

Penbrook Borough Council Meeting Minutes  
March 6, 2023

1. Call to order
  - A. On March 6, 2023 President Deardorff called the Borough Council to order at 6:31 pm followed by a salute to the flag and a prayer from Pastor Halliday.
  - B. 7 members of Council were present. The Mayor and Ramper were absent. The solicitor attended remotely.
2. Executive Session
  - A. President Deardorff called an executive session at 6:33 to discuss a personnel matter. The executive session was adjourned and public allowed back in at 6:57.
3. Action on the minutes
  - A. On the February 6 Council minutes, motion to approve by V. Shaw and seconded by Dry. Carried unanimously
  - B. On the February 21 Caucus minutes, motion to approve by V. Shaw and seconded by Newcomer. Carried unanimously
4. Citizen comments on agenda items: NONE
5. Reports
  - A. Hogarth provided Council with the February 2023 Police stats
  - B. Treasurer – Manager Hogarth read the Treasurer’s report for February 2023. A motion was made by Stokes and seconded by Newcomer to accept the report. It was voted on unanimously.
  - C. Manager – Hogarth announced that the Borough was awarded \$90,000 from the Local Share Grant to be used to offset a portion of the 2024 Asylum Run Debt Service.

D. Solicitor – No report

E. STEMS – No report

F. Fire Chief – No report

G. Committees

i. Codes – Deardorff reviewed the codes and property maint. stats.

ii. Public Safety – Order of succession members for March are Armbruster, Dry and Deardorff.

iii. Parks and Property – Stokes mentioned that there is an action item regarding the bids for phase I of the little valley park project and he'd like phase III on the March Caucus agenda for discussion.

iv. Public Works – N. Shaw reviewed projects that the staff have been working on.

v. Personnel – There are two action items on the agenda involving personnel issues.

vi. Community and Government – Ralph E. Jones has been approved for the Adopt-A-Highway for Walnut Street from BJM Auto to 7-11. Signs should be going up shortly.

vii. Budget – No report

viii. Authority – The WREP meetings have started with Blain Bargo attending the first one. The cemetery basin project will be starting in the next few weeks with the bid from Iron Eagle Excavating being awarded last month.

ix. Planning Commission – The commission will be meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and will continue to focus on the comprehensive plan and the upcoming town hall meeting.

6. New Business

- A. A motion is needed to accept the resignation of Fred Pace from the Civil Service Commission. A motion to accept was made by Armbruster and seconded by Dry. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. A motion to appoint Tammy Sweger to a full member of the Civil Service Commission from an alternate was made by Armbruster and seconded by N. Shaw. The motion carried unanimously.
- C. A motion is needed to accept the lowest responsible bid or reject all bids received for the Little Valley Park Project Phase I. A motion to reject all bids made by V. Shaw and seconded by Dry. Motion carried unanimously.
- D. A discussion and if necessary, action on the vacant public works/property maintenance position. V. Shaw briefed Council that she spoke with some staff members about the position left with the termination of Paul Goff last month. Those she spoke to support the personnel committee's recommendation of filling the vacancy as currently described. Stokes asked about a job description. Dry read the portion of the job description that describes the property maintenance duties. Newcomer asked if we were pulling duties away from Light-Heigle and giving them to our in-house BCO. Hogarth said that was the goal. That the responsiveness of LH is not very good. It's likely that inspections would still be handled by third parties but everything else should come back to us for better customer service. V. Shaw made a motion to authorize the manager to fill the vacant public works/property maintenance position. Seconded by Stokes. The motion carried unanimously.
- E. Discussion and if necessary, action on the new property maintenance position. Again, V. Shaw briefed Council on the need to have more hours responding to and enforcing property maintenance issues. This would also work to support the goals of the Planning Commission. Shaw surveyed the work currently being done by the office staff, particularly the BCO. Currently rental inspections are suspended and most codes duties are being handled by a third party which is costing the borough money. In February, budget chair Armbruster provided Council with a memo stating the feasibility for the general fund to support this unbudgeted new position. V. Shaw made a motion to authorize the

manager to advertise and fill this position. It was seconded by Armbruster and carried unanimously.

7. Visitors to be heard

a. Anthony Owens of 113 N 30<sup>th</sup> brought in neighbor signatures supporting his quest to keep chickens. Owens also provided Council with a fact sheet listing the benefits of chickens. Currently there is a zoning ordinance prohibiting the keeping of any poultry animal.

b. Clyde Bateman of 2615 Boas commented on several items he believes are deficiencies in the borough.

8. Council comments

A. Armbruster said he's been reading through all the ordinances looking for what potentially needs amended and has found what he believes are typos. He asked the solicitor if they can just be changed or does it need to go through the formal amendment process. The solicitor commented that the original text would need referenced before a decision could be made.

B. Deardorff thanked Council for all their work with the personnel and other issues over the past months.

9. Action on the bills to be paid

A motion was made by Armbruster to pay the bills and seconded by Dry. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Adjournment

A motion was made by V. Shaw and seconded by N. Shaw to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted and attested,

Joseph Hogarth  
Borough Manager and Municipal Secretary