

FOUNTAIN HILL BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES
September 7, 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, Mr. Rufe, Mr. Trabel, Mr. Trotter and Ms. Halleman. Also, in attendance were Eric Gratz, (Borough Manager), Anthony Branco (Interim Borough Manager), Cordula Voges (Finance Director), Pete Lehr (Solicitor), Chief Bachert, Dave Boehrer (Fire Chief), and guests.

Council President Blatt called the meeting to order and asked for everyone to rise for the Pledge to the Flag and observe a minute of silence to honor the victims of September 11, 2001.

MINUTES

- Motion to approve of the minutes of August 18, 2021

	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/ PRE-SCHEDULED

Ms. Wendy Glassic at 1218 Broadway reported a decaying deer carcass on the side of Delaware Ave following a phone call to the Borough Office. Both the Borough staff and Ms. Glassic had notified the State Game Commission to dispose of the carcass. The Public Works department is aware of the issue and will monitor.

Ms. Glassic also expressed safety concerns regarding a vacant studio apartment on Seneca St (block of 903 and 913) exposing sharp metal and a ladder giving open access. Council President Blatt stated that Mr. Wargo, the Zoning Officer, will be notified to inspect.

Ms. Elaine Lamana of Bethlehem and her daughter Lisa Lamana of 1412 Stanley Ave reported that Lisa Lamana has received a handicapped parking space in the recent past. However, everyone who has a handicapped sticker may park there. Frequently, the handicapped parking space is occupied by other vehicles with or illegally without a handicapped sticker. She mentioned that the City of Bethlehem has specifically reserved handicapped spots and wanted to know if the Borough

could do the same. Council President Blatt asked the Solicitor to review state law to determine if reserved parking spaces can be assigned.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Gifford reported that a compromise has been achieved regarding the Police Officers' 12-hour shift.

Because of COVID restrictions impeding ceremonies to commemorate the 9/11 attacks, the Borough will not have any commemorating events. Mayor Gifford mentioned that St. Ursula's Church is holding a mass on Sunday at 10 am to commemorate the victims of 9/11.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Gratz referred to the Memorandum regarding the deteriorating conditions of the Pool and suggested a conversation with all of Council discussing its future use. Council agreed that community meetings should be held and a residents' survey should be initiated to get input from the community. And once more clearly defined, preliminary cost estimates should be attained. Mr. Gratz will design and initiate a survey questionnaire.

Official Trick or Treat events were eliminated in 2020 because of the pandemic. Council Member, Ms. Johnson suggested to designate a date (usually last Friday in October – same as the City of Bethlehem) to allow for Trick or Treating. Council President asked for a motion to endorse Trick or Treating for the last Friday in October.

	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						

Mr. Gratz brought up the 2021 Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony. Because of any COVID restrictions, Council agreed to take a wait and see approach regarding the 2021 Christmas Tree Lighting.

NEW BUSINESS – None.

MOTIONS

Council President Blatt referred to the Memorandum regarding the Borough's PMRS Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) 2022 for non-uniform employees and asked for a motion to approve the MMO as calculated by Ms. Voges.

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

RESOLUTIONS – None.

ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE NO. 864

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL, CHAPTER 15, PART 3, SECTION 302 (c)(3), TO DELETE/ADD CERTAIN HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES

BE IT ORDAINED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Fountain Hill, Lehigh County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, that Chapter 15, Part 3, Section 302(c)(3), shall be amended as follows:

ADD:

STREET	SIDE	LOCATION
Jeter Ave	front	1113
Russell Ave.	front	1123
Pawnee St.	front	1011

Council President Blatt asked for a motion to approve the above ordinance.

	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 thanked St Luke’s for the 2nd installment payment toward the purchase of the fire truck.

Council President Blatt had received letters from the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley asking for a \$500 contribution and from Meals on Wheels of the Greater Lehigh Valley asking for a general contribution in the upcoming year. Mr. Blatt asked to consider these in the upcoming Budget 2022 discussions.

Residents of 943 Long Street Lehigh County housing thanked the Borough for the new “Pedestrian” sign to prevent speeding. Residents continue to observe speeding drivers. Mr. Blatt explained that speed bumps can only be installed on municipal roads, if an engineering study allows them. A traffic engineering study is also needed, if speeding signs with a speed limit of <25m/h are installed. In light of the related cost the House & Ordinance Committee will review options for speed control on Long Street.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance (Trotter, Blatt, Jordan)

Mr. Trotter read the Check Detail reports and made the Motion to approve payment of the August 2021 bills.

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

B. Public Works (Jordan, Trotter, Rufe)

Ms. Jordan reported Christian Smith’s resignation effective 9/2/2021 and made the motion to accept his resignation.

	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						

With budget time approaching and in light of the current competitive environment Ms. Jordan asked to review the payscale for PW employees. Mr. Trotter suggested to schedule a Finance Committee meeting to further discuss. Mr. Trabel suggested to potentially outsource PW projects. Council President Blatt asked Mr. Gratz to schedule a Finance Committee meeting.

C. Police (Blatt, Trotter, Johnson)

Council President Blatt reiterated that a compromise was reached to uphold the current 12 hr shift.

Chief Bachert reported that several officers had received lifesaving awards plus awards for issuing the most DUI and traffic citations.

Mayor Gifford commended the Police Officers for their achievements.

D. House & Ordinances (Rufe, Halleman, Jordan) – None.

E. Fire (Trabel, Halleman, Rufe)

Mr. Trabel read the August 2021 Fire report.

Council President Blatt also thanked the Fire Department for the basement pumpouts during the recent flood.

F. Recreation (Johnson, Rufe, Trabel)

Ms. Johnson thanked Mr. Quarry to provide the photos taken at the pool to show its current condition.

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

Ms. Halleman read the Sewer & Garbage Collection reports for the month of August.

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

SPECIAL OR SELECT COMMITTEES

Mr. Dave Boehrer reported that Derek Richmond had to resign as Fire Chief because of personal reasons. In the meantime, Mr. Dave Boehrer is filling in as acting fire chief.

The new Fire Truck is still not delivered due to delays for necessary supplies

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

Council President Blatt pointed out that the 2nd September Council Meeting is postponed to 9/22/2021.

On behalf of all Council, Council President Blatt thanked Mr. Branco again for his service over the last 7 years and wished him well for the future.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (as needed) – None.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:55 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: _____
Eric Gratz, Borough Manager

Next Ordinance – 865
Next Resolution – 2021-16