

MINUTES
Bloomfield Borough Council
November 7, 2023

Bloomfield Borough Council met this evening in a regular session in the Bloomfield Borough Council Chambers with the following council members present: President Malinda C. Anderson, Vice President J. Kevin Fitzpatrick, John J. Patterson V., Brenten S. Dum, Karl L. Cless and Jessica L. Grindle.

Also present: Secretary Danielle Shope, Assistant Secretaries Susanne Woolever and Kathleen Miller, Borough Employees Damon Hartman and Jeremy Foulkrod, Solicitor Isaac Wakefield, Mayor and Water Authority Representative Edward T. Albright Jr., HRG Representatives Ryan Hostetter and Tracy Strickland, Planning Commission Chair Melanie Rowlands, BEO/ZEO Becky Smiley, and residents Ed Apple, James A. Woods, Kevin McCarty, and Mike and Karen Whitmer.

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

President Anderson led the gathered assembly in the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

MEETING OPENING

Recording of the Meeting – President Anderson advised the attendees that the meeting was being recorded by the Council for the accuracy of the minutes and stated that side conversations should be conducted in the hallway so as to not disrupt the meeting or its recording and reminded everyone that talking when someone else is speaking also disrupts the meeting and affects the recording. President Anderson further requested that those individuals in the audience desiring to speak during Public Comment identify themselves prior to speaking and they have 3 minutes to present their concern. Individuals have 10 minutes to present their concern if they are on the agenda. President Anderson asked if any individuals in the audience were also recording the meeting and if so to identify themselves for the record. President Anderson stated that Council will not deviate from the agenda and any questions should be addressed during the appropriate portion of the meeting.

Executive Session Information (October & November meetings) - Both of these executive sessions were discussions pertaining to personnel and legal issues.

Approval of Public Hearing Minutes from September 28, 2023 - Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve the public hearing minutes, seconded by Councilman Patterson. Motion carried with Councilman Cless abstaining.

Approval of Minutes – Councilwoman Grindle made the motion to approve the October 3, 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Councilman Cless. Motion carried.

Approval of Financial Report – Councilman Dum made a motion, seconded by Councilman Patterson, to approve the October 2023 meeting financial report. Motion carried.

REQUESTED PUBLIC COMMENTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS

There were no Requested Public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS

Resident Mike Whitmer of 301 Barnett Street questioned the size of buildings that could be built on the Fraker property in Lakeside Development. President Anderson stated this would be discussed during the Planning Commission portion of the meeting.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Solicitor's Report – Solicitor Wakefield submitted his formal report to Council and unless there were any questions, he would defer to the report.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Albright thanked the Council, Mr. Hartman and Mr. Foulkrod for their part in preparing the Borough for the county Veterans Day parade. He reported there were 30 cars at recycling with 2 volunteers present. Mayor Albright reported that during the October Halloween parade, the Borough ran into issues with the soccer teams. The field had been scheduled for the Halloween Parade, but the soccer teams were using the field for a game. Soccer parents were rude to the Civic Club ladies and again the soccer parents disregarded parking rules. Mayor Albright made a motion to ban the Tuscarora Soccer league from using the field. An extensive discussion followed. Councilman Cless made a suggestion to have BEO Smiley contact the Tuscarora Soccer representative and ask them to attend a Borough Council meeting to discuss these matters. Mr. Woods suggested sending a letter denying field use. More discussion followed. President Anderson stated a soccer club representative needs to come before Council before a permanent decision is made and Vice President Fitzpatrick stated that at the end of the day it is about the kids and not the irresponsible adults.

Mayor Albright also thanked the Aesthetics Committee for taking care of the grandstand banners. The Mayor also received a commitment from a generous person to acquire a scoreboard for the baseball field. The donor will pay for everything. Council will have to discuss a location for this scoreboard at a later date.

Parking Officer Report – There were 9 tickets issued in October with 1 still unpaid and 1 voided.

Enforcement Report – President Anderson deferred to BEO Smiley.

BEO Report – Becky L. Smiley - BEO Smiley had nothing more to report than what is in her report. For the complete detailed BEO report, please see Borough Enforcement Officer Monthly Report on file in the Borough Office.

Planning Commission Report – Melanie Rowlands provided the following report:

Ms. Rowlands reported that Land Development Plans for the Rice Memorial Project, having been approved at last month's Council Meeting, should be signed by all necessary parties. The necessary signatures were obtained.

The Planning Commission requested that Council approve Ordinance #368 regarding zoning and zoning map changes including approval of an extension of the R-3 District along Lakeside Drive as well as various zoning clarifications and a new section on permitted uses for Solar Energy Systems. Prior to the vote, Rowlands answered a resident's question about a new restriction incorporated as a result of the September 28, 2023 Public Hearing where new R-3 dwellings are constructed within 100 feet of existing R-1 dwellings; some additional limitations are now placed on building height and density standards. This standard, having been reviewed by County Planning and advertised, applies to any such situation in the borough, not just the districts impacted by this zoning request. Mr. Kevin McCarty agreed with what Ms. Rowlands conveyed to him.

Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve Ordinance #368, Chapter 26 Zoning Amendments to text and map, seconded by Councilwoman Grindle. Councilman Cless voted Yes, with reservations. Motion carried.

FEMA/PEMA - Councilman Cless had no report.

Water Authority Report - Mayor Edward T. Albright Jr. stated they have been hit with new testing for PFAS contaminants. It will cost over \$4,000 for this testing since there are four wells. This is mandated by the State.

PCBA/COG – Councilman Cless stated the past quarterly meeting was held September 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in council Chambers. BIU reported that 63 subdivision plans, 30 new lots, and 331 permits were submitted for review and approval. The Regional Transportation plan was discussed regarding trails, bike paths, etc. County wide broadband service and solar panel projects were also discussed. Next meeting is scheduled for November 9, 2023 at 7 p.m.

Zoning/Permit Officer's Report – Zoning Officer Smiley issued 1 permit to 414 West High Street for a sunroom.

Capital Tax Collection Bureau Report – Councilman Cless stated the board met on October 19, 2023 in Council Chamber. Disbursements were reviewed and approved. The 2024 budget, salary increases for employees, and hiring of a professional cleaning service were also reviewed and approved. Annual reorganization of the PC Tax Collection Committee was also held with new officers elected. Next meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2023 at 7 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Leaf Collection - Scheduled for Monday, October 9, 2023 through Wednesday, November 22, 2023.

Christmas Tree Lighting - scheduled for Sunday, November 26, 2023 at 5 p.m.

The PPL pole has been replaced, but it is doubtful electricity will be available for the tree lighting. Don Jacobs has offered to provide electricity for the event from his building. Lynn and Jean Shatto of Shermansdale are donating the tree.

RIGHTS OF WAY & UTILITIES

Vice President Fitzpatrick reported the Borough had to excavate for a backed up sewer on Main Street. The cause was tree roots from a “beautification tree” planted years ago right over the sewer main. It was the Borough’s responsibility to fix and the tree will not be replaced.

The Perry County Council of the Arts approached Vice President Fitzpatrick about putting a huckleberry sculpture on the Square marketplace. He referred them to the county since it is the county property. The county has agreed to pay for the cost of the sculpture installation.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Councilman Cless reported the east end exterior of the Borough Building update was completed today by Gill’s Construction. Collins Construction visited the site and measured for materials and labor cost, but failed to submit a bid. No one else offered a bid since the deadline for installation was December 31, 2023. Councilman Cless expects an invoice to be submitted soon. A check for \$13,820 was made out to Gill’s Construction.

A portion of the library ceiling collapsed and Mr. Hartman graciously replaced the tiles for a temporary repair. An estimate to upgrade that tiled portion to drop ceiling was offered at \$3,895. This would include a new drop ceiling installation with new LED lighting fixtures and rewiring. An additional quote to upgrade all 4 ceiling sections of the entire library was offered at \$16,080. Council discussion on this issue is needed.

Sarah Keller from Senator Rothman's office requested installation of a satellite dish to be installed on the roof of the Borough Building for Starlink internet service as their current service is quite inadequate. Installation of the satellite dish will be paid for by the Senator. Councilman Cless made a motion to approve this satellite dish installation, seconded by Councilman Dum. Motion carried.

AESTHETIC

Councilman Dum stated the Veterans Day Parade was a success. He thanked H&J towing for the trailer used for the reviewing stand. President Anderson suggested a thank you note be sent to H&J. Councilman Dum also thanked Mrs. Barbara Woods for decorating the stand with the red, white and blue bunting. The Christmas Tree lighting will be November 26, 2023. The profit from the sale of the luminaries this year will go to the Senior Center.

FINANCE, INSURANCE & SAFETY

Councilman Patterson had no report.

Several amendments to the proposed budget needed to be discussed and voted upon.

- 1) Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to advertise a tax rate increase for 2024 by 1.5 mills (2.1622 to 3.6622), seconded by Councilwoman Grindle. Motion carried.
- 2) Discussion followed on potentially reducing the library donation of \$1,000 to \$500. Vice President Fitzpatrick was opposed. Councilwoman Grindle agreed with Kevin. Councilman Cless felt since the Borough provides all the library's renovations, etc. and that the library's surrounding townships have not given their fair share he felt \$500. Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to not reduce the library donation at all, seconded by Councilwoman Grindle. Motion carried with Councilman Cless voting "nay". President Anderson will contact the surrounding townships within the library's service area to come to a meeting to discuss their lack of support. More discussion followed.
- 3) Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve a 3% Borough employee salary raise, seconded by Councilman Cless. Motion carried with Councilman Patterson abstaining.
- 4) President Anderson stated there was a decrease in Capital Blue Cross insurance to \$41,000. There was a decrease of \$1,300 in dental insurance. President Anderson made the motion that the employee contributions remain the same for the employees to be funded at 100% and spouses at 85%, seconded by Vice President Fitzpatrick. Motion carried with Councilman Patterson abstaining.
- 5) Discussion on the purchase of a 4X4 to be used on the new park walkways and to plow the Borough alleys took place. Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to include up to \$15,000 for a 4X4 purchase, seconded by Councilwoman Grindle. Motion carried with Councilman Cless abstaining.
- 6) Councilman Cless made the motion to reduce the amount paid to TCRPC from \$2,400 to \$1,200, seconded by Vice President Fitzpatrick. Motion carried.
- 7) Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to renew SAMS at approximately \$1,200 for 3 years, seconded by Councilwoman Grindle. Motion carried.
- 8) President Anderson made the motion to approve a brush pick up fee of \$5.00 per quarter (can not opt out), seconded by Vice President Fitzpatrick. Motion carried with Councilman Dum "nay" vote. Discussion followed.

GRANTS

Vice President Fitzpatrick made a motion to establish a municipal priority checking account in the name of 'Bloomfield Park Project Grant' at Pennian Bank, seconded by Councilman Patterson. Motion carried.

Tracy Strickland, landscape architect from HRG, explained the walking trail plan map. Discussion followed. Councilman Cless questioned the safety of the walkway being on the inside of the fence in left field. Mr. Woods questioned the use of black top. More discussion followed.

There is a DCED grant that is pending that could potentially expand on this project. This is for \$250,000 which would offset the match of the other grant. They hope to hear about this second grant by November 21, 2023.

Vice President Fitzpatrick stated they are applying for an LSA grant for \$1 million dollars with no match. They are putting a municipal complex grant in for the Borough Building improvement.

PERSONNEL

Councilwoman Grindle made the motion to approve and institute the Employee Handbook effective January 1, 2024, seconded by Vice President Fitzpatrick. Motion carried.

CLOSING COMMENTS

There being no further business, upon motion by Councilman Patterson, seconded by Councilman Cless, the regular meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The next meeting is Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Miller, Assistant Secretary