

FOUNTAIN HILL BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES

April 5, 2021

7:00 P.M.

Due to Governor Tom Wolf’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency Disaster Declaration on March 6, 2020, a virtual/remote public Council Meeting was held via phone/zoom. The remote participation option for residents was published on the Borough’s website www.fountainhill.org. Remotely participating Council members were: Ms. Jordan, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Trotter, Mr. Blatt, Mr. Rufe, Mr. Trabel, Ms. Halleman, and Mayor Gifford. Also remotely participating were Anthony Branco (Borough Manager), Cordula Voges (Finance Director), Chief Bachert, Mr. Wargo (Zoning Officer), Jason Quarry (Public Works Supervisor), and guests.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council President Blatt called the meeting to order and asked everyone to pledge allegiance to the Flag.

MINUTES

- Motion to approve of the March 17, 2021 minutes

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan	x		x			
Jamie Johnson			x			
Wilbert Rufe			x			
Doug Trotter			x			
Philip Trabel		x	x			
Helen Halleman			x			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			x			
Mayor Gifford						

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR – None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Gifford praised the Police’s work in the past month. Chief Bachert provided details.

The EasterBunny Run was a success.

Mayor Gifford encouraged all residents to be vaccinated.

BOROUGH MANAGER’S REPORT

- The Stormwater bills for 2021 were mailed on April 1, 2021 and are due on July 1, 2021 before late fees will be applied.
- The application for the 2021 CDBG Grant - road construction on Kieffer St – is in process.
- UGI notified the Borough that it will start its street work on the south side of Broadway within the next couple of weeks.

Hanover Engineering is working on a cost estimate for UGI to put money in escrow. Mr. Branco stated that any past agreements with UGI specifying the cost sharing for milling and repair after UGI put in its lines worked well. He is suggesting to have the solicitor prepare a Resolution specifying the scope of work to be done by UGI. The solicitor explained the Resolution would be a general resolution that applies to all utilities cutting on the road to follow certain standards. UGI will notify residents about parking restrictions at due time.

- Mr. Branco reported that the City of Bethlehem plans to start its sewer reconstruction project at Broadway and Bishopthorpe. This work would also impact the current Meter Pit on Broadway that records the reading of the sewage flow from the Borough of Fountain Hill leading into the city of Bethlehem. Mr. Branco also mentioned a sewer agreement with the City of Bethlehem dating back to 1954 spelling out a 50% cost sharing regarding the meter pit between the two parties. Mr. Branco asked for a motion to create a “Memorandum of Understanding” with the City of Bethlehem explaining the nature and extent of work and cost based on the 1954 agreement.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan			x			
Jamie Johnson	x		x			
Wilbert Rufe			x			
Doug Trotter			x			
Philip Trabel		x	x			
Helen Halleman				x		
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			x			
Mayor Gifford						

- Mr. Branco reported that four (4) miles of the sewer main have been televised so far. The inspection report revealed some disrepair of the sewer main on Seneca St and some other pipes.
- Mr. Branco asked for a consensus from Council to advertise the Small Cell Ordinance and present it to Council at the April 21 Council Meeting. Council President Blatt asked all of Council, and a consensus was reached.

NEW BUSINESS

- Motion to approve a Loading Zone/No Parking request for Mr. Strausser on Itaska Street

Mr. Strausser explained that the current No Parking sign needed to be moved up 12’ so that all drivers will recognize and adhere to No Parking. He mentioned that the existing curb cut does not have to be changed. Mr. Strausser offered to use the No Parking sign that he had.

Mayor Gifford said granting Mr. Strausser’s request would be a measure to support local businesses.

Mr. Rufe added that the expansion of the No Parking zone will have little impact on residents. The Police has no objections to extend the No Parking zone.

Mr. Branco pointed out that an ordinance was needed to expand the No Parking zone.

Motion to advertise an ordinance expanding the requested parking.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan		x	x			
Jamie Johnson	x		x			
Wilbert Rufe			x			
Doug Trotter			x			
Philip Trabel			x			
Helen Halleman			x			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			x			
Mayor Gifford						

RESOLUTIONS

Motion to approve several resolutions.

RESOLUTION NO. 2021- 07

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL, LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, TO INCREASE THE RATES OF RESIDENTIAL RENTAL UNIT INSPECTIONS

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan			x			
Jamie Johnson		x	x			
Wilbert Rufe			x			
Doug Trotter	x		x			
Philip Trabel			x			
Helen Halleman			x			

Norman E. Blatt Jr.			x			
Mayor Gifford						

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 - 8

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL, LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF POOL CASHIERS FOR 2021.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan	x		x			
Jamie Johnson			x			
Wilbert Rufe			x			
Doug Trotter		x	x			
Philip Trabel			x			
Helen Halleman			x			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			x			
Mayor Gifford						

The opening of the pool for the summer will mostly depend on the YMCA's ability to hire the required number of life guards.

ORDINANCES – none

MOTIONS – none

OLD BUSINESS

- Ordinance No. 860 (see below) was tabled at the request of Mr. Trabel at the 4/5/2021 Council Meeting.

The ordinance is presented again for Council to vote on.

ORDINANCE NO. 860

AN AMENDMENT TO ORDINANCE 700, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL EXPANDING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S PERMITTED USE OF REAL ESTATE TAX FUNDS FOR INSTANCES LEVIED FOR THE DEBT PAYMENT OF ALL OPERATING COSTS AS PER 8 PA. STAT. AND CONS. STAT. ANN. § 1302(a)(6).

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan	x		x			
Jamie Johnson			x			
Wilbert Rufe			x			
Doug Trotter		x	x			
Philip Trabel				x		
Helen Halleman				x		
Norman E. Blatt Jr.				x		
Mayor Gifford						

COUNCIL PRESIDENT’S REPORT

- Managing Social media Presence

Council President Blatt referred to Ms. Voges’ Memo stressing that each Council Member engaging in Social Media should be careful not to mix personal with official Borough matters.

- Upon Mr. Blatt’s request, Mr. Branco stated that neither Arbor Day nor Memorial Day celebrations are planned as of now.

Mayor Gifford is asking for Council permission to put together a virtual program for Memorial Day. Council consented and authorized Mayor Gifford to do so.

- Council President Blatt proposed to open the Borough Offices to the public contingent to observing mask requirements and social distancing. Hand sanitizer will be made available and signage will be posted. Council consented to open the Borough Offices no later than May 1, 2021.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT- none

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance (Trotter, Blatt, Jordan)

- Motion to pay the bills presented

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan		x	x			
Jamie Johnson			x			
Wilbert Rufe			x			
Doug Trotter	x		x			
Philip Trabel			x			
Helen Halleman						x
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			x			
Mayor Gifford						

B. Public Works (Jordan, Trotter, Rufe)
Public Works is busy preparing the parks and the pool.

C. Police (Blatt, Trotter, Johnson)
Chief Bachert reminded that national pharmacy drug drop off is scheduled for April 24 at the Police Department and St Luke's Hospital. Pamphlets were distributed.

D. House & Ordinances (Rufe, Halleman, Jordan)
No report

E. Fire (Trabel, Halleman, Rufe)
Bunny Run was held on Saturday before Easter.

F. Recreation (Johnson, Rufe, Trabel)

- Motion to approve the 2021 YMCA pool contract based on the 2019 Management Agreement contingent on opening the pool and no other instances preventing its opening.
Also – the agreement states that the last two (2) weeks in August the pool will only be open on weekends.

The fees will stay the same – potential fee refund will be discussed if pool will be closed.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan			x			
Jamie Johnson	x		x			
Wilbert Rufe		x	x			
Doug Trotter			x			
Philip Trabel			x			
Helen Halleman			x			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			x			
Mayor Gifford						

Park program is still considered – however, sanitization will be costly.

G. Health & Sanitation (Halleman, Johnson, Trabel)

Ms. Halleman read the March collection reports.

Ms. Halleman asked Mr. Branco and Public Works to check on a tree having fallen down on Delaware Ave.

H. Personnel (Trotter, Blatt, Jordan)

Mr. Trotter reported that the part-time zoning position was offered to Ms. J. Laudenschlager. She accepted to start on May 3. Her compensation will be \$15/hr for 20 hours per week.

SPECIAL OR SELECT COMMITTEES

Books on the hill is getting its finishing touches. Active hours are currently discussed.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR – Discussion on Non - Agenda Items

Mr. Brian Ferencin apologized for his recent inappropriate behavior directed toward Council Members. Council accepted his apologies.

Mr. Ferencin asked if the Borough has a pothole hotline. Council President suggested to call Borough Hall to relate any information to Public Works.

Ms. Johnson pointed out that the playground is not for use of motorcycles or 4-wheelers. The police will be called to issue citations. She reminded to take care of the playground and not litter.

Mr. Rufe was approached about a fence permit by a resident. He asked the Zoning Officer to reach out to the applicant again and specify the requirements.

Mr. Rufe was approached by the Zoning Hearing Board complaining not receiving timely information on meetings and advertisements from the Zoning department and asked to have it addressed internally. Mr. Branco responded that any pertinent material is disseminated according to the MPC (Municipalities Planning Code) rules and any faulty advertisement would be the attorney's responsibility. He will consult with Mr. Wargo, the Zoning Officer.

Mr. Mike Spencer of 1035 Jeter Ave concurred with Mr. Rufe and asked the Borough to effectively communicate with the Zoning Hearing Board about the zoning matters. He cited that a Zoning Hearing Board meeting was published on the Borough's website before it was communicated to the Board. Finally, Mr. Spencer suggested to further discuss the complaint offline.

Mr. Trabel asked about the two payments made during the month of March for Water Hydrant rentals. Ms. Voges explained that the 2nd payment was probably made early and therefore resulted in two payments during March. He also asked about a payment to Hanover Engineering out of the Liquid Fuel Fund. After the meeting, Ms. Voges explained that the payment was related to Wiley Street road construction work.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (if needed) - none

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:47 PM Council President Blatt asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Trabel made the motion, seconded by Ms. Johnson and unanimously approved.

BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL
LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

By: _____
Norman E. Blatt Jr.- President of Council

SUBMITTED

By: _____
Cordula Voges, Finance Director

ATTEST:

By: _____
Anthony Branco, Borough Manager

Next Resolution 2021-9
Next ordinance 862