

AMBLER BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

May 19, 2008

The regular monthly meeting of Ambler Borough Council was held Monday, May 19, 2008 in Borough Council Chambers located at 122 E. Butler Avenue, Ambler, Pennsylvania 19002. A public meeting began at 6:30 p.m. to consider concerns on the issue of residential overcrowding and residential rental units in the Borough.

During the public meeting Jim Gambles of 277 North Main Street expressed concern about parking availability and driveways being block by commercial vehicles. Susan Curry of 316 Edgewood Drive stated the Borough should maintain a health standard based on the number of persons per bathroom in a residential unit. George Benigno of the Planning Commission stated that the Borough conforms to BOCA codes that set forth number of persons per bedroom. Mayor Wahl advised that the Borough should proactively enforce codes that currently exist. Mr. Kenney mentioned a "town watch" program. Mary Dager of 129 Church Street stated she had called the Borough about a residence on Church Street, the Borough has inspected the property and there had been only temporary improvement. Mrs. Baigis stated that code enforcement hotline complaints helped the Borough maintain community standards. Mrs. Pieri stated that overcrowding is evidenced by the lack of parking in some areas. Mr. Myers of Code Enforcement stated that existing ordinance requires two parking spaces per single family unit. John Pugliese of 279 North Main Street inquired as to how grandfathering could be phased out. Borough Solicitor Bresnan stated that after a time of 18 months with the apparent discontinuation of a traditional use, grandfathering will no longer apply.

Mr. Bresnan, responding to questions of penalty (e.g., code enforcement requirements that might enforce a three-strikes-and-you're out policy) stated that such policies are problematic and can actually limit the Borough's options in dealing with specific situations. Council agreed that Code Enforcement should be more vigilant in enforcing codes currently in effect. Additionally, Mr. Myers stated that he currently was identifying rental units that were not registered with the Borough and planned a more thorough inspection of rental units upon sale of the unit(s). He stated that his goal was to inspect each rental unit every two years. When asked whether he would have enough manpower, Mr. Myers stated that he could not yet make that determination. Finally, Council agreed that the painting of parking lines on streets as they are repaved creates a more efficient use of parking space resulting in the availability of additional spaces.

Concerns regarding noise were discussed by two members of the public. Roger Egleston of 425 Ambler Road spoke about the shooting range. Chief Foley replied that the shooting range meets NRA standards, that high velocity assault rifles are not used and that the watershed is checked. He stated that the shooting range is used by Upper Dublin and Ambler police only, and that night firing is scheduled and is necessary for officer certification. "Katherine" of Ambler Manor stated her concern about another area with late-night loud noises and a congregation of people outside of Bar 31.

The regular Council Meeting began at 7:30 a.m. President Tony Isabella presided.

Mayor Bud Wahl led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Roll Call – Present: Mr. Isabella, Mr. Dooley, Mr. G. Pasceri, Mrs. Pieri, Mr. Kenney, Mrs. Baigis, Mr. S. Pasceri, Ms. Maxion and Mr. Amento. Mayor Wahl, Chief Bill Foley, Solicitor Bresnan and Mrs. Aversa also were present.

Mr. Isabella noted that Mrs. Baigis had offered suggestions to amend the April 15th Minutes and has asked for a clarification on the Minutes. Mr. Isabella then motioned for approval of the Minutes of the April 15, 2008 Council Meeting with suggested corrections. Seconded, carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Safety Committee – Mr. G. Pasceri, Chairman

Committee members: Mr. G. Pasceri, Mr. Dooley, Mr. Kenney and Ms. Maxion

The Committee met on Monday, May 5, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in Borough Council Chambers located at 122 E. Butler Avenue. Present: Mr. Isabella, Mr. Dooley, Mr. G. Pasceri, Mrs. Pieri, Mr. Kenney, Mrs. Baigis, Mr. S. Pasceri, Mr. Amento and Ms. Maxion. Also present: Mayor Wahl, Chief Bill Foley, Solicitor Bresnan and Mrs. Aversa.

The Public Safety Committee report was given this evening by Ms. Maxion.

The Committee will recommend the following:

1. Recommend adoption of **Ordinance** 1016 setting new road overlay requirements.

In other business the following was discussed:

1. The Police Department report for April 2008 was received.
2. The April 2008 Public Works and Code Enforcement reports were reviewed.
3. The Borough is looking for interested residents to participate in a steering committee for the Ambler Ambulance Association.
4. Documents released by the EPA relative to the Bo-Rit 38-acre (non-remediated asbestos dump) site were distributed.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Maxion stated that Rep. Schwartz, State Senator Greenleaf and State Rep. Taylor recently had written letters to the EPA requesting that the Bo-Rit site be included on the National Priorities List. Council determined to review this issue at the next Public Safety Committee to consider writing a letter and applying for grant money for remediation of the site.

5. A proclamation was presented for Raymond Simonis.
6. The April 2008 Fire Department report was received.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Baigis asked whether the 18 false alarms reported in the report was considered to be excessive. George Benigno responded that there are fines for repeatedly faulty alarm systems.

7. The Borough had begun public notification for the 2008 street paving project.
8. The Ambler EAC requested a free energy audit that was offered to a few municipalities in Pennsylvania which was funded as an EPA “pilot project.”
9. The Borough is actively researching for grants to install flashing lights within school zones.
10. A request was made for consideration of a stop sign at Spring Garden Street and Bannockburn Avenue.

Mrs. Baigis asked whether a traffic study had been conducted. Chief Foley replied that the intersection is a “T” intersection that does not meet the PENNDOT recommended criteria for a stop sign. There will be no further consideration of a stop sign at this intersection. Chief Foley added that he will be more proactive in stepping up pedestrian crossing signage.

Mr. Isabella asked if there were comments or questions from Council or the public. David-Michael Kenney of Ambler Main Street stated the AMS will begin holding a new event called “First Thursday and Friday, Too” at the request of retailers. He stated that the 2nd Alley of the Arts will be held Saturday, June 7th from 12:00 until 4:00 p.m. He stated that Oktoberfest will become “International Fest” this fall. There being no further comments or questions, it was moved the report be accepted and filed. Seconded, carried.

Parks and Recreation Committee – Mrs. Pieri, Chairman
Committee members: Mrs. Pieri, Mr. Dooley, Mr. G. Pasceri

The Committee met on Monday, May 5, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in Borough Council Chambers located at 122 E. Butler Avenue. Present: Mr. Isabella, Mr. Dooley, Mr. G. Pasceri, Mrs. Pieri, Mr. Kenney, Mrs. Baigis, Mr. S. Pasceri, Mr. Amento and Ms. Maxion. Also present: Mayor Wahl, Chief Bill Foley, Solicitor Bresnan and Mrs. Aversa.

The Parks and Recreation Committee report was given this evening by Mrs. Pieri.

A presentation was made by Chris Holtz and Sean Galt of Thompson Networks regarding the concept of installing video surveillance cameras in the Borough. They focused on installing the cameras as Knight Park and explained how the cameras could recapture, record and review. They stated that intensifier technology could be used for night filming and that angle ranges could be set so that neighboring residents could have privacy. Council asked that Thompson Networks prepare a proposal for review by the Committee.

The Committee will recommend the following:

1. Recommendation to apply for a rain garden design grant for Riccardi Park as recommended by the EAC. (Tony Federici, Senior Ecologist for URS Corporation had made a recommendation to Council.)
2. Recommendation to allow placement of a bench with an "In memory" plaque in Knight Park as requested by the Rocco family.

In other business the following was discussed:

1. The Borough has begun to compile construction costs and prepare the grant application for the "green building" to be constructed at Knight Park.
2. Construction of the batting cage and fencing at Knight Park is complete.
3. Information relative to a grant by the PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources for the Borough parks was presented.
4. A meeting was held in Knight Park and the concept of a Park Watch program was discussed.

Mr. Isabella asked if there were comments or questions from Council or the public. There being none, it was moved the report be accepted and filed. Seconded, carried.

Public Utilities Committee – Mr. Amento, Chairman

Committee members: Mr. Amento, Mrs. Judy Baigis, Mr. S. Pasceri

The Committee met on Monday, May 5, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in Borough Council Chambers located at 122 E. Butler Avenue. Present: Mr. Isabella, Mr. Dooley, Mr. G. Pasceri, Mrs. Pieri, Mr. Kenney, Mrs. Baigis, Mr. S. Pasceri, Mr. Amento and Ms. Maxion. Also present: Mayor Wahl, Chief Bill Foley, Solicitor Bresnan and Mrs. Aversa.

The Public Utilities Committee report was given tonight by Mr. Amento.

The Committee will recommend the following:

1. Recommend awarding the sludge dewatering controls and polymer feed system to Eastern Environmental Contractors at a low, responsive bid of \$370,850.00.
2. Recommend awarding the meggar testing job to Fry Electrical Construction at a cost of \$2,184.00.

In other business the following was discussed:

1. The April 2008 WWTP and Engineer's Reports were reviewed.
2. Whitmarsh Pump Station is nearing upgrade completion. The air scrubber is being rebuilt. PADEP will be contacted to conduct a one-month study for permit approval.
3. Proposed Well 15 (Brookfield Lane-The Ridings) has received DRBC approval pending DEP technical review. A DRBC public hearing to be held in New Jersey is scheduled for July 16th.
4. The Annual Leak Detection Survey has been conducted by Fluid Conservation Technologies. Leak detection reports have been reviewed and work orders will be issued to Borough employees to make repairs.
5. The plant engineer was authorized at the November meeting to conduct a study based on PA DEP's verbal indication that Ambler should expect to see a total nitrogen limit of 3 mg/l and a total Phosphorus limit of 0.1 mg/l after the total maximum daily load (TMDL) is revised. The project is in process. EPA has verbally indicated it will not pursue total nitrogen requirements at this time and will revisit the issue in 5+ years; however, DEP may continue imposing the same or even more stringent limits based on Statewide water quality.
6. An ordinance establishing guidelines and fees for regulating grease traps is being considered.
7. DVIT has conducted its review of the insurance claim to Loch Alsh Booster Station. Upper Dublin High School will contribute to the cost of a new upgraded generator to meet the new high school's fire flow needs.
8. The Water Supervisor and Water Engineer continue to obtain quotes for repointing of the Loch Alsh Reservoir tower and installation of a safety railing at the spillway.

Mr. Isabella asked if there were questions or comments from Council or the public. There being none, it was moved the report be accepted and filed. Seconded, carried.

Finance and Planning Committee - Mr. Kenney, Chairman

Committee Members: Mr. Kenney, Mrs. Pieri and Mrs. Baigis

The Committee met on Monday, May 5, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in Borough Council Chambers located at 122 E. Butler Avenue. Present: Mr. Isabella, Mr. Dooley, Mr. G. Pasceri, Mrs. Pieri, Mr. Kenney, Mrs. Baigis, Mr. S. Pasceri, Mr. Amento and Ms. Maxion. Also present: Mayor Wahl, Chief Bill Foley, Solicitor Bresnan and Mrs. Aversa.

The Finance and Planning Committee report was given this evening by Mr. Kenney.

The Committee will recommend the following:

1. Recommend that the April invoices in the amount of **\$986,093.31** be paid as follows: General (\$132,977.41); Street Lights (\$1,462.20); Fire (\$30,705.82); Parks & Rec. (\$10,507.23); Water (\$81,012.23); Sewer (\$138,253.15); WWTP (\$146,688.36); Rail Corridor (\$0); Road Overlay (\$0); Debt Fund (\$0); Water Capital (\$1,356.25); Liquid Fuels (\$0); with end of month cycle totaling \$442,734.29, voided checks totaling \$396.37 and April cycle bills totaling \$542,962.65.
2. Recommend purchasing a sewer truck from Lower Gwynedd Township at a cost of \$10,000.00.
3. Recommend changing the Cavalier Lot project scope by removing the sidewalk and installing a fence behind the top of the wall. (Additional landscaping also will be added. Per Borough Engineer Jim Dougherty no problems should arise as long as drainage outlets are present in the wall.)
4. Recommend authorization to prepare bid specifications and advertise for the CDBG Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Grant.

In new business:

1. Recommend appointing Karen Kieser as an Ambler Trustee to the Wissahickon Public Library Board of Trustees.
2. David-Michael Kenney was added to the Borough Revitalization Committee.
3. A document was distributed relative to the WWTP audit.

In other business the following was discussed:

1. The Borough Engineer's April report was reviewed.
2. A memo recommending changes to the Borough lighting standard was received.

3. A memo recommending the creation of a Home Occupation Ordinance was received.
4. A memo setting standards for the use of PODS in the Borough was received.
5. The Borough is working to address the complaints of property owners surrounding Artman Home.
6. The proposed DC-2 Zoning Ordinance recommending a Zoning and Map Change was sent to the Planning Commissions for review.
7. The land development review from Gilmore for Station Square was received.
8. A letter from the County Planning Commission in reference to the Ordinance setting buffering requirements was received.
9. The Borough presented the 2008 Grant Applications to the County on May 13th.

Mr. Isabella asked if there were questions or comments from Council or the public. Mr. D.M. Kenney stated that the Auto Show was a success, that the rain delay brought added business to the restaurants and that the restaurant owners were pleased that there were no additional carnival food vendors. He thanked the Highway Department for their meticulous grooming of the town for the event. There being no further questions or comments, it was moved the report be accepted and filed. Seconded, carried.

Salary and Personnel Committee – Mr. S. Paceri, Chairman

Committee members: Mr. S. Pasceri, Mr. Amento, Ms. Maxion

The Committee met on Monday, May 5, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in Borough Council Chambers located at 122 E. Butler Avenue. Present: Mr. Isabella, Mr. Dooley, Mr. G. Pasceri, Mrs. Pieri, Mr. Kenney, Mrs. Baigis, Mr. S. Pasceri, Mr. Amento and Ms. Maxion. Also present: Mayor Wahl, Chief Bill Foley, Solicitor Bresnan and Mrs. Aversa.

An Executive Session was held on hiring and on union personnel merit increases.

The Salary and Personnel Committee report was given this evening by Mr. S. Pasceri.

In new business, the Committee will recommend the following:

1. Recommend hiring Peter Baylor to the vacant police officer position.
2. Recommend hiring James Ryan Rhoads for the new police officer position as approved in the 2008 budget.

In new business:

1. The Borough has hired two seasonal highway employees and one part-time parks employee.

In other business the following was discussed:

1. William F. Foley, Jr. was sworn in as the new Police Chief.
2. The Committee met with AFSCME to initiate negotiations.
3. The Committee agreed to hire a seasonal (May-October) park maintenance employee for the 2008 season.

Mr. Isabella asked if there were questions or comments from Council or the public. There being none, it was moved the report be accepted and filed. Seconded, carried.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Public Safety Committee – The Committee recommends and Ms. Maxion moves:

Recommend adoption of **Ordinance** 1016 setting new road overlay requirements. Seconded. Poll Council. 9-Ayes; 0-Nays. Carried.

Parks & Recreation Committee – The Committee recommends and Mrs. Pieri moves:

Recommendation to apply for a rain garden design grant for Riccardi Park as recommended by the EAC. Seconded. All Ayes. Carried.

Recommendation to allow placement of a bench with an “In memory” plaque in Knight Park as requested by the Rocco family. Seconded. 8-Ayes; 1-Nay (Mrs. Baigis). Carried.

Public Utilities Committee – The Committee recommends and Mr. Amento moves:

Recommend awarding the sludge dewatering controls and polymer feed system to Eastern Environmental Contractors at a low, responsive bid of \$370,850.00. Seconded. All Ayes. Carried.

Recommend awarding the meggar testing job to Fry Electrical Construction at a cost of \$2,184.00. Seconded. All Ayes. Carried.

Finance & Planning Committee – The Committee recommends and Mr. Kenney moves:

Recommend that the April invoices in the amount of **\$986,093.31** be paid. Mrs. Baigis moved the invoices be paid with the exclusion of the Gilmore Engineers invoice which was to be held for further review. Seconded. 3-Ayes (Mrs. Baigis, Mr. Kenney, Ms. Maxion); 6-Nays. Motion defeated. Motion to pay the April invoices in the amount of \$986,093.31. Seconded. 6-Ayes; 3-Nays (Mrs. Baigis, Mr. Kenney, Ms. Maxion). Carried.

Recommend purchasing a sewer truck from Lower Gwynedd Township at a cost of \$10,000.00. Seconded. All Ayes. Carried.

Recommend changing the Cavalier Lot project scope by removing the sidewalk and installing a fence behind the top of the wall. Additional landscaping also will be added. Seconded. All Ayes. Carried.

Recommend authorization to prepare bid specifications and advertise for the CDBG Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Grant. Seconded. All Ayes. Carried.

Recommend appointing Karen Kieser as an Ambler Trustee to the Wissahickon Public Library Board of Trustees. Seconded. All Ayes. Carried.

Salary & Personnel Committee – The Committee recommends and Mr. S. Pasceri moves:

Recommend hiring Peter Baylor to the vacant police officer position. Seconded. All Ayes. Carried.

Recommend hiring James Ryan Rhoads for the new police officer position as approved in the 2008 budget. Seconded. All Ayes. Carried.

There being no further business, Mr. Isabella moved the meeting be adjourned. Seconded, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Russell
Administrative Assistant
Water Department
For
George W. Benigno
Borough Secretary