

**FOREST CITY BOROUGH
MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 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 Nick Cost, Robert Lesjack, Joann Matarese, Ed Pearsall, Mayor Pauline Wilcox, Solicitor Paul Smith and Secy/Treasurer S. Vannan. Council Member Chris DeGonzague was unavailable.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

President Orasin welcomed everyone, and opened the floor for public comment:

Eric Burns introduced himself as the new President of the Forest City Baseball/Softball League, replacing Mark Lewis. He presented the borough with a check for \$2,000, repayment of monies loaned to the league for work done at the Upper Field at Kennedy Park. President Orasin thanked him saying, "This is another step in the process to bid out the work planned for the courts and looks forward to working with Mr. Burns and the League. Welcome!"

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. ADMINISTRATION: (Joann Matarese)

Councilwoman Matarese asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes and then made a motion to accept the Minutes for the regular monthly meeting, held on January 9, 2017. Councilman Lesjack seconded the motion. All voted aye, the January minutes were accepted.

Council members reviewed the Treasurer's Report for January 2017. Council Member Matarese made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and authorize total disbursements of \$87,726.24. Cash Receipts totaled \$69,015.38. Councilman Cost seconded the motion. Approval carried with a roll call vote of 6 to 0 in favor of accepting the report as submitted.

Councilwoman Matarese presented the 2015 Liquid Fuels Report, no action required. PA Auditor General completed this Audit in February 2017. The audit is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov.

Brian Kelly, CPA submitted an amended 2016 Audit Engagement letter to include a "Single Audit" of the Sewer Accounts as required by the USDA, bringing the total audit cost to \$10,000. The Sewer Account will cover \$4,000. Ed Pearsall made a motion to accept and authorized Council President Orasin to sign the Engagement Letter on the borough's behalf. Bernie Scalzo seconded the motion. Roll call vote – 6 for, 0 opposed. The motion carried.

Gary Wilding of KBA Engineering took the floor and addressed the request for a Change Order that would increase the cost of the project by \$164,102 for additional work required to stabilize overload on storm lines. This will cover work on the 400, 500, & 600 block of Main Street, as well as work on North, Center, Depot and South Streets. There is available funding remaining from the original USDA monies that will be used on this additional work. Mr. Wilding presented maps of the changes outlining original lines vs. the creation of new storm lines to deal with the impact of stormwater diverted from sewer mains. Because of gas & water lines, the stormwater lines on Main Street had to be pushed onto the sidewalks. All additional work will be done block by block to make sure that the costs do not exceed available funds already in place. Mr. Wilding asked Council to consider approving a change order "not to exceed" \$170K, which is a little more than the request he presented.

President Orasin requested that a "schedule of completion" be provided that guarantees all work is complete by June 30, 2017. Mr. Wilding responded that he has already met with Leeward and they promise a "drop dead" date of June 30, 2017. Nick Cost asked if this included repairs to sidewalks that are already showing heaving, "Will they be dug out and replaced?" Gary Wilding replied, "Yes, within reason, Leeward will re-level & re-tamp." Mr. Kameen asked, "Is this still all part of the original loan from the USDA?" President Orasin responded, "Yes!"

Councilman Scalzo proposed a motion to approve Leeward Change Order #8, not to exceed \$170K. Councilman Cost seconded the motion. All voted yes in a 6 to 0 roll call vote, motion carried.

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B. PUBLIC WORKS: (Bernie Scalzo)

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

- Recycling Donations - \$351 (1/4, & 1/30/17); received 21.7 tons of road salt from Cargill thru the CoStars program on 1/16; reported damage to guardrails in Vision Park to police and took photos.
- Councilman Scalzo said, "If anyone sees anything going on in the Industrial Park, please report it to police".
- The crew responded to many calls about icy road conditions that required plowing & cindering.
- There was a water main break on Rt. 247.
- Vandling Borough purchased eleven (11) bucket loads of Salt/cinder mix from the borough; they will be billed \$715.

Anyone who has any ideas on the solving the plowing situation, please submit them to Councilman Scalzo. Councilman Scalzo asked for everyone's patience when the roads are bad, the borough has limited time & equipment, "the guys are doing the best they can". The Safety Committee will be working on this as mentioned earlier in the meeting. He asked that everyone be more considerate of neighbors' driveways and that our crew will strive to be more careful with driveways and around corners.

C. BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: (Robert Lesjack)

Councilman Lesjack provided an update on the building renovations, "All of the chairs are dismantled, fabric has been cut and this project is moving along thanks to Mayor Wilcox and her entourage." Councilman Lesjack said he provided pizza for the crew, hoping this will bring them back. The foyer & offices are almost complete. President Orasin asked, "Will the March meeting be downstairs?" Councilman Lesjack responded, "No, progress takes time. The contractor is working on the council table."

D. PARKS & RECREATION: (Ed Pearsall)

Councilman Pearsall reported that he has been speaking to a number of people about donations for work at the courts at Kennedy Park. He talked to Bob McGraw and Linda from Pleasant Mt. Welding who say they will make donations, but need a letter requesting them. Tony Wilcox added, "I'm planning at least two chicken BBQ's, spring & fall." Councilman Pearsall suggested that one of these events could coincide with the dedication of the new basketball courts. Pearsall added that he would like to celebrate athletes from the area and invite them to the dedication. Mr. Wilcox said, I've gotten a promise of a discount on the paint and will be doing the painting on the courts once re-surfacing is complete."

E. CODE ENFORCEMENT: (Chris DeGonzague)

Councilman DeGonzague was unavailable for tonight's meeting. The Residential Rental Unit Activity Report was included in folders for council review.

F. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Nick Cost)

Council member Cost asked council to consider the purchase of two white signboards and two additional sets of letters. Total cost around \$504, which is within the amount budgeted for this purchase. Cost noted that around \$30 has been paid by organizations & businesses who are paying \$5 for a one-week posting. Councilman Cost made a motion to purchase the boards & letters for \$504. Councilman Pearsall seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Councilman Cost reported that three applications were received for the Main Street Coordinator position recently advertised in the Forest City News. President Orasin, Joann Matarese & Nick Cost will meet with these applicants. Ms. Vannan will schedule interviews for the 3rd or 4th Tuesday of February. Councilman Cost noted, "These are three great applicants and it will be a difficult choice." Mr. Kameen asked if he would reveal who the applicants are, but council members agreed that they would prefer that interviews be conducted first.

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Councilman Cost is working on a letter that will go out to all business in the community, "I plan to meet with business owners to get their ideas on what their needs are, what Council can do to improve things and to ask them if they know any other businesses that may be interested in moving to our Main Street. We need to find out what the borough could do to encourage them." President Orasin asked Councilman Cost to push this off until after the Main Street Coordinator was in place so that he or she could participate in this effort, "Plan meetings for some time in March." Councilman Cost agreed.

CORRESPONDENCE: (President Bill Orasin)

President Orasin reported that State Representative Jonathan Fritz will host office hours in the Borough Building on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. beginning February 9, 2017.

Susquehanna County Commissioner Mary Ann Warren will also be available to answer questions and address residents' concerns on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Elegante Restaurant on Main Street, Forest City, PA beginning February 16, 2017.

Forest City Girls' Softball Booster Club is sponsoring a Pasta Dinner & Bingo fundraiser on Sunday, February 26, 2017. For more information & tickets, please call Michelle Gillette at 570-466-5813.

MAYORS REPORT: (Mayor Pauline Wilcox)

Mayor Wilcox distributed the January 2017 Police Report and Vandling Invoice for February Patrols and January calls.

Two part-time officers submitted resignations, Matthew Batzel, eff. 10/1/16 and Claud Neer, eff. 1/31/17. Councilman Cost offered a motion to accept Matthew Batzel's resignation. Councilman Pearsall seconded the motion, all voted aye and the motion carried. Councilman Lesjack made a motion to accept Neer's resignation; Council member Matarese seconded the motion, all voted aye.

Mayor Wilcox requested approval for a 3-day training for Chief Johnson & Part-time Officer Foley. The three-day training is from 2/13 to 2/15/2017 – "Drug Investigations". The cost per man is \$325. Approximate cost of the hotel for 2 nights is \$119/night. Councilman Cost offered a motion to approve the training at an approximate total cost of \$930. Councilman Lesjack seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

The Mayor offered the floor to Chief Johnson to discuss plans to create an agreement with Uniondale Borough for Police coverage. Discussion followed. Chief Johnson explained that the agreement could mean possible procurement of a 4-wheel drive vehicle owned by Uniondale. Coverage of the area would require officers to cross thru Clifford Township. Bob Lesjack expressed concern over the distance and slower response within our borough if there is an emergency. Chief Johnson noted that he had already spoken to the PA State Police who would respond in the event of a conflict of coverage. Councilman Cost said, "More information is needed." Councilman Scalzo asked if this would mean the establishment of a Regional Police force. Councilman Lesjack again expressed his concern over "taking critical coverage away from Forest City". President Orasin said, "A committee of Council Members will be appointed to investigate options". He asked for interested council members. Nick Cost and Bernie Scalzo volunteered to work with President Orasin on this committee.

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

Solicitor Smith presented Ordinance #506_2017 – Sidewalk maintenance, for council review and input, stating that he had not received the input he expected. President Orasin noted, "There are still things that needed to be defined and asked the Safety Committee to continue to work on it and re-introduce it at the next meeting." Solicitor Smith agreed and recommended that council table the ordinance until then. All agreed. John Kameen expressed concern over the snow left curbside and asked, "Why is it acceptable if no one removes it?" President Orasin replied, "We realize this is a problem and acceptable solutions are difficult to find." Councilman Scalzo added, "We are working on a number of ideas and hope to come up with something everyone can live with."

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Solicitor Smith reported that he has contacted Attorney Fred Moase who is currently working out of Wilkes-Barre. Attorney Moase agreed to offer his services and represent the Borough as Zoning Solicitor for \$85/hour. He was appointed to this position previously and will continue to serve. Wayne Memorial Community Health Services will be appealing the recent Zoning denial and Attorney Moase will represent the borough for the appeals process.

Solicitor Smith updated council on Ordinance #507_2017 – Zoning Amendment. Attorney Smith submitted the ordinance to the Susquehanna County Planning Commission on January 19, 2017. Following their review of the proposed amendment on 2/1/17, they agreed to recommend the following as presented, “To include provisions for Medical Marijuana Dispensaries and Opioid Clinics, including Methadone Clinics and allow such uses only in the C-2 Highway Commercial District as Conditional Uses rather than as general drug stores or Medical clinics in the C-1 Main Street Commercial District.” The Commission took action to recommend the adoption of the proposed amendment to the Forest City Borough Zoning Ordinance following the required advertising & public hearing procedures as outlined in Section 609 of the PA Municipalities Planning Code. Forest City Planning Committee will review the Ordinance at a Public Meeting on February 21, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. Attorney Smith will provide copy for publication in the Forest City News.

CONTINUED BUSINESS:

President Orasin provided a UGI Gas update. He noted, “He is still not satisfied with their response, and will join with other municipalities to continue to seek answers from them.”

John Kameen provided information to council about the installation of a gas line into Vision Park. He learned a week and ½ ago that they received approval for a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission and the USDA. This has taken six years and so much of the prep work and testing done originally is no longer valid. This will now require a \$60K match instead of \$50K. These matching funds will be in the form of a loan from the F. C. Industries Revolving Loan Fund. Funding so far includes \$141K from ARC, \$49K from USDA, \$30K from Susquehanna County Act 13 Impact Fees and \$2K for Wetlands Delineation. Attorney Dave Bianco will prepare a new deed at no charge. The engineering fees may not be as expensive as originally thought. Mr. Kameen offered to provide a list of all of the businesses who have indicated an interest. The list is available upon request.

President Orasin thanked Mr. Kameen for the update and said, “That’s great, if there’s anything we can do, please let us know.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next regular meeting will be on Monday, March 6, 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 8:25 p.m.