

MINUTES
Bloomfield Borough Council
December 5, 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, and Karl L. Cless. Jessica L. Grindle had an excused absence.

Also present: Secretary Danielle Shope, Assistant Secretaries Susanne Woolever and Kathleen Miller, Borough Employees Damon Hartman, Solicitor Isaac Wakefield, Mayor and Water Authority Representative Edward T. Albright Jr., HRG Representatives Ryan Hostetter, Tax Collector Brenda Albright, BEO/ZEO Becky Smiley, Tuscarora Soccer Club President Steve Lis, Bloomfield Public Library Representatives Miriam Nicholson and Jacqueline Hair, Perry County Times Reporter Paul Wyatt, Richard Brown, West Perry High School Civics Student Ricardo Sepulveda and mother Kelly Sepulveda, and Borough Residents Ed Apple, James A. Woods, Kelvin Spotts, and John Long.

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. (Perry County Times Reporter Paul Wyatt was also recording the meeting) President Anderson stated that Council will not deviate from the agenda and any questions should be addressed during the appropriate portion of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes – Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve the November 7, 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Councilman Cless. Motion carried.

Approval of Financial Report – Councilman Patterson made a motion, seconded by Vice President Fitzpatrick, to approve the November 2023 meeting financial report. Motion carried.

REQUESTED PUBLIC COMMENTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS

Tuscarora Soccer Club- Mr. Steve Lis, President of the Tuscarora Soccer Club, informed the Council that they are trying to control the parking situation for games. The Club sends out screen shots to the visiting teams, etc. as to the designated parking areas. President Anderson conveyed to Mr. Lis that there were also Borough events already on the calendar that were not respected and the soccer teams played games on those dates anyway. Also, President Anderson stated that the soccer field is a designated flight field for emergency medical helicopter use and all soccer equipment, such as goals, need to be removed after games. Mr. Lis said he understood and he has informed all his coaches.

John Long - Bloomfield Park Project - Mr. Long complimented Council for taking the initiative for coming up with the Park Project which he feels will be a real asset to the community. Mr. Long expounded on the uniqueness of the GrandStand and the ballfield. He would hate to see the ballfield compromised in any way with tracks or paths going around the field. He also stated that baseball spikes and asphalt do not mix. Mr. Long also stated his concern about the 8 foot wide path that is proposed for the Park walkways. He asked for a reduced width of the path. He gave his suggestion for a solution. He also asked Council to consider connecting the Dan Paul Lake Park to the Bloomfield Park Project. Council has already considered this possibility. There is a second grant that could facilitate this if the grant is awarded to Council.

James Woods - Bloomfield Park Project - Mr. James Woods stated he is in agreement for the proposal for the Park. However, he stated that if the 8 foot wide pathway is placed where it is suggested on the plans you can kiss baseball goodbye on these fields. He reiterated what Mr. Long stated that baseball spikes and asphalt do not mix. Mr. Woods is all for the Park idea, but he does not want to see the trail being a detriment to the baseball field which is over 100 years old. He gave his suggestion for a solution which entails putting in a fence. He described the fence that he is proposing. Discussion followed. Councilman Cless objected to the fence behind the building. There would have to be access gates. Vice President Fitzpatrick told Mr. Woods that his suggestions will not fall on deaf ears and his ideas would be taken into consideration. Council will try to incorporate them into the Park designs if possible. President Anderson stated she appreciated his drawings and concerns and they will be given to the planning group because they are not quite at that stage yet since the second grant has not yet been awarded. Councilman Dum stated his agreement that the trail be outside the fence and not on the inside.

Mr. Kelly Spotts gave his agreement with Mr. Long and Mr. Woods. Mr. Spotts questioned whether more trails were needed within the Borough. He also questioned the width of the trail. HRG Engineer Hostetter stated DCNR requires an 8 foot trail. Discussion followed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS

Miriam Nicholson, President of the Bloomfield Library Board, thanked the Borough for its past donations. Centre and Wheatfield Townships have also donated to the library. She thanked the Borough for having the library be part of the community. Their house tour went well and they appreciated the tree lighting also. Ms. Nicholson publicly apologized for someone named "Eddie" (Eddie Orris) (who she has no idea who he is), but he took what the library posted concerning the library parking and turned it into an absolutely rude and obnoxious thing on FaceBook. This did not come from the library. Ms. Nicholson stated libraries are here to bring people together and that is what they want to do.

Councilman Cless read a statement expressing his feelings about library and soccer team parking and the FaceBook posts.

Vice President Fitzpatrick replied that he spoke to the Commissioner and she pulled down her FaceBook comments.

Brenda Albright, tax collector, thanked Council and especially Councilman Cless for all they/he has done for her tax office downstairs.

BEO/ZEO Becky Smiley gave a quick update on the GrandStand account. The account has been officially closed out as of last week. The remaining monies went to the Twilight Team to cover any 2024 expenses. The signs ordered by the public have been hung at the GrandStand.

Executive Session Information - Council adjourned into Executive Session at 7:30 p.m. Council reconvened its regular meeting at 7:43 p.m. with a motion by Councilman Patterson, seconded by Vice President Fitzpatrick. Motion carried. The Executive Session was held to discuss personnel and legal issues.

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. Mr. Wakefield stated that an amended agenda is not to be done anymore. All agenda items must be on the meeting agenda 24 hours in advance.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Albright thanked Councilman Dum for getting the Christmas Tree and also the Borough employees and the Civic Club for making the Christmas Tree lighting a success.

There were 28 people dropping off at recycling, with 5 volunteers. The bins are full and need to be tipped.

Parking Officer Report – There were 7 tickets issued in November with 1 still unpaid and 1 voided. The towing signs are not here yet.

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 was absent, so there was no report. Vice President Fitzpatrick stated they did receive feedback on their recommended changes to the SALDO from Perry County. This will be the topic of discussion for their next meeting.

FEMA/PEMA - Councilman Cless had no report.

Water Authority Report - Mayor Edward T. Albright Jr. stated that the water plant is pumping good water. They just went into contract with GEO Services. Every 10 years, the wells need to be recertified. Well 2 needs to be recertified. It is a 2 year process. They are waiting for Spring to come so they can do the bottleneck project for which they put in a grant.

Councilman Dum asked about any possibility of terrorist attacks on our water system. Mr. Albright said there should be no problem because we are not hooked up to the internet.

PCBA/COG – Councilman Cless stated the past quarterly meeting was held Nov. 7, 2023 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers. The previous meeting discussions were given final review and approval on outstanding issues. The next quarterly meeting will be held February 8, 2024.

Zoning/Permit Officer's Report – Zoning Officer Smiley issued 1 demo permit to 417 West Main Street and 1 permit for the one story office building at the old Rice Memorial, 417 West Main Street.

Capital Tax Collection Bureau Report – Councilman Cless stated the next meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2023 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Planning Commission Board - William Zeke Morrow resignation effective 12/31/23 - Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to accept the resignation of William Zeke Morrow, seconded by Councilman Cless. Motion carried. President Anderson stated a plaque will be given to Mr. Morrow in recognition of his outstanding service to this community and this Board.

Bloomfield Borough Zoning Hearing Board - James A. Woods (1/1/24-12/31/26) - Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to accept Mr. Woods onto the Zoning Hearing Board, seconded by Councilman Patterson. Motion carried.

Ordinance #369 - Fire Protection Tax 2024 - No Fire tax increase. Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve Ordinance #369, seconded by Councilman Dum. Motion carried.

Ordinance #370- Tax Rate 2024 - Real Estate Tax increase from 2.1622 to 3.6622 mills on each dollar. Councilman Patterson made the motion to approve Ordinance #370, seconded by Vice President Fitzpatrick. Motion carried.

Ordinance #371 - Local Services Tax 2024 - Local Services Tax rate to remain the same at \$52.00 per year. Councilman Cless made the motion to approve Ordinance # 371, seconded by Councilman Patterson. Motion carried.

Ordinance #372 - Amending Chapter 9, Health and Sanitation, Part 2, Vehicle Nuisances - Councilman Dum made the motion to approve Ordinance #372, seconded by Vice President Fitzpatrick. Motion carried.

Resolution #2023-07 - Permit Fees, 2024 - Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve Resolution #2023-07, seconded by Councilman Patterson. Motion carried.

Resolution #2023-08 - Independent Auditor 2024 - Councilman Patterson made the motion to approve Resolution #2023-08, seconded by Councilman Cless. Motion carried.

Resolution #2023-09 - Per Capita Tax 2024 - Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve Resolution #2023-09, seconded by Councilman Dum. Motion carried.

Resolution #2023-10 - LSA Grant - Councilman Cless made the motion to approve Resolution #2023-10, seconded by Councilman Patterson. Motion carried. The LSA grant is from casino funding and the Borough has applied for \$465,000 which would be used to improve the Borough Building.

RIGHTS OF WAY & UTILITIES

No report.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Councilman Cless reported the following:

1. He replaced a broken mini blind in Senator Rothman's office. He met with Doug Hoffman, State IT Tech, to discuss the installation of the satellite dish on the roof of the Borough Building for Starlink internet service. Materials are on order by the state. Installation will be at their earliest convenience.
2. Mr. Cless met with Council President Anderson, Mayor Albright, USPS Postmaster and the library staff on November 20, 2023 to resolve a library patron parking issue. A possible solution was agreed upon by all parties to address the issue. They will attempt to use the grassy area to the west of the Post Office facility to create more parking spaces.
3. He worked with Damon and M4 Contractors to make repairs to the lower level restroom sewage pump station. The system was made operational until a burned out pump can be rebuilt and reinstalled.
4. Mr. Cless made a request to the borough secretary to publish a "Request for Bids" in the local newspaper for soliciting bids on the repair of the library ceiling. Will await responses ... one bid received by email was \$16,080.

AESTHETIC

Councilman Dum stated the New Bloomfield Luminaria event will be Christmas Eve. Bags will be \$2.50. The proceeds will go to the New Bloomfield Senior Center. Councilman Dum thanked all involved with the Christmas Tree Lighting Program, including the Mayor and Take Two (Rick Smiley and Kathy Miller). Councilman Dum thanked everyone on the Council since this will be his last Council Meeting. He stated five years was long enough. He wants to spend more time with family.

President Anderson thanked Councilman Dum for his service to the Borough and asked for the address of the Shatto family so a thank you letter can be sent for the beautiful Christmas tree.

FINANCE, INSURANCE & SAFETY

Councilman Patterson stated that one of his last duties on Council will be to adjust the budget for 2024. The building maintenance fund must be increased by \$20,000. Once approved, the 2024 Budget can be finalized. Councilman Patterson made the motion to approve the 2024 budget with this increase, seconded by Vice President Fitzpatrick. Motion carried. The 2024 Budget is approved.

GRANTS

Vice President Fitzpatrick stated they already spoke about the potential LSA grant for the Borough Building of \$465,000. The additional DCED grant of \$250,000 that they applied for toward the Park has been delayed until January or February. The Borough received \$171,200 from DCNR which will be deposited in a separate account in Pennian Bank on Monday.

PERSONNEL

Councilwoman Grindle had an excused absence so there is no report. President Anderson stated the updated employee manuals are ready and all employees can come get this at the office.

Meeting Announcements - President Anderson stated the next meeting of the Bloomfield Borough Council will be Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. for a reorganization meeting followed at 7:00 p.m. for the normal monthly meeting in the Bloomfield Borough Council Chambers.

President Anderson thanked both Councilman Dum and Councilman Patterson for their service to the Bloomfield Borough Council.

CLOSING COMMENTS

There being no further business, upon motion by Vice President Fitzpatrick, seconded by Councilman Dum, the regular meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., preceded by the Reorganization Meeting at 6:30 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Miller, Assistant Secretary