



AGENDA MEETING

JANUARY 24, 2024

Call to order

Borough Council President Shaunta Miller called the meeting or order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll was called; the following was roll call response:

Councilor Vice President Bernice Clark-Dickerson-present

Councilor Douglas Eagar-present

Councilor Bethann Johnson-present

Councilor Michelle Miller-present

Council President Shaunta Miller-present

Councilor Michele Roberts-present,

Councilor Walter Stubbs-present

Mayor Amanda Hammock-present

Announcements

Ms. Miller announced that council met in an executive session prior to the meeting to discuss potential litigation and personnel issues.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was voiced.

PRESENTATION/ACTION ITEMS

Motion to approve/reject the hiring of Kenneth P. Lawless as Chief of Police – Councilor Michelle Miller made a Motion to approve the appointment of Kenneth P. Lawless to the position of chief of police with the Morton Police Department. Ms. Clark-Dickerson seconded the Motion. Manager Stewart stated that all of the chief's criteria has been met for his appointment prior to this evening. Roll call: Vice President-Bernice Clark- Dickerson-yes,

Douglas Eagar-yes, Bethann Johnson-yes, Michelle Miller-yes, Shaunta Miller-yes, Michele Roberts-yes, Walter Stubbs-yes. **Motion** passed.

OATH OF OFFICE

Mayor Hammock welcomed Mr. Lawless and family, and then administered the Oath of Office to Chief Kenneth Lawless. Police officer Ian Kelly , on behalf of the entire department, welcomed Chief Lawless to the Department.

Jackie Guy – School District representative gave an update on renovations for the Springfield District. We are almost ready to get ETR School air conditioning. In a few months, would like to present the tax information when it is tax time; possibly April.

Presentation and Request –Lisa Lockley - William E. Rice Way – at School and Walnut Street.

Ms. Lockley of 114 Harding, introduced Abby, and presented a proposal to have the street sign unveiled. She read the proposal to council and presented a copy to each member. The date of the event is targeted for Saturday March 23 at 10:00 a.m. on the 200 block of Walnut School Streets; 3 original airmen and one nurse should be present. Tuskegee pins, and remembrances will be available and event T-shirts will be available. The name of the sign which was approved will be the William E. Rice Way. Manager Stewart stated he would work with Ms. Lockley with obtaining the signage design and recommends replacing directly on top of the Walnut Street sign.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFASTRUCTURE

Councilor Bethann Johnson thanked everyone for their help in cleaning up the borough hall and meeting room. She reminded residents not to throw snow into the street during a snow emergency; and requested cars be moved into driveways.

Ms. Johnson gave an update on the COVID 19 ARPA PA small water and sewer grant in the amount of \$267, 057. Borough Manager Stewart DCED office to let them know there is a change in leadership as who would be executing documents. They are in the process of updating, and hopefully at the next meeting, the council can charge Catania’s office with preparation of the contract documents.

Ms. Johnson gave an update on the contribution from Aqua in the amount of \$265,000. They are in the process of cutting the check. This should take about 2-3 weeks. This amount is earmarked for paving, trench repairs and overlay of Providence, Highland, and N Morton Avenues where Aqua has renewed the mains. Mr. Catania will be preparing a combined proposal with Rutledge with council’s approval, this may occur early to mid-April. We will make sure the potholes are repaired. Ms. Miller thanked Mr. Catania for involving Rutledge in this proposal.

Gas Furnace –Foyer

Mr. Stewart stated that the furnace was removed in the foyer area. The public works department did save the former furnace, we will make arrangements to have this installed at less cost. Replacement would be \$10,000. To put old furnace back – less than \$1000.

Code Related Fees

Borough Secretary stated that the last time the fees have been increased was in 2015. Mr. Stewart would research and get a recommendation from Mr. Catania so council can take appropriate action.

Street Opening Permit-Wawa –Springfield Township

Solicitor Ewald explained that this is a serious matter to council and a number of council members were concerned about the proposed Wawa at corner of Leamy and Baltimore Avenue. Council hired their own traffic engineer to evaluate the impact – specifically left hand turns. Our consultant came up with a report which will be available on Tuesday. This report did not back up the borough to oppose left-hand turns out of the Wawa. He proposed concerns but ultimately deemed it safe. This was taken back to the developer and has agreed to address all, except sidewalk as neighbors were not willing to permit sidewalk. First concern was in order for the lane changes to work they would need to acquire land from the property across the street, however Springfield already obtained the land. Second concern is timing of light needs to be set so that it removes as much traffic from Leamy each time. Developers agreed to work with us on an agreement with Springfield Township on this changing of the light. Third concern is a barrier created to deter people from turning left, into the property, and they will put in a “pork chop island” which allows right turns in but no left turns in. He wanted to make sure the lane striping is done correctly. Storm water issue was a concern, and they agreed to control and contain and mitigate the storm water. All issues have been agreed to address, in addition stop sign at driveway, and install “do not block the box” striping, and six months after construction is complete, they will meet again and evaluate if all is working correctly. They are reimbursing us for the cost of our traffic review and have committed to installing traffic improvements at two of our local neighborhood streets; Walnut Street, and Providence Road, Althea Lane. A street opening permit has been applied for; and will be processed.

Al Modine(sp) – Providence Road –resident, had comments on the chaos on the street, without the Wawa- and provided pictures to council. He commented this is the highest rated accident street in Springfield and Morton. No one stops at the stop signs or obeys. He feels it is not going to work. Kids almost get hit every single day, parents and police are standing there so that this does not happen. He feels this is not safe for pedestrians. Mr. Ewald stated this would be shown to the traffic engineer.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Vice President Clark-Dickerson reported that the 2024 Real Estate Tax bills are scheduled to be mailed February 5th.

Ms. Clark-Dickerson also reported that the annual trash and first quarter sewer bills are scheduled to be mailed on or about February 1st.

Request for banking services. We will be looking for a bid for Request for proposals. We are right now still at Republic Bank.

Ms. Clark-Dickerson stated we are looking into hiring a full-time public works assistant.

*Mr. Bill Heffner was allowed to ask council a question regarding hiring a full-time assistant. Ms. Clark-Dickerson stated that yes, this is being looked into. He also questioned if the 4 part time maintenance people are being utilized. Ms. Clark-Dickerson stated they have not been used for 3 months. The position was already there, and we thought it best to go with full-time employee.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Council President Miller welcomed the new Chief of Police. No further report.

PUBLIC HEALTH, SANITATION, AND RECYCLING

Councilor Roberts had no report; but requested tonnage reports from B& L Haulers. Mr. Stewart the hauler will be reporting on the recycling efforts.

LAW AND ORDINANCE

Councilor Michelle Miller had no report.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Councilor Eagar discussed the next meeting of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning ordinance (CDBG) would be held 2-14-24 at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Eagar discussed the DVRPC Transit Oriented Development program. This is a project to maximize leisure space within walking distance. This is a project that will be coordinated with Springfield Township to move forward.

Mr. Eagar discussed that we will be obtaining new email addresses for all the councilors; as well as upgrade with a new website.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Councilor Stubbs asked Mr. Stewart the percentages of the objects we plan to take care of for the \$180,000 we will receive. Mr. Stewart explained about the Mini Pro grant – a planning grant into looking at Sycamore Woods and Jacobs Park and looking into a 5 year plan to remove all

the non-native trees, address the invasive species, poisonous weeds, healthy understory – the figure we received from Davey Resource Group gave was approximately \$250,000 over a 5 year plan. We asked for the maximum from the County, they saw the merit and decided it deserved funding; and there is a 0 match; we will be doing 18 months’ worth of work and when Round 5 comes out; we can ask to be able to finish what we began.

Mr. Stubbs announced that the committee wants great ideas to help the youth of Morton. The meeting is the first Wednesday of next month at 7:00.

MAYOR’S REPORT / MANAGER’S REPORT

Mayor Hammock thanked all for attendance for the swear-in of the new chief. She did make note that the fire company had decided on March 23 for the Easter Egg Hunt, so this will be adjusted.

Manager Stewart reported that Mr. Johnson was prepared for the snow storm; the plow and salter was working; vehicles were parked close to intersections, which made plowing nearly impossible; we now need to look at snow emergency and other signage and striping on the crosswalks, parking in front of fire department, and blocking fire hydrants.

PSAB NEMO

The Borough association has announced the training in February; the consensus from the new council is to take this class virtually in March. We will sign those councilors up for that training.

Committee Assignments

Mr. Stewart discussed a proposed schedule –quarterly meeting schedule for committees, on the Thursdays after the council meetings; with the Park and Recreation meeting on a monthly basis. Once approval is granted, this will be advertised.

ACTION ITEMS

Councilor Michele Roberts made a Motion to approve providing permission to Catania Engineering to prepare and advertise a combined Morton-Rutledge 2024 Road paving contract. Councilor Bernice Clark Dickerson seconded the Motion. All voiced approval. Motion carried.

Vice President Bernice Clark-Dickerson made a Motion to provide permission to the borough manager to issue a request for proposal for banking services. Councilor Roberts seconded the Motion. Roll call – voice vote – all approved. Motion carried. Mr. Stewart needed direction first-as this is a multi-week process, the tax collector is looking for direction to which banking facility for tax billing. Republic currently takes our tax payments; but payments can also be left at the borough office. Council approved the taxes being sent to Republic Bank.

Vice President Clark Dickerson made a Motion to approve providing permission for the borough manger to advertise for the hiring of a full-time public works assistant. Councilor Stubbs

seconded the Motion. Roll call: Vice President- Bernice Dickerson-yes, Douglas Eagar-yes, Bethann Johnson-yes, Michelle Miller-No, President Shaunta Miller-yes, Councilor Walter Stubbs-yes. Motion carried.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Jackie Guy – 635 Country Lane –

Asked if the borough would be –re-interviewing people that applied previously. Manager Stewart stated that yes this can be done. Stated that trash cans for recycling can be purchased.

Michael Lee -123 W Sylvan Avenue

Corrected Mr. Stewart’s date as of the last snow storm; Stated that the word councilor was misspelled. Welcomed Chief Lawless. Reported that the lighting on the street is poor on Sylvan Avenue. Suggested people wear reflective clothing at night.

Calvanita Clifton-209 Pennington

Reported that her street is very dark; and a street light is needed. There are disabled people on the corner; and it is very dark’ reported that neighbors of hers park on the sidewalk.

Bill Heffner- 571 S. Old Middletown Road

Questioned when the meeting minutes would be posted as it has been two years. Manager Stewart stated they would be posted and brought up to speed on a monthly basis.

Questioned if the treasurer has retired and is someone replacing this person? Manager Stewart mentioned that Brinker Simpson will fulfill the roll until a replacement can be hired.

Questioned if 990s were received yet from the Fire Company, answer was not at this time; and if we have made payments to the fire company. Not at this time was the answer. He also questioned the broken parking meters situation. Manager Stewart stated that the meters are antiquated; and 20% of the meters are non-functional. We do have an auto pay by phone function. We are looking at potential kiosk for the situation.

Trash Cans

Mr. Stubbs questioned if there was an ordinance regarding leaving trash cans outside; there is a code to enforce, and Ms. Roberts added that neighbors need to be part of this community. Trash information can also be added to our website.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Preston, Secretary

