

AMBLER BOROUGH COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 6, 2020

Ambler Borough Committees held their scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 6, 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, October 5, 2020. The public was invited to access the ZOOM meeting and offer questions or comments.

The Committee Meeting was preceded by an advertised meeting to consider adoption of **Ordinance 1117** which would change the zoning of 24 North Ridge Avenue (former St. John's Lutheran Church) from Institutional to R-3 Residential. Motion to adopt. Seconded. Poll Council: Aye: Mr. DeRuosi, Ms. Hertz, Mrs. Deininger, Ms. DiPietro, Ms. Endicott, Mrs. Siskind, and Ms. Marshall. Absent: Ms. Henderson, Ms. Welch. Motion Carried.

In Attendance this Evening – Mr. DeRuosi, Ms. Hertz, Mrs. Deininger, Ms. DiPietro, Ms. Endicott, Mrs. Siskind, Ms. Henderson, Ms. Welch and Ms. Marshall. 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.

Mr. DeRuosi reminded attendees that all participants, except for the Borough Council, Borough Manager, Borough Solicitor, Borough Police Chief, and invited Borough Staff will be muted with video camera/web camera turned off automatically upon entry to the virtual meeting. There will be a Public Comment section regarding agenda items at the end of each Committee's report and before vote by Council. A Public Comment period regarding non-agenda items will occur after voting. Participants who wish to speak during the Public Comment section will be instructed to press the "Raise Your Hand" button.

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. Public Works & Code Enforcement reports were received.
2. A Declaration of Disaster Emergency for Ambler Borough for the month of October 2020, empowering the Borough to manage its emergency response was received. Consider adoption of the proposed Declaration,
3. The next Restaurant Weekend will be held the second weekend of October. Borough Manager will contact Ambler Main Street Manager to ascertain whether further Restaurant Weekend events will be scheduled throughout the fall/winter.
4. The next Red Cross Blood Drive is scheduled for Tuesday, December 22 from 2-7 p.m. in the Gymnasium.
5. Installation of a crosswalk at the intersection of Lindenwold and Race Street was discussed. The Fire Company would prefer a stamped crosswalk since a raised option would impact their travel routes. An alternate location is being reviewed.

Discussion ensued. Borough Engineer Jim Dougherty stated the crosswalk would involve standard striping and curb ramps. He will consider relocating the crosswalk nearer the Library. He stated a crosswalk at an intersection cannot be more than 30 feet from the intersection. If located further, it is a 'mid-block crossing' which would require additional signage and cost of signage. Chief Hoffman questioned whether pedestrians would walk to and observe a mid-block crosswalk. Manager Aversa stated staff would need to look at the number of parking spaces that might need to be sacrificed for a mid-block crossing.

Public Comment

Anna Lee Lapinski – 136 Rosemary Avenue. Ms. Lapinski spoke in favor of locating the crosswalk at the intersection. She stated she did not think pedestrians would be looking mid-block for a crosswalk.

Salvatore Boccuti – 300 Rosemary Avenue. Mr. Boccuti requested that the Borough consider adding a warning light at the crosswalk intersection. Manager Aversa stated not at this time since signals require an 18-month PennDOT review process and added costs.

Public Utilities Committee - Mrs. Glynnis Siskind, Chairperson

Committee members: Ms. Welch, Ms. Henderson, Ms. Marshall

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. Ms. Marshall asked the Solicitor as to the status of the petition. Solicitor Bresnan stated that Harrisburg Council was working within a 30-day window scheduled to last until October 31st for intervenors to address concerns. To date, intervenors are the neighboring townships and there are no citizen intervenors.

3. Consider authorizing WWTP to hire Paone Electric for \$42,000 to build a new control system to operate pumps and control levels and send out alarms from pump station #1. This item was budgeted.
4. Consider authorization for WWTP to order parts to rebuild bank B on the UV system. This is a sole source costing \$35,693.60. This item was budgeted.
5. Consider award of WWTP paving contract for paving upgrades at the plant to Associated Paving Contractors at the low bid cost of \$17,750.00. Other bids included B.F. Brown & Co., Inc. at \$27,995 and Giuliani & Co., Inc. at \$19,937. Consider making award this evening so contractor can start right away given weather considerations.
6. Consider award of pump replacement contract for Water Dept. Well 6 to Raab Well Drilling Inc. at the low estimate cost of \$33,028.50. The second quote was obtained from A.C. Schultes and was for \$39,158.00. This item was budgeted.
7. PFAS sampling took place in September. Water Dept. is awaiting sampling results. Water Dept. voluntarily conducts this sampling every six months. Results will be posted on the Borough website.
8. Bid opening was held earlier today for the Butler Pike Pipeline Replacement Project. A recommendation to award will be made at the October 20th Council Meeting. Manager Aversa stated there was flexibility in the preliminary project timeline to allow for a coordination of paving with PennDOT.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Endicott asked about the water valve situation in Lower Gwynedd Township and whether that involved with the recent water main breaks in the township. Manager Aversa stated five water valves had been paved over by Lower Gwynedd. A letter was sent to the Township Manager to make them aware and asking that they and their contractors be mindful of utilities when paving. She stated the Borough will not be responsible for repaving or restorations at the water main break locations.

Finance & Planning Committee - Ms. Nellie DiPietro, Chairperson

Committee members: Ms. Endicott, Ms. Welch, Ms. Marshall

The Committee report was read by Ms. DiPietro.

1. The Borough Energy Transition Plan in line with the Ambler Borough Ready for 100 Renewable Energy Resolution adopted by Council in March 2019 has been distributed to Council. A PDF of the plan is available for review on the Borough website. Public comment is being accepted with anticipated adoption in October.
2. A Public Hearing was held earlier this evening on the proposed Zoning Map change for 24 N. Ridge Avenue from Institutional to R-3 Residential. **Ordinance 1117** was advertised and considered this evening. Motion to adopt. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.
3. The Borough Engineer's report was received.
4. Council will work with the County to determine a starting point to further discuss Borough Stormwater requirements (referencing the current Ordinance), specifically the area calculation that triggers storm water requirements.
5. The Borough has submitted a grant application with the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) for the Poplar Street Parking Lot. This project will include significant storm water improvements. Borough Engineer Jim Dougherty stated the proposed \$1 million project (at 50% match) would involve stormwater BMPs, and an underground storm sewer basin which would give the Borough MS4 credits, as well as a streetscape plan.
6. The Borough was approved for a PA Small Water & Sewer Program grant in the amount of \$355,093 for Edgewood Drive Stormwater Improvements. Engineer Dougherty stated the project would involve installation of stormwater pipe on Edgewood at Cove running down to Hendricks. He stated that while the project involves pipes and inlets, he would look at adding green aspects to the project involving water quality BMPs per Ms. Endicott's request.
7. The Zoning Hearing Board meeting continuance for Carhen Enterprises LLC regarding 27 S. Spring Garden Street is scheduled via ZOOM for October 15th at 6:30 p.m.
8. Mattie N. Dixon Community Cupboard seeks authorization to have a mural painted on the wall of the food pantry facing their parking lot. The Committee has also received a request from Edmond Shinn representing Aloha Smoothie Company to paint a mural on the wall of that new business at 12 Cavalier Drive.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Welsh asked about maintenance requirements for murals, inquiry as to how long they last. Mr. Shinn stated his artist calculated approximately five years before touch-up/restoration may be needed. Mr. Shinn stated the Aloha Smoothie Company murals was a Lilly Pulitzer design. He hopes to receive authorization this evening to begin painting to take advantage of the mild October weather. The Committee deliberated whether they were prepared to make a motion to approve this evening. Code Enforcement Officer Kucher stated murals are not included in the Sign Ordinance except where signage may be included in the mural. Solicitor Bresnan suggested that if the Committee intended to move forward this evening approval should be contingent upon legal review and preparation of a proviso for maintenance and removal provisions for a mural. Solicitor Bresnan stated a review was needed to determine what is allowable signage and what would require a variance. He did clarify that a mural is not a billboard. He stated monies in escrow might be required for review. Mr. Shinn offered to remove the words “Smoothie Company” from the mural, which would simply display the word “Aloha.” Solicitor Bresnan stated he would like to work with Code Enforcement to prepare a working document that protects the Borough. Committee Chair DiPietro stated that while the Community Cupboard is a non-profit, Aloha is a business and as such the Borough should have a concrete policy for murals. She determined with her committee not to grant authorization this evening, but to wait for a document on murals policy to be prepared by the Solicitor/Code.

Parks & Recreation Committee - Ms. Sara Hertz, Chairperson

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

The Committee report was read by Ms. Endicott.

1. A grant extension for the EAC Growing Greener Grant has been authorized for one additional year.
2. The Committee is moving forward with plans for creation of a Community Garden to be installed next spring. Ms. Henderson will prepare a proposed budget for the project.

Public Comment

Madge Monser – 372 Forest Avenue. Ms. Monser stated the EAC would be installing Riparian Buffer Planting at Ambler Borough Park and Tannery Run Creek. A total of 104 trees and shrubs will be planted.

Salary & Personnel Committee - Mrs. Nancy Deininger, Chairperson

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

The Committee report was read by Mr. Deininger.

1. Interviews were conducted for the Water Department Superintendent position. A recommendation to prepare an offer to a prospective candidate is requested.
2. Interviews were held for the vacant Equipment Operator position. A recommendation to offer the position to current Borough employee Victor Solis is requested.
3. Chief Hoffman has requested to enter the DROP (Deferred Retirement Option Program) on November 2nd. Manager Aversa stated officers do not receive social security benefits. Drop must be within 5 years. An officer cannot come back and reapply and this is different than the DROP situations in Philadelphia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Public Safety Committee

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

Public Utilities Committee

Consider award of WWTP paving project to Associated Paving Contractors, Inc. for the low bid of \$17,750.00. Motion Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Finance and Planning Committee

Consider adoption of **Ordinance 1117** which would change the zoning of 24 North Ridge Avenue (former St. John's Lutheran Church) from Institutional to R-3 Residential. Motion to adopt. Seconded. Poll Council: Aye: Mr. DeRuosi, Ms. Hertz, Mrs. Deininger, Ms. DiPietro, Ms. Endicott, Mrs. Siskind, and Ms. Marshall. Absent: Ms. Henderson, Ms. Welch. Motion Carried.

Salary and Personnel Committee

Consider preparing an employment offer to an applicant for the Water Superintendent position. Motion Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Consider offering the Equipment Operator position to current Borough employee Victor Solis and advertising for the soon-to-be-vacated position of Public Works Laborer. Motion Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

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