

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH
MINUTES
Monday May 6th, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER: (President DeGonzague, presiding).

President DeGonzague called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He welcomed everyone. He then asked everyone to join in the “Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present: President DeGonzague, Councilman Bernie Scalzo, V.P. Cost, Councilwoman Lazier, Councilwoman Bean, Councilman Lesjack, Councilwoman Woody, Mayor Ginton, Secretary/Treasurer Dennise Yankauskas, Solicitor McAndrew was not able to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

President DeGonzague opened the floor for public comment. None was offered.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION: (Robert Lesjack)

Councilman Lesjack offered a motion to accept the Minutes from April 2nd, 2024, seconded by V.P. Cost, all responded “Aye”, none opposed.

Councilman Lesjack offered a motion to accept the Minutes from April 22nd, 2024, seconded by Councilwoman Bean, all responded “Aye”, none opposed.

Council members reviewed the Treasurer’s Report for April 2024. Councilman Lesjack offered a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report for April 2024. Councilwoman Woody seconded the motion. The roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed.

Councilman Lesjack announced the Edward Jones CD matured and was deposited into the Roof Account, \$206,330.57.

PUBLIC WORKS: (Bernard Scalzo)

The Public Works report for April 2024 was offered. Councilman Scalzo read the following into the record: Swept Main Street and Dundaff Street; took Jet Truck out on a call to Uniondale, office will send a bill; rotated tires on F550 truck; cleaned all equipment after street sweeping; opened Maxey Street both ways; replaced shut-off in Little League kitchen; installed new light fixture in back room up Kennedy Park; opened restrooms for the 2024 season at Kennedy Park; installed new basketball nets. March recycling donations \$183 and April recycling donations \$182.

Councilwoman Lazier made a motion to accept Powell’s quote for the up-fitting of the new truck for \$48,812.74, seconded by Councilman Scalzo. Roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed.

Councilman Scalzo reported the engineering work done by JHA for the N Main Street and Susquehanna Street drainage issues are still work in progress and an invoice will follow.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Sarah Woody)

Councilwoman Woody made the motion to hire part-time cleaning person Brandi Stratton effective 05/03/2024 at \$15/hr., Councilman Lesjack seconded the motion. Roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Amy Bean)

Action Team Updates; Councilwoman Bean announced The Forest City Outdoor Action Team next meeting is June 6th, 2024 at 6 p.m.

Councilwoman Bean made a motion to approve the purchase of three bike racks to be placed on Main Street by the GFCBA not exceeding \$700. Councilwoman Woody seconded the motion. The roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed. Donations from businesses are being sought for this project and a plaque will be placed on the racks stating donated by.

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Councilman Lesjack offered a motion to accept the proposal to contract with Woodland Design Associates, Inc. to oversee the Center Street Park Project at an estimated cost of \$43,200, seconded by V.P. Cost, roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed. They will be available to help apply, write and administer grants. The cost is based on the 2023/2024 fee schedule and could change if the project goes into 2025.

Councilwoman Bean made a motion to approve CBDG Grant Phase II grant for the sidewalk from Erie Street to Main Street. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. There is no cost to the borough for this. The roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed.

Councilwoman Lazier made a motion to approve applying for the Endless Mountains Heritage Region Grant for \$2000, with the borough being reimbursed after the grant closes, to add a second sculpture to the Erie Street Trailhead. Councilman Lesjack seconded the motion. Roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed.

PARKS & RECREATION: (Nick Cost)

V.P. Cost read a letter from the GFCBA for a road closure on August 3rd, 2024 for the Annual Light Parade. Details to follow. V.P. Cost made a motion to apply for the permit to close the road. Councilwoman Lazier seconded the motion. The roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed.

V.P. Cost announced the permit was received to close the road for the Memorial Day service on May 27th, 2024 from 10:30 am to 11:00 am 300 through 900 blocks of Main Street.

V.P. Cost stated the Parks & Recreation Committee is asking the borough to split the cost of the weekly water testing at the park. Amount to be determined after the first testing. Councilwoman Lazier made a motion for the borough to cover the cost of the water testing stating the volunteer's money raised should not pay for this, Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. Roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed.

V.P. Cost stated the Parks & Recreation Committee is asking to spend \$400 from their account to purchase fish for stocking Kennedy Park Pond, \$800 has been raised. A big thank you to Valance Miller & Mike Norella. V.P. Cost made a motion to approve their using \$400 from their account, Councilman Scalzo seconded the motion. Roll call vote was seven in favor, none opposed.

V.P. Cost announced there are over thirty vendors for the May 19th, 2024 Vendor Market at Kennedy Park.

Parks and Rec would like to thank Wally & Kyle for their hard work getting to park ready for the summer season.

V.P. Cost would like to thank the Lions Club and NEP for their donation to the Fishing Derby to be held in August.

COMMUNITY SAFETY & HEALTH: (Tracey Lazier)

No updates

CODE ENFORCEMENT (Robert Lesjack)

Councilman Lesjack read the Code Enforcement report submitted by Joe Unis.

MAYOR'S REPORT: (Mayor Christopher Ginton)

The April 2024 police report was distributed for review.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: (Solicitor McAndrew)

Solicitor McAndrew was not available to attend the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: (President DeGonzague)

Councilwoman Sarah Woody discussed the ATV and SXS

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CORRESPONDENCE: (President DeGonzague)

President DeGonzague announced the reader board at the south end of town was donated to the GFCBA to advertise the Third Annual 5k & Community Walk for the late Donny Teague on May 11th, 2024.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT: (Items other than those covered by the agenda)

Councilwoman Sarah Woody talked about a safe route for ATV and SXS to get from the O&W Trail to Turkey Hill and Elegante. Meetings with DCNR representatives, representatives from the Governor's Office Rail Trail and the brough about signage and other safety concerns could be addressed along with reviewing the Minersville ATV and SXS Ordinance. President DeGonzague stated ATV's and SXS will be allowed to cross to Turkey Hill for gas and Elegantes to eat. Councilman Scalzo stated state law allows this also.

Katie Zefran asked if the ATV's and SXS coming from the trail to Kost Tire then to Turkey Hill were allowed to go over the new sidewalk being installed there. President DeGonzague said they would not be on the sidewalk but would be allowed on the road to get to Turkey Hill and Elegante.

Paul Vendetti of 512 Main Street spoke about Ordinance #522 that it not on the agenda but was discussed at previous meetings. He stated the truck directional route is all wrong the way it was written or possibly could be a typo. President DeGonzague agreed and would speak to Solicitor McAndrew. He has concerns and would like time at some point to sit down and discuss this matter. V.P. Cost asked if he could stay for a few minutes the adjournment of the meeting to discuss more.

Jason Oblenus of 612 Railroad Street, Forest City after reading the previous months minutes he read the lady that was doing the cleaning previously sent a resignation letter in and asked if this was the normal policy? Mr. Oblenus read in the Forest City news last month that the Main Street Coordinator resigned and sees in the prior months minutes that she corrected herself by saying he was not fired. So, the question is, did he resign or was it just not budgeted for? President DeGonzague replied it was not put on the budget due to budget restraints, he was not fired. And did not resign because the borough never received a resignation letter. Mr. Oblenus also wanted to know if there was a signed contract with PPL with a set price, if they have changed the price the solicitor needs to check the contract. The price should never have been changed.

Resident Carla Stackhouse of 612 Erie Street spoke of a letter she received from Solicitor McAndrew and have noted some points she would like to discuss. The letter stated several councilmembers have traveled her road where the change has been made. Councilwoman Bean said she traveled the road after she spoke with Ms. Stackhouse and the ordinance was changed. President DeGonzague stated he travels it quite often. Ms. Stackhouse asked do you believe that traveling north or downward is the safer way of travel? If council agrees with this statement; I ask that that they kindly change the ordinance back to one-way in a northbound direction. President DeGonzague that must be an error and he will verify with Solicitor McAndrew. Driving southbound up Erie Street is no easy task when the roads are bad in the winter time.

Kathy Kernoschak asked who was going to be cleaning the bathrooms up Kennedy Park. President DeGonzague said they would be checking with the cleaning person to see if she would be interested in cleaning the restrooms up the park and would get back to her.

Councilwoman Bean stated she was not present for the last meeting due to personal issues and I am not sure if everyone heard me on the phone. Apparently, it is in the paper but I do not read the paper so I am not sure what it says. I was replying to an email I was given about the Town Hall Meeting a very lengthy email. The email has a lot of false statements in it and is exactly what I was referring to. Things like Jason Oblenus stated. Councilwoman Bean stated the borough secretaries that Councilwoman Beans statement needs to be written verbatim by Mayor Christopher Ginton; Councilwoman Bean stated it was.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS: (President DeGonzague)

President DeGonzague announced the next regularly scheduled Council meeting will be Monday, June, 3rd, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

President DeGonzague asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilman Lesjack offered a motion to adjourn, seconded by V.P. Cost, all responded “aye,” none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.