

AMBLER BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

July 19, 2022

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

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. Welch, Ms. Forst, Ms. Endicott (arrived 7:10 p.m.), 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. Mr. DeRuosi was absent.

Approval of Minutes: Mrs. Siskind made a motion to approve the Minutes of the June 21, 2022 Council Meeting with suggested revisions. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committees of Ambler Borough Council did not meet in July. This evening, the following was presented:

Finance and Planning Committee – Ms. Nellie Forst, Chairperson

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

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 **June 2022** bills in the amount of **\$621,895.08** as follows: General (**\$191,024.12**); Street Lights (**\$3,440.07**); Fire (**\$988.14**); Refuse (**\$50,765.95**); Parks & Rec. (**\$2,936.72**); Water (**\$145,032.72**); Sewer (**\$16,613.90**); WWTP (**\$151,033.27**); Debt Fund (**\$0.00**); Liquid Fuels (**\$1,641.19**); Water Capital (**\$58,419.00**).
2. Consider executing the Montco 2040 Grant Funding Agreement for the 2022 Ambler Theater Project, with Ambler Borough filing as applicant on behalf of the theater.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Borough Engineer's report was provided.

2. Staff is reviewing the current street sweeping schedule at the request of Haywood Park residents, to consider splitting the schedule into an A.M./P.M. process to allow for parking on alternate sides of the street on street sweeping days.

Discussion ensued. Manager Aversa stated that with more people working from home and additional family members moving in, there simply was not enough room to move all the cars on street sweeping days. She stated she would review the schedule with Public Works and have a draft ordinance revision prepared reflecting proposed changes to the schedule.

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 Police and Community Ambulance reports were received.
2. The Public Works and Code Enforcement reports were received.

Ms. Henderson asked if there were further comments or questions from the Committee, Council or the public. Councilperson Hughes commented that activity appeared to have increased as reflected on the police report. Chief Borkowski stated that during summer months there is more outside activity, including neighborhood disputes and discharge of fireworks. 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. Welch.

The Committee will consider the following action this evening:

1. Consider approval of the electric energy agreement issued by Freepoint Energy Solutions for Borough Hall and Water Facilities.

Discussion ensued. Councilperson Auerbach asked whether the Borough had considered use of solar energy. Manager Aversa replied that the Borough has looked into this and would consider pursuing solar for the wastewater treatment plant property which averages a \$30,000 per month energy bill. She stated the available land for installation of solar would need to be ‘cleaned up’ before it was an acceptable site for solar installations. Manager Aversa stated that the Freeport quote as of this date is offering 48 months at the full fixed price of \$0.07591.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. Engineer’s Report - The WWTP engineer’s report will be provided.
2. Water Dept. will conduct quarterly samples for PFAS in July.

Ms. Welch 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 the following action this evening:

1. Consider how to proceed with the current draft Single Use Plastics (SUP) ordinance.

Discussion ensued. Council set the effective date for the ordinance as March 1, 2023, with a roll-out date for Styrofoam as March 1, 2024. Ms. Auerbach stated that Solicitor Bresnan had correctly captured the intent of the ordinance with this recent revision. Ms. Endicott stated she was comfortable with the ordinance which involved community input. Ms. Welch stated the ordinance was ready to be advertised. Ms. Hughes stated that she believed Council had not engaged proactively enough with the business community, however, she was comfortable with the ordinance due to the exemption clause. Mrs. Siskind commented that Ambler Main Street members had been communicated with regarding the ordinance and seemed fine with it. Many businesses were already putting SUP considerations into practice. Ms. Endicott indicated the Committee would make a motion to advertise the proposed ordinance for adoption.

In other business the following was reviewed:

1. Ambler Community Garden (ACG) hosted its Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Event at the ACG Garden at Knights Park on Thursday, July 14.

2. Events to be held at Borough parks this summer include a Kickboxing Class on July 30th (10 a.m.) at Knight Park with instructor Tiffany Tesfa Guma and Yoga at Knights Park session on August 13th (time to be determined) with instructor Dan. Additional activities for consideration include Family Movie Nights and Teen Nights.

Discussion ensued. Manager Aversa stated the Committee had approximately \$1,400 remaining in this year's budget for special activities. Ms. Henderson stated Teen Nights are held once a month. In August they would hold a Backpack Event and a Clothing Donation Event. Ms. Endicott stated the Committee would review its proposed Movie Night schedule to determine the number of movies that might be scheduled as well as scheduling dates.

Ms. Endicott 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.

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 other business the following was reviewed:

1. The Water Department vacancy for Assistant Water Superintendent has been advertised and resumes are being accepted.
2. AFSCME Union negotiations are being held.

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 the **June 2022** bills in the amount of **\$621,895.08**. Seconded. 8-Aye. Carried.

Consider executing the Montco 2040 Grant Funding Agreement for the 2022 Ambler Theater Project, with Ambler Borough filing as applicant on behalf of the theater. Seconded. 8-Aye. Carried.

Public Utilities Commttee – The Committee recommends and Ms. Welch moves:

Consider approval of the electric energy agreement issued by Freepoint Energy Solutions for Borough Hall and Water Facilities. Seconded. 8-Aye. Carried.

Parks & Recreation Committee

The Committee recommends and Ms. Endicott moves:

Consider advertising for adoption the Single Use Plastics Ordinance (with final formatting). Seconded. 8-Aye. Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Erica Garvey of 213 Locust Street commented on the disrepair of the sidewalk on Locust Street, noting that metal was sticking up from the ground and was a safety hazard. Manager Aversa state that Public Works would be making the sidewalk repairs this summer. Ms. Garvey asked when the Locust Street Alley would be paved. Manager Aversa stated she would ascertain whether the alley was public, and therefore the responsibility of the Borough, or private, and therefore a responsibility of the homeowners. Finally, Ms. Garvey inquired about a proposed North Maple Street development. Code Officer Glenn Kucher stated the developer has not submitted a formal application. When Ms. Garvey pointed out water issues in the area of Center & Locust, and not wanting additional housing in that area, Solicitor Bresnan stated that if the applicant comes in under existing zoning, Borough Council cannot disapprove. As to Ms. Garvey’s request for new nets and lines at the basketball court, Manager Aversa stated the Borough could go ahead and fulfill these requests. Ms. Siskind commented the Planning Commission was completing its Parks Plan for all of the parks in the Borough.

Mary Spross of 366 Forest Avenue inquired about future plans Council has for the protection of historic structures since they no longer are considering a Demolition Delay Ordinance. Mrs. Siskind stated Council had no further plans to take this up again. Ms. Spross asked about availability of funding to conducting Borough Walking Tours. Mrs. Siskind suggested she contact the Wissahickon Historical Society. Manager Aversa stated this is an Ambler Main Street function and she would discuss this with them.

Dan Rauscher of 346 Euclid Street asked about street cleaning requirements should a resident leave town for a week and their vehicle remains. Chief Borkowski stated that a resident should notify the police department to avoid a penalty.

Councilperson Auerbach asked Chief Borkowski about our police force and active shooter training. Chief Borkowski responded that while most officers have such training, the police chiefs in the County would be meeting in September to encourage the County to have countywide training so that all units are ‘on the same page.’ Hopefully training would be more advanced and would begin in the fall.

Councilperson Henderson asked whether the Borough could install street signs on the alleys. She stated she had recently called 911 for a neighbor and did not know that name of the nearest cross street which was an alley. Chief Borkowski stated the police department goes out to assist ambulance crews which may not be familiar with the roads in Ambler. Manager Aversa stated 911 callers should give an actual address (number and name) and not an alley name, because alleys do not have numbered addresses. Furthermore, she stated that in most alleys, there is no room to erect a signpost.

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