

AMBLER BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

March 17, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of Ambler Borough Council was held Tuesday, March 17, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at Borough Council Chambers located at 122 E. Butler Avenue, Ambler, Pennsylvania, 19002.

This evening, Council President Sal Pasceri presided. Mr. Pasceri called the Council Meeting to order. Mayor Sorg led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Mayor thanked Council members and Chief Foley for their involvement with and attendance at the Montgomery County Hero Cop Plaque Dedication held at Ambler Borough Hall in remembrance of fallen officer Raymond Moscardelli who died in the line of duty serving the citizens of Ambler on January 20, 1977. Councilman Curtis noted that the reception had been well attended and well received. He added that he would like the plaque to be installed at the new Borough Hall.

At the conclusion of the Mayor's remarks, Sgt. John Keefer presented Mayor Sorg with a PD Mayor's Badge for her service to our police department and the Ambler community.

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

Mr. Pasceri invited Kathleen Casey, president of the Ambler Food Co-op, to make a presentation. Ms. Casey stated the Co-op was formed in 2012 and currently has 200 member-owner households. She summarized the benefit of a Co-op as being rooted in the community, with more money going into the local economy than would occur with a traditional food store. She stated the Co-op is raising equity and is completing applications for approval for a bank loan. She added that the Co-op is looking at potential retail space, including future space available at 122 E. Butler Avenue. Additionally, she stated the Co-op would be a for-profit business and would pay property taxes.

Councilperson DeRuosi stated he supported the Co-op because Ambler is a walkable and sustainable town and that the Co-op would be a daytime retail “anchor” for the Borough. Councilperson McCormick added that a Co-op would be “for us, by us.” Councilperson Deininger expressed her interest in the Co-op because it would be located in-town and would be a walkable food market. Council President Pasceri added he would recommend that the sale of Borough Hall be put out to bid in May to give the Co-op an extra 60 days to get their financing in order.

A motion was made to approve the Minutes of the February 17, 2015 Council Meeting. Seconded. Carried. Council then proceeded to hear Committee reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committee Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, 2015 were cancelled due to the bad weather event. 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 no actions this evening.

In other business the following was discussed:

1. The February 2015 Police and Fire Department reports were received.
2. The February 2015 Ambulance Association report was received.
3. The February 2015 Public Safety Minutes were received.
4. Chief Foley is obtaining pricing for relocation and retrofit of school crossing signals for use at Butler Avenue crosswalks.
5. 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, Mr. Palumbo

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

The Committee will consider no actions this evening.

1. Consider authorization to advertise for bid the Lawn Maintenance Bid.

In other business the following was discussed:

1. The Committee has prepared a community survey with questions on future uses of Ambler Borough Park. The survey website has been published on the Borough's website and in the Spring 2015 Hometown News.
2. Ambler's Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) will hold an Earth Fest on Saturday, April 18th at Calvary United Methodist Church (16 Park Avenue).
3. The Lawn Maintenance Agreement Bid has been advertised. Bid opening is April 1, 2015.

Mr. DeRuosi 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.

Public Utilities Committee – Mr. Amento, Chairperson

Committee members: Mr. Curtis, Mr. Zaccone

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

The Committee will consider the following action this evening:

1. Consider awarding a contract for the WWTP Digester T-10 Phase I-Cleaning to McGovern Environmental, Inc. at a cost of \$49,524.00
2. Authorization to adopt **Ordinance 1081** Setting Revised Water Rates for Borough Customers Inside the Borough.
3. Authorization to advertise for adoption an Ordinance setting a Tapping Fee for water connections.
4. Authorization to refinance the Water Bond is requested.

Discussion ensued. Finance Manager Gordon stated the current Bond is \$2.9M and that she would seek to refinance the existing Bond with an additional \$1M for capital projects. She would accomplish this in the form of a loan, using the loan to pay off the Bond and retaining the balance for capital water projects.

In other business the following was discussed:

1. The WWTP Supervisor's and Engineer's reports were reviewed.

Mr. Pasceri 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 **February 2015** invoices in the amount of **\$660,571.12** be paid as follows: General (**\$438,115.72**); Street Lights (**\$6,105.23**); Fire (**\$4,709.52**); Parks & Rec. (**\$1,124.22**); Water (**\$90,962.66**); Sewer (**\$12,880.64**); WWTP (**\$103,723.75**); Rail Corridor (**\$0.00**); Road Overlay (**\$0.00**); Debt Fund (**\$0.00**); Water Capital (**\$0.00**); Liquid Fuels (**\$2,949.38**).
2. Consider authorization to advertise for adoption an Ordinance on Wireless Communications Facilities.
3. Consider authorization to proceed with advertising a proposed Zoning Map Change to include automotive sales as a permitted use.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Aversa stated that she would need to distribute full-color copies of the proposed map change to Council and that further definition of the map change may be needed. She asked Council to hold off on making a recommendation at this meeting.

4. Consider advertising for adoption a proposed Zoning Map Change to rezone 122 E. Butler Avenue from Institutional to Downtown Commercial.
5. Consider a recommendation to execute Amendment Documents to the Original Reimbursement Agreement (September, 2014) for Borough Streetscape Improvements, with the letter of amendment stating an increased reimbursement from \$865,000 to \$1,060,000.

In other business the following was discussed:

1. The Borough Engineer's report was received.
2. Council is reviewing, at the request of the Planning Commission, proposed language for the Parking Ordinance.
3. The Zoning Hearing Board has scheduled a continuance in reference to permits issued to Ambler Savings Bank for April 29, 2015 (7:00pm)

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, Mr. Palumbo

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

The Committee will consider the following actions this evening:

1. Considering a recommendation approve the hiring of Melissa Reale for the Receptionist-Cashier position.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Baigis of Tennis Avenue commented that it appeared that Ms. Reale had begun working as a Borough employee before approval of her employment by Council at this evening's meeting. Solicitor Bresnan stated that it is not uncommon for Council to ratify the action of staff. Ms. McCormick stated that at a prior Executive Committee Meeting Council had determined that an employment offer could be made to Ms. Reale. She stated that due to inclement weather on March 3rd, the Committee Meeting was cancelled and that it was at that meeting that Council would have approved of Ms. Reale's employment. She stated that at that date Ms. Reale had accepted the job offer and had given two weeks' notice. Mrs. Baigis was insistent that the Receptionist should not have begun actual work until after a formal public vote by Council.

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 will make no recommendations this evening.

Parks & Recreation Committee – The Committee will make no recommendations this evening.

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

Awarding a contract for the WWTP Digester T-10 Phase I-Cleaning to McGovern Environmental, Inc. at a cost of \$49,524.00. Seconded. Carried.

Authorization to adopt **Ordinance 1081** Setting Revised Water Rates for Borough Customers Inside the Borough. Seconded. Carried.

Authorization to advertise for adoption an Ordinance setting a Tapping Fee for water connections. Seconded. Carried.

Authorization to refinance the Water Bond with a loan with an additional \$1M loan for capital projects. Seconded. Carried.

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

That **February 2015** invoices in the amount of **\$660,571.12** be paid. Seconded. Carried.

Consider authorization to advertise for adoption an Ordinance on Wireless Communications Facilities. Seconded. Carried.

Consider setting the date to go to bid for purchase of 122 E. Butler Avenue in May, 2015. Seconded. Carried. .

Consider advertising for adoption a proposed Zoning Map Change to rezone 122 E. Butler Avenue from Institutional to Downtown Commercial. Seconded. Carried.

Authorization to execute Amendment Documents to the Original Reimbursement Agreement (September, 2014) for Borough Streetscape Improvements, with reimbursement increased from \$865,000 to \$1,060,000. Seconded. Carried.

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

Consider approval of the hiring of Melissa Reale for the Receptionist-Cashier position. Seconded. 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