

AMBLER BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

February 16, 2021

Ambler Borough Council held their scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 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. As such, the meeting was not held at Borough Hall. A public copy of the meeting agenda was posted on the Borough website. The public was invited to access the ZOOM Meeting and offer questions or comments.

Roll Call – Present: Mr. DeRuosi, Ms. Hertz, Mrs. Deininger, Ms. DiPietro, Mrs. Siskind, Ms. Endicott, Ms. Welch, Ms. Henderson, and Ms. Sheedy. Mayor Sorg, Chief Hoffman, Solicitor Joe Bresnan and Borough Manager Aversa also were in attendance. Code Enforcement Officer Glenn Kucher and Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Russell also were in attendance. Public Works Supervisor Marco Resente and Interim Water Superintendent Steve Smallberger also were in attendance. Borough Engineer Jim Dougherty was in attendance.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. DeRuosi made a motion to approve the Minutes of the January 19, 2021 Zoom Council Meeting and the February 2, 2021 Zoom Committee Meeting. Motion Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committees of Ambler Borough Council met via Internet vehicle ZOOM on Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Present: Mr. DeRuosi, Ms. Hertz, Mrs. Deininger, Ms. DiPietro, Ms. Endicott, Mrs. Siskind, Ms. Henderson, Ms. Welch, and Ms. Sheedy. Mayor Sorg, Chief Hoffman, Borough Manager Aversa and Solicitor Joe Bresnan were in attendance. Finance Manager Gail Gordon, Code Enforcement Officer Glenn Kucher and Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Russell also were in attendance. Borough Engineer Jim Dougherty was in attendance.

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

Public Safety Committee – Ms. Erin Endicott, Chairperson
Committee members: Ms. Hertz, Mrs. Deininger, Mrs. Siskind

The Public Safety Committee report was given this evening by Ms. Endicott.

The Committee will consider no actions this evening.

Approved at Committee Meeting:

1. Consider adoption of the Emergency Declaration for COVID-19 for the month of February 2021. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Police, Fire Department and Community Ambulance reports were received.
2. The Public Works and Code Enforcement reports were received.

Ms. Endicott asked if there were further 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: Ms. Welch, Ms. Henderson, Ms. Sheedy

The Public Utilities Committee report was given this evening by Mrs. Siskind.

The Committee will consider the following action this evening:

1. Consider award of the WWTP Pump 5 rebuild to Midway for the low quote of \$10,948.24. Quotes were also received from Longo Sales and Service for \$13,920.00 and BDS/D Electric for \$13,624.00.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The WWTP engineer's report was provided.
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 has been advertised. Formal protests and petitions were received.
3. Gilmore Engineers are working on pipeline design for the Loch Alsh cluster of wells as part of the Borough's PFAS/MIRIA project process. The project will involve piping three wells to one new filtration unit. PFAS testing was conducted January 2021 and the Water Dept. is awaiting lab results.
4. The Butler Pike Bridge pipeline replacement project is underway. No road closure is planned, but a travel lane will be restricted at times. Traffic control will be provided per highway opening permit requirement. Water main construction is anticipated to be completed by mid-April.

Mrs. Siskind asked if there were further 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. Nellie DiPietro, Chairperson

Committee Members: Ms. Endicott, Ms. Welch, Ms. Sheedy

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

The Committee will consider the following actions this evening:

1. Consider that **January 2020** invoices in the amount of **\$439,629.81** be paid as follows: General (**\$53,394.67**); Street Lights (**\$4,694.94**); Fire (**\$24,793.70**); Refuse (**\$53,652.81**); Parks & Rec. (**\$315.94**); Water (**\$119,298.83**); Sewer (**\$60,786.84**); WWTP (**\$122,692.08**); Debt Fund (**\$0.00**); Water Capital (**\$0.00**); Liquid Fuels (**\$0.00**).
2. Consider approval of the applicant AMBGOOD, LLC's preliminary and final plans for 90 W. Butler Avenue with requested waivers under the condition that the applicant resolves all outstanding issues in the Borough Engineer's January 15, 2021 review letter. A presentation was made to redevelop the existing gas station with a bank at 90 W. Butler Avenue – AMBGOOD, LLC. at the February Committee Meeting.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Sheedy asked for the timeframe for groundbreaking. Applicant responded approximately six weeks for groundbreaking and explained that the underground gas tanks would be removed with remediation undertaken. Ms. Endicott stated she was uncomfortable with the right-out turn at the Butler Avenue entrance. Ms. Henderson concurred. Bruce Goodman of AMBGOOD, LLC stressed that the intersection is located further from the SEPTA tracks and would be well marked. Ms. Welch asked Chief Hoffman if there was a track record of concern at that location. Chief Hoffman responded that there was not an exorbitant amount of traffic at that location. Mr. Goodman pointed out that in all likelihood there would have been more traffic as a gas station than there would be for the bank. He estimated 25 vehicles per day at the kiosk. Ms. Endicott noted that new housing was in the works in that area and that the dynamics have changed, particularly pedestrian traffic. Mrs. Siskind asked for a clarification of the direction of the drive-thru. Mr. John Hornick of AMBGOOD, LLC stated traffic would be entering at the south side with a front exit turning right onto Butler Avenue or exiting onto Maple Avenue. Mr. Goodman stated that bank needs what it needs to operate, and that a huge investment and 20 years commitment was being made. He stated AMBGOOD, LLC would comply with all engineering requirements other than the waivers. Manager Aversa suggested the Borough consider converting the Borough lot on the north side of the SEPTA tracks to a right turn only exit as well.

Approved at Committee Meeting:

1. Consider adoption of Resolution 2021-1 clarifying and setting the tax collector rates. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Borough Engineer's report was received.
2. The solicitor provided a draft ordinance to define mural language. The draft ordinance has been sent to the Planning Commissions for review.
3. The Solicitor prepared a draft Ordinance amending the area calculation that triggers storm water requirements. The draft ordinance was sent for review by the Planning Commissions.
4. The Northern Montgomery County Recycling Commission has prepared a revised Resolution and Procedures for Act 101 Violations to include new language for the enforcement of Act 101 and enforcement against violations by haulers, businesses, and residents of its member municipalities. Further revisions are being requested.

Ms. DiPietro asked if there were further comments or questions from Council or the public. **Public Comment:** Madge Monser of 372 Forest Avenue asked, regarding the AMBGOOD, LLC plan, that only an entrance to the bank be permitted from Butler Avenue and referenced DVRPC statistics on pedestrian fatalities. **Public Comment:** Madge Monser of 372 Forest Avenue requested that language including "institutions" which might violate Act 101 be included. Ms. DiPietro stated that specific revisions request had been made to the NMCRC.

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, Ms. DiPietro

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 is moving forward with plans for creation of a Community Garden next spring. A Zoom information session will be held Sunday, February 21 at 2:00 p.m. Register at the post on the Borough website www.boroughofambler.com. Questions may be directed to Councilperson Jen Henderson at jhenderson@borough.ambler.pa.us.

2. Ambler Borough Planning Commission currently is working on a Parks Plan outlining the future of the Borough Parks System. They will hold several ZOOM workshops in the coming months for each of the parks to solicit resident input and participation in the process. The next workshop will be held February 23, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss Borough Park, Edgewood Preserve, Tennis Avenue Lot and Reiffs Mill Open Space. Go to www.boroughofambler.com/departments/parks-recreation to register.

Ms. Hertz asked if there were further 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.

Salary and Personnel Committee – Mrs. Nancy Deininger, Chairperson

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

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

The Committee will consider the following actions this evening:

1. Interviews for the Water Operator I position were held and a recommendation will be made to offer the position to a candidate.
2. An Executive Session was held at 6:00 p.m. this evening to discuss the police contract.

Approved at Committee Meeting:

1. Consider hiring Steve Smallberger as the Water Superintendent. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. Whitpain Township was contacted, and no applicants have applied for the vacant Water Authority Board position.
2. An Executive Session was held on January 25, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss employee issues and contract negotiations.

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

Public Safety Committee – The Committee will make no recommendations this evening.

Public Utilities Committee – The Committee recommends and Mrs. Siskind moves:

Consider award of the Pump 5 rebuild to Midway for the low quote of \$10,948.24. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

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

Consider that **January 2021** invoices in the amount of **\$439,629.81** be paid. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Consider approval of the applicant AMBGOOD, LLC's preliminary and final plans for 90 W. Butler Avenue with the following waivers under the condition that the applicant resolves all outstanding issues in the Borough Engineer's January 15, 2021 review letter. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Section 22-305.4.A – To waive the requirement for the Applicant to provide location, names and widths of street, the location and name of railroads, the location of property lines and name of owners, the location of water courses, sanitary sewers, storm drains and similar features within 400 feet of any part of the land to be subdivided or developed.

Section 22-308.C – To permit simultaneous Preliminary and Final review.

Section 22A-107.2.C – To permit cover maintained over storm pipes to be less than the minimum 2 feet both onsite and in the Borough right-of-way.

Section 22A-107.2.D & §22A-107.5.A – To permit the use of storm pipes with an inside diameter less than 18 inches both on-site and in the Borough right-of-way.

Section 22A-107.6.A – To permit the use of HDPE pipe in lieu of RCP both on-site and in the Borough right-of-way.

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

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

Consider offering employment to the candidate put forth at the Executive Session for the Water Operator I position. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

Consider approval of the Police Contract as discussed at the Executive Session with the contract to be accepted for contract years 2021-2024 with annual raises of 2%, 3%, 3% and 3.5%. Seconded. (9-Aye). Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Madge Monser of 372 Forest Avenue asked the Borough to contemplate how to hold more user-friendly Zoom Meetings.

There being no further public comment or other business, Mr. DeRuosi moved the meeting be adjourned. Seconded, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Russell
Assistant Secretary
Borough of Ambler