

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH
MINUTES
MONDAY – OCTOBER 2, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER: (President Robert Lesjack).

President Lesjack called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He welcomed everyone, then reported that an Executive Session was held for Personnel issues on Friday, Sept. 29, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. President Lesjack reviewed the meeting policy noting that the President will preside over meetings and in his absence the Vice-president will preside. He read the entire policy noting that all motions require a majority vote. Public Comments is welcomed but personal attacks will not be tolerated. Each resident must stand at the podium, speak clearly into the microphone, identify themselves with their full name and address. Only relevant matters of concern to the borough will be allowed. Each speaker will be allowed to address council once and will be limited to five minutes. Anyone behaving in a disorderly fashion will be removed from the meeting and it may result in an immediate adjournment.

All stood for the “**Pledge of Allegiance**”.

ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: Solicitor McAndrew

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)

Councilwoman Matarese made a motion to accept the Minutes from September 2023, seconded by Vice-President Cost. Motion carried with approval from all, none opposed

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to accept the September, 2023 Treasurer’s Report with cash receipts totaling \$105,018.45 and Disbursements totaling \$143,148.89. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. Motion carried in a roll-call vote with seven in favor none opposed.

Councilwoman Matarese made the following announcements:

A five-year Pension Audit with Dept. of Auditor General, Auditor April Harshaw was successfully completed; the 2022 Liquid Fuels Audit was completed on 9/25/23 with PennDot Financial Consultant, Earl Helbring; The Annual MS4 Report was submitted to the PA DEP on 9/29/2023; PA Auditor General issued the 2023 State Aid Allocation for Volunteer Fire Relief Association - \$8,068.72 which was received by the Borough on September 21st, payment was issued to the F.C. Fire Dept. Relief Assn. 9/29/23, Secretary/Treasurer Vannan filed Form 706B on DCED Municipal Statistics site as required; Received 2023 Municipal Pension Allotment Act 205 \$13,128.69 to be paid to PMRS 9/13/2023 to cover the Non-uniform Pension Municipal Obligation.

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to advertise a Special Budget Workshop Public Meeting for Monday, October 23, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. on the 3rd floor of the Borough Building, seconded by Nick, all voted in favor in a roll call vote, seven to zero.

PUBLIC WORKS: (Councilman Scalzo)

Councilman Scalzo provided the September 2023 Public Works Report: A turbo heater was purchased for the recycling center \$149.98 with the extended warranty; replace a stop sign at Grand & Susquehanna Streets, weed wacked Kennedy Park; installed rain gutters on borough garage, gutters were salvaged from a demo project, gutter hangers were purchased from Amazon - \$45.99; Cleaned the Dundaff Street storm drains and replaced a stop sign at the entrance to the Vision 2000 park. September Recycling donations were \$159.

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Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to purchase six tires for the F550 Plow Truck – bids were received from STTC Service-\$2,479.70 or \$3,409.70; McCarthy Tire-\$2,937.94; & Kost Tire-\$3,429.65, the low bid from STTC - \$2,479.70 was seconded by Councilman DeGonzague. All voted yes in a roll call vote, seven to zero.

Councilman Scalzo made a motion to advertise for Sealed Bids for snow removal from Main Street curbs, meter to meter. Due Friday, Nov. 3, 2023. The bids will be opened at the November 6th meeting. Councilwoman Matarese seconded the motion to advertise. Seven voted in favor, none opposed, the motion carried.

Resolution #11-2023 was presented, authorizing Vice President Cost to sign the PennDot Agility Agreement on behalf of the Borough. This will renew program eligibility for another five-year period.

Councilman Scalzo offered the motion, seconded by Councilwoman Matarese the motion carried with seven in favor, none opposed.

Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to advertise Yard Waste Pick-up on Tuesday, October 17 and Thursday, October 19, 2023. Councilman Degonzague seconded the motion, all voted yes, none opposed. Information will also be posted on the Borough website.

Councilman Scalzo announced that Kennedy Park restroom facilities will remain open until October 31st, 2023, weather permitting.

Councilman Cost provided an update on the Grant for the sidewalks on the 600 Block of Main Street. Originally it would go through DCED Keystone Community, it was reclassified as a Public Improvement Grant by DCED which increased the match from 30% to “dollar for dollar” - \$88,200 became \$148,191. Bobbi Jo suggests that we nix the DCED and apply through PennDot for the multi-modal grant which has a 30% and would take us back down to \$88,200. I recommend that we vote to authorize the application for the PennDot Multimodal in November, 2023 through Susq.Co. Housing & Redevelopment rather than to continue with the DCED grant. Vice President Cost offered a motion to authorize Susq. Co. Housing & Redevelopment to apply for a PennDot Multimodal Grant for the sidewalks on the 600 Block of Main Street to replace the previously approved USDA KCP grant due to an increase in the required match. Councilwoman Matarese seconded the motion, all seven members voted yes in a roll-call vote and the motion carried.

Councilman Scalzo reported that the three projects being handled by JHA Engineering are proceeding. One of the next steps will be to contact the property owners that border the project on North Main Street and arrange meetings to provide information and answer their questions.

Councilman Scalzo noted that public works will be plowing Kennedy Park again this winter as requested.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Councilwoman Lazier)

Councilwoman Lazier reported that no price was available for the work from sidewalk to curb on Center Street, so the item was tabled.

Vice President Cost made a motion to select Dunmore Roofing with a bid of \$496,400 over the lower bid from C&D Waterproofing because of their closer proximity to the Borough. Mayor Glinton interjected that he disagreed with this motion. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scalzo. Councilwoman Lazier voted no, the remaining six voted yes and the motion carried.

PPL has still not provided a price to move lines to accommodate the roof project, so this item is tabled.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Councilwoman Bean)

An update on Main Street Façade Project – Checks in the amounts of \$5,000 and \$4,350 awarded to Phil Hodges, Jr. for two completed Façade Projects. COVID ARPA funds paid out to date for façade projects is \$29,081.88.

The Outdoor Town Action Team supplied minutes from the September meeting and the agenda for the upcoming October meeting.

The O.T. Action Team asked for Council’s support to form a Junior Action Team in cooperation with the FCRHS. Action Team member Dr. Katie Zefran reported that information from the PSAB has given the team what they need to do to get this going. A resolution will be created for Council to approve to proceed. President Lesjack asked, “Who will be in charge of this?” Dr. Zefran responded, “Selected Action Team members and someone from the school, yet to be determined, will oversee the plan. We’ve been in touch with the

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Superintendent who has agreed to the plan.” Councilman DeGonzague offered a motion to support the proposal. Councilwoman Matarese seconded the motion. All responded “Aye”, none were opposed. The motion carried.

Dr. Zefran then asked Council to approve & support the application for a grant from Susq. Co. Promotion & Tourism Agency to promote & develop tourism in Forest City Borough. The grant would require a 25% match which would be around \$1,250. Councilwoman Bean offered a motion to support their request. Councilman DeGonzague seconded the motion. Seven voted yes, none were opposed in a roll-call vote. The motion carried. President Lesjack suggested that the Action Team should seek donations maybe through offering memorial bricks or pavers, Dr. Zefran replied, “We’re not looking for private donations or funding yet.” President Lesjack asked Dr. Zefran what kind of base would be under the statues on the sculpture trail that the Action Team are working on. Dr. Zefran replied, “The statues will be secured on a concrete pad.” Dr. Zefran said she would take President Lesjack’s suggestion back to the Action Team and added that they may consider seeking memorial donations for the Center Street Pocket Park.

Councilwoman Bean asked for an update on the computers installed in the police vehicles. Chief Foley reported the after the installation of the State Program two months ago, they are fully operational and citations are being printed and handed out from the vehicle.

PARKS & RECREATION: (Vice President Cost)

V.P. Cost offered the Parks & Recreation Board Report – The last Vendor Market of the 2023 season brought in \$388 from concession stand sales and \$709 in donations.

V.P. Cost made a motion to approve an additional \$2,000 bringing the total to \$3,000 for the purchase of cameras for Kennedy Park due to the ongoing issue with vandalism. The cost of the cameras will be paid out of funds raised by the Parks & Rec Board. The motion was seconded by Councilman DeGonzague. All voted yes in a roll-call vote, none opposed. The motion carried.

Vice President Cost reminded everyone about the upcoming “Trunk or Treat” Halloween event to be held at Kennedy Park on Saturday, October 28, 2023 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

COMMUNITY SAFETY & HEALTH: (Councilman Christopher DeGonzague)

Councilman DeGonzague reported that FEMA will be broadcasting a test signal to all cell phones on October 4th at around 2:22 p.m. to verify that their systems are operational in the event of an emergency.

CODE ENFORCEMENT: (Councilwoman Lazier)

Councilwoman Lazier asked CEO Reisch to report on her activity for August. CEO Reisch provided a written report to council members. The report documented her follow-up on several on-going issues including the Haney property, demolition of the yellow house on Center Street, still waiting for the demo application for a property on Delaware Street. Asked Council permission to have a note included in the sewer/garbage bills regarding the Residential Rental Unit Ordinance #463. She suggested that the Borough consider adopting a “Blighted Property Ordinance” and an Accessory Building ordinance amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Reisch went on to report that she’s taken photos (grass, tires, garbage, etc.) Sent letters to those property owners. Responded to complaints about a vacant lot at 746 Delaware Street. Will work with Solicitor McAndrew to put together a plan to deal with the Haney issue.

MAYOR’S REPORT: (Mayor Christopher Ginton)

Mayor Ginton presented the August 2023 Police Report.

Reported that the Steamtown Marathon is Sunday October 8th at 8:00 A.M. Volunteers needed, please contact the police department.

A medication/Rx Takeback is scheduled for Saturday Oct 28th from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. at Forest City Area Emergency Services.

Seeking approval to purchase a gun safe from Secure It - \$999.00 free shipping or from Dean Safe - \$1099.99, free shipping – was budgeted for 2023 with COVID ARPA funds. Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to purchase the gun cabinet from Dean Safe for \$1,099.99, seconded by Councilwoman Lazier. A roll call vote was taken. Six members voted yes, Councilman Degonzague passed, the motion carried six to 0.

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The police asked for approval to purchase of (3) Ultima Patrol guns – Total cost \$2,460 less \$600 trade-in = \$1,860 to be funded by COVID ARPA 2023 Budget. Councilwoman Lazier offered a motion to purchase the guns, seconded by Councilwoman Matarese. The motion passed with five in favor and two opposed. The opposition came from Councilwoman Bean and Councilman DeGonzague.

Mayor Glinton reminded everyone that “Trick or Treating” in the borough will be permitted on Tuesday, October 31st from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.

SOLICITOR:

Solicitor McAndrew was unavailable for this meeting. .

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENTS & QUESTIONS:

President Lesjack began by expressing his disappointment at the person or persons who are repeating what is discussed at Executive Sessions. These are private meetings, the subject of which are to be held in the strictest confidence. So, whoever it is, must realize the seriousness of what they’ve done. These meetings are confidential.

Alan Mindas, 1003 Hudson Street, expressed his concern over the parking situation on North Street between Delaware & Main. Most of the problem seems to be coming from an apartment building that cannot accommodate the number of cars owned by the tenants. This street needs to have parking limits set or maybe become a one-way road. Vice President Cost said the situation will be examined and an amendment to the parking ordinance considered.

Joe Woody, 730 Main Street, criticized council for casually taking a vote to spend ½ million dollars for a roof, then question the validity of spending a couple thousand to ensure the safety of our police force.

Councilwoman Lazier asked council to consider the condition of the alley that people are unable to access and the possibility of considering a parking pass for people who have no where to park, maybe \$100 or some way for them to avoid getting parking tickets. It was noted that Main Street is a state road and overnight parking during snow season is prohibited by the state. The mayor commented that the alley that Councilwoman Lazier referred to is filled with potholes and quite hazardous. When asked if the Borough could make repairs to the alley, it was noted that this is private property as researched by the previous solicitor. Councilwoman Lazier asked if the police could review this for the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A Special Public Meeting will be held on Monday, October 23 at 1:00 p.m. to work on the 2024 Budgets.

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

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn, Vice-President Cost made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilwoman Lazier, all replied “Aye”, meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.