 2023 Vendor Market on May 21 from 10 to 4. Space is available for a \$10 non-refundable donation which needs to be in a week before the market.

Kennedy Park is looking for estimates for some landscaping around the playground area, please contact Nick Cost or Kathy Kernoschak.

The summer swim season will open on Memorial Day, Monday, May 29, 2023. Please stay out of the water until this date, water testing has to be done for two weeks prior to the opening date. There are rules and they will be posted when the beach is opened.

Mikloiche Timber & Construction will return to the park to fix the beach area that suffered some wash-out issues last year.

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

Councilman DeGonzague had nothing to report.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT:**

The Personnel Committee made a recommendation for a Code Enforcement Officer that met with some heated discussion. The hourly rate of \$40 was questioned. Councilwoman Matarese pointed that the rate is based on the individual serving as an Independent Contractor without benefits, saving the borough for insurance, pension, matching taxes, etc. Mayor Glinton opposed the rate. Discussion got heated, in the midst of which Councilwoman Lazier made a motion to hire another candidate that was asking \$20/hr. The motion was seconded by Councilman DeGonzague, but in all the commotion, President Lesjack did not hear the motions made and tabled the appointment.

A complaint from resident Stephanie Sojka-Reisch about free-range chickens in her neighborhood was discussed. It was noted that Patrolman Gabikian had previously warned the owner and that officers would cite the individual if they were seen out again. The police would investigate further.

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

The April 2023 Police Report was.

The national Prescription Drug Take-back held Saturday, April 22, 2023 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Forest City Emergency Services building was very successful, collecting 53.1 lbs. of medications.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

Katie Cicilioni, Cicilioni Properties, LLC, asked council to paint parking lines on Center Street & Depot Street between Main & Higgins Streets. Clearly marking the NO Parking areas that are too close to the intersections. Parking allowed at the corners, which is in violation of the vehicle code, makes it difficult for motorists to have a clear view of oncoming traffic and especially difficult for large trucks to make the corners. Local businesses located in this area, Frugal Living, Zazzera's, AJM and others have all grown, adding more employees and the need for more clearly designated parking areas. Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to approve the line painting on the side streets. Councilman Cost seconded the motion. Six members responded "aye", one (Councilman DeGonzague) responded "no". The motion carried, Councilman Scalzo will direct Public Works to proceed.

A thank you card was received from the F.C. Baseball & Softball Association in appreciation for the support and funding that Council approved for re-surfacing the Upper Field at Kennedy Park.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

President Lesjack reminded everyone that the April Sewer & Garbage bills issued in May will include penalty & interest charges that were previously waived during COVID.

Sealed bids were opened for the Rt.#247 Sidewalk Project from Main Street to the Browndale line as follows:

➤ Maiocco Excavating, Inc.	\$154,494.00
➤ Pioneer Construction Co., Inc.	\$255,000.00
➤ Linde Corporation	\$293,773.00

Kiley & Associates, the engineers on the project, will review the bids. The engineers will make a recommendation to Council, who will put the Engineer's recommendation to a vote at the next meeting.

**CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENTS & QUESTIONS:**

A request was made by a resident to have the crosswalks repainted. Councilman Scalzo will follow up.

Eileen Lynch reminded Council that her daughter at 901 Susquehanna Street is still experiencing problems with holes opening up as a result of inadequate drainage. Ms. Lynch commented that she thought that it

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was being investigated, but nothing has been done. Councilman Scalzo reported that he has been working with JHA Engineering on a three-phase project that will address some of the drainage issues in the borough, two proposals have been received, a third is in the works. Once the engineering fees have been paid, permits will be needed, and depending what funds are available, bids for these project(s) will be sought.

John Kovaleski thanked Forest City Police for their work on Code Enforcement.

Jason Obelenus commented to council about increasing costs, "The longer you drag your feet, the more things cost."

Linda Zefran asked if Council could consider holding a "Special Meeting" to accept the sidewalk bid rather than waiting until the June meeting. President Lesjack said he would consider that and try to schedule it soon

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The Memorial Day parade & service will be on Monday, May 29, 2023. The PennDot road closure was approved. Gathering for the parade will begin at 10:00 a.m. with the service at William Apts. at 11:00 a.m.

The next regular monthly Council Meeting will be on Monday, June 5, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Vice President Cost, all responded in favor, none opposed. The meeting ended at 7:40 p.m.