

BOROUGH OF MORTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 14, 2021

The regular council meeting of July was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by council president, Michelle Miller. The pledge of allegiance was recited and roll was called. The following was roll call response: Michelle Miller-present, John Miller-present, Michele Roberts-present, Robert McGrath-present, Hiele Hodnett-present, Joseph Boylan-present, Douglass Eagar-present, and Mayor App-present. Also present, was Solicitor Ewald, Chief Laspina, and engineer Catania. Ms. Miller reported that the Manager is out sick but is available by telephone.

Mr. Boylan mentioned that when it comes time to vote for approval of the monthly minutes, we will only have the minutes for the meeting of June 23 at this time. The minutes for June 9 will be available at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor App spoke about the trouble with law enforcement staff. He also mentioned that the Police Academy had only 27 cadets enrolled. He also introduced William Thomas our new officer, he brings 33 years' experience and 16 years as Sergeant. Mr. Thomas was welcomed by all in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MONTHLY BILLS

Ms. Miller made a Motion to approve the bills for the month of June. Mr. Boylan seconded the Motion. Roll call: Ms. Miller-yes, Mr. Miller-yes, Ms. Roberts-yes, Mr. McGrath-yes, Ms. Hodnett-yes, Mr. Boylan-yes, Mr. Eagar-yes. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 23 MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Miller made a Motion to approve the minutes for June 23rd. Mr. Miller seconded the Motion. All council voiced approval. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Miller gave the building inspectors report for June. There were 11 building permits issued, -0 use and occupancies, and 4 contractors' licenses.

129 Althea Lane-property maintenance

Ms. Miller reported that the grass will be cut by the borough. Complaints were allowed by neighbors of the property: Joanne Langguth- 142 Althea – questioned if the grass would continue to be maintained, and asked the process. Mr. Dan Hanson of 134 Althea had comments on the condition of the property, Ms. Dara August of 137 Althea had problems with a large bees nest on the property and is concerned for the safety of her child. Ms. Cecilia Todd – questioned what can be done to prevent these vacant properties from this happening. Solicitor Ewald states that it would be handled on a case by case basis. Mr. Boylan did state that neighbors do need to call – as there is a vacant properties ordinance – the

borough is keeping a record of William cutting the grass, as we are limited in what we are allowed to do on private property. Mr. Schreiber of 125 Althea commented that how could council not know of this and was worried about termites. Mr. Lillicrapp of 114 Locust stated that he did speak with Ms. Campenella and C-link is the Mortgage service.

Mr. Ewald stated that we should send past due notices out to Portnoff Law offices.

Mr. Bill Heffner – 571 Old Middletown Road – asked what were the legal fees incurred by council on the police matter. Ms. Miller stated she would obtain that.

Mr. Mario Cimino-46 S Morton Avenue – spoke of the assessment appeal and stated it would be complete by August 1 in the County.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Boylan questioned if all council received their Tax Collector report for June. This was confirmed.

Resolution for Municipal Records- Mr. Boylan stated this is currently in the works, to be rid of some old files in the office.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police report

Mr. Miller read the police report for June. There were 244 traffic checks, 14 motor vehicle violations and 11 assists at the RR gates.

Fire Department and Fire Marshal

Mr. Miller read the police department report for June and also the report from the fire marshal.

Civil Service Meetings

Chief Laspina was concerned about recently held civil service meetings and addressed council on this matter. Solicitor Ewald stated that last year, the chief participated in the August Meeting. The chief was concerned about this May, June and July, and asked for transparency and if these meetings were advertised. He was concerned that no one, police chief, or mayor knew about the meeting. and then requested a meeting with council.

PUBLIC HEALTH/SANITATION AND RECYCLING

Ms. Roberts reported that there are now 2 days trash pickup and requested residents not to put out trash earlier than the evening before. She did remind them that with the heat, there have been delays. She did advise them to notify us so that we can put it on our cable channel. The fire department has asked us about moving and the placement of another igloo. Ms. Roberts stated she spoke with Am vets for cardboard and a clothing box and they will not have a meeting until September so that all our recycling can be in one area. She did go to Mr. Heffner from FEA industries with MR. Miller. These are two companies that may possibly allow us to put the igloos on their property.

Mr. Stubbs.....19 Harding – stressed that the trash men please place the trash cans back up on the curb/or sidewalk and not in the street. He did ask about Morton having their own trash truck instead of outsourcing.

Ms. Roberts stated we did get rid of our truck and now there are probably more requirements and mandates. Ms. Miller stated this would be a lot of money.

LAW & ORDINANCE

Mr. Eagar had nothing new to report but would look into new info for the property maintenance issue.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Hodnett announced a committee meeting on the third Tuesday of August 8/17 at 7:00 p.m.

PARK AND RECREATION

Ms. Miller had nothing new to report, painting will soon be done on the swing sets. Lisa Gardner, of 600 Highland asked if the playground was dedicated as a tot lot. Ms. Gardner reported that there have been teenagers there all hours of the night and reported a swing is broken. Ms. Miller reported that we would have to order a new swing. A resident complained that the signs do no good, and getting a new swing is not a resolution. Chief Laspina suggested if there are teenagers there after hours causing damage, call the police.

OLD BUSINESS

DELCORA meeting – Mr. Catania stated that under a mandate from EPA ; a summary of meter results were given, two areas were identified as problem areas Bridge, Beech, Yale . A cooperative effort will be used to address the problem.

Ms. Hodnett asked where a pedestrian was struck in the recent report given. Chief explained that it was at Morton and Mitchell Avenue. This was a woman crossing with a baby stroller.

Children at Play signs

Ms. Hodnett asked about the children at play signs for Broad and School and Broad and Baker by a pole. Chief stated this was brought up in a meeting with the mayor and this is the highway department. Mr. Johnson stated that we have the signs, someone just needs to show him where to place them.

MR. Stubbs questioned speed limit signs, and suggested we put some up due to the children riding bikes on the streets this is mostly North Morton Avenue and others. More comments are made, but audio is garbled.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Johnson – Highway Department – mentioned that he was told he has to collect money from the meters, and he stated he was not able to do so. Ms. Miller stated this should be discussed with council in another forum.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Michael Lee – 123 W Sylvan Avenue – welcomed Officer Thomas. He questioned how many residents of Morton contracted Covid-19, and then how many passed on? Council did not have that information.

This information is on the County website. He hopes the tension between the police departments and the council can be resolved, and he reminded all of the January 6, 2021 incident.

Mr. Heffner – 571 S Old Middletown Road- taxes have gone up; and then questioned the legal fees that have gone back and forth regarding the council and police department. MR. Heffner asked how much has been spent this year. Ms. Miller stated that she can provide this; Mr. Heffner asked if this could be provided by the next council meeting.

Mario Cimino-46 S Morton – any appeals will have to be made by August 1 of this year if you are not happy with your assessment.

*at this point in the meeting, someone is speaking on their private phone, and the rest of the meeting cannot be heard clearly.

Mayor App stated that we need to improve communications with council and the new borough manager. He spoke about the accreditation of the police---. There is a 7-21-21 deadline for this application. Chief explained the grant and that we need to act fast.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Preston, Secretary