

AMBLER BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

April 16, 2019

The regular monthly meeting of Ambler Borough Council was held Tuesday, April 16, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at Borough Council Chambers located at 131 Rosemary Avenue, Ambler, Pennsylvania, 19002.

Council Vice President Hertz called the Council Meeting to order. Mayor Sorg led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Mayor's Moment was delivered by Mayor Sorg recognizing the month of April as Sexual Assault Victims Month and spotlighting Victims Services of Montgomery County which she stated is there for victims to help all the way through a crisis. She noted that Victim Services will involve with filing of police reports, hospitalization, court activities and offers counselling

Roll Call – Present: Ms. Hertz, Mr. Pasceri, Mr. Zaccone, Ms. Tomlinson, Mrs. Deininger, and Ms. Endicott. Mr. DeRuosi, who was not present, called in to attend the meeting. Mayor Sorg, Chief Hoffman, Solicitor Joe Bresnan of Dischell, Bartle & Dooley and Borough Manager Aversa were present. Ms. DiPietro and Mrs. Siskind were absent.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Hertz made a motion to approve the Minutes of the March 19, 2019 Council Meeting. Seconded. Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committees of Ambler Borough Council met Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at Borough Council Chambers located at 131 Rosemary Avenue, Ambler, Pennsylvania, 19002. Present: Mr. DeRuosi, Ms. Hertz, Mr. Zaccone, Mr. Pasceri, Mrs. Deininger, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. DiPietro, Ms. Endicott, and Mrs. Siskind. Mayor Sorg, Chief Hoffman, Solicitor Joe Bresnan of Dischell, Bartle & Dooley, and Borough Manager Aversa were present.

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

Public Safety Committee – Mr. Claudio Zaccone, Chairperson

Committee members: Mrs. Deininger, Mrs. Siskind

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

The Committee will consider no action this evening.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Police Department, Fire Department and Community Ambulance Association reports were received.
2. The Public Works and Code Enforcement reports were received.
3. The Police Department and Code Enforcement Department remind Borough residents that fireworks are not permitted to be discharged in the Borough. Residents seeing fireworks use should contact the Police Department.
4. A Red Cross Blood Drive is scheduled for Monday, June 3 (2 – 7 p.m.) in the Ambler Borough Hall gymnasium. An appointment to give may be made by going online to www.redcrossblood.org and entering the sponsor keyword ‘ambler’ or by called the Red Cross at 1-800-Red-Cross.

Mr. Zaccone 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 – Mrs. Glynnis Siskind, Chairperson

Committee members: Mr. Pasceri, Mr. Zaccone, Ms. Tomlinson

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

The Committee will consider the following action this evening:

1. Authorization is requested to approve the T-Mobile tower lease on the Water Tank at Skippack and Butler Pikes in Whitemarsh.

Approved at Committee Meeting:

1. Authorization for WWPT to replace the fiberglass tank grating over the UV system and to award to Industrial Instruments & Supplies Inc. at a purchase cost of \$10,885.64. Motion. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The WWTP Engineer’s report was received.
2. The Solicitor is preparing a notice of action regarding forming a Water Authority to be sent on to the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission.

3. Water Department has conducted voluntary water testing for PFAS. Lab results will be posted on the Borough website.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Endicott noted that the results, some higher and some lower than those obtained during the 2018 testing, were still quite below the US EPA Health Advisory Limit.

4. Representative of the Water Department attended a public meeting held at the Fort Washington Fire House on April 4, 2019 to discuss blasting at the Mattison Estates.

Discussion ensued. Manager Aversa stated that the PA Department of Environmental Protection assured there would be no issue regarding any effect the blasting might have on the water wells in the vicinity. Solicitor Bresnan stated the blasting would be state regulated and that the Water Department would be protected should there be damage to the water mains.

Mr. Pasceri 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.

Finance and Planning Committee – Ms. Francine Tomlinson, Chairperson

Committee Members: Ms. DiPietro, Ms. Endicott

The Finance and Planning Committee report was given this evening by Ms. Tomlinson.

The Committee will consider the following actions this evening:

1. Consideration that **March 2019** invoices in the amount of **\$776,406.40** be paid as follows: General (**\$288,930.26**); Street Lights (**\$25,171.69**); Fire (**\$5,528.28**); Refuse (**\$41,230.86**); Parks & Rec. (**\$3,038.52**); Water (**\$203,273.21.**); Sewer (**\$22,373.16**); WWTP (**\$185,039.33**); Debt Fund (**\$0.00**); Water Capital (**\$0.00**); Liquid Fuels (**\$1,821.09**).
2. Consider proposed parking upgrades and changes including:
 - increasing the fee from \$0.50 to \$1.00 per hour;
 - increasing street metered parking time limits from one hour to two hours;
 - discontinuing 'free' parking in December; and
 - maintaining free parking from Noon-2:00 daily.

Discussion ensued. Anna Lee Lapinsi of 136 Rosemary Avenue asked Council to act on the larger picture of lack of parking in the Borough, and not simply changing parking fees. She noted that several years ago Council was considering adding a parking deck at the Lindenwold-Race Street lot. Ms. Tomlinson stated the Finance and Planning Committee had formed a subcommittee to study parking options in the Borough. Ms. Hertz stated the Borough needed some revenue and that this evening's actions would address business

requests. She noted that this is a piece of the parking process and that the Committee would continue to discuss parking taking into consideration affordability and how to move forward. Brook Marshall of 157 Edgewood Drive suggested that the 2013 parking study undertaken by the Borough was out-of-date and that the Borough should consider undertaking another parking study. Bernadette Dougherty of 338 Tennis Avenue suggested Council re-consider moving forward with a parking deck and to apply for RCAP funds which have been reserved for this undertaking.

3. Consider moving forward on having the Solicitor draft ordinance language for Green Building Incentives.

Discussion ensued. Council concluded that while some incentives were understandable and feasible, item number three which states “increasing impervious surface percentage numbers for pervious surfaces (if the maximum impervious for the specific property is for example 45% allow for an additional 5% if the owner is installing pervious surfaces” needed further clarification. It was decided to ponder the issue some more and table any action this evening.

4. A TEFRA Hearing (Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982) was held to obtain public comment for Council to determine whether to adopt **Resolution 2019-04**, a Resolution of the Borough of Ambler approving the issuance by the Wissahickon School District of its tax-exempt Notes or Bonds for the Wissahickon Valley Public Library-Ambler Branch renovation project.

No public comment was received. Ms. Tomlinson moved to adopt Resolution 2019-04. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

5. Consider granting Preliminary/Final Land Development to the Wissahickon Valley Public Library-Ambler Branch to construct a building addition and accessibility improvements at 209 E. Race Street based upon recommendation of the Planning Commission, Zoning Hearing Board Notice of Decision, Montgomery County review letter and Borough Engineer’s review letter.

Discussion ensued. Present were Anne Frank (WVPL Executive Director), Anne Hall (Ambler Branch Manager), other representatives of the Library and their Engineer. A review of the project was provided by the Library’s engineer. The project will involve a 2,500 square foot addition wrap-around which will enable the addition of a 90-100 seat meeting space, a children’s area and a smaller meeting space in the back. Once completed the building footprint will have been expanded to 6,200 feet. The roof will be replaced to the deck allowing for sloped insulation to increase the roof slope with installation of a membrane roof which would be light grey in color. The landscape plan will provide for three 2 ½ inch caliper Washington Hawthorne trees in the front and for storm management measures to include a buffer/rain garden feature with overflow directed through under-sidewalk French drain into the curb. Peak flow was analyzed to realize a peak flow rate reduction. Low brush and habitat will be maintained at the back of the facility. Storm water inlet filters are not included with the project, however if recommended by Council, could

be included. The engineer stated that vegetation is the best management practice for the site. Finally, he noted a bike rack will be installed outside of the facility.

6. Consider amending the Borough's Wireless Ordinance, guidelines and fee schedule to comply with FCC order as well as develop design requirements for wireless facilities in the rights-of-way to prevent aesthetically obtrusive facilities.

Discussion ensued. Solicitor Bresnan stated he was awaiting an answer from the Borough's communications attorney as to whether the Borough's current ordinance is sufficient or will require additional changes. Ms. Tomlinson stated Council would take no action this evening.

7. Consider adoption of a Resolution provided by the Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) to encourage Rep. Madeleine Dean, our federal representative, to cosponsor and vote in favor of a bill currently before the House of Representatives that would address climate change.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Bill Metler of CCL addressed Council at length. He stated that the way of the future is with solar power, wind power and clean energy solutions. He explained that producers, with this bill's passage, would be assessed a fee at the extraction site of fossil fuels of \$15/ton carbon which would increase by \$10/ton per year. Monies collected would be pooled and distributed equally to all U.S. households. He stated that while it is expected that producers would pass on their increased costs, this bill would ensure that more money would be returned to households than would be paid out in increased purchasing costs. He urged Council to accelerate their RF100 movement by encouraging Rep. Dean to co-sponsor the bill before Congress. He stated the bill would be a catalyst towards clean energy use.

Ms. Hertz asked which townships and boroughs in Pennsylvania had signed on. Mr. Metler replied that should Council adopt the proposed Resolution, Ambler Borough would be the first to sign on. Ms. Hertz asked whether Pennsylvania Senators Casey and Toomey have signed on. Mr. Metler replied that there is no Senate companion bill. Bernadette Dougherty asked who would collect the carbon fee and who would distribute funds to the public. Mr. Metler replied the Department of Treasury and the IRS would involve. Brook Marshall stated that the producers would pass on their costs to their customers resulting in no net benefit to U.S. households. David Morgan of 29 School Street asked how reliable would a new energy grid be in providing energy to households. Mr. Metler replied that experts would be working on a new grid and improved storage systems for energy. He stated it would probably be a slow 10 year process to swing the economy off fossil fuels and that would allow time for technology to improve.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Borough Engineer's report was received.

2. Demolition of the property on Tennis Avenue has been completed. The Borough will work with the County Planner on a landscape plan and determine future use for the site.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Bernadette Dougherty asked that fencing be installed at the site to define the boundaries. Manager Aversa stated that FEMA requires the site be maintained unfenced as open space since the site is in a flood plain. No structures may be installed at the site.

3. The Committee will assess the feasibility of creating a Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) or Historical Commission.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Bernadette Dougherty stated that staff at Hope Lodge would be conducting a workshop on preservation of historic sites at some future date. Ms. Endicott stated that the Committee had just recently begun to consider this action and that no action was required this evening.

4. Council is considering increasing the number of website videos of meetings to include Planning Commission and other special meetings. The annual cost of the video/website service would increase from \$3,000 to \$6,000.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Tomlinson stated she saw little value in video recording Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board meetings. She suggested Council defer evaluating this until after new microphones are installed for the sound system. No further action will be taken this evening.

Ms. Tomlinson 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 – Ms. Sara Hertz, Chairperson

Committee members: Mrs. Deininger, Ms. Endicott

The Parks and Recreation Committee report was given this evening by Ms. Hertz.

The Committee will consider no actions this evening.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Committee held a training session on cycling safety on March 30th for ages 10-15.
2. Summer Camp registration will be held May 1st at Ambler Borough Hall or parents may register their children at the Ambler YMCA starting May 2nd. Camp will run from June 17-July 26 (8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) Monday through Friday. Camp fee is \$45 per week per child. Proof of Ambler Borough residency is required.

3. The Committee will explore authoring a Plastics Use Ordinance and will work with local businesses to discuss options.

Ms. Hertz asked if there were comments or questions from Council or the public. She thanked the Environmental Advisory Council and volunteers for providing a remarkable day at Earth Fest on April 13th. She stated that Council would like a Growing Greener Grant presentation update at the May meeting. Ms. Endicott announced that Movies in the Parks have been scheduled for the summer season. The schedule is posted in the *Hometown News* newsletter. There being nothing further, it was moved the Committee's report be accepted as filed. Seconded. Carried.

Salary and Personnel Committee – Mrs. Nancy Deininger, Chairperson

Committee members: Mr. Pasceri, Mr. Zaccone, Ms. DiPietro

The Salary and Personnel Committee report was given this evening by Mrs. Deininger.

The Committee will consider the following actions this evening:

1. Consider adoption of an employee Code of Conduct/Social Media Policy.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Deininger stated that she would like to table further discussion until the next meeting due to the absence of Ms. DiPietro this evening.

Approved at Committee Meeting:

1. Authorization for Police Department to hire Ian Stanley as a probationary police officer. Motion. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. Interviews are scheduled for the Public Works Highway Laborer position.
2. Water Department has advertised for and will interview candidates for the Water Operator 1 position.
3. Council has been asked to consider authorizing the hiring of an additional probationary police officer.

Mrs. Deininger 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.

Public Utilities Committee – The Committee will recommend and Mr. Pasceri moves:

Recommend approval of the T-Mobile tower lease on the Water Tank at Skippack and Butler Pikes in Whitemarsh. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Approved at Committee Meeting: Authorization for WWPT to replace the fiberglass tank grating over the UV system and to award to Industrial Instruments & Supplies Inc. at a purchase cost of \$10,885.64. Motion. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Finance & Planning Committee – The Committee recommends and Ms. Tomlinson moves:

Recommend that **March 2019** invoices in the amount of **\$776,406.40** be paid. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Recommend approval of proposed parking upgrades and changes. Seconded.

- increasing the fee from \$0.50 to \$1.00 per hour – All Aye. Carried
- increasing street metered parking time limits from 1 hour to 2 hour – 6-Aye; 1-Nay [Ms. Endicott]. Carried.
- discontinuing ‘free’ parking in December – All Aye. Carried.
- maintaining free parking from Noon-2:00 daily – All Aye. Carried.

Consider adoption of **Resolution 2019-04**, a Resolution of the Borough of Ambler approving the issuance by the Wissahickon School District of its tax-exempt Notes or Bonds for the Wissahickon Valley Public Library-Ambler Branch renovation project. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Consider granting Preliminary/Final Land Development to the Wissahickon Valley Public Library-Ambler Branch to construct a building addition and accessibility improvements at 209 E. Race Street based upon recommendation of the Planning Commission, Zoning Hearing Board Notice of Decision, Montgomery County review letter and Borough Engineer’s review letter. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Consider adoption of a Resolution provided by the Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) to encourage Rep. Madeleine Dean, our federal representative, to cosponsor and vote in favor of a bill currently before the House of Representatives that would address climate change. Seconded. All Nay [0-Aye; 7-Nay]. Motion Failed.

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

Salary & Personnel Committee – The Committee will make no recommendations this evening.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

At the conclusion of the public meeting, Council allows the public time to comment on matters of interest or concern. Comment is not limited to current agenda items. During the Public Comment Period, Council will not answer questions or engage in dialog with the speaker. Residents are asked to state their name and address. Comments regarding any and all employee issues are not entertained. Council may address items or questions raised at the next scheduled Committee or Council meeting, but reserves the right to determine agenda items. Council requests those in attendance refrain from engaging the speaker during public comments.

Brook Marshall asked about the status of parking enforcement. Manager Aversa stated that the Borough has hired a new Parking Meter Attendant for parking enforcement.

There being no further business, Ms. Hertz moved the meeting be adjourned. Seconded, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Russell
Assistant Secretary
Borough of Ambler