

## AMBLER BOROUGH COMMITTEE MINUTES

December 1, 2020

Ambler Borough Committees held their scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via ZOOM Software Program. Consistent with Council President's and the Mayor's Declaration of Disaster Emergency, this action was taken to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of our community and to promote our commitment to maintain social distancing in our community. As such, the meeting was not held at Borough Hall. A public copy of the meeting agenda was posted on the Borough website on Monday, November 30, 2020. The public was invited to access the ZOOM meeting and offer questions or comments.

**In Attendance this Evening** – Mr. DeRuosi, Ms. Hertz, Mrs. Deininger, Ms. DiPietro, Ms. Endicott, Mrs. Siskind, Ms. Henderson and Ms. Welch. Mayor Sorg, Chief Hoffman, Solicitor Bresnan and Borough Manager Aversa also were in attendance. Code Enforcement Officer Glenn Kucher and Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Russell also were in attendance. Water Superintendent Jeremy Matozzo was in attendance. Finance Manager Gail Gordon was in attendance.

### COMMITTEE MEETING REPORTS

#### **Public Safety Committee - Ms. Erin Endicott, Chairperson**

Committee members: Ms. Hertz, Mrs. Deininger, Mrs. Siskind

The Committee Report was read by Ms. Endicott.

1. The Public Works report was received.
2. A Declaration of Disaster Emergency for Ambler Borough for the month of December 2020, empowering the Borough to manage its emergency response was received. Consider adoption of the proposed Declaration,
3. The next Red Cross Blood Drive is scheduled for Tuesday, December 22 from 2-7 p.m. in the Gymnasium.

#### **Public Utilities Committee - Mrs. Glynnis Siskind, Chairperson**

Committee members: Ms. Welch, Ms. Henderson

The Committee report was read by Mrs. Siskind.

1. The WWTP report will be provided to the Committee.
2. An application of the Borough of Ambler for approval of the abandonment of public water service to the public in Pennsylvania has been filed and a notice was advertised. Formal protests and petitions were received.

Discussion ensued. Solicitor Bresnan stated he would be having a phone call with Adeolu Bakare, our Harrisburg attorney, and Borough Manager to review status of the application. He stated he anticipated scheduling an Executive Session sometime in the near future. Manager Aversa stated that given the delay in moving forward with an Authority, she was requesting that MIRIA monies sent by the Borough for a grant funding match for a PFAS project be returned. It would be the intention of the Water Dept. to reapply in 2021.

3. An ordinance to allow Solicitor Bresnan to file an eminent domain action against PennDOT will no longer be required since a permit was recently granted. The Solicitor stated it might have been necessary to file a declaration of taking for a PennDOT easement so that the Borough could commence work on the Butler Pike Bridge water pipeline replacement project that has been awarded.
4. Consider award to Eastern Environmental Contractors for the Digester Conversion project at WWTP for the low bid of \$844,400.00.

Discussion ensued. WWTP Engineer Bill Brown explained the intention to convert the five sludge tanks from anaerobic digestion to aerobic digestion. This would result in less phosphorus to remove and less phosphorus to go to the Wissahickon Creek. He stated the bids were over budget since fewer companies will take and haul the materials. He explained that WWTP could use this year's capital reserves in conjunction with next year's budget to complete the project. Mrs. Siskind asked whether the WWTP could bump the UV Project to 2022 to enable the WWTP to proceed now with the Digester Conversion Project. Mr. Brown stated that the UV system is currently in operation and although it was installed in 1990 he felt the WWTP could wait until 2022. He explained that grant money is frequently available for 'shovel ready' projects, so he would move forward with the project planning phase.

5. Consider purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) for the WWTP to make the WWTP's electricity usage 100% carbon neutral.

Guest speaker Adam Kurzer of 3-Degrees made a presentation to Council. He stated that the WWTP would be purchasing property rights to renewable energy generation. Certificates are bought and sold on the market to end uses such as the Borough. WWTP would not be taking ownership of energy-producing grid, but rather energy produced enters the grid and WWTP would take title to energy produced. Manager Aversa stated WWTP

and Water Dept. facilities are a challenge as we move towards RF100. She stated \$10,000 per utility is put in the annual budget for 'green' projects. The REC offering for a 24-month agreement was quoted at \$13,160.40 per year. Manager Aversa stated that Ambler pays a 19% share of WWTP operating costs.

6. Consider authorization to contract with Allied Controls at an estimated cost of \$38,000 for SCADA System Upgrades to include software, hardware, licensing and engineering services.

### **Finance & Planning Committee - Ms. Nellie DiPietro, Chairperson**

Committee members: Ms. Endicott, Ms. Welch

The Committee report was read by Ms. DiPietro.

1. The Borough Engineer's report was received.
2. Council will consider ordinance amendments to stormwater requirements, specifically the area calculation that triggers stormwater requirements.

Discussion ensued. Ms. DiPietro stated Council was in the process of determining whether to amend trigger requirements with her preference being a reduction to 500 sqft and Mr. DeRuosi having suggested a 750 sqft requirement. Council discussed whether there would be an undue burden to homeowners working on small projects with a reduced trigger requirement. Code Officer Kucher stated that the triggers could result in burdensome inspection and escrow requirements. He stated most plans to add additions on properties involve dropping a shed or building over existing footprints such as three-season rooms, patios or decks. He stated County infiltration requirements cannot be satisfied with rain barrels or downspout planters and that projects might require French drains at the very least. He stated sealed engineering plans would need to include an elevation plan. He added that ENS Plans must be reviewed by our engineer and that fees would be passed on to the applicants. Finally, he stated residents probably would be required to provide operations and maintenance documents requiring signature, notarization and recording at the County Courthouse. Ms. Endicott stated that there should be a culture shift in the Borough where residents would understand that stormwater management is a Borough priority. Mr. DeRuosi stated that rather than being an impediment to the homeowner, the ordinance would set forth best management practices for stormwater issues.

### **Public Comment**

Madge Monser of 372 Forest Avenue commented on stormwater management. She referenced Appendix G for Small Projects. She stated stormwater management is not a penalty, but rather reflects a change in culture.

3. The Borough Solicitor provided a draft ordinance, amending the Sign Ordinance, that places some limitations upon ‘Murals,’ differentiating them from Signs, and establishing criteria for murals.
4. The Borough Solicitor will prepare a draft ordinance to include 2-hour parking on Race Street, Mattison Avenue, Rosemary Avenue and Water Street. A permit process is also being developed to provide parking passes to residents on those streets.
5. A Budget meeting was held December 1 at 6:00 p.m. via ZOOM prior to this evening’s regularly scheduled meeting.
6. The Environmental Advisory Council submitted their budget request for 2021.
7. A Public Hearing will be scheduled December 15<sup>th</sup> at the Council Meeting to consider adoption of Ordinance 1118 Fixing the Real Estate Tax Rate for the Year 2021.
8. Consider adoption of a Resolution 2020-10 Authorizing Appropriation of Specific Funds for Purposes of the Municipality in 2021.
9. Crown Castle Fiber LLC requests renewal of the Right-of-Way Agreement for an addition term of five years. The current contract will expire February 2021.
10. Preliminary/Final Land Development Plans to redevelop the existing gas station with a bank at 90 W. Butler Avenue have been reviewed by the Planning Commission. Revised plans will be submitted by the applicant to reflect the Commission’s recommendations as well as the Borough engineer and Montgomery County Planning Commission comments.

**Parks & Recreation Committee - Ms. Sara Hertz, Chairperson**

Committee members: Mrs. Deininger, Ms. Endicott, Ms. DiPietro

The Committee report was read by Ms. Endicott.

1. The Committee is moving forward with plans for creation of a Community Garden to be installed next spring.
2. Ambler Borough Planning Commission currently is working on a Parks Plan outlining the future of the Borough’s parks system. The Commission will hold ZOOM workshops in the coming months for each of the parks to solicit resident input and participation in this process.

3. Consider adoption of Resolution 2020-09 for application for a grant from PECO's Green Region Open Space Grant Program for the improvements at Ambler Square.
4. Consider contracting with Red Tail Restoration & Land Management, LLC for 2021 services.
5. The EAC made a presentation on the Tree Inventory Project. Jillian Sanchez stated the EAC had worked with assistance from PA Department of conservation & Natural Resources and the Penn State Extension to conduct the accurate collection of data on the community's tree health and diversity. She stated the computerized inventory would help the Borough assess tree damage, plan for the care of new trees, highlight locations for future planting and provide community awareness and engagement. Hannah Lloyd stated the EAC was able to establish an online database from a mobile app which would be invaluable for planning, tree maintenance and research. She stated the team had created an Open Tree Map and that the database could be updated as work is performed on the trees. She acknowledged that EAC has planted 169 trees in the last two years. She clarified that the DCNR allows for public property tree plantings only and not for consideration of privately-owned properties. Madge Monser advocated for the Borough to hire a subcontractor to manage the Borough's inventory of trees. Manager Aversa stated that would not be feasible in the 2021 budget and suggested that next year the EAC's 'tree tenders' could possibly lend a hand.

**Salary & Personnel Committee - Mrs. Nancy Deininger, Chairperson**

Committee Members: Mrs. Siskind, Ms. DiPietro, Ms. Henderson

The Committee report was read by Mrs. Deininger.

1. Several volunteer committee positions expire at the end of the year. Appointments will be made by Council at the January Meeting for Committee positions with expiring terms which include:

Appeals Board (2 seats – 3 year term); Civil Service Commission Alternate (current vacancy – 4 year term balance); Environmental Advisory Council (2 seats – 3 year term); Human Relations Commission ( 1 seat vacancy – 2 year term balance; 1 alternate seat – 2 year term balance); Planning Commission (1 seat – 4 year term); Vacancy Board (1 seat – 1 year term); and Zoning Hearing Board (1 seat – 3 year term; 1 seat Alternate – 3 year term; 1 seat Alternate – 2 year term balance). Interested candidates are asked to send a letter of interest and resume to the Borough Manager at [manager@borough.ambler.pa.us](mailto:manager@borough.ambler.pa.us) or by mail to the Borough Manager.

2. Ambler Borough has organized a municipal water authority under the provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Act. Terms for the 9-member Ambler Water Authority Board expiring the first Monday in January 2021 include: one seat from Ambler Borough and one seat from Whitpain Township. Interested candidates are asked to send a letter of interest and resume to the Borough Manager at [manager@borough.ambler.pa.us](mailto:manager@borough.ambler.pa.us) or by mail to the Borough Manager.
3. The Committee will receive letters of interest and resumes from residents of Ward One who are interested in being considered for the vacating Ward One Council seat. Council intends to nominate and appoint a candidate at the December 15, 2020 meeting, with swearing in to be held that same evening.
4. Interviews are being scheduled for the Public Works Laborer position.
5. Consider re-appointment of Kia Connelly-Baker to a second 3-year term on the Board of Trustees of the Wissahickon Valley Public Library representing Ambler Borough. The Board is comprised of nine members and Ambler Borough appoints two of these trustees.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Public Safety Committee** - The committee recommends and Ms. Endicott moves:

Consider adoption of a Declaration of Disaster Emergency for COVID 19 for the month of December 2020. Motion Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

**Public Utilities Committee** - The Committee recommends and Mrs. Siskind moves:

Consider award to Eastern Environmental Contractors for the Digester Conversion project at WWTP for the low bid of \$844,400.00. Motion Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Consider purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) for the WWTP to make the WWTP's electricity usage 100% carbon neutral with a 24-month agreement quoted at \$13,160.40 per year. Motion Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Consider authorization to contract with Allied Controls at an estimated cost of \$38,000 for SCADA System Upgrades to include software, hardware, licensing and engineering services. Motion Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

**Parks & Recreation Committee** – The Committee recommends and Ms. Hertz moves:

Consider adoption of Resolution 2020-09 to authorize grant application from PECO's Green Region Open Space Grant Program for the improvements at Ambler Square. Motion Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

**Salary & Personnel Committee** – The Committee recommends and Mrs. Deininger moves:

Consider re-appointment of Kia Connelly-Baker to a second 3-year term to the Board of Trustees of the Wissahickon Valley Public Library representing Ambler Borough. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Madge Monser of 372 Forest Avenue noted that the current PECO Green Region Grant has closed out, paving the way for the Borough's application for the Ambler Square project.

Manager Aversa discussed the flooding on November 30<sup>th</sup> caused by construction runoff from the Mattison Estates construction site. She stated that severe flooding (not rainwater but muddy runoff) occurred on Euclid, Mattison and Rosemary Avenues. She stated the Borough Engineer is going to look at the elevations since water found it way into the Borough. She stated video was taken of the occurrence. According to Ms. Aversa the drains would not empty and the inlets were not collecting water properly. Ms. Endicott stated the contractor was required to design an erosion and sediment control plan so that water does not leave the construction site. She stated that this is not acceptable and cannot continue. Ms. Aversa stated the Engineer would work to review whether the controls calculations were correct, and whether the drainage system was properly hooked up. The Borough Solicitor stated there should be a Developers Agreement and that money should have been posted into escrow. Ms. Aversa stated that an Executive Session may be required and that the Borough Solicitor may need to take some action.

There was no further public comment at the conclusion of the meeting. There being no further business, Mr. DeRuosi moved the meeting be adjourned. Seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Russell  
Assistant Secretary  
Borough of Ambler