

BOROUGH OF MORTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 9, 2020

The regular public meeting of September 9, 2020 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, Joseph Boylan-present, Douglass Eagar-present and Mayor App-present. Also present: Solicitor Ewald, Manager Poole, Police Chief Laspina, Engineer Catania.

Present after roll call: Hiele Hodnett-7:05, Robert McGrath-7:09.

Council comments – none

Solicitor Ewald added a few items to the agenda – the property at School and Pennington, as well

As the Ordinance for zoning.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA – None

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Miller asked council if they approved of the borough meeting minutes for August. Everyone said they did, she said ‘lets cast a vote to approve said minutes. All voiced approval. Motion carried.

*Ms. Hodnett enters the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MONTHLY BILLS

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC BULDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Building Inspector report for August was 16 building permits, 5 Use and Occupancy permits, and 7 Contractor licenses.

Mr. Catania reported that the tot lot work is done, October the walking path will be in the works. PECO did come in and do the work they had to do and now the mechanical contractor needs to schedule a start up of the system.

Ms. Miller mentioned that at the end of Sycamore where it turns into Country Lane, there has been water problems, and UTC met with Jamie Anderson and herself, and Eastern Stormwater Collaborative is going to work with them on installation of a rain garden, and this should solve some of the water problems. We are getting busy with another project

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Tax Collector Report-August

Mr. Boylan reported that the Tax Collector report for August is on file in the borough office if anyone would like to review.

He did question the tax collector of the remaining taxes to be collected, how many properties the \$136,000 represents. She stated she would get that information for him.

Ms. Acquarola did say there is an upset sale happening next week as well.

Sewer and Trash

Mr. Boylan reported that the Sewer and Rubbish reports for August are on file in the borough office if anyone would like to review.

2020 Road Program-payment #1

Mr. Boylan made a Motion to approve payment #1 in the amount of \$30,618.00. To Joseph E. Sucher and Sons. Ms. Hodnett questioned how much more work needs to be done on this project. Mr. Catania did say they have to provide a 1-year maintenance bond, and when we are sure of all the clean up work.

*Mr. McGrath enters the meeting at this time.

Ms. Miller seconded the Motion. Roll call: Michelle Miller-yes, John Miller-yes, Michele Roberts-yes, Bob McGrath-yes, Hiele Hodnett-yes, Joseph Boylan-yes, Doug Eagar-yes. Motion carries.

BUDGET MEETINGS

Mr. Boylan explained the meeting schedule and stated the kick-off begins on September 16 at 7:30. He urged all to consider projects, and we can incorporate items into the budget but we may need to be cautious on when we begin. Mr. McGrath questioned why do you have facilities on two different days, it should only be highway aid and small committees. Mr. Poole stated for the meetings, mask is required as well as social distancing.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Report

Mr. Miller gave the police report – there was total of 210 incidents in August. He did give the highlights. The rest of the police report is on file at the borough office. Chief had no other items, but did say that the officers were on the news due to a baby delivery.

Fire Report

Company responded to 24 incidents. There was 109 personnel response. Highest response was 7, three water rescues, assisted on a pump out, they did assist Swarthmore 7 times. He did read more of the report which is on file. We do thank them for their service. Mr. Miller asked the Chief and Mr. Poole if he could schedule a public safety meeting on September 17th. Ms. Miller asked the reason for a call to Brookhaven, as it seems far away.

PUBLIC HEALTH, SANITATION & RECYCLING

Ms. Roberts reported the trash and recycling pick ups. Republic picked up 13 times and tonnage was 95.68; B&L disposal had 4 pickups and tonnage was 20.09. She reported that our 3rd quarter bills are due 9-18-20. Ms. Miller asked how it was going with the contracts? Ms. Roberts stated this will be on next month's agenda.

LAW & ORDINANCE

Mr. Ewald reported on 116 School Street- the owners passed away, and appears that it has been abandoned for a while. We do not have a record of ownership. He had a recommendation from a colleague to hire a genealogist to try and locate an heir to pursue. He found one who would do it as \$110 per hour and asked for a 2-hour retainer and authorized for 5 hours. She then could determine the ownership or heir or if the records are too jumbled to do it for a reasonable cost. He questioned if council was willing to invest up to \$550 or else, we will have to wait until tax sale.

Ms. Miller stated that she spoke to someone today who believed there was a resident who was willing to buy that property and actually cut the grass.

Carlton Bagby then spoke to council and explained the ownership. He stated that he would speak to Mr. Gates and would get back to council.

Zoning Ordinance

We did not get anything on the zoning ordinance from the county until a few hours ago. They find the proposed amendments to be reasonable and recommend passing. This is on the side yard projections and occupancy permit requirements and private pools definition. We need this to be authorized for advertisement. Mr. Eagar made a Motion to authorize advertisement. Mr. Miller seconded the Motion all voiced approval with the exception of Mr. McGrath -No.

238 Pennington

Mr. Ewald stated that we received a call from the attorney for the developer and he indicated that they were exploring an alternate plan of two sets of twins. We do not have receipt of that plan at this time. There is no zoning hearing scheduled, and in the event that this is submitted they will withdraw.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Hodnett had no report, just reminded all to get the mail-in ballots in. She asked when the drop off box would be installed. There is no date for that yet, but by mid-October. This will be placed outside the door of the entrance to the Highland Avenue exit/entrance.

PARKS & RECREATION

Mayor App stated that the committee has been very busy. He thanked Bruce Blunt for the work at the park with the mulch and grass. He went above and beyond what he was contracted to do. We did work at the Tot lot to get that ready, as 50 yards of mulch was put in. The Spivey family donated the take-one leave one library at the gate of the tot lot.

Ms. Hodnett questioned when the park would be open, and Mayor App stated he feels it should be closed right now. After some discussion on whether to open or not, the Mayor stated he would hold off a little longer, and reassess and come to a decision at a later time.

Heile then questioned the idea of providing a basketball rim for the kids. This was a donation by the police department. Also, someone wanted a take-one leave -one library at Jacobs Park. This was a boy scout project and was a donation also. Ms. Miller stated that it would take someone to donate their time and materials to do so. Mayor App stated that he and his wife will be adding a plaque to the library as their donation.

Teadra – jumped on late, and again questioned the parks being closed. Her opinion was that the parks should be opened.

PLANNING

Meeting 9-16-20 at 7:00 regarding the property at 27 Sycamore.

ZONING

No report

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS -none

OPEN DISCUSSION

Kristin Acquarola – Tax Collector - stated that if anyone on council needs anything for the budgets from her, she will provide. Mr. Boylan stated that there are a few line items for tax collector and he would reach out to Mr. Poole.

Sunday Dyitt – spoke to council in reference to a conversation she had with Bob Smyth, who is a resident of Springfield. They walked around Morton, and she introduced him to some people. He did meet William Rice, and they spoke to him about being a Tuskegee airman. She asked for a way to honor Mr. Rice. Ms. Miller stated that Mr. McGrath went and met Mr. Rice and they are thinking of doing a mural at the borough building. Ms. Dyitt asked for one to be put down at her side of Morton, where he lives. Mr. McGrath stated this town is only $\frac{3}{4}$ of a square mile and we do not need two of everything.

DELCORA

Ms. Miller stated some information recently came in regarding DELCORA and we can research and read up on this and talk about this at our next meeting.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Mr. Bagby reported that we did assist Brookhaven recently. He was concerned that we open the parks, and that was his opinion.

Mr. Bagby asked about the employees' salaries, and asked if we did a salary analysis in the borough. Ms. Miller stated this is not to be discussed in the borough meeting. Ms. Miller stated that research has been done. She stated the solicitor and she has done this. The solicitor stated he looked into Lansdowne and their ranges were the same, however they were union.

Ms. Roberts stated all these things would be discussed during budget meetings and review.

Ms. Hodnett stated we did talk about looking into boroughs that are the same, Swarthmore, Ridley, Rutledge.

Mr. Boylan stated it is not just a matter of saying what does another borough pay, but the responsibilities and skills under that title. There are similar jobs elsewhere in the marketplace that any of our employees can go to; we certainly encourage them to do so. Mr. Bagby countered with the fact that one of the employees has worked for the borough for 40 years. Mr. Boylan did compare the salary to someone who works at McDonalds flipping burgers. Mr. Bagby stated it should be merited, are we doing the right thing as a borough regarding equity.

Mr. Boylan stated an inventory of what the guys are doing is necessary. We need some level of detail of what is actually getting done, or not getting done; and if it is not, is it a lack of skill, will they need job training - To the extent that we map this job out and say this is what it should be and based on that, this is what it should pay, this should move us 'down the field'.

Ms. Hodnett also stated we have to look at what we utilize our staff for and if it is fair, and look at this as well.

Mayor App stated this is important for council to look at this and look also at job description. He currently approaches Mr. Poole and he asks the guys to help and has never had a problem. He thanked the staff, for always being there and telling the guys what his needs were. Going forward this is a good time for council to look at these issues. He thanked everyone for their comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Miller made a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Preston, Secretary