Penbrook Borough
Caucus Meeting
Minutes
October 16, 2023
6:30 PM

1. Call to order and roll call: President Deardorff called the public meeting to order at 6:31 pm. All members present except for Ramper and Mayor McDonald

2. Manager's Report

    A. The paving projects are completed and a final walkthrough will take place sometime next week.
    B. The Little Valley project will resume as pieces for the pavilion have been shipped. The ADA curb cut needs completed as does the asphalt for the walkway.
    C. Shaun Trude may get orders for basic training sooner than expected. If he leaves this fall the plan is to possibly use Paul Goff to assist with leaf collection.
    D. Iron Eagle Excavating will soon be mobilizing to complete the basin project.

3. Discussion and Action Items

    A. Deardorff advised that the Zoning Hearing Board applicant was unable to attend tonight's meeting so this topic should be postponed until the November Caucus meeting.

    B. The LEO's president addressed Council seeking permission to conduct this year's collection initiative with proceeds going to the Manna Food Bank. The event will take place on November 22 from 12p to 5p. The LEO's would like to use the Community Room and the FD triangle for collections. They would also like to place a collections box in the hallway. Newcomer made a motion to approve the request and seconded by V. Shaw. Motion carried unanimously.

    C. Hogarth presented Council with the proposed 2024 meeting schedule to be advertised. He noted that the SWA and Planning Commission both have to decide on date changes that will be affected by holidays. If no changes are proposed the schedule will be on the November agenda. Armbruster asked why the budget meetings started early. Hogarth said at a recent budget meeting it was discussed and agreed to start them early to allow for discussion of capital improvement projects.

D. Hogarth is asking Council to consider using a consent agenda for meetings in which several items are voted on separately such as minutes, payment of invoices and treasurer's reports. Hogarth and Kern provided examples of other municipality's agendas. V. Shaw commented that she likes the simplicity exampled by Conshohocken Borough. Stokes asked how items are decided to be included. Kern said some items are consistent such as the approval of minutes. Other, not recurring items would be decided at the Caucus meeting such as handicap parking permits. She also said, if a Council member saw an item on the consent agenda that needed further discussion, that item could be removed and placed on the agenda for discussion before any action is taken. Dry asked where the idea came from. Kern said it's part of the Robert's Rules of Order.

E. Stokes advised that he's looking for approval for the solicitor to attend the planning commission meeting while the SALDO applications are being considered. Stokes suggested that her attendance will help keep the process moving along so Council can make a decision within the timeline given.

F. A review and further discussion of the excavation ordinance proposal. Council received the redline version offered after the review by the Borough's engineer. Kern reviewed those comments and had several comments of her own. Most involved the consistency of language and definitions however her review was not complete at the time of the meeting. Armbruster asked about the use of the term "building inspector" and why it shouldn't read "BCO" or Borough Codes Official. Kern advised that the generic term is all-encompassing and further suggested a change to "borough official". Kern will continue her review and the topic will likely be added to the November Caucus agenda.

G. Deardorff advised that there was a comment to the Borough's FB page recently regarding election signs that he believed needed discussion. Armbruster made a motion to amend the agenda to add the discussion. The motion was seconded by N. Shaw and carried unanimously. Deardorff went on to say that someone commented that the election signs placed on the Borough's property at Herr and Walnut Streets is disrespectful because that property is meant as a memorial for those that served in the armed services. Kern advised that Council can control the signs as those that are placed are required to get written permission, however she cautioned that the prohibition of signs then requires the prohibition of all signs, not just election signs that are protected under the first amendment as free speech. Deardorff asked if any response to the FB post should be offered. All of council agreed no response should be made.

4. Citizen Comments – N/A

5. Council Comments

    A. Stokes commented that the Harrisburg Area Police Athletic League is in the process of working out particulars for possibly using the large ball field at Community Park.

    B. Armbruster asked Hogarth what the Harrisburg Truck Body invoice was for. Hogarth advised it was to repair a cracked sub-frame on one of the dump trucks.

6. The public meeting was adjourned at 7:21 pm for an executive session to discuss a legal issue. The executive session was adjourned at 7:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Hogarth
Borough Secretary