



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY , January 10, 2024

7:00 p.m.

Call to Order

President Miller called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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 M Johnson-present

Councilor Michelle Miller-present

Council President Shaunta Miller-present

Councilor Michele Roberts-present

Councilor Walter Stubbs-present

Mayor Amanda Hammock – Absent

Announcements

Manager Stewart reported that the council met in executive session to discuss personnel issues and potential litigation.

Council President Miller announced the following Committee Chair assignments:

Public Facilities and Infrastructure – Councilor Bethann Johnson

Finance & Administration – Councilor Bernice Clark-Dickerson

Public Safety – Councilor Shaunta Miller

Public Health, Sanitation, and Recycling – Councilor Michele Roberts

Law and Ordinance – Councilor Michelle Miller

Community and Economic Development – Councilor Douglas Eagar

Parks and Recreation- Councilor Walter Stubbs

Public Comment on agenda:

Mr. Michael Lee – 123 W Sylvan Avenue – requested a round of applause for the work that Michelle Miller did as president of council; as well as former Vice President John Miller.

Bill Heffner – 571 S Old Middletown Road, Media pa – noticed on the agenda, the budget would be adjusted; as well as a vote. He questioned if he could make a comment after he finds out what they were doing or how would this be handled. Ms. Miller stated he should hear first and then comment. Solicitor Ewald stated a resolution is a draft, about what council intended. Mr. Ewald explained this is just moving funds. He questioned who oversees the budget – the answer given was Mr. Stewart.

Committee reports

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Johnson referred to Engineer Catania. He reported for the month of December that there were 13 building permits issued, 2 use and occupancies, and 0 contractors licenses issued.

Engineer Report

Mr. Catania wanted to discuss the restoration from Aqua on the streets. Ms. Miller questioned if he represented Rutledge and they have some streets that need repaired from Aqua as well. She was curious if they (Rutledge) would be interested in bidding with Morton to see if there would be a cost savings. Mr. Catania stated he would check on that.

Mr. Stewart –reported that Morton was awarded a grant in the amount of \$262,057 for the Small Water and Sewer Grant. DCED is moving forward on this. He expects this grant to be awarded in the next 4-6 weeks. Mr. Stewart reported that Bergman, or Collier engineering who are doing our zoning plan have identified Morton Train station as a good candidate for a Multi-Municipality grant between Morton and Springfield. This is early in the discussion, but he will keep council informed of this potential grant – which is a 0 match. This is a planning grant - dollar value between \$50,000 and \$175,000.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Tax collector reported that there are not many collections. In the next few weeks, she will submit to the County, all the delinquent taxes. In March, the County will have the information. She did send delinquent letters. Thereafter, the bills will be printed and as of February 1, they will be sent out. She reported that she did order a new laptop.

Treasurer Report –Mr. Stewart reported all the disbursements, we have not received the statement at this time from Citadel. For the last two years we have been tracking the cash flow, and the residents do pay their taxes quickly.

Mr. Stewart stated that if the municipality make s a change in the banking, this has to be done within the next two weeks. Springfield School district has moved away from Republic Bank to PNC, and the other institutions we have high rates from is WSFS and Sharon Savings. Council will need to discuss a possible RFP process so that we can get the tax collector her information to print on the tax bills.

Ms. Clark-Dickerson pointed out the Disbursement journal. Brinker Simpson does al the entries into QuickBooks, and she is here on Fridays. Mr. Boylan previously usually had the information emailed to him; and this can be done for Ms. Dickerson as well.

Discussion regarding reopening 2024 Budget

We are not looking into increasing the budget but moving some line items. Solicitor Ewald stated this is just a modification of the 2024 budget.

Mr. Heffner stated this budget document he received stated that \$44,800 is still an increase. Mr. Stewart paused this portion of meeting until he ran the numbers.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Report – OIC McGrady highlighted reports -a theft at Kohl's, 12 motor vehicle accidents, 5 were in Baltimore Pike, Leamy and Providence area, suspicious subjects at Kohl's. 21 assist other police departments, serving warrants, assisting on calls for forced entry on business. Responded to 10 medical emergencies, 20 traffic enforcement warnings.

Fire report – Fire Chief Holstein reported 26 incidents, total response 176 individuals. High response of 15 per alarm, averaging 7 per alarm.- December. For the year we had 356 incidents, total response of 2,377 individuals, 1264 personnel hours. Ms. Roberts asked for elaboration on the \$4 million endangered property. Mr. Holstein reported that this was regarding 119 Bridge Street Apartments.

The detail of this report is on file in the borough office.

Fire Marshal Report

Mr. Rufus Stokes was unable to be at the borough meeting, so President of Miller read the report that he had submitted. He reported about an issue with fire extinguishers at Springfield valley, Fire alarm activity at Popeye's, Apartments at 8 Amosland, multiple fire alarm-no key to access fire alarm system room. Also spoke regarding the Knox boxes, and sent updated information form to get new Knox yes.

He reported that if new council members were not given information on the classes they should take, he asked for their information to be forwarded him so he could send .

PUBLIC HEALTH, SANITATION, AND RECYCLING

Ms. Roberts reported that the 2024 Trash and Recycling Schedule would be trash on Mondays, and Recycling would be on Thursdays. She reported the new household rate for would be increased to \$305.00

Ms. Michelle Miller reported that she posted information about the recycling and texted some people. Out of about 40 people that reacted, there were 3 that were negative. People are happy and satisfied about it.

Ms. Roberts reminded all that there would be no trash pick up on Monday January 15th due to Martin Luther King Day.

LAW AND ORDINANCE

Ms. Miller had no report at this time. She will be discussing any potential plans or ordinances with Mr. Ewald. Mr. Eagar had nothing in transition at this time.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Eagar will try his best to fulfill the roll left behind by Ms. Hodnett. He will bring his spirit and energy to this. Two things are the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, and the other item was to discuss community events – the Red Cross blood drive, and Juneteenth, and movie nights, and another 5K Run. He would like the businesses to get together; and if there are any other questions, please reach out.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Mr. Stubbs reported that he had nothing new; he has reached out to some people in the town about the checkerboard competition, and CPR Classes. He does not think that just teenagers should learn CPR and have to pay for a certificate. He would like to find out if there is free access to this training. First Baptist Church has allowed their basement to be utilized for t his training. Hopefully we will be able to utilize the gym as well before the summer time.

Grant Award

Mr. Stewart reported that we had a severe wind storm with several trees coming down in the community. He thanked Mr. Johnson for going out after hours to make sure the roadways were clear. Multiple trees came down in sycamore Woods. We received a \$180,000 award for urban forest management between Sycamore Woods and Jacobs Park.

MAYOR REPORT – Mayor absent

MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Stewart stated that some math errors were found, and will report to the board and address Mr. Heffner’s concerns when we get to the Resolution on the changes to the budget.

Resolution 2024-01

Mr. Stewart stated shortly after re-organization meeting he met with President Miller and Vice President Dickerson regarding the salaries of the non-uniform employees . The salary for the secretary’s position was - \$23.19 per hour with a 2% increase in 2024 budget, but looking at neighbors, typically the salary is between \$25-30 per hour. His recommendation was \$25 per hour. The second was public works lead – that salary was \$19.70 and a 2% increase in 2024; the wage came to \$20.10 per hour. The salaries for this position are significantly higher – between-\$28 -\$35 per hour. Mr. Stewart recommended \$22.50 and explained his reasoning for that recommendation. In 2023 we hired a part-time public works employee at \$15.00 per hour; that increased from 2023-2024 was a 17% increase. Solicitor Ewald suggested a short executive session as this was a sensitive issue. When meeting reconvened, Council Vice President Bernice Clark Dickerson made a Motion to approve Resolution 2024-01 – Salary adjustment for non-uniformed employees in the amount of \$25 per hour each. Mr. Stubbs seconded that Motion. Roll call: Council Vice President Bernice Clark Dickerson-Yes, Council Douglas Eagar-yes,

Bethann Johnson-recused, Michelle Miller-No, Shaunta Miller, Michele Roberts-yes, Walter Stubbs. 5 Yays, 1 Nay, one abstention. Motion Carried.

Motion to Approve Resolution 2024-02 – Modification of the 2024 Budget Allocation

Mr. Stewart this would be a total increase of \$86,200 and the board will take action to reduce existing line items in this amount so that we remain with a balanced budget of \$2,529,586.00 .

Line item 401.130 – salaries for administration -\$13,000 increase- new line item \$101,567.

410.105- chief of police salary - \$15,000 more than original budget – increase to \$519,500.

410.476 Police health care – increased by \$58,200 – new allocation \$196,200.

Offsets or decreases –

404.314 – special legal fees – originally allocated \$25,000 – this will be decreased by \$24,000- line item is \$1000.00

409.103 – building repairs – decrease by \$16,050 – new is \$13,950.

410.111 – police training – decreased by \$5000 – new is \$4000

410.321 – all administration – decrease by \$5000 – allocation is 0.

430.251 – tree trimming and pruning - \$13,250 – received a grant, so this can be eliminated to 0.

454.720 – Park and recreation equipment –decreased by \$15,000 – new allocation is \$15,000.

487.183 – opt out health insurance this is no longer valid –\$7900 is not needed- reduced in it’s entirety – 0.

Total budget is still \$2,529,586.00.

Ms. Michelle Miller did ask for clarification of the telephone expense.

Motion to approve 2024-02 to modify the budget allocations was made by Councilor Roberts, seconded by Councilor Clark-Dickerson. Roll Call: Council vice President Bernice Dickerson-yes., Councilor Eagar-yes, Councilor-yes. Johnson-yes, Councilor Michelle Miller-yes, Council President Shaunta Miller-yes, Councilor Roberts-yes, Councilor Stubbs-yes . Motion carried.

Motion to approve Disbursement Journal for December 2023. Councilor Michelle Miller made a Motion to approve disbursement journal for December 2023. Council Vice President Clark-Dickerson seconded the Motion. All council voiced approval. Motion carried.

Gave the upcoming events and council meetings.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Ms. Shaunta Miller announced that anyone is available who signed the board to speak, but allotted 3 minutes.

Lisa Lockley – 114 Harding Avenue

Ms. Lockley asked permission to erect a sign underneath Mr. William Rice's banner. This sign would say William E. Rice Way - on March 23rd at 10:00. The Tuskegee Airmen will be here to honor him. This sign would be on the pole with his banner. Council President Miller stated this would be discussed somewhat and it would be on next meeting's agenda.

Michael Lee – 123 W Sylvan Avenue

Mr. Lee commended Mr. Stubbs in his interest of the youth of Morton; however children need guidance to become good respectful citizens, as they are the future.

Cecilia Todd – 110 Althea Lane

Commended all three new council members on their accomplishments so far, and commended them for the increases for the employees. Also mentioned that someone needs to control the borough calendar.

Charles Lillicrapp-114 Locust Road

Questioned the fire chief if the borough of Rutledge offered \$150,000 to the fire company. Chief stated that no offer was made.

Bruce Wagner – 124 W Sylvan Avenue

Questioned North Morton Avenue, and the water company; with funds to do the street repairs. We have liquid fuels funds which we haven't used for 2023. Could we use those funds to repair Morton Avenue? Mr. Catania stated that funds that we receive from the water company have no strings attached. Council will be considering the 2024 County aid portion of liquid fuels has an expiration, but the borough liquid fuels can accumulate. This question is actually a budgeting item.

Bill Heffner – 571 S Old Middletown Road, Media PA

Mr. Heffner asked when the next CDBG meeting is to be held. He also asked how the residents would be notified of the recycling. Handouts, word of mouth and website. Ms. Roberts stated that she felt that not many people will recycle.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Roberts made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha Preston, Secretary

