

**MINUTES
BOROUGH COUNCIL
May 1, 2023
7 P.M.**

The Council Meeting was held in-person at Borough Hall. Council members present were: Ms. Jordan, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Rufe, Mr. Trotter, Mr. Blatt, Mr. Trabel and Mayor Johnson. Also in attendance were Jason Quarry (Public Works Supervisor), Ed Bachert (Police Chief), Cordula Voges (Finance Director), Dave Berger (Solicitor), 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.

As an administrative matter, Council President Blatt asked for a motion to amend the agenda to include the acceptance of the bid for the Sioux Street project.

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

MINUTES

Approval of the minutes of March 6, 2023

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

PUBLIC HEARING

Council President Blatt turned the meeting over to the public hearing portion of the meeting and asked Mr. Berger to continue. Council President Blatt also noted that a stenographer was present

to record the public hearing portion. Mr. Berger invited the public to comment on the proposed Ordinance 873 to amend Chapter 27, Zoning, to revise Attachment 3, Table of Dimensional Requirements, to reduce the minimum lot area requirement for dwelling units in the Town Center (“TC”) zoning district to 1,150 square feet and reduce the minimum lot width to 200 feet. Since the public did not further comment, Council President Blatt asked if there was a motion to approve the Ordinance.

The public portion of the meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

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

Ordinance 873 was approved by a vote of four to two.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR/ PRE-SCHEDULED - None.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Appoint new Council Member**

Council President noted that the new council member will replace Ms. Graham for the remaining term ending on 12/31/2025. Council had interviewed two applicants. Council President asked for nominations. Mr. Trabel nominated Mr. Stewart McCandless and Mr. Trotter seconded his nomination. No other nominations were made.

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

Council President Blatt thanked Mr. Arnold for his interest in serving on council and encouraged him apply for any other open committee positions.

Then Mayor Johnson administered the oath of office to Mr. McCandless. Mr. McCandless took his council seat.

- **Appoint Norris McLaughlin as interim Right to Know Officer**

Council President asked if there was a motion to appoint Dave Berger, attorney with Norris McLaughlin, as interim Right to Know Officer.

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

Council President Blatt asked to update the Borough's website accordingly.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Sioux Street Reconstruction Project**

After reviewing all bids, Hanover Engineering (HEA) recommended awarding the contract to the lowest bidder for the project with a bid amount of \$264,244.75.

Council President asked if there was a motion to award the contract to Grace Industries.

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

OLD BUSINESS

- **Pool Update**

Ms. Johnson reported that the necessary number of twelve pool applications to operate the pool have not been received. She stated that the pool was intended to open on June 12. Since the Public Works department needs about 45 days to prepare for the opening and not enough lifeguarding staff are secured to operate the pool, Ms. Johnson recommended not to open the pool this year. However, she stressed that the Borough has a great interest in opening the pool next year and any work needed around the pool and grounds would continue.

Ms. Johnson suggested partnering with the Borough of Hellertown or the City of Bethlehem again to offer Fountain Hill residents access to a pool this summer.

When inquired Mr. Berger confirmed that a motion not to open the pool this summer was not needed. He suggested asking for a motion to partner with other municipalities for pool access. Council President asked if there was a motion to partner with other municipalities for pool access.

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

- **Playground Update**

Ms. Johnson updated Council on the Summer Playground program. The opening date is scheduled for June 12. As in the past, eight counselors are to be hired. The afternoon hours of the program were discussed. In the past, an evening session from 6 to 9 pm was offered, which is consistent with the general park closing at 9 pm. Council's generally consented to keep an evening session. Consistent police presence for 15 minutes around 6 pm and additional police drive-bys were suggested to deter disruptive behavior.

The Summer Playground program will be re-visited and finalized at the next two council meetings.

- **CDBG Grant 2022 – Jeter Ave (Kieffer to N Hoffert St)**

Mr. Berger reported that any of the bidders fulfilled the requirements under the CDBG Grant. Ms. Smith with Hanover Engineering is still communicating with the Lehigh County representative. Mr. Berger recommended to table any decision on this project. Mr. Trotter made the motion to table the decision on this project. Council President Blatt confirmed with Mr. Berger that no one was needed to second the motion. Council unanimously consented to table the matter.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Little League had a great opening day.

Mayor Johnson thanked all contributors to and participants in the Arbor Day celebrations.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Council President Blatt thanked the Community Coalition for their efforts and their work at the pool.

Council President Blatt apologized for not having the last council meetings live streamed due to technical issues. However, the recordings were made available.

Council President Blatt thanked everyone for a well-orchestrated Arbor Day program.

Council President Blatt reminded that no roadside parking will be permitted on Delaware Avenue on May 15 and 16 (potentially even 3 days weather depending) during the road construction.

The Community Coalition held a successful borough clean-up. Council President Blatt asked residents to pick up after their dogs and clean up their property.

A Memorial Day program is planned on Friday, May 26 at the Triangle

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance

(Trotter, Blatt, Jordan)

Mr. Trotter asked for a motion to approve payment of the bills as presented.

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

Public Works

(Jordan, Trotter, Rufe)

Mr. Quarry reported that Hill Street between Clewell Street and Kieffer Street is being paved.

Police (Blatt, Trotter, Johnson)

Chief Bachert noted that the Delaware parking restrictions will be handled in a relaxed manner.

House & Ordinances (Rufe, Jordan) - None.

Fire (Trabel, Rufe)

Mr. Trabel presented last month's fire report.

Recreation (Johnson, Rufe, Trabel)

Ms. Johnson referenced the earlier discussions on the pool and playground.

Health & Sanitation (McCandless, Johnson, Trabel)

Mr. McCandless presented last month's Sewer/Garbage collection report.

Personnel (Trotter, Blatt, Jordan) - None.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR - Discussion on Non - Agenda Items

Mr. Jason Brandon of 701 S Hoffert Street was disappointed that Council decided not to open the pool this summer. He complained that the hiring of lifeguards was not done timely enough. Council President Blatt responded that the public was given many opportunities to address Council during the "Privilege of the Floor" over the past weeks and added that other municipalities are facing the same staffing problems. Ms. Johnson noted that the decision whether to open also depended on the Public Works Department's preparatory work needed to de-winterize the pool etc. Ms. Johnson stated that all efforts were made to provide staffing for the pool. Finally, Mr. Rufe recollected that the coalition was expressly formed to assist in hiring staff to work in tandem with the borough. He reiterated that all municipalities experience staffing problems. He encouraged the coalition to apply the current experience to a future campaign. Ms. Johnson stated that the work to repaint the building and caulk the sidewalk will be done over the summer. Mr. Brandon was waiting for a start date for the caulking. Council President Blatt acknowledged Mr. Brandon's disappointment with how the pool was handled. He recommended coordinating any work at the pool with the Public Works department. He also reminded all volunteers to submit the liability release forms and drop them off at Borough Hall.

Mr. Brandon asked Council to consider a commemorative plaque at the Triangle to honor Mr. Freeman's business serving the borough for decades. Council will look into it.

Mr. Albrecht, member of the Volunteer Fire department, expressed his disappointment that the pool would not open. He asked if reduced hours were considered. Ms. Johnson replied that not enough staff were available to even offer reduced hours.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Rufe reported that the Bethlehem Area Public Library held its open house after construction.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:07 pm, Council President Blatt asked for a motion to adjourn into an executive session to discuss the appointment of an Interim Borough Manager.

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

At 8:34 pm Council President Blatt brought the public meeting back to order after having discussed the filling of the Interim Borough Manager position on a temporary basis. Council President Blatt asked if there was a motion to appoint Mr. Jason Quarry as the Interim Borough Manager at the current borough manager's rate as of 5/2/2023.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:42 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 & ATTESTED

BY: _____
Cordula Voges, Finance Director

Next Ordinance – 874
Next Resolution – 2023-14

Approved