

MINUTES
BOROUGH COUNCIL
March 22, 2023
7 P.M.

The Council Meeting was held in-person at Borough Hall. Council members present were: Ms. Jordan, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Trotter, Mr. Blatt, Ms. Graham, Mr. Trabel and Mayor Johnson. Mr. Rufe was absent. Also in attendance were Eric Gratz (Borough Manager), Cordula Voges (Finance Director), and guests.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

MINUTES

Approval of the minutes of March 6, 2023

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

PRESENTATION(S)

- Lehigh County Executive Phil Armstrong

Lehigh County Executive Phil Armstrong stopped by for his annual visit. He introduced the Office of the Community Liaison, headed up by Yorman De La Rosa. De La Rosa's office will collaborate between county government and various community groups and municipal governments. Mr. De La Rosa will also focus on diversity representation throughout Lehigh County.

Mr. Armstrong updated Council on some of the regional highlights in Lehigh County. By putting a coalition together Lehigh County was able to keep the Iron Pigs baseball team in the county. April 4th will be the opening night for the season. Senator Casey will be visiting a senior home in the county. Mr. Armstrong stressed that the county is committed to offering senior homes to seniors who cannot afford private homes despite the staffing challenges. Mr. Armstrong mentioned new legislation that grants certified volunteer firefighters in the county a \$150 tax rebate.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR/ PRE-SCHEDULED

- Handicapped Parking

Ms. Elaine Lamana, mother of Ms. Lisa Lauer at 1312 Stanley Ave, Fountain Hill, represented her daughter. She reported that she had addressed Council on her daughter’s behalf in the past for the same matter. Ms. Lauer’s handicapped parking space is frequently occupied by other vehicles with and without handicapped stickers, even though Ms. Lauer pays an annual fee to the Borough for the handicapped parking spot. Ms. Lamana mentioned that the City of Bethlehem has specifically reserved handicapped permanent parking spots and asked Council to consider an ordinance to also provide permanent authorized parking. Council President Blatt replied that the Handicapped Parking ordinance has been amended multiple times. However, dedicated handicapped parking spots have never been granted. Mr. Gratz will further research the matter and follow up.

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS FOR REVIEW – None.

RESOLUTIONS FOR FINAL PASSAGE

RESOLUTION 2023-12		
A RESOLUTION OF THE FOUNTAIN HILL BOROUGH COUNCIL APPOINTING THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2023.		
<u>Shade Tree Commission</u>		
Will Rufe	5-year term	3/22/2023 – 12/31/2027

Mr. Mike Klo resigned after 5 years of serving on the Shade Tree Committee. Mr. Rufe is appointed to replace him. The agenda was changed within the permissible 24-hour window to include Resolution 2023-12.

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

DRAFT ORDINANCES FOR REVIEW & ADVERTISEMENT

ORDINANCE NO. 877

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL, CHAPTER 6, PART 2, TO REVISE SECTION 202 RELATING TO THE SALE, DISCHARGE, AND POSSESSION OF FIREWORKS, TO ESTABLISH NEW REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE USE OF CONSUMER FIREWORKS WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL.

The draft Ordinance No. 877 was crafted by the Solicitor also incorporating feedback from the House & Ordinance Committee. The amendment was necessary to comply with the new state law. Mr. Gratz asked Council to authorize him to advertise the ordinance and present it for final approval at the next council meeting.

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan			X			
Jamie Johnson	X		X			
Wilbert Rufe						X
Doug Trotter			X			
Philip Trabel		X	X			
Erica Graham			X			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			X			
Mayor Johnson						

OLD BUSINESS

- Pool (projects, materials, lifeguard applicants)

Mr. Gratz reported that three lifeguard applicants are currently going through the lifeguard training offered by the City of Allentown. More advertising to recruit pool staff is on the way.

The electrical work, required to repair the pool pump house piping and wiring, came in lower than quoted.

The Community Coalition is moving forward with their volunteer work.

- Vo-tech Students

Mr. Gratz and Mr. Quarry met with two gentlemen from the local Vo-tech school to discuss students' engagement in Borough projects. Vo-tech students could provide community service outside of school hours potentially for the summer assisting the Public Works department of any of the Community Coalition volunteers. The other option would be that a trade class takes on a project during the school year under the supervision of classroom instructors. As an example, a carpentry class could repair/build the wooden steps on the pool grounds.

- Easter Egg Hunt – April 1st at 10AM Stanley Ave Playground

Council President Blatt reminded that the rain date for the Easter Egg Hunt will be April 2nd at the same time. Mr. Gratz encouraged more kids to sign up because plenty of candy has been donated.

DISCUSSION ITEMS (NEW BUSINESS) – None.

COUNCIL ACTION ITEMS – None.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR – Discussion on Non - Agenda Items

- Bethlehem Area School District (BASD) – School Board Representative

Mr. Winston Alozie of 678 Ostrum Street, BASD Representative, informed Council about the happenings in the school district, as they might affect the borough residents. Brougham Middle School held its inaugural class of the National Junior Honor Society.

Over the last three years, BASD has been working on a feasibility study for its three oldest school buildings: William Penn, Thomas Jefferson and Fountain Hill Elementary. It found that costs to refurbish or newly build Fountain Hill Elementary School are about the same. But the conversation is still going on. At the next school board meeting, the plan approval for an update to the “Framework of Citizenship” (i.e. Code of Conduct) will be finalized to update the language and policies allowing the school officials to enforce the rules. A pilot regarding grading is undertaken to accurately reflect the actual and not subjectively perceived academic progress of a student. Report cards will have a more detailed comment section. The BASD hired a new Human Resources director.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.

Chief Bachert announced that medical drop off will be held on April 22nd from 10 am to 2 pm at the Police Station and St. Luke’s hospital.

Council President Blatt announced that Council Woman, Ms. Graham, will be resigning at the end of March.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:41 pm Council President entertained 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 - President of Council

SUBMITTED:

BY: _____
Cordula Voges, Finance Director

ATTEST:

By: _____
Eric Gratz, Borough Manager

Next Ordinance – 878
Next Resolution – 2023-13