

Minutes
BOROUGH COUNCIL
October 3, 2022
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. Ms. Graham was absent. Also, in attendance were Eric Gratz (Borough Manager), Cordula Voges (Finance Director), Jason Quarry (Public Works Supervisor), Ed Bacher (Police Chief), Dave Berger (Solicitor), and guests.

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 September 21, 2022 as amended

	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						

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR/ PRE-SCHEDULED

- 940 Cherokee LLC on proposed Text Amendment to Zoning Ordinance

Mr. Joseph Piperato, attorney, and the engineer for the developer (940 Cherokee LLC) requested time to present to Council on the possibility of a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. They seek the reduction of the square footage to 1190 sqft to allow a 2nd four-story building on the premises because Zoning denied their request for a variance.

Mr. Berger stated that Council can decide if they would consider a text amendment to the zoning ordinance. Mr. Berger will work then with the developer's attorney to draft an amendment. The Borough will charge the appropriate fee to the applicant, if Council allows to proceed. The amendment would then go to the Planning Commission before returning to Council for adoption.

Council President Blatt asked Council if they considered the desired text amendment. Council consented.

MAYOR'S REPORT – None.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT

Roadwork Update

The pedestrian crossing at Broadway/Delaware will be completed any day. Also, the traffic sign signal will be put up by the end of the week.

The Broadway Curb & Sidewalk project will be started early November.

The micro surfacing project on Delaware Avenue from Uncas to Broadway Early is scheduled to start early November as well, if the weather permits it. Otherwise, the project will have to be moved to 2023. The milling requires 2 days – during that time traffic limitations and no parking will be in effect. Final dates will be published on the website and social media.

Crossing Guard Pay

The City of Bethlehem pays \$15/hour Bethlehem city schools. Upon the Bethlehem Area School District's Superintendent recommendation, Mr. Gratz suggested to offer an increase of the Borough portion of the Crossing Guard's pay from \$4.15/hour to \$7.15/hour and ask the Bethlehem Area School District to follow suit. A Borough representative would present the suggestion accordingly to the School Board.

Capital Project Planning for Budget 2023

Mr. Gratz mentioned that the Sioux Street project (1100 block of Sioux) is postponed to 2023 due to cost increases for the other road projects. Council had indicated to also include the curb and sidewalk repair. The Sioux Street construction cost will be funded with Liquid Fuel funds. However, curb and sidewalk repair cost are not eligible for Liquid Fuel funding. Mr. Gratz asked, if Council intends to pay for the property owners' portion of the curb and sidewalk cost or ask property owners to pay for it. The cost would need to be factored into the budget. Council consented to factor these costs into the Budget 2023.

Pedestrian Crossing Signs

In response to a resident's request, road signs for the pedestrian Delaware crossing are ordered. In addition, Mr. Quarry provided cost information for potentially 2 advisory flashing signs (\$3,500/sign). These flashing signs cannot be enforced, but the Police Chief approved of them. A final decision whether or not to purchase will be reviewed and made in one of the next meetings.

NEW BUSINESS

Council President Blatt reminded that Trick or Treat is scheduled for Friday, October 28 between 6-8 pm - rain or shine.

Fountain Hill Community Grocery Funding Request

When inquired Mr. Berger recommended to vote on the funding request of \$3,000 after approving Resolution No 2022-27 (formal policy).

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2022- 27

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL, LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, ESTABLISHING A FORMAL POLICY FOR NON-PROFIT ENTITIES TO REQUEST MONETARY DONATIONS.

Mr. Gratz pointed out that any donation requests have to be permissible under Chapter 12 of the Borough Code. And ultimately, all donations are at Council's discretion.

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

ORDINANCES – None

MOTIONS

- Approving payment to Gaver Industries Inc dba Barker and Barker Paving. for the Warren Street Mill and Overlay Project in the amount of \$112,536.00 as recommended by the Borough Engineer

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

- Approving payment to Kobalt Construction for the balance of Jeter Avenue Reconstruction in the amount of \$15,648.18 as recommended by the Borough Engineer

	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						

- Approving payment for the 2022 Police Pension Plan Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) in the amount of \$377,820.00.

	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						

- Approving payment for the 2022 Non-uniformed Defined Benefit Pension Plan Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) in the amount of \$50,793.00.

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

- Approving payment for the 2022 Non-uniformed Cash Balance Pension Plan Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) in the amount of \$9,292.00.

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

- Promoting Gary Arndt from “Probationary” to “Full Status” as a Public Works Laborer effective October 13.

	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						

OLD BUSINESS – None.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Council President Blatt reported that the Community Coalition meeting was well attended. The next meeting is not scheduled yet.

Council President Blatt reported that Mr. Zovko also is planning a neighborhood cleanup on October 15th. The location is still to be determined.

The negotiations with the Police Union are still under way.

Council President thanked Officers Wood and Vasquez who assisted with the removal of a rabid racoon in front of his property.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance (Trotter, Blatt, Jordan)

Motion to pay 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			
Erica Graham						x
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			x			
Mayor Johnson						

Public Works (Jordan, Trotter, Rufe) – None.

Police (Blatt, Trotter, Johnson)

Chief Bachert announced that the “Meet Your 1st Responders” will be held at the Fountain Hill Park on October 8.

The Police Department will also participate in this year’s trick or treat event.

House & Ordinances (Rufe, Graham, Jordan) – None.

Fire (Trabel, Graham, Rufe)

Mr. Gratz presented the September fire report. Lowe’s donated candy for the Fire Department’s Haunted House.

The Volunteer Fire Department is still looking for new members.

Recreation (Johnson, Rufe, Trabel)

Per the school’s request, Ms. Johnson suggested to hold the December 4 tree lighting ceremony at 4 pm.

Ms. Johnson suggested to hold a borough wide yard sale in the playground area in the spring. Council President Blatt encouraged her to pick a date and then present to Council.

Health & Sanitation (Graham, Johnson, Trabel)

Council President Blatt read the September Sewer/Garbage collection reports.
When inquired, Mr. Berger briefed Council on the Solicitor's collection efforts.

Personnel (Trotter, Blatt, Jordan) – None.

SPECIAL OR SELECT COMMITTEES

Mr. Rufe mentioned the "Books on the Hill" first anniversary.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR – Discussion on Non - Agenda Items - None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (None)

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:45 pm Council President entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. 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