

MINUTES
Bloomfield Borough Council
March 5, 2024

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, Raymonda J. Cunningham, Karl L. Cless and Jessica L. Grindle.

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. - Absent, HRG Representative Ryan Hostetter, BEO/ZEO Becky Smiley, Planning Commission Chair Melanie E. Rowlands, Junior Mustangs Athletic Association and Tuscarora Soccer Club Representative Katie Reisinger. Water Authority Representative Larry Weller, Aishel/Talmudic Daniel Fine and John Melham, and resident Edward R. Apple Jr.

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. (No one else was recording the meeting) President Anderson stated that the 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 February 6, 2024 meeting minutes, seconded by Councilman Cless. Motion carried.

Approval of Financial Report – Councilwoman Grindle made the motion to approve the February 2024 financial report, seconded by Councilwoman Cunningham. Motion carried.

REQUESTED PUBLIC COMMENTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS

There were no requested public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS

Katie Reisinger, Secretary of Junior Mustangs Athletic Association (JMAA) and Vice President of Tuscarora Soccer Club, addressed the Council. She stated that she is happy to represent the Borough by coordinating and managing the Google calendar for the Post Office field. She has reached out to those with access to the calendar in an effort to “clean up” the calendar. She noted that proof of insurance needs to be submitted to the Borough prior to access to the calendar and use of the fields. Tuscarora has already submitted theirs via email and JMAA has a disclaimer in their policy that proof of insurance is sent to the Borough each year and the Twilight team is in the process of submitting theirs. Ms. Reisinger will send a screenshot of the calendar to the Borough each week via email every Sunday evening. She is also working on communicating the designated parking spots to the teams and their families. She requested that parking information be added to the field direction document that the River League will be sending to all town baseball teams. She will communicate the same with the Tuscarora soccer teams as well. Ms. Reisinger will work with Ms. Becky Smiley throughout the Park construction project so she can update the teams who use the fields about the possible construction impact.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Solicitor’s Report – Solicitor Wakefield stated he provided Council with his formal report and unless there were any questions, he would defer to the report. Solicitor Wakefield mentioned that Mr. Bunt will provide the signed “99 year lease” for the easement behind the ball field soon.

Mayor’s Report – Mayor Albright was absent so there was no Mayor’s report.

Parking Officer Report – Mayor Albright provided Secretary Shope with his parking report. There were 6 tickets issued in the month of February and all were paid. President Anderson mentioned that recycling was held with 32 residents participating with 8 volunteers.

Enforcement Report – President Anderson deferred to BEO Smiley.

BEO Report – Becky L. Smiley - BEO Smiley had nothing more to report other 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 – Ms. Melanie Rowlands reported the following:

- 1) The Planning Commission unanimously recommended that Council approve the 'Minor Subdivision' Plan for Aishel campus of Talmudic University. This merely groups and separates 10.51 acres of land on the west side of N. Carlisle St. from the greater educational campus. No land development is proposed at this time. Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve the minor subdivision plan, seconded by Councilwoman Grindle. Motion carried.
- 2) Final efforts continue on Ch. 21, Subdivision and Land Development ordinance (SALDO) prior to final reviews and approval process per PA Municipal Planning Code including a future public hearing. Efforts are being made to incorporate updated standards on street widths that studies show increase safety, decrease expenditures and reduce stormwater management issues by reducing paved surface areas.
- 3) Zoning Hearing Board Chairman (Larry Brodisch) requested that BBPC address 'short term rental' homes (Airbnb and similar) based on reported problems in other areas of the County. Chair-person Rowlands noted that the issue could be addressed in the Zoning ordinance or by stand alone ordinance. (Solicitor Wakefield concurred). Initially at a minimum, Bloomfield might wish to establish a registry of owners of such properties. Having discussed this with the Planning Commission on February 26, 2024, Rowlands stated that she will seek input from Council members as well as further research to recommend a balanced path forward.

FEMA/PEMA - Councilman Cless reported after researching the subject of NIMS (National Incident Management System) qualifications for municipal officials, information from FEMA and the county EMC stated that all elected officials who may be designated as incident personnel are required by FEMA/PEMA to take 4 courses ... IS 100, 200, 700, 800. Bloomfield Borough currently has one member (Karl Cless) certified with IS 100, and 700. The EMC of each municipality is required to be certified in those and several other courses. Discussion followed.

Water Authority Report - Mayor Edward T. Albright Jr. was absent so no report. President Anderson stated that James E. Swenson was asked to be on the Water Authority Board for the term of March 5, 2024- December 31, 2025. Approval is needed. Councilman Cless made the motion to approve James E. Swenson to the Water Authority Board, seconded by Councilwoman Cunningham. Motion carried.

PCBA/COG – Councilman Cless stated the first quarterly meeting was held February 8, 2024 at 7 p.m.in Council Chambers. Various township activities were discussed including the subject of NIMS qualifications by municipal officials. It was evident no municipality has fully complied; however, Newport Borough has begun certification of several of its council members. The Boroughs Association portion of the meeting was canceled due to the lack of a quorum. Discussion followed about the poor attendance. Solicitor Wakefield suggested having these meetings on an “as needed” basis.

Zoning/Permit Officer’s Report – Zoning Officer Smiley issued no permits for the month of February. Ms. Smiley, President Anderson and Councilman Cless did have a meeting with Mr. Ron Leyder, owner of the blighted property on East Main Street, to discuss a plan of action for the property. By Mid-March Mr. Leyder has to have a plan of action and by Mid-April the property will be inspected again.

Ms. Smiley has had several inquiries about using storage containers in lieu of sheds. Several Council members stated absolutely not. Solicitor Wakefield agreed this is not a good idea. This issue will be tabled until the next meeting.

Capital Tax Collection Bureau Report – Councilman Cless stated the next quarterly meeting will be April 17, 2024 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

2024 Committee Assignments & Responsibilities:

Administrative & Insurance (Property/Liability) Committee

The Administrative Committee is responsible for overseeing all the Borough’s administrative matters relative to the Borough Building to include maintenance, content and all Borough property except for the Borough sewer plant, garage, and its property. The committee is responsible for all property and liability insurance. The Committee is also responsible for overseeing the Janitor. The Committee Chair is responsible for reporting problems and recommendations to the Council for their determinations.

Chair: Cless

Members: Cless, Anderson

Aesthetic Committee

The Aesthetic Committee is responsible for overseeing the Borough’s aesthetic matters relative to the Borough’s appearance, including, but not limited to, the Borough’s town square, working with the Borough’s Ad-Hoc Aesthetic Committee & Borough’s Shade Tree Commission, and organizing and facilitating the Christmas Tree Lighting.

The Committee Chair is responsible for reporting problems and recommendations to the Council for their determinations.

Chair: Cunningham

Members: Cunningham, Anderson

Enforcement Committee

The Enforcement Committee is responsible for overseeing the Borough's enforcement matters and co-operating with the Mayor in overseeing the staff (parking enforcement officer, zoning/permit officer, and code enforcement officer). The Committee is responsible to see that ordinances are being adhered to and determine if additional ordinances are needed. The Committee Chair is responsible for reporting problems and recommendations to the Council for their determinations.

Chair: Anderson

Members: Anderson, Fitzpatrick

Finance & Grants Committee

The Finance, Grants and Safety Committee is responsible for overseeing the Borough's Finance and Grants including auditing the financial report on a monthly basis, developing the annual budget, seeking and preparing grants for additional funding for major Borough projects. The Committee Chair is responsible for reporting problems and recommendations to the Council for their determinations.

Chair: Anderson

Members: Anderson, Fitzpatrick

Personnel & Insurance (Heath/Dental) Committee

The Personnel Committee serves the function of the Borough's Human Resources Committee, responsible for the Employee Handbook, the interviewing and hiring of Borough employees, their pay, health insurance, periodic evaluations and benefits. **Note:** The first line supervisor of the Secretary is the Borough President, of the Maintenance Workers is the Rights of Way Committee Chair, of the Borough Enforcement Officer and Parking Officer is the Enforcement Committee and the Janitor is the Administrative Committee. The Committee Chair is responsible for reporting problems and recommendations to the Council for their determinations.

Chair: Grindle

Members: Grindle, Anderson

Rights of Way, Utilities, & Safety Committee

The Rights of Way & Utilities Committee is responsible for overseeing the Borough's Rights of Ways (streets, alleys, curbs, sidewalks, driveway entrances and associated maintenance), Utilities (sewer plant building, garage and grounds, sewer lines, stormwater and runoff) and the equipment relative to those activities and overseeing the full-time staff. Additionally, this committee is responsible for ensuring that the Borough meets the National and State requirements for safety of employees and facilities. The Committee Chair is responsible for reporting problems and recommendations to the Council for their determinations.

Chair: Fitzpatrick

Members: Fitzpatrick, Anderson

Discussion & Vote Free Tree Program: Councilwoman Grindle stated that PCEDA decided to stop on the first one since no one had enough time to meet with DCNR. Ms. Grindle will meet again with them on Thursday.

Discussion and Vote My Work Program (Work Experience for High School Students): Councilwoman Grindle stated the students would have their own supervisor. The Borough would decide what projects need to be completed and then, the students would execute the project. They have their own insurance. Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to adopt the My Work Program, seconded by Councilwoman Grindle. Motion carried.

Library Board - Current Member List: The Library provided the Borough with an updated member list. A new librarian has been hired, Jaime Dickson. The Executive Committee of Bloomfield Public Library includes: President- Miriam Nicholson, Vice President- Peg McPherson, Secretary - LeeAnn McLaughlin, and Treasurer - Peg Kingsborough. Other Library Board Members include Jackie Hair, Sarah Geesaman and Stephanie Rohrbaugh. Other staff members include Julia McGuigan, Tia Mullen and Anne Paden. Keys are held as follows: Tia Mullen #7090, Miriam Nicholson #7091, Anne Paden #7092, Julia McGuigan #7093, Jamie Dixon #7094 and Peg McPherson #7095.

RIGHTS OF WAY & UTILITIES

HVAC Mini Split Purchase at Sewer Plant: Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve the purchase of a new Mini Split for the Sewer Plant not to exceed \$6,000, seconded by Councilman Cless. Motion carried.

Bloomfield Borough Park Project Update - HRGB Ryan Hostetter: Mr. Hostetter mentioned that HRG would be submitting to DCNR shortly and expect to have approval in May. They will advertise in May and open bids in June. They hope to complete the project by the end of October. Discussion followed concerning ballfield use during this project.

Consideration and potential action Community Park Easement Agreement: The 25 foot easement was approved by the New Bloomfield Fire Company on Friday. The Borough does not have a signed copy yet. Once the signed easement paper is received from Mr. William Bunt's office, it needs to be signed by President Anderson. At that point, it can be added to the Park Project. Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve the easement for the Park Project, seconded by Councilwoman Cunningham. Motion carried. Vice President Fitzpatrick can sign this document if President Anderson is away.

Talmudic Sewer Reevaluation (usage): Vice President Fitzpatrick reiterated that roughly 10 months ago they talked with Talmudic, now Aishel/Talmudic, campus on their sewer usage. The Borough gave them consideration to review their usage for one year. There is one more quarter to go. Many times only one family may be on campus, other times maybe one hundred people. The Borough will visit this again to see if there is any action after the next quarter that needs attention.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Councilman Cless reported the following:

1. The library ceiling project was completed on February 21st. The original bid invoice for the work was adjusted to \$16,330 due to an exhaust fan being installed to provide better air circulation for the room at an additional cost of \$250.
2. The electric heat low voltage relay and thermostat were replaced in the lower level restrooms due to a system malfunction. Parts were ordered to replace the items used from inventory. Additionally, the backup sewage pump was replaced in the lower level.

3. Since repeated calls for keys to be returned to the borough by ex-Borough officials has fallen on deaf ears, the decision was made to replace the Council Chambers door lock with an electronic keypad deadbolt to eliminate the need for keys and prevent unauthorized entry in the future. The new lock was ordered at a cost of \$104 and installed.

AESTHETIC

Councilwoman Cunningham reported that there was a request by a new resident in Timber Circle to remove 4 trees. Ms. Cunningham took him a form to fill out and told him that he would have to replace the trees. She will continue to be in contact with the resident until the project is complete.

FINANCE, INSURANCE & SAFETY

Councilman Cless has been in contact with Cupp Insurance Agency regarding the new building policy. He is waiting for the results of this and he will meet with the Agency prior to March 12, 2024. He will pass the numbers onto President Anderson.

GRANTS

Vice President Fitzpatrick reported :

- 1) The LSA grant request we filed will not be decided until at least the July timeframe.
- 2) We are applying for the COVID 19 ARPA Multipurpose Community Facilities Program for a grant to address the needs of the Borough building. We anticipate this grant, requiring no match, to be at the same level as the LSA proposal. Our deadline for submission is 4/20/24.

Vice President Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve working with HRG to finalize the PBDA Covid 19 ARPA Capital Project Fund Grant in the amount of \$3,200, seconded by Councilwoman Grindle. Motion carried.

Vice President Fitzpatrick mentioned how the 99 year lease for \$1.00 from the Fire Company for use of the property behind the fire company was never executed. This document was never received back from Mr. William Bunt. This will have to be addressed again. Mr. Bunt is looking to see if it has been filed with the Recorder.

PERSONNEL

President Anderson stated they will look at the employee health insurance in June. Employee handbooks may now be picked up in the Borough Office.

Discussion followed about Councilman Cless' statement about tax money on vehicles.

Executive Session - No Executive Session

CLOSING COMMENTS

There being no further business, upon motion by Vice President Fitzpatrick , seconded by Councilwoman Cunningham, the regular meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.. Motion carried. The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in Bloomfield Borough Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Miller, Assistant Secretary