

**BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
January 24, 2018
7:00 PM**

Council members present were: Mr. Rapp, Ms. Jordan, Mr. Blatt, Ms. Halleman, Mr. Atkinson, and Mr. Trotter. Also, in attendance were Mayor Gifford, Anthony Branco, Executive Administrator, Chief Bachert, the Bethlehem Press, and guests. Mr. Trabel arrived at 7:06 P.M.

Council President Rapp called the meeting to order and asked for everyone to rise for the Pledge to the Flag

Council President asked Council to review the draft Minutes of January 2, 2018 Re-Organizational Meeting – DRAFT (Please submit revisions to Mr. Branco in writing)

PRESENTATION(S): none

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR: Discussion on Agenda Items - none

RESOLUTIONS:

Mr. Branco apologized for the late notice of this resolution, but it was just received on 1/23/2018 and needed to be returned immediately for the Transportation Grant the Borough had received for the upgrades at Broadway and Delaware Avenue.

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-23

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF
FOUNTAIN HILL, LEHIGH COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF
PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT
WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR
ACCEPTANCE OF TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET ASIDE FUNDS**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Fountain Hill has been awarded Transportation Alternatives Set Aside funds under the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation’s Transportation Alternatives Set Aside program;

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Borough Council of the Borough of Fountain Hill does hereby approve the acceptance of the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside funding;

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that the Borough Council of the Borough of Fountain Hill does hereby authorize the Council President to sign and the Borough Secretary to attest on behalf of the Borough of Fountain Hill, Federal Aid Reimbursement Agreement No. R18050001 and any supplements between the Borough of Fountain Hill and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and have the same delivered to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Duly Adopted by Borough Council at a meeting held on the 24th day of January, 2018.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Philip Trabel						X
Leo Atkinson			X			
Hellen Halleman			X			
Annamarie Jordon	X		X			
Norman Blatt			X			
Doug Trotter		X	X			
Larry Rapp			X			
Mayor Gifford						

MOTIONS

OLD BUSINESS

- Draft Quality of Life Ordinance

Council President Rapp stated that this has been given to Council for review and that any changes be given to Mr. Branco in writing.

Mayor Gifford asked why comments must be in writing and not verbally. The Mayor felt that the draft was too constricting on the residents, stating that one person’s trash is another person’s treasure. Maybe someone would want a couch on their front porch

Mr. Blatt commented that this was just government seeking control.

Council President Rapp asked for a vote to direct Mr. Branco to proceed with the necessary steps to adopt the draft as an ordinance.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Philip Trabel			X			
Leo Atkinson			X			
Hellen Halleman			X			
Annamarie Jordon			X			
Norman Blatt			X			
Doug Trotter			X			
Larry Rapp			X			

Mayor Gifford

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- Draft Marijuana Ordinance

Council President Rapp stated that this has been given to Council for review and that any changes be given to Mr. Branco in writing.

Ms. Jordan stated that this was discussed in a Planning Commission meeting in 2017 to which Mr. Trotter agreed.

Mr. Branco informed Council that the Planning Commission recommended that a dispensary be allowed by Special Exception as two new districts in the General Commercial and Town Center districts, and a grower allowed by Special Exception in the Industrial District. After speaking with the Zoning Officer, it seems that a better option would be to allow these uses in the same areas as a Special Exception. This would need to go back to the Planning Commission as well as the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, then advertised for a public meeting at a Council meeting, advertised for a second reading, and finally Council taking action.

Council President Rapp asked for a vote to direct Mr. Branco to proceed with the necessary steps to adopt the draft as an ordinance.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Philip Trabel			X			
Leo Atkinson			X			
Hellen Halleman			X			
Annamarie Jordon			X			
Norman Blatt			X			
Doug Trotter			X			
Larry Rapp			X			
Mayor Gifford						

- 2018 YMCA Pool Agreement – to be placed on the February 5, 2018 Council agenda
- Police Association request for lump sum payments for the uniform allowance.

Mr. Branco handed out a request from the Police Association asking the contractual agreed to uniform allowance be changed to provide a one-time lump sum payment rather than separate purchase orders through the year. This would make it easier for the Financer Officer to process the payments since items are purchased from various outlets, some taxable while other items are tax exempt. After some discussion Chief Bachert was asked for comments. The Chief stated that the investigator should receive the uniform allowance on a quarterly basis while the police officers could receive two payments during the year. Council President Rapp directed Mr. Branco to place this on the Police Committee agenda for February 5, 2018 for discussion and a recommendation to Council.

- Borough Engineer RFP

Mr. Rapp mentioned that Mr. Branco had sent a summary of the RFP's received for the position of Borough Engineer. He asked Mr. Branco to give a brief summary of the RFP's received.

Mr. Branco stated the following;

- There were 7 RFP's received
- The price quotes, as forwarded to Council, were similar.
- The RFP required 5 years' experience. One firm only has been in business for 3 years.
- Currently the Borough has nearly \$1,000,000 in upcoming projects, and to have a new firm come in and familiarize themselves with what has thus far been done would be expensive due to the number of projects that are being undertaken.

Mr. Rapp asked for a vote keep Hanover Engineering as the Borough Engineer.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Philip Trabel			X			
Leo Atkinson			X			
Hellen Halleman			X			
Annamarie Jordon			X			
Norman Blatt			X			
Doug Trotter			X			
Larry Rapp			X			
Mayor Gifford						

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Ms. Casey Roncoroni – interest is serving on Planning Commission

Ms. Roncoroni introduced herself to Council and gave an introduction of her experiences in planning and her desire to contribute to the community. Afterwards Council voted unanimously to appoint Ms. Roncoroni to serve a 4-year term on the Planning Commission.

- Request from Barbara Merkle to carry over 24 vacation days from 2017

Mr. Branco presented Council with Ms. Merkle's request to carry over 24 days of vacation from 2017 due to her absence from work due to medical issues.

Mr. Blatt felt this was a bad idea and would set future precedent.

Mayor Gifford stated that Ms. Merkle served the Borough well and that Council should be merciful.

Mr. Atkinson asked what is allowed to which Mr. Rapp stated the manual stated 5 days.

Mr. Trabel stated that if 5 days is allowed then we should stick to 5 days.

Ms. Halleman stated this would be an exception to the rule, and asked how Ms. Merkle was paid for her time out. Mr. Rapp stated that she had used the sick days she had accumulated.

Mr. Trotter stated that Council should allow the request, but doing so and setting a precedent worries him.

Mr. Rapp asked could a caveat be placed on the request so that a precedent would not be set.

Mr. Blatt stated that a caveat can be added but it would be thrown back in the Borough face in the future.

Ms. Jordan stated that this was a very bad decision, but agreed that a precedent should not be set.

Mr. Blatt stated that this was not budgeted and that the Borough is in double digit tax increases and that we have a financial responsibility to monitor costs.

Mr. Trotter stated that this is a painful because Ms. Merkle has been her so long and due to a medical issue she was unable to use the vacation days.

Mr. Blatt stated that this does not have anything to do with a loyal employee, but rather setting precedent.

Ms. Jordan stated this has nothing to do with Ms. Merkle, but with precedents and what would be sought by our contracted employees.

Mr. Blatt made a motion not to grant the request of Ms. Merkle, seconded by Mr. Trabel. A roll call vote was requested by Council President Rapp.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Philip Trabel		X	X			
Leo Atkinson			X			
Hellen Halleman			X			
Annamarie Jordon			X			
Norman Blatt	X		X			
Doug Trotter			X			
Larry Rapp			X			
Mayor Gifford						

- Mr. Branco advised Council that the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission was forming a Lehigh Valley General Assembly to help prepare for future changes in the valley. Their will be three meetings; January 30, 2018, July 31, 2018, and October 30, 2018 at Penn State Lehigh Valley 2809 Saucon Valley Road, Center Valley. Mr. Trabel and Mr. Atkinson volunteered to go along with Mr. Branco.
- Mr. Branco asked for permission to place 58 wooden chairs in storage on MunciBid. Council agreed.

COUNCIL ACTION

- Mr. Rapp informed Council that the PW. Backhoe was in the shop in need of extensive repairs. The Borough has already spent \$2,500 and there are another estimated \$7,500 of work needed.

Ms. Jordan stated that the cost of repairs would eat up 85% of the maintenance budget.

Mr. Quarry when asked, stated that the backhoe was 21 years old and was a used machine when purchased.

Ms. Jordan advised Council that the cost of the backhoe before any incentives or trade in value of the old machine was \$94,900. After Plasterer discounts and the trade in value the 5-year lease amount would be \$75,000. The \$15,000 trade in value would be used as the lease payment for 2018, and the remaining 4 years would come from Liquid Fuels.

Ms. Jordan made a motion to purchase the backhoe at the above listed figures.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Philip Trabel			X			
Leo Atkinson			X			
Hellen Halleman			X			
Annamarie Jordon	X		X			
Norman Blatt		X	X			
Doug Trotter			X			
Larry Rapp			X			
Mayor Gifford						

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR – Discussion on Non - Agenda Items -none

EXECUTIVE SESSION: as required

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Atkinson made a motion to adjourn at 7:45.

Next Ordinance – 840

Next Resolution – 2018-24