

**FOUNTAIN HILL BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES
August 2, 2021
7:00 P.M**

The Council Meeting was held in-person at Borough Hall. Council members present were: Ms. Jordan, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Blatt, Mayor Gifford, and Ms. Halleman. Mr. Trabel was initially absent but did come later. Also, in attendance were Anthony Branco (Interim Borough Manager), Cordula Voges (Finance Director), Pete Lehr (Solicitor), Chief Bachert, Jason Quarry (Public Works Supervisor) and guests.

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

MINUTES

Council President Blatt asked for a motion to approve the July 6, 2021 Council minutes.

| | 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 | | | | | | |

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR/ PRE-SCHEDULED – None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Gifford suggested to hold a 9/11 20th commemoration and potentially engage the Middle School band. Council President Blatt asked her to spearhead a committee organizing such an event.

BOROUGH MANAGER’S REPORT

Mr. Branco reported that the Borough is experiencing problems with multiple property owners not cutting the grass on their properties. In the past, Public Works cut the grass and the property owner was billed for the labor and machine hours. The Borough discontinued this practice because of concerns that any Public Works employees could get hurt. Instead, Mr. Branco asked for permission to hire an outside contractor to clean the property. The Borough would bill the property owner and – if needed - file a municipal lien and pursue a sheriff’s sale. The Solicitor recommended if a property is mortgaged to contact the mortgage company and ask for payment

or threat of municipal lien filing. Mayor Gifford cautioned to pursue a sheriff's sale because of unknown hardship circumstances. Ms. Jordan recommended a stronger position to take care of problem properties because of their overall negative impact on the community as a whole.

Council President Blatt asked for a motion to authorize Mr. Branco to hire an outside contractor to clean unkept properties.

| | 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 | | | | | | |

NEW BUSINESS

Chief Bachert requested to purchase six (6) new vehicle laptops with sufficient memory to comply with the new County wide reporting system funded through cash reserves. Chief Bachert estimated the cost to be between \$20,000 and \$25,000.

Council President Blatt asked for a motion to approve his request.

Mr. Trabel made the motion, seconded by Ms. Johnson

| | 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 | | | | | | |

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 - 15

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL, LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, TO APPOINT A BOROUGH MANAGER AND BOROUGH SECRETARY.

The motion was made by Ms. Jordan, seconded by Mr. Trabel to make the appointment.

| | 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 | | | | | | |

Mr. Rufe and Mr. Trotter had indicated beforehand that they are supportive of the decision.

ORDINANCES - none.

MOTIONS

Approval for Payment Application #3 in the amount of \$72,849.48 to Pipe Services for sanitary sewer TV inspections – reviewed and approved by Hanover Engineering.

| | 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 | | | | | | |

OLD BUSINESS - none.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Council President Blatt recited a letter from Mr. Chad Bruckner who had done the background check on the newly hired Borough Manager thanking him for the opportunity to provide the service.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Lehr updated Council on the recent delinquent accounts (for Sewer & Garbage, Stormwater and Rental License Fees) with an aggregate balance of \$65,289.07. Of those, three have paid in full. An additional two accounts are anticipated to be paid in full as a result of sales occurring tomorrow. Four have issued partial payment. Of the remaining six, four have judgments entered against them as of July 29th and two others (commercial owners) have complaints filed for which service has been accomplished.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance (Trotter, Blatt, Jordan)

- Council President Blatt presented the bills for the month of July and entertained to ask for a motion to pay bills as presented.

| | 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 | | | | | | |

B. Public Works (Jordan, Trotter, Rufe)

Ms. Johnson reported that Derek Palmer successfully completed his six-month probation period and asked to transfer him to full time employment status.

| | 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 | | | | | | |

Mr. Quarry reported that the pool is closed now for the season. He recommended to discuss necessary upgrades to the pool.

Council President Blatt asked Ms. Johnson to set up a committee to work on that and also suggested to get access to the pool study that was done in the past.

C. Police (Blatt, Trotter, Johnson)

Chief Bachert reported on an arrest that was recently made.

D. House & Ordinances (Rufe, Halleman, Jordan) - none.

E. Fire (Trabel, Halleman, Rufe)

Mr. Trabel reported on the July Fire Report. He also mentioned that the Firehouse lighting was updated with LED light bulbs finance through a fire grant.

He reminded that the Fire Department is still looking for Volunteer Firefighters.

Ms. Halleman reported about a local fire incident. She questioned the reason for the increase in fire incidents. Fire Chief Richmond stated that Code enforcement and fire fighter training are crucial tools to deal with these incidents. He also encouraged everyone that any alarms should be reported to the Fire Department to find out the cause for the alarms.

Mr. Blatt thanked St Luke's Hospital again for its contribution to the purchase of a new fire engine.

F. Recreation (Johnson, Rufe, Trabel)

Ms. Johnson reported that the pool season was very successful despite short staff. Attendance was low because only daily passes and no season passes were sold. Council President Blatt asked her to form a committee to work out the future pool season.

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

Ms. Halleman reported the Sewer & Garbage collection reports for July.

H. Personnel (Trotter, Blatt, Jordan) – none.

SPECIAL OR SELECT COMMITTEES

Ms. Jordan noted that the Bethlehem Area Library is looking for a part-time staff member for the Book Mobile.

Mr. Manzanares of St. Luke's Hospital thanked the Public Works crew for painting the curbsides at crosswalks near the hospital.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR – Discussion on Non - Agenda Items

A resident of 943 Long Street complained that vehicles are still speeding through the Long Street alley. Chief Bachert responded that the Police does not see any violations. Council President Blatt added that the current street signs alert drivers to slow down.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (as needed) – NONE.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:01 PM Council President Blatt asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms Johnson made the motion, seconded by Mr. Trabel 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- 16
Next ordinance 863