

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH
MINUTES
MONDAY – September 5, 2017**

CALL TO ORDER: President Orasin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLLCALL: Present: President Orasin, V.P. Bernie Scalzo, Council Members Joann Matarese, Nick Cost, Robert Lesjack, Ed Pearsall, Mayor Pauline Wilcox, Solicitor Paul Smith and Secr/Treasurer Sharon Vannan. Absent: Councilman DeGonzague.

SPECIAL DISCUSSION: MAIN STREET FIRE

President Orasin began, “The recent Main Street Fire is a tragedy of epic proportions for the Borough, fortunately everyone made it out safely. There has been a great outpouring of support; this kind of disaster brings out the best in the people of Forest City and surrounding communities. The Borough has lost five buildings since May and the Lesjack property sustained severe damage in the Main Street fire. There were many positive stories. I will turn this over to Mayor Wilcox now who will take this time to honor one of our own.”

Mayor Wilcox asked Chief Johnson to provide a rundown of the events. Chief Johnson offered a report of what occurred, “Foley heard banging and shouting. He observed a fire at 511 Main Street, running to the scene and around the back of the property. He spotted one of the victims exiting from the back of 509. He assisted the individual escape and called in the fire. He made sure that everyone was safely out of the building and accounted for.

Mayor Wilcox then presented an award to Officer Foley noting his dedication and bravery, “On behalf of the Borough, we recognize you for your heroic actions and we are proud to call you one of our own.” A standing ovation and applause followed the presentation. The Mayor added, “We will be recognizing others who responded to the fire at our next meeting.

The Mayor also reported that Father Brian Clarke was hosting a non-denominational prayer service at St. Joseph’s Church to show support for the fire victims.

Councilman Cost commented, “Officer Foley, I’ve know you awhile and am proud to call you friend. We are very lucky to have you on the force.”

To date the State Police Fire Marshal has yet to determine the cause of the fire, but continues to investigate. The owners are working with their insurance companies to get the area secured until removal of debris and demolition of the buildings can begin. President Orasin added, “This is a distraction from the other business at hand for now, but we must move forward toward recovery. Chief Johnson added, “The state has released information to the insurance companies. We will continue to enforce restricted access to the area to ensure public safety.”

Paul Smith reported that there have been adjustors on the scene. As of this morning, they are still working on the releases. So far, 507 will not require a demolition permit, since it is already down, removal of debris can begin immediately. 509 & 511 will require demolition permits. Joe Cutri has been contacted and will provide a letter requiring the demolition and removal of debris. The letter will also inform the owners and insurance companies of the need to secure the area to prevent the risk of injury.

Art McLain reported that he met with Mr. Tomaine who was preparing to open his Martial Arts business at 511. He had moved his equipment in and lost everything. He is looking for an alternative location and any loans or grants that may be available to get him back up and running.

Rachel Habetler reported that her husband Stephen was at the fire all night and day and was impressed with how well everyone worked together. Tony Wilcox added, “I’m impressed and touched by how everyone worked together and how other local businesses offered their help.”

Councilman Cost added, “You just don’t see this kind of support until something happens, but this is a great little town.” Solicitor Smith reported that Kevin Lesjack’s building sustained a lot of damage. Other funeral homes in the area have offered him space to continue to offer his services. The flower shop is operating at a location across the street.

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President Orasin added, “This has been a great loss for the community, loss of businesses as well as financial loss. I urge Council to take a pro-active stance and look toward encouraging the re-development of these properties; we don’t need another parking lot in town.”

PUBLIC COMMENT: President Orasin opened the floor for public comment:

Paul Ravnikar commented on the roads and the lack of curbing on the 800 block of Main Street. There are some places where there is no curbing which is dangerous and fails to reduce the run-off. He also noted that North and Main Street is a very dangerous intersection. There is parking on both sides and it is very difficult to navigate turns. President Orasin asked Councilman Scalzo to, “Please look into this and discuss the parking situation with Chief Johnson.” Chief Johnson responded, “If there is a handicapped person with a van and they’re parked legally, there’s not much we can do.” The mayor asked, “Can it be made a one-way?” Councilman Scalzo will look into the situation and see if anything could be done about the curbs and parking.

President Orasin said, “If there’s nothing else, then we’ll move on with our Committee Reports.”

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)

Councilwoman Matarese asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes for the regular monthly meeting held August 7, 2017, asked if there were any corrections, and then made a motion to accept the minutes. Councilman Cost seconded the motion. All voted aye, the motion carried.

Council members reviewed the Treasurer’s Report for August 2017. Councilman Lesjack questioned the total reported for furniture sales - \$140, “should be \$170.” President Orasin pointed out that \$30 was reported on the July Treasurer’s Report bringing the total to \$170. Councilwoman Matarese made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report and authorize total disbursements of \$64,993.77. Cash Receipts totaled \$87,873.03. Councilman Pearsall seconded the motion that carried with a roll call vote of 6 to 0 in favor of accepting the August report.

Ms. Vannan prepared the 2018 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) worksheets for the Uniform and Non-Uniform pension plans and distributed to council as required by Act 205 of 1984. The Uniform contribution is zero; the Non-uniform contribution for 2018 is \$6,258. Councilman Scalzo offered a motion to approve and accept the MMO worksheets. Councilman Cost seconded the motion, all voted aye and the motion carried. Ms. Vannan will forward the MMO’s to the PMRS as required.

Councilwoman Matarese announced that the 2018 UC Contribution rate remains at .0285, the base payroll subject to UC increases to \$10,000.

Roto-Rooter invoices totaling \$811.25 for additional video work on USDA Payment Request #59. Councilwoman Matarese made a motion to approve for submission to the USDA for payment. Councilman Lesjack seconded the motion. Roll call vote – six ayes, none opposed. Motion carried.

B. PUBLIC WORKS: (Bernie Scalzo)

Vice President Scalzo read the report for August 2017 citing the following items:

- Recycling donations collected - \$236;
- Purchased new chains for the swings at Kennedy Park, added mulch under the swings & slides;
- Installed the 36” drain pipe under the road at Kennedy Park - \$519;
- Purchased two new front tires and replaced the front ball joint on the recycling truck, \$812;
- A “No Parking” Sign was stolen from Vision Park – police report filed;

Councilman Scalzo added that he met with Gary Wilding of KBA and does not have a final answer yet on some of the road issues reported at last month’s meeting. Gary recommended that the hole at Vision Park be filled in with modified and monitored. After a period of observation, they can decide on the scale of excavation needed. Caryl Street dip was looked at by the Dept. of Surface Mining and they conclude that it is not mine related. Will probably have to excavate, fill and pave – cold patch would be too costly and probably will not last. The problem on Lower North Main, behind Adam’s Garage, is likely caused by the pitch of the storm pipes. Leeward will be asked to revisit this location. The cause of the problem at

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Emergency Services on Railroad Street is not clear. Pioneer will be called in to determine the cause and make repairs.

Councilman Scalzo continued, reporting that the water washing under the road at Maxi & Main, near Elegante's, may be another contractor issue, "but we're keeping on top of it."

C. BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Robert Lesjack)

Councilman Lesjack reported that the proceeds from the sale of furniture and misc. items netted \$170 so far. Still many items left. He noted that Kevin Lesjack, a victim of the recent Main Street fire, has a need for file cabinets. Nick Cost added, "We should also check with the Karate guy."

Councilman Lesjack reported that he checked with Dennis Kutch last week, but he doesn't have the plans for the building project done yet.

In the meantime, Councilman Lesjack reported that he is working on putting together prices for the second floor bathroom renovations. He asked to use \$5,000 of his budget for the bathrooms and the other \$6,000 for the restoration of the Pentecost Hall floor. He has been checking prices at Home Depot and the Salvation Store in Honesdale. Sinks & bases with granite counter tops on the high end will run \$300 to \$450. He found better quality at the Salvation Store. He needs two sinks, toilets, fixtures, paint, flooring, lights, etc. "We'll be cutting it very close." Councilman Lesjack asked permission to spend the \$5K on the bathrooms with a motion. He also noted that Chief Johnson had requested a shower for emergency clean-up, but that's a "no" at this time. Councilman Cost seconded the motion to approve the use of \$5,000 for the restoration of the two bathrooms on the second floor. The roll call vote was six in favor, none opposed, the motion carried.

D. PARKS & RECREATION: (Ed Pearsall)

Councilman Pearsall mentioned that there are some people interested in joining the Kennedy Park Board. Rachel Habetler indicated interest as well as a few other people. Councilman Pearsall noted that a few people that were on the previous board indicated they were not happy with the way things had gone. President Orasin said, "They would be happily welcomed back." Councilman Pearsall continued, "It's been a rough year, tough to get people together, but we need to get things moving and we welcome input from the public. I know Tony was a bit frustrated, but we would welcome him to return." Our recent fund raising effort has resulted in some very generous donations. 1,355 Pledge forms were mailed out to Postal Routes #1, 2 & 3 of the 18421 Zip Code, reaching Forest City, Vandling and Browndale. Councilman Pearsall "This is very early in the drive and already the donations have reached \$1,215. Thank you to all who have contributed. I expect more will be coming in. This is the first request for donations in almost seven years and the money will match the grant funds that we received for the basketball and tennis courts. Specs are being prepared. We hope to bid it out soon and break ground in the spring."

E. CODE ENFORCEMENT: (Chris DeGonzague)

Councilman DeGonzague was unavailable for this meeting. CEO Stephanie Reisch reported that work continues on the "Quality of Life Property Maintenance" codes. She met with the owner of 257 Hudson St. (formerly Maxi's on the Hudson). Concerns about the structural integrity and safety of the building were discussed with the current owner. He will be reporting his plans soon to remedy the situation. Property owners have been called or sent letters concerning garbage and grass code violations, many have been cooperative.

Dumpster permits were issued to a few property owners. Plans to work on the Dumpster Permit Ordinance are also on the list.

Some homes do not have house numbers. The Property Maintenance Code requires house numbers that are a minimum of 4" and reflective. This is critical for fire and emergency response. Stephanie thanked Cindy and Sharon for helping with her training, office procedure and just daily support.

President Orasin commented, "Good job, Stephanie, we thank you and appreciate your thoroughness."

F. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Nick Cost)

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Councilman Cost offered the floor to Art McLain. Art reported that he has been offering his support to the fire victims. He meets regularly with businesses in the borough and expressed his thanks to Pat O'Dell, GFCBA and the Rails Trails. They have been offering ideas and there are several things on the drawing board. "Things are moving forward."

CORRESPONDENCE: (President Bill Orasin)

President Orasin read a letter from the Area Agency on Aging. They have some funds available and would like to have the Senior Center repainted. They asked the Borough to secure two estimates for their consideration. Councilman Lesjack offered a motion to secure the bids. Councilman Cost seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. President Orasin asked Councilman Lesjack to look into the cost of materials and labor. Then put together some prices to present to them for their approval.

President Orasin's next piece of correspondence was an invitation from the GFCBA to their Autumn Mixer on Monday September 11 at Fiddle Lake Farm from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. It also included a "Save the Date" for their Holiday Mixer on Wednesday, December 6, 2017.

MAYORS REPORT: (Mayor Pauline Wilcox)

Mayor Wilcox distributed the August 2017 Police Report and the Vandling Invoice for September Patrols and August calls.

Mayor Wilcox asked council to consider the purchase of a gas generator to keep things running in the event of a disaster/emergency – notably the recent multi-structure fire on Main Street that disrupted utilities to the Borough Building. "The Police Department found themselves in darkness, with no phones, lights, radios, etc." The Mayor asked Council to include the cost of a generator in the upcoming budget for 2018. Councilman Cost asked, "What's the cost of the unit and connection?" Chief Johnson replied, "We need to look into some options." Councilman Scalzo asked if it would be a natural gas unit. Guy Gerstel asked permission to speak and offered the opinion that it would make more sense to have a "Mobile Command Center", rather than a permanent connection to a building that could also be part of a disaster situation. President Orasin replied, "We'll need to look into it."

Mayor Wilcox went on to offer condolences to anyone who suffered a loss in the recent fire and reported that there was assistance available through the local Salvation Army, call 570-785-help. The mayor also noted that an account was set up at FNB. Call Eileen Lynch to contribute to the "Disaster Relief Fund."

Mayor Wilcox then reported that she has been in contact with Superintendent Aquilina, who is asking for a special police detail at the school, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. through mid-October. The Mayor said she discussed this with Solicitor Smith who saw no legal issues. The Superintendent offered \$20 per hour. The Mayor said, "This will be the rate paid to officers covering at the school." Discussion followed. Ms. Vannan pointed out the cost to the borough, (i.e., matching taxes, potential liability issues, workers' comp and unemployment comp) needs to be considered and with so few part-time officers to adequately cover the shifts, any overtime that would be paid if Rowan and/or Johnson had to cover a double shift. Councilman Cost suggested that the officers could be "released to work" for the School District at the District's expense, and not work as employees of the Borough. Ed Pearsall seconded the motion. President Orasin asked for all those in favor. All responded aye and the motion carried. Mayor Wilcox and Chief Johnson said they would contact Superintendent Aquilina to discuss further.

The Mayor asked if there has been any interest in the two police vehicles. Ms. Vannan indicated that contact information in the ad and on the website instructed interested individuals to contact Chief Johnson at the Police Dept. number. Chief Johnson replied that he had no calls and that it's time to consider scrapping the 2007 since it could not pass inspection, but continue to see if there was any interest in the 2011. Council members agreed.

SOLICITORS REPORT: (Paul E. Smith, Esq.)

Solicitor Smith had nothing to report.

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NEW BUSINESS:

President announced that three bids were received for the Garbage Contract. This had been necessary due to a request from the current hauler to be released from his contract. Opening them in the order in which specs were requested, President Orasin opened the bids as follows:

FREDDY'S REFUSE			FOUR (4) Plans offered - call Freddy's - pay them direct - 3 years						
PLAN	bags per week	size	Weight. per bag	price per month	Disc. if paid by quarter	extra bags	Recycling included	Bulk item call in advance \$10/item Sticker required	2 yard dumpster at Garage \$60/dump
A	1	30 gal.	35#	\$14	\$13/mo.	\$4	Y	Y	n/a
B	2	30 gal.	35#	\$21	\$19/mo.	\$4	Y	Y	n/a
C	3	30 gal.	35#	\$30	\$28/mo.	\$4	Y	Y	n/a
D	0	30 gal.	35#	0	0	\$4	Y	Y	n/a
Plan D - All bags purchased at the borough or Zazzera's - Borough to collect & pay Freddy									
no matter which plan - borough residents must call Freddy's to pick a plan - A, B or C									
<u>OR</u> get added to a List for collection of boro bags on Plan D									
Plan A,B,C - residents pays Freddy's									
Plan D - Pay Borough by the bag - the Borough pays Freddy's for bags sold.									
must sign up for one of these plans or your recycling will not be picked up									
Plan A,B & C can be paid monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually									
Paid in advance of first pick-up									
The Borough will be provided with a list of all residents who have signed up									
If you don't sign up your recycling will not be collected									

COUNTY WASTE - RESIDENTS PAY BOROUGH – 3 years									
PLAN	95 gal. can with lid & wheels	size	Wt. per bag	ANNUAL \$168 price per month	Disc.	extra bags	65 gal. wheeled can w/lid Recycling included	BULK ITEM ONE (1) PER WEEK PER HOUSE HOLD	2 vard dumpster Borough Garage FREE
weekly	1	n/a	n/a	\$14	n/a	n/a	1	Y	Y
curbside collection								no add'l chg.	
fee collected by the borough and paid to County Waste monthly									
No cost to borough for bulk or dumpster - no bags or stickers.									
Based on 785 units - \$10,990/month \$131,880/year									

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J.P.MASCARO & SONS – RESIDENTS PAY BOROUGH

	BAG SYSTEM	ANNUAL PER UNIT	BULK SEMI-ANNUAL	BULK ANY TIME Med-up to 20# Lg.- over 20#	2 YD. DUMPSTER AT GARAGE	RECYCLING PER YEAR PER UNIT Bi-weekly
1 ST YEAR	\$3.50/bag	\$166.20/yr.	\$3,300.	\$25-Med. \$35-Lg.	\$25/pick up	\$43.20/unit
2 ND YEAR	\$3.65/bag	\$169.80/yr.	\$3,420.	\$27.50-Med. \$37.50-Lg	\$26/pick up	\$44.04/unit
3 RD YEAR	\$3.80/bag	\$173.64/yr.	\$3,540.	\$30-Med. \$40-Lg.	\$27/pick up	\$45.12/unit
First year						
FIRST YEAR Approx. 785 units	Annual	\$130,467	\$3,300.00	?	\$300.00 (12X)	\$33,912
\$13,998/month \$17.83/unit/month \$167,976/year	monthly	\$10,872.	\$275.	?	\$25.	\$2,826.

President Orasin thanked those who submitted bids and asked Solicitor Smith to review the packets to determine that all the necessary documentation was provided. He added that they would be reviewed and a work session would be planned to consider what the Borough should do at this time. A final decision will be made at the Regular Monthly Council Meeting on October 2, 2017

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next regular meeting will be on Monday, October 2, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilman Pearsall moved to adjourn. Councilman Cost seconded the motion. All responded “aye” and the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.