

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH
MINUTES
MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER: (Robert Lesjack, President).

President Lesjack called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., welcomed everyone. All stood for the “**Pledge of Allegiance**”. He then took a moment to remind everyone about the rules, “ Please speak only when recognized, stand and identify yourself, your address and whether you are a resident of the borough. Limit your comments to five minutes. Do not interrupt Council members during their reports, save your questions for the public comment sections.”

ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: Mayor Glinton.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No Comment offered.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to accept the Minutes from 9/6/22 and a special meeting for MS4 and the 2023 Budget workshop held September 9/22/22. Councilwoman Bean seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to accept the September Treasurer’s Report with cash receipts totaling \$197,147.75 and Disbursements totaling \$146,846.50. Councilman Cost seconded the motion. All Council members voted yes in a roll-call vote, seven in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

The 2023 General Fund Budget was distributed for Council’s review. The Budget was revised with changes made at the Budget workshop on 9/22. Sewer & General Budgets will be presented at the November meeting when a motion to advertise may be offered if it meets with Council approval.

Councilwoman Matarese announced that the second and final ARPA distribution was received on 9/9/22 - \$91,402.63. Total ARPA funds received is \$182,805.26 - \$75,727.29 used for Parks & Recreation, \$3,800 paid out for the first completed façade project – balance funds remaining \$103,277.97.

PUBLIC WORKS: (Councilman Scalzo)

The Public Works report for September 2022 included August Recycling Donations- \$286, aluminum cans sold to Archbald Wrecking for \$48. Zero turn mower is still in for repairs waiting for a part. A yard waste collection is scheduled for Tuesday, 10/18 & Thursday, 10/20 – Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to advertise the pick up in the Forest City News. Seconded by Councilwoman Matarese, all voted aye and the motion carried.

The bid for the Center Street Park stairs received on 9/6/22 for \$86K was tabled. Alternative plans may be considered. Several comments about other options were discussed. Councilwoman Bean asked who prepared the bids, Councilman Scalzo responded, “Dennis Kutch, KBA.” Council President Lesjack asked about using concrete, Councilman Scalzo replied, “Concrete would be a safety hazard in the cold months with ice buildup. The metal grates would be less likely to ice up and could be salted.” President Lesjack asked about repairing rather than replacing. Councilman Scalzo added that this will also be considered.

Councilman Scalzo made a motion to hire Louella Zender as a full-time maintenance worker at \$15/hour with full benefits with a start date of 10/4/22. Councilman Cost seconded the motion. A roll call vote found seven in favor, none opposed. The motion carried. Councilman Scalzo added that the person previously hired had decided not to accept the position.

An ad for snow removal was presented requesting sealed bids. Solicitor McAndrew added that the contractor must provide flaggers and follow PennDot guidelines to permit uninterrupted traffic flow. That would be added to the ad before submitting to the F.C. News. Councilman Scalzo offered a motion

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to advertise pending the addition of the flagging requirements. Councilman DeGonzague seconded the motion. All responded yes in a roll-call vote. The motion carried seven to zero in favor.

Concerns about tree(s) in the 700 block of Delaware Street were addressed. Councilman Scalzo offered to get prices for trimming and/or removal if it was a Borough responsibility. President Lesjack remarked that the complaint was made by a neighbor of the residents affected and that they should contact the borough. Councilwoman Bean asked if this is the Borough's responsibility. Councilman Scalzo replied that the tree(s) are between the curb and the sidewalk in the right of way, so it may be. Councilman DeGonzague added that the Borough ordinance says it's the property owner's responsibility to maintain the sidewalks and property maintenance codes say that applies to the trees as well. No decision was made, but Wally will be asked to look at it.

Councilman Scalzo added two updates: The first, the zero-turn mower's clutch is damaged and it is still waiting for parts to complete repairs. A rental from Barhite's continues to be our only option.

The second is that JHA Engineering met with Wally, Nick Cost and Bernie Scalzo in the 900 block of Susquehanna Street, south of the Personal Care Home. Run-off there continues to plague properties below on North Main Street. JHA's preliminary site visit was \$2,000, approved at a previous meeting. It may require hiring a contractor. Councilman Cost suggested getting three proposals before proceeding.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Councilwoman Lazier)

Councilwoman Lazier reported that she is working on a fee schedule for Pentecost Hall rentals. Council members need to agree on the fees and a resolution to the fee schedule previously adopted will need to be amended. Once that's done, Councilwoman Lazier plans to expand marketing with ads on NEPA cable, in the Forest City News, the white board and through social media. Solicitor McAndrew suggested that calls should be made to other facilities to get a better idea of what they are charging and what their price includes in order to get a baseline. President Lesjack added that a brochure should be created and distributed to local florists, caterers, and party suppliers in the area.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Councilwoman Bean)

Councilwoman Bean announced that Witches on Main will be held on Wednesday, 10/26/22. Funds raised from participation in a pumpkin contest and local donations will benefit the Holiday Light Fund.

Councilwoman Bean asked council to hold an Executive Session on Tuesday, October 18th at 11:00 a.m. to discuss the F. C. Emergency Services' request for financial assistance. This meeting will only be for the Borough's elected officials and Solicitor McAndrew who will cover the legal issues and the Borough's responsibilities under the PA Borough Code as it relates to this request.

Councilwoman Bean asked Gus Fahey to update council on the Façade program. Mr. Fahey reported that 23 "Intent to Participate" applications had been received with a November 30th deadline. Eight applications were under consideration, four were given a "Notice to Proceed" totaling \$14,181.15. (K.W. Oil, Ferraro's Barbershop, Brennan Funeral Home, and McAndrew Law offices. Two applicants have accepted the offer for design assistance from Mike Muller. The program was moving along quite well and there has been a lot of positive interest.

The Action Team Minutes from the 9/1/22 meeting were distributed as well as their agenda for their next meeting on 10/6/22. Councilwoman Bean noted that the Team is working with Bobbi Jo Turner from Susq. Co. Housing & Redevelopment to find grants. The Endless Mts. Visitors Bureau grant that was approved by Council on 9/6 was submitted on 9/25/22 with a match secured by the GFCBA. This grant will fund one, possibly two, sculptures from the F.C. Trail Head up Rt. #247 directing visitors to the Forest City Main Street. Other grants are being investigated to improve access to the Trail from Main Street down Center Street. This will help to connect the Trail with the Center Street Park behind the Borough Building.

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The next Action Team meeting will Thursday, October 6th at 6:00 p.m. at Elegante Restaurant.

PARKS & RECREATION: (Councilman Cost)

Parks & Rec 8/29/22 meeting Minutes were distributed. Councilman Cost noted that the Bridge across the spillway at K.P. was completed through the generosity of Pleasant Mount Welding and he thanked them for their commitment to improving the Park.

Councilman Cost reported that a fee will be charged for reserving the pavilion in 2023, (suggested fee - \$50 per event) and the kitchen will not be available to rent. A resolution for a new fee schedule will be created, noting that even though donations are encouraged, very few are received.

Plans provided by CAM Engineering for bathroom renovations were distributed. Specs still need to be prepared that will enable the borough to advertise for bids, so this item was tabled.

Councilman Cost offered a motion to purchase Yellow Perch from Mid-Atlantic Stocking for Kennedy Park Pond at a cost of \$315. Councilman DeGonzague seconded the motion. Seven voted yes, none opposed. The purchase was approved.

Councilman Cost presented a bid from Mikloiche Construction for excavation and repairs to the eroding bank at the K.P. Little League field - 16' high x 36' long at an approximate cost of \$3,000. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. The roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed, the motion carried.

Councilwoman Lazier commented that the new playground equipment looks "fabulous", but added that she feels that the old playground equipment should be inspected to insure that it is safe. Councilman Cost said he would look into it.

Councilman Cost added that the last vendor market for 2022 was a great success and that the Board had decided to hold three in 2023 - May, July & September, exact dates yet to be determined. Again, food vendors will not be accepted for the 2023 season because the concession stand will be open.

Save the date for the annual Winterfest Soup Cook-off on Saturday, February 12, 2023. An Ice Fishing Derby is planned for that date as well, weather permitting. The Parks & Rec Board will hold their regular monthly meetings in 2023 on the 4th Monday of each month.

COMMUNITY SAFETY & HEALTH: (Councilman DeGonzague)

Councilman DeGonzague reported that he participated in a Hazard Mitigation Plan webinar on 9/15/22. Elected officials and Emergency Management officials are encouraged to attend these meetings to provide updated information for the state plan that will later be adopted by the state, county and local municipalities.

Councilman Cost asked if the storm drain filters had come in yet. The filters will be used to reduce the sediment that gets into storm drains. This information is collected and used in the MS4 annual reporting process. Councilman DeGonzague said they are on the way.

MAYOR'S REPORT: (Mayor Christopher Ginton)

Assistant Chief Dzanis reported to Council in Mayor Ginton's absence. The September 2022 police report was distributed. Code Enforcement notices have been sent out, but nothing significant to report at this time. Any changes to Code Enforcement have been tabled for now.

Asked about coverage for the Steamtown Marathon on October 9th, AC Dzanis responded that the agencies that they contacted have responded and will be participating, so they are covered.

Reminder that "Witches on Main" will be Wednesday, 10/26/22 – 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. All fund-raising proceeds will benefit the Main Street Holiday Light Fund.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: (Marissa McAndrew)

Solicitor McAndrew had nothing to report.

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NEW BUSINESS:

T-Mobile offered a 5-line plan that would provide the borough with five (5) **free smart phones**, protective cases & charge cables (2-police, 2-public works, & 1-Code Enforcement) replacing the (4) flip phones currently on the AT&T plan. The cost of this would be approximately \$30 a month less for 5-lines than the current plan with AT&T for 4-lines. Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to cancel the AT&T coverage and switch to T-Mobile. V.P. Cost seconded the motion. A roll call vote found seven in favor, none opposed. The motion carried.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Catherine Singer of Delaware Street, provided information she had obtained by researching deeds in the courthouse in Montrose. She maintained that the area between the curb and the sidewalk belongs to the Borough and the Borough should be responsible for removing dangerous trees. She contacted PPL & the cable companies and there are no wires running through the trees. President Lesjack asked if these dangerous trees were in front of her house and she said she was acting on behalf of her neighbors. President Lesjack asked her to have the property owners contact the borough. When asked, A.C. Dzanis acknowledged that he had gone to the location and admitted that the trees may be hazardous. Ms. Singer continued, saying that her neighbors are in poor health and she is acting on their behalf. President Lesjack said he would have our maintenance people check it out before any decision was made.

In response to Mr. Kameen's concern about the Executive Session to be held, Solicitor McAndrew responded that Council could hold an Executive Session to discuss legal matters and personnel issues.

CORRESPONDANCE:

An invitation to the Annual Susquehanna County Officials Convention for October 20, 2022 was distributed to council members. Cost of the dinner is \$10, rsvp by 10/10/22. Council members to contact Ms. Vannan if they are interested.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next regularly scheduled Council Meeting will be Monday, November 7, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilwoman Bean offered a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Cost. All responded "aye". Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.