

**Penbrook Borough
Caucus Meeting
Minutes
November 21, 2022
6:30 PM**

1. Call to order and roll call: President Deardorff called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. All elected officials were present.

2. New Business:

A. Action on Resolution 2022-18 appointing members to the Zoning Hearing Board for their respective terms. Armbruster made a motion to approve the resolution and seconded by N Shaw. There was no further discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Mr. Nathan Newcomer of 2354 Canby St. has applied for the vacant Ward 1 council position. Mr. Newcomer does reside in Ward 1 of the borough and has resided there for more than a year. Newcomer introduced himself to Council. The Solicitor advised that Council needs to appoint Newcomer to the position by resolution at the December Council meeting.

C. Manager Hogarth reported that the staff is ready to resume rental inspections but needs a vote by council to reinstate. He's also wondering about the moratorium on buyer inspections. V Shaw was concerned about how we've done rental inspections in the past and didn't want to overwhelm the staff by doing it the same way we've done previously. Can inspections be done based on complaints? Stokes concerned some will not want to complain because of fear of retaliation from property owners. There was no discussion about buyer inspections other than everyone agreeing we shouldn't do them any longer. Nothing regarding rental inspections resolved and will be on future caucus agendas for discussion. Buyer inspection will need ordinance change to eliminate.

D. Council considered a handicap parking sign application presented by the tenant at 2739 Boas. There is off-street parking available in the way of a detached garage. Council would want a copy of the lease or a letter from the landlord stating that the tenant does not lease the garage before approving the sign.

E. Hogarth presented a draft of the 2023 Borough Fee Schedule. There were many questions regarding rental of community room and pavilion. Stokes believes it should be made available to Penbrook residents. Hogarth commented on the stains, damage and dirt that takes place with organized events like elections and opening up to rentals will only add to wear and tear. Ramper noted that elections had things taped to

the walls and it appears new paint chips have appeared. Deardorff asked that the fee schedule be presented at the December Caucus meeting for further discussion before action at the January meeting.

F. Regarding the appointment of an Emergency Management Coordinator, Ramper had stated in a previous meeting that he wanted this discussion on the agenda to re-consider Councilman Nate Shaw. He had stated that other municipalities have people in dual roles including the EMC such as Highspire Borough where the EMC is also the Public Safety Director and the Borough Manager. The Solicitor advised that her position is that appointing an elected official as the EMC would create a conflict in that any staff member answers to the elected officials but an elected official acting as staff presents a problem.

G. Hogarth had three sanitary sewer issues to discuss. In the interest of time, two of the three items would be held for another caucus meeting. One that couldn't wait is action needed by Council to have Rettew Engineering add sewer line and manhole repairs located on the E Harrisburg Cemetery property to the storm water basin project bid documents. Hogarth believes doing so in conjunction with the basin project will reduce the cost of the project and the sewer line was the site of the emergency repairs needed this past summer. Council agreed to have it placed on the December agenda for action.

H. Stokes discussed referendum questions regarding the sale of alcohol in the borough. Penbrook is currently "dry", but the planning commission has been discussing the sale of alcohol to bring in different businesses. Through research Stokes had question examples from the Liquor Control Board. Several members believed that narrowing the questions toward "brew pub" establishments were preferred over general alcohol sales. Ramper believes potential sites for alcohol sales of any kind are too close to residential areas and therefore would pose issues. Stokes will be taking Council comments to the planning commission meeting tomorrow for further discussion

3. Old Business

- A. Solicitor Kern provided Council with a draft resolution for the WREP program acted on at the November Council meeting. The tri-county planning commission is asking for a resolution. This would be added to the December meeting for action. Armbruster believes this shouldn't be acted upon because the county will want to control storm water projects. There were no further comments or questions.
- B. Vehicle use policy was not discussed and will be moved to a later meeting.
- C. Fire department incentive program was not discussed and will be moved to a later meeting.

4. Citizen Comments

n/a

5. Council Comments

a. Armbruster asked about the Eckert Seaman's Invoice. Hogarth advised that was for bond counsel work on the debt payoff.

b. Ramper asked about a credit card charge. Hogarth advised it was a purchase of heated wiper blades for the public works trucks and believed it was added safety during plowing.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted

Joseph Hogarth
Borough Secretary