

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH
MINUTES
MONDAY, February 7, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER: (Nicholas Cost, Vice President presiding).

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

ROLL CALL:

Present: Council Members Nick Cost, Bernie Scalzo, Chris DeGonzague, Joann Matarese, Tracey Lazier, Mayor Ginton, Solicitor McAndrew and Secretary/Treasurer Sharon Vannan. Monitoring by Phone: President Lesjack. Absent: Councilwoman Bean.

Committee appointments announced:

Budget/Finance-Joann Matarese, Nick Cost & Bernie Scalzo; **Personnel**-Amy Bean, Joann

Matarese & Robert Lesjack; **Sewer/Garbage**-Nick Cost, Bernie Scalzo & Tracey Lazier;

Safety Committee-Chris DeGonzague, Amy Bean & Robert Lesjack.

Planning Committee: Paul Dovin, Peggy Brager & (newly appointed) Eric Bennett.

Zoning Committee: Bill Orasin, Sr., Robert Trusky, & Tom Fitzsimmons.

Hearing/Appeals Board: (newly appointed) John Kowalewski.

Department Heads: Public Works-Bernie Scalzo, **Code Enforcement**-Chris

DeGonzague, **Buildings/Grounds**-Nick Cost, **Parks & Recreation**-Tracey Lazier,

Safety & Health-Chris DeGonzague, **Administration**-Joann Matarese, and **Comm. &**

Economic Development-Amy Bean.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Vice President Cost opened the floor for public comment.

Eric Burns asked if part-time officers are provided with benefits. Vice President Cost responded, “No.”

OUTSOURCING CODE ENFORCEMENT & ZONING:

NEIC representatives Ken Marino and George Littlejohn introduced themselves and provided information on their services for Code Enforcement and Zoning. Written complaints given to the Borough would be forwarded to NEIC, they would investigate, issue warnings, notices and if necessary, submit to the District Magistrate if the property owner fails to comply. The Borough’s ordinances would need to be reviewed and brought up to date. Specific procedures adopted to ensure that enforcement can be carried out. The Borough would maintain all documents, files, etc. They shared the names of several other communities that are using their services. Other municipalities mentioned included Jessup, Greenfield, Taylor, Sterling & Pike County. A fee schedule would be forwarded to the borough in the next few days. Several questions were asked about applying stricter codes.

V.P. Cost thanked them for their presentation and said that council would review their proposal and get back to them.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to accept the Minutes from January 3, 2022 and Special Meeting on January 21, 2022. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion, all responded aye. None opposed.

Council members reviewed the Treasurer’s Report for January 2022. Council Member Matarese offered a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report and authorize disbursements of \$132,963.23. Total Receipts were \$84,892.79. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. All Council members voted yes in a roll-call vote, none opposed, six to zero.

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Councilwoman Matarese reminded everyone that their “Statement of Financial Interests” are due.

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to adopt Resolution #1-2022 authorizing the addition of Robert Lesjack to the Honesdale National Bank accounts as an alternate signor. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. A roll-call vote found five for, Councilman DeGonzague opposed. The motion carried, five to one.

Councilwoman Matarese offered a motion to adopt Resolution #2-2022 authorizing the addition of Robert Lesjack to the First National Bank accounts as an alternate signor. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. A roll-call vote found five for, Councilman DeGonzague opposed. The motion carried, Five to one.

PUBLIC WORKS:

The Public Works report for January 2022 was offered for the record.

Removed and stored all the Christmas decorations from Main Street. Removed large & small trees.

Received 44 ton – CoStar Road salt/deicer from Cargill. Ploughed borough roads and applied deicer.

Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to approve the re-hire of Joseph Tedesco as an alternate part-time snow plow driver at \$16/hour effective immediately. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. The roll call vote was five for, one opposed (Councilman DeGonzague). Motion carried.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS:

Nothing to report.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Nothing to report.

PARKS & RECREATION:

Councilwoman Lazier announced that the Winterfest 2022 will be held on March 19, 2022 from 11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Kennedy Park. A Soup Cook-Off with 1st, 2nd & 3rd ribbons for the best soups. Registrations and set-up begin at 10:00 a.m.

A youth ice-fishing derby will be held, weather permitting, with registration at 8:30 a.m. The derby starts at 9:00 a.m.

Three Vendor markets will be held in May, July & September, more details to come. There will be a “Christmas in July” themed event in July benefiting “Toys for Kids”. All donations will go to the Forest City Regional School.

We continue to receive donations toward the Playground equipment fund drive, information will be forthcoming on equipment costs & installation.

The next Parks & Recreation meeting will be Monday February 28, 2022 in the Borough building in the 2nd floor Conference room. All are welcome.

Information for the park benches was distributed. Councilwoman Lazier made a motion to purchase 6 four ft. benches (cedar seat & back with a black frame) at a total cost of \$2,568.42. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, six in favor, none opposed. The motion carried. Delivery may be up to 20 weeks.

Brian Fitzsimmons, representing the F.C. Little League, requested funds to make repairs to the Little League Field at Kennedy Park using approximately \$7,000 from the COVID-19 ARPA funds that are available for outdoor recreation improvements. He provided estimates from Martin Stone Quarries-\$3,332.64, Justus Home & Garden-\$2,584.44, estimate for Prince Bros. field work-\$800 for a total of Approx. \$6,717.08. Asking for up to \$7,000 to cover any additional incidentals. Councilwoman Lazier offered a motion to approve \$7,000 of

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ARPA (Covid-19 relief) to temporarily correct the problems at the Kennedy Park Little League Field. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. All voted yes in a roll call vote – six to zero. The motion carried. It’s hoped these repairs will keep the field in usable condition until the 2023 season when recreation grants may be sought.

Discussion continued about the need for misc. equipment, but was not an item on the agenda, so was tabled until estimated costs could be submitted for consideration.

CODE ENFORCEMENT:

Councilman DeGonzague reminded everyone that written complaints are required for Code Enforcement issues. The procedure he follows is to “go out and take a look”, try to make contact by phone, issue a warning, then a second notice and ultimately file with the District Magistrate if property owner fails to comply. Councilman DeGonzague noted that this is the what NEIC proposes and that he does the same at no cost to the borough.

MAYOR’S REPORT:

The January 2022 police report and the F.C. Police Dept. 2021 Annual Report were distributed.

Mayor Glinton recommended Kenneth Esterline for hire. Councilwoman Matarese made a motion to hire Kenneth Esterline as a Part-time patrol officer for \$16.75 per hour effective 2/27/22. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. All responded yes in a roll call vote – six to zero.

Mayor Glinton recommended the promotion of OIC Assistant Chief John Foley to Chief of Police. Councilman Scalzo made a motion to promote John Foley to Chief of Police continuing under the current Police Contract through December 31, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Tracey Lazier. All voted yes in a roll-call vote – six to zero.

Mayor Glinton recommended the promotion of Part-time Patrol Officer Trevor Dzanis to the position of Full-time Assistant Chief effective 3/28/2022. Councilwoman Lazier offered a motion to accept the promotion of Trevor Dzanis to a full-time position as Assistant Chief with full benefits as outlined in the current Police Agreement to be amended to include Assistant Chief Trevor Dzanis through December 31, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilman Degonzague. The roll-call vote was unanimous six to zero finding all Council Members in favor and the motion carried.

Mayor Glinton reported that he has been in talks with surrounding municipalities to offer assistance and coverage. Councilwoman Matarese asked how many that might include, Mayor Glinton responded, “Seven, (i.e., Union Dale, Clinton Twp, Clifford Twp, etc.). Mayor Glinton will have more information at future meetings.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT:

Solicitor McAndrew had nothing to report.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT:

Eric Burns questioned Assistant Chief Dzanis’ qualifications. A.C. Dzanis responded with a detailed list of his education, training and experience. Having served on the Forest City Police Department since November 2019 he felt he was in line for this promotion. Mr. Burns went on to say that he wanted to know how this decision was made, why there had been no posting or advertisement for these positions. Solicitor McAndrew replied that she and Mayor Glinton had discussed this at length and had found no requirement to go outside of the department when qualified officers were available and that promoting from within the department was an accepted practice and the way the previous Chief had been appointed.

Jean Hyde asked if the new appointees were local. Dzanis responded that he is looking for housing locally and plans to relocate. None of the officers currently employed live within

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the borough and the past chief actually lived just as far away as the newly appointed team. Chief Foley added that there have been no response time issues and didn't expect any.

Robert Selinsky presented a police report from August, 2020 that was printed out for him by the recently retired chief on 9/25/2020. The report was filed by then Assistant Chief Foley as a "neighborhood complaint" involving Mr. Selinsky and a Borough resident over an argument following Mr. Selinsky's stop at a Borough resident's house. The argument was political in nature. The two were separated and the complaint was considered closed. Mr. Selinsky argued that the complaint was handled improperly as he was never interviewed and that he strongly opposed Chief Foley's promotion. Mr. Selinsky added that drug testing should be adopted by the borough.

Eric Burns was again recognized. He expressed his concern about Welch Road (behind Elegante Restaurant from Main Street to Maxie Street). He suggested that it be designated a one-way street during the winter months with traffic entering on Main Street and proceeding uphill. He remarked that buses and trucks were not supposed to be using the road and that it has become a dangerous situation. He noted that recently a vehicle had slid off the road and was stuck in the new guardrails. Vice President Cost thanked him and said it would be reviewed and considered.

Linda Haney from North & Railroad Street took the floor to ask Council to direct public works plow drivers to slow down, turn the blade the other way and stop burying her in snow. She added, "Please push it into the empty lot away from my trailer".

Jean Heid, Hudson St, asked Council to consider installing a sidewalk between 214 and 252 Hudson Street, "It has become a safety issue for kids coming & going from the school". Vice President Cost said the Borough would contact the state as Hudson Street is a state road and PennDOT may be involved. He added that it would be a very expensive project. Ms. Heid complained, "I pay taxes and get nothing for them". Mayor Glinton offered to contact the County to see if they could give any advice or assistance.

Vice President Cost said, "If there's nothing else, we'll move on."

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next regular meeting will be on Monday, March 7, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilwoman Lazier made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. All responded "aye". The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.