

AMBLER BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

April 19, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of Ambler Borough Council was held Tuesday, April 19, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at Borough Council Chambers located at 131 Rosemary Avenue, Ambler, Pennsylvania, 19002.

The meeting was preceded by a reception for the Borough's many volunteers who were recognized for their volunteer efforts during National Volunteer Week (April 17-23).

Council President Siskind called the Council Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Sorg led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mrs. Siskind, Ms. Forst, Ms. Endicott, Ms. Sheedy, Ms. Henderson, Ms. Auerbach and Ms. Hughes. Mayor Sorg, Police Chief Borkowski, Solicitor Joe Bresnan and Borough Manager Aversa also were in attendance. Ms. Welch and Mr. DeRuosi were absent.

Approval of Minutes: Mrs. Siskind made a motion to approve the Minutes of the March 15, 2022 Council Meeting. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Mayor Sorg introduced Alaina Wenitsky and Chloe Jeon, Wissahickon High School students who are active Environmental Advisory Council volunteers, and she read a Mayoral Proclamation thanking them for being civic minded citizens who go to the next level with their volunteer activities.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committees of Ambler Borough Council met Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at Borough Council Chambers located at 131 Rosemary Avenue, Ambler, Pennsylvania, 19002. Present: Mrs. Siskind, Ms. Welch, Mr. De Ruosi, Ms. Forst, Ms. Endicott, Ms. Henderson, Ms. Auerbach, and Ms. Hughes. Police Chief Borkowski, Solicitor Joe Bresnan and Borough Manager Aversa also were in attendance. Ms. Sheedy and Mayor Sorg were absent.

Finance and Planning Committee – Ms. Nellie Forst, Chairperson

Committee Members: Mr. DeRuosi, Ms. Sheedy, Ms. Auerbach

Ms. Forst introduced auditors from Zelenkofske-Axelrod LLC who made a presentation to Council. Deborah Bacon, CPA gave an overview of auditor responsibility, which is to issue an opinion on the Borough's financial statements. She stated auditors are not charged

with issuing an opinion on the internal control structure, however the auditor would comment if an issue such as fraud was found. She stated the Borough is responsible for maintaining 'Gap' standards and working with the auditors to provide required supplementary information (RSI).

Ms. Bacon stated her audit determination was to offer an unmodified ("Clean") opinion on financial statements and that there were no findings. She thanked now-retired Finance Manager Gail Gordon and current Finance Manager Albert Yaghooty for their responsible thoroughness. She announced that new GASB financial reporting requirements ("Pronouncements") would be in place next year.

Ms. Bacon's associate intern provided a summary of financial results. The Borough's governmental activities net position is \$11.0 million which is a \$1.6 million increase realized by an increase of \$648,500 in total revenues and a \$254,500 decrease in total expenses from 2020. The net pension asset is \$2.0 million. The end of year General Fund balance is \$4.1 million. Net position of the Water Fund is \$8.3 million, with \$4.4 million invested in net capital assets. Net position of the Sewer Fund is \$422,000 with \$168,100 invested in net capital assets. He concluded by highlighting future considerations for accounting standards effective 2022 involve 'Leases' and 'Conduit Debt Obligations.'

Councilperson Auerbach stated, regarding 'Leases', that the Borough might need to consider the increased work load and contract for external consulting. Ms. Bacon stated the GASB requirement will be to document 'operating leases'. Manager Aversa stated the Borough does not involve with many leases and did not foresee a burden. Ms. Auerbach asked about the meaning of 'unrestricted deficit of \$1 million.' Ms. Bacon responded stated auditors would look at the General Fund compared to the budget, adding that the Finance Department must record every liability.

Councilperson Hughes suggested the Finance Department employ Vendor Management or Risk Assessment programs to format lease data. Ms. Bacon responded that it would be a best practice to do the 'legwork' when starting a lease.

Finally, Ms. Auerbach asked about the practice of separation of duties to prevent fraud. Ms. Bacon stated that during the audit they conduct a walk-through of transaction cycles. Manager Aversa noted that the Borough has a third control, Treasurer Marita Bondi, who reviews invoices and checks, and stated that this is not a state law requirement.

The Zelenkofske-Axelrod LLC presentation concluded.

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

The Committee will consider the following actions this evening:

1. Authorization is requested to approve payment of the **March 2022** bills in the amount of **\$903,945.14** as follows: General (**\$226,932.99**); Street Lights (**\$3,899.40**); Fire (**\$988.14**); Refuse (**\$58,294.91**); Parks & Rec. (**\$7,825.14**); Water (**\$168,662.20**);

Sewer (\$19,392.32); WWTP (\$198,338.00); Debt Fund (\$0.00); Liquid Fuels (\$4,452.50); Water Capital (\$215,159.54).

2. The Borough Solicitor has requested authorization to amend the Sign Ordinance to clarify the definition of architectural elements and other inconsistencies.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Borough Engineer's report was provided.
2. Staff is working with the Borough Engineer to prepare the paving bid for this year.

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

Public Safety Committee – Ms. Jennifer Henderson, Chairperson

Committee members: Ms. Endicott, Ms. Forst, Ms. Hughes

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

The Committee will consider no actions this evening.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Fire, Police and Community Ambulance reports were received.
2. The Public Works and Code Enforcement reports were received.
3. Chief Borkowski updated Council on participation in the Eastern Montgomery County Traffic Safety Force.
4. A "Walk, Bike, and Roll to School" event has been organized by Lower Gwynedd Elementary School families and will take place on May 4th. An increased police and school district staff presence will be stationed at key intersections to raise awareness on commuting to school safety. For more information go to facebook.com/biketowiss

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

Public Utilities Committee – Ms. Haley Welch, Chairperson

Committee members: Ms. Endicott, Ms. Sheedy, Ms. Hughes

The Public Utilities Committee report was given this evening by Ms. Sheedy.

The Committee will consider no actions this evening.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. Engineer's Report - The WWTP engineer's report will be provided.
2. Water Department conducted routine quarterly system sampling for PFAS. The Water Engineer review lab analysis and prepared a chart summarizing results which is posted on the Borough website. All levels continue to be consistent with the average of past sample results. There are no significant increases or decreases at any well, tanks, or at Whitemarsh.
3. Water Department will commence routine system hydrant flushing in May. A daily flushing schedule will be posted on the Borough website.
4. Staff is working with the Borough Engineer to prepare the 2022 MIRIA Grant Application.
5. The Special Council filed a water rate increase request with the Public Utilities Commission on March 31. Notification of the filing was mailed to water customers outside the Borough and is available for review in the Borough Hall lobby.

Ms. Sheedy asked if there were further comments or questions from the Committee, 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. Erin Endicott, Chairperson

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

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

The Committee will consider no actions this evening.

In In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Community Garden Committee provided an update to Council at the April Committee Meeting.
1. EAC Events - Team-Up to Clean-Up is scheduled May 21 (10-noon). Council Members and EAC members will undertake spring clean-up at the parks. The public is welcome to join in with the community beautification effort.

2. EAC Events – EarthFest is back after a two-year hiatus. This year’s theme is “Small Changes Can Make a Big Difference.” Event is scheduled April 30 (10-2). More information is available at www.amblereac.org/earth-fest .
3. Knight Park YMCA Summer camp will run June 21 to July 29 (8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.) Monday through Friday. Camp fee is \$50 per child. Registration will be held at Borough Hall on May 4 from 5-7 p.m. Proof of Ambler residency required at registration.
4. The EAC has been tasked with researching Single Use Plastic Ordinances to and to report back to Council in the spring suggesting sample language.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Endicott stated that EAC member Nancy Roecker-Coates has invested a lot of time and effort, researching similar ordinances in other jurisdictions. She has prepared a preliminary draft to be posted for review by the public before May’s Committee Meeting. The draft will be presented as a recommendation from the EAC. Ms. Endicott stated the document will be available for review by the public at EarthFest. Manager Aversa asked that staff receive a copy to enable them to better field questions.

Ms. Endicott asked if there were further comments or questions from the Committee, Council or the public. Councilperson Henderson highlighted a ‘Give-Aways’ event hosted by Lenny Robinson at Knight Park. Specifically, on April 22 (4-6 p.m.) he would host a Bike Give-Away. On April 23 (9-1 p.m.) he would host a Clothing & Equipment Give-Away. She stated that donations are encouraged.

There being nothing further, it was moved the Committee’s report be accepted as filed. Seconded. Carried.

Salary and Personnel Committee – Mr. Frank DeRuosi, Chairperson

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

The Salary and Personnel Committee report was given this evening by Ms. Forst.

The Committee will consider no actions this evening.

In In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The vacant water department position has been advertised. Interviews will be scheduled.
2. A Proclamation recognizing Borough volunteers during National Volunteer Week (April 17-23) was prepared.

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Consider approval of payment of the March 2022 bills in the amount of **\$903,945.14**.
Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Consider authorizing amending the Sign Ordinance to clarify the definition of architectural elements and other inconsistencies. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no further public comment or other business, Mrs. Siskind moved the meeting be adjourned. Seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Russell
Assistant Secretary
Borough of Ambler