

## AMBLER BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

November 17, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of Ambler Borough Council was held Tuesday, November 17, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at Borough Council Chambers located at 131 Rosemary Avenue, Ambler, Pennsylvania, 19002.

Council Vice President Peter Amento called the Council Meeting to order. Mayor Sorg then led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call** – Present: Mr. Pasceri, Mr. Amento, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Zaccone, Mr. DeRuosi, Mrs. Deininger, Mr. Sheward and Mrs. Polesir. Mayor Sorg, Solicitor Bresnan, Chief Foley and Borough Manager Mary Aversa also were in attendance. Mrs. McCormick was absent.

**POLICE OFFICERS SWORN IN:** Mayor Sorg swore in newly hired police officers Erik M. Iochum and Timothy J. Ferraro.

**2016 PUBLIC BUDGET MEETING:** The Meeting was preceded at 6:00 p.m. by a public meeting on the proposed FY2016 Municipal Budget. Finance Manager Gordon outlined the budget, noting that there would be a \$150 annual decrease in trash billing for at least two years. This decrease would be offset by a property tax increase of \$48.98 for an average assessed property value of \$116,612.00. She explained a reduction in the trash fee and the increase in real estate millage were necessary because trash now has its own fund just as do both Streetlights and Parks. She stated the accounting would now be more transparent. Additionally, Mrs. Gordon stated increased millage in the Parks Fund would be needed to recoup \$20,000 for the Edgewood Preserve. She stated the Water and Sewer funds would remain the same. The Borough Solicitor would be asked for a determination on Business Privilege Tax collections.

**PUBLIC HEARING – ORDINANCE 1090 – PERMITTED AUTO SALES:** A Public Meeting was held at 7:00 p.m. on proposed Ordinance 1090 which was amend the Borough Zoning Ordinance to permit automobile sales on specified parcels in the business district. Solicitor Bresnan explained that a former automobile dealer had existed as a non-conforming use, and that the Borough had realized that it did not expressly permit auto sales. As such, he stated that the current code could be challenged and advised that Council consider the Ordinance. There was no comment from either the public or Council. A motion to approve Ordinance 1090 was made. Seconded. (8-Aye). The hearing concluded.

**MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE AND POLICE PENSION PLAN PRESENTATION:** Mr. Scott Repke of Bernstein Management and Mr. Joe Duda of Duda Actuarial Consulting were present to discuss the status of Municipal Employee and Police Pension Plans. Mr.

Repke stated that Borough's performance since 1986 has realized an 8.4% annualized return. He noted that during that time the global stock market had realized 7.6% and that annualized inflation had been 2.7%. He commended Council for 'riding out' the market's volatility in recent years.

Mr. Duda stated that both the municipal employee and police pension plans were overfunded. He stated since his last visit in 2013 he was changing assumptions made for the plans, specifically to reduce the calculated interest rate for both plans from 7 ½% to 6.75% and to reduce the salary scale for municipal employees from 4.5% to 3.75% and for police employees from 5% to 4.25%. He stated expectations were not as optimistic and that while the funds are in a very strong position, he would prefer to take a more cautious approach. The revised MMO for municipal employee pensions was stated at \$17,213 and for police pension, \$0.00. He stated the Borough would receive a small amount of state aid for the municipal employee pension, and nothing for the police pension. He asked for Council to move on the actuarial report and approve the 6.75% interest rate used to calculate the plans to produce the MMO. Council President made a motion to approve. Seconded. (Aye-8). Carried.

The Council Meeting continued. Council President Pasceri made a motion to approve the Minutes of the October 20, 2015 Council Meeting. Seconded. Carried. Council then proceeded to hear Committee reports.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The Committees of Ambler Borough Council met Wednesday, November 4, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at Borough Council Chambers located at 131 Rosemary Avenue, Ambler, Pennsylvania, 19002. Present: Mr. Pasceri, Mr. Amento, Mr. Zaccone, Mr. Curtis, Mr. DeRuosi, Mrs. Deininger, Mrs. McCormick, Mr. Sheward and Mrs. Polesir. Mayor Sorg, Solicitor Bresnan, Chief Foley and Borough Manager Mary Aversa also were in attendance.

At the Council Meeting this evening, the Committees conducted business as follows:

#### **Public Safety Committee – Mr. Curtis, Chairperson**

Committee members: Mrs. McCormick, Mr. Sheward

The Public Safety Committee report was given this evening by Mr. Curtis

#### **The Committee will consider the following actions this evening:**

1. Consider adoption of Ordinance 1089 authorizing Borough participation in the County Radio Financing Program.

#### **In other business the following will be discussed:**

1. The October 2015 Police and Fire reports were received.

2. The October 2015 Ambulance Association report was received.
3. The Public Works and Code Enforcement reports were received.

Mr. Curtis asked if there were comments or questions from Council or the public. There being nothing further, it was moved the Committee's report be accepted as filed. Seconded, carried.

**Parks and Recreation Committee – Mr. DeRuosi, Chairperson**

Committee members: Mrs. Deininger, Mrs. McCormick

The Parks and Recreation Committee report was given this evening by Mr. DeRuosi.

**The Committee will consider the following actions this evening:**

1. Consider advertising for adoption **Ordinance 1091** amending Park Rules to permit walking of leased dogs in Ambler Borough Park.

**Recommended at Committee Meeting:**

1. With a request to participate in the Edgewood Preserve Project, Council (after deliberating in Executive Session) considered approving a \$20,000 contribution towards purchase of a parcel with willingness to assist in facilitating the project, taking eventual ownership of the protected parcel once sufficient funds are raised. Motion, Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

Mr. DeRuosi asked if there were comments or questions from Council or the public. Mary Margaret Monser of the Environmental Advisory Council stated the Edgewood Preserve Project volunteers would be holding a 'Beef & Beer' at the Borough Hall Gym on January 30, 2016 to raise funds towards purchase of the Edgewood parcel. She stated the committee was soliciting donations from private individuals and from corporate entities. There being nothing further, it was moved the Committee's report be accepted as filed. Seconded, carried.

**Public Utilities Committee – Mr. Amento, Chairperson**

Committee members: Mr. Curtis, Mr. Zaccone

The Public Utilities Committee report was given this evening by Mr. Amento.

**Recommended at the Committee Meeting:**

1. Recommendation to obtain quotes and award the emergency replacement of approximately 500 feet of water main on Marion Avenue. Motion to approve. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

**In other business the following was discussed:**

1. The WWTP Supervisor's and Engineer's reports were reviewed.
2. The Borough is accepting written comments on the proposed TMDL Strategy during a 30-day comment period. A public meeting was advertised and held at the Committee Meeting to accept verbal/written comments. The proposed Strategy has been available on the Borough website. Comments will be accepted through November 27, 2015.

Mr. Amento asked if there were questions or comments from Council or the public. There being nothing further, it was moved the report be accepted and filed. Seconded, carried.

**Finance and Planning Committee - Mr. Sheward, Chairperson**

Committee Members: Mr. DeRuosi, Mrs. Deininger

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

**The Committee will consider the following actions this evening:**

1. Consideration that **October 2015** invoices in the amount of **\$631,142.44** be paid as follows: General (**\$126,421.09**); Street Lights (**5,649.40**); Fire (**\$7,478.98**); Parks & Rec. (**\$2,394.07**); Water (**\$87,698.19**); Sewer (**\$56,704.22**); WWTP (**\$132,084.11**); Debt Fund (**\$0.00**); Water Capital (**\$212,066.82**); Liquid Fuels (**\$645.56**).
2. Consider authorization to advertise the 2016 Council Meeting schedule.

**Approved at Committee Meeting:**

1. Consideration to waive the sidewalk installation required of PFP Management, LLC for their 368 Fairview Avenue (3 lot) project. To the contrary, a motion was made to require sidewalk installation. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.
2. Consideration authorization to contract with Antrimweb Internet Marketing for the design and transfer of the new Borough website. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

**In other business the following was discussed:**

1. The Borough Engineer's report was received.
2. The Borough Planning Commission has reviewed the Parking Ordinance and provided draft language for consideration.

3. The auction of Borough property located at 122 E. Butler Avenue was held and no bid was accepted. Staff is preparing a bid package to be advertised for the sales offering of the property.
4. The 2016 draft budget has been completed. Public Meetings have been scheduled for November 17 and December 1 at 6:00 p.m. and for November 24 at 10:00 a.m.
5. Proposed Rose Valley Creek Conservation District Ordinances were received along with a letter by Attorney Joseph Catuzzi, who is representing Mr. and Mrs. Brian Quinn of Valley Brook Road. Borough Solicitor has met with interested parties to discuss the letter and proposed language.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Bresnan stated some points had been agreed to and that he was revising ordinance language. He stated his intention to draft revised language and to resubmit the revised ordinance. He advised that the ordinance would then have to start over at with Planning Commission.

Mr. Sheward asked if there were questions or comments from Council or the public. There being nothing further, it was moved the report be accepted and filed. Seconded, carried.

**Salary and Personnel Committee – Mr. Zaccone, Chairperson**

Committee members: Mr. Amento, Mr. Curtis

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

**Recommended at Committee Meeting:**

1. Recommend hiring Erik M. Iochum and Timothy J. Feraro to the Police Force. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

**In other business the following was discussed:**

1. Appointed volunteer terms that expire December 31, 2015 include:
  - Vacancy Board (1 year term) – one seat
  - Planning Commission (4 year term) – three seats
  - Zoning Hearing Board (3 year term) – one seat & one alternate seat
  - Civil Service Commission (6 year term) – one seat
2. Appointed volunteer vacancies currently include:
  - Appeals Board (3 year term) – one seat
  - Environmental Advisory Council (3 year term) –two seats

**Executive Session:** An Executive Session was held on the determination of the termination of an employee. Motion to terminate the Borough employee. Seconded. (8-Aye). Carried.

Mr. Zaccone asked if there were questions or comments from Council or the public. There being nothing further, it was moved the report be accepted and filed. Seconded, carried.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Public Safety Committee** – The Committee recommends and Mr. Curtis moves:

Consider adoption of Ordinance 1089 authorizing Borough participation in the County Radio Financing Program. Seconded. Carried.

**Parks & Recreation Committee** – The Committee will make no recommendations.

Consider advertising for adoption Ordinance 1091 amending Park Rules to permit walking of leased dogs in Ambler Borough Park. Seconded. Carried.

*Approved at Committee Meeting:* With a request to participate in the Edgewood Preserve Project, Council (after deliberating in Executive Session) considered approving a \$20,000 contribution towards purchase of a parcel with willingness to assist in facilitating the project, taking eventual ownership of the protected parcel once sufficient funds are raised. Motion, Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

**Public Utilities Committee** – The Committee will make no recommendations.

*Approved at the Committee Meeting:* Recommendation to obtain quotes and award the emergency replacement of approximately 500 feet of water main on Marion Avenue. Motion to approve. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

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

Consider authorizing actuary to move on the actuarial report granting approval of the 6.75% interest rate used to calculate the municipal employee and police pension plans used to produce the MMO. Council President made a motion to approve. Seconded. (Aye-8). Carried.

Consideration that **October 2015** invoices in the amount of **\$631,142.44** be paid. Seconded. Carried.

Consideration to adopt **Ordinance 1090**, a Zoning Ordinance change, to permit automobile sales. Seconded. Carried.

Consider authorization to advertise the 2016 Council Meeting schedule. Seconded. Carried.

*Approved at Committee Meeting:*

1. Consideration to waive the sidewalk installation required of PFP Management, LLC for their 368 Fairview Avenue (3 lot) project. To the contrary, a motion was made to require sidewalk installation. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.
2. Consideration authorization to contract with Antrimweb Internet Marketing for the design and transfer of the new Borough website. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

**Salary & Personnel Committee** – The Committee recommends and Mr. Zaccone moves:

Decision to terminate a Borough employee. Seconded. (8-Aye). Carried.

*Approved at Committee Meeting:* Recommend hiring Erik M. Iochum and Timothy J. Feraro to the Police Force. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Russell  
Assistant Secretary  
Borough of Ambler