

## AMBLER BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

May 18, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of Ambler Borough Council was held Wednesday, May 18, 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. and led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

**Approval of Minutes:** Mrs. Siskind made a motion to approve the Minutes of the April 19, 2022 Council Meeting. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Mrs. Siskind commented that the Car Show held on May 15 was well attended and very successful. She thanked Ambler Main Street, the Public Works crews and Police Department for their efforts.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committees of Ambler Borough Council met Tuesday, May 3, 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. Sheedy, Ms. Auerbach, and Ms. Hughes. Police Chief Borkowski, Solicitor Joe Bresnan and Borough Manager Aversa also were in attendance. Mayor Sorg and Ms. Henderson were absent.

#### 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 **April 2022** bills in the amount of **\$1,023,610.84** as follows: General (**\$265,691.76**); Street Lights (**\$4,761.69**); Fire (**\$0.00**); Refuse (**\$56,958.57**); Parks & Rec. (**\$26,704.06**); Water (**\$247,865.44**); Sewer

(\$157,908.18); WWTP (\$263,376.06); Debt Fund (\$0.00); Liquid Fuels (\$0.00); Water Capital (\$345.08).

2. Consider executing a renewed lease agreement with MCIU/Head Start Program for the 2022-23 school year, with the same terms and conditions as set forth in prior lease.
3. Consider adoption of Pension Resolution 2022-07, allowing Finance Manager Albert Yaghooty to administer the employee plan.

**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.
3. The Planning Commission is reviewing the Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan to convert the existing building into three residential condominium units along with off-street parking at 25 North Ridge Avenue (Colony Club, LLC).
4. The Planning Commission is reviewing the Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan to convert the existing building into three residential condominium units along with off-street parking at 24-26 North Ridge Avenue (John's Court, LLC).
5. The Zoning Hearing Board rendered its decision for Ambler Crossings Development Partners.

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. The Mayor has issued a Mayoral Proclamation declaring the first Friday in June (June 3) as National Gun Violence Awareness Day.

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. Welch

**The Committee will consider no actions this evening.**

**Approved at Committee Meeting:**

1. Resolution 2022-06 was approved authorizing the grant application to MIRIA for the NWWA Interconnect (at/near Ft. Washington Ave. and Susquehanna Rd.), new 12" pipeline at Loch Alsh Ave. and Ft. Washington Ave., carbon media removal, and system PFAS testing projects with an estimated total project cost of \$1,485,000. Based upon a MIRIA grant match of 4.5 times the Local Effort, this requires a Local Effort contribution by Ambler of \$270,000. Motion to approve. Seconded. All Aye.

**In other business the following was reviewed:**

1. Engineer's Report - The WWTP engineer's report will be provided.
2. Water Department will soon commence routine system hydrant flushing. A daily flushing schedule will be posted on the Borough website.
3. The Water Dept. has completed April 2022 sampling in the distribution system for PFAS. The contracted lab will analyze the samples and the Water Engineer will review the data. Results will be posted on the Borough website. The Water Dept. will continue to take quarterly samples.

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 no actions this evening.**

**In other business the following was reviewed:**

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. 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 per week. Registration will be held at Borough Hall on May 4 from 5-7 p.m. Proof of Ambler residency required at registration.
3. Council discussed the revised draft Single Use Plastic Ordinance.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Welch set forth three issues in the draft Ordinance for consideration. She suggested that language on use of paper bags, specifically legislating the type of paper bag, be removed, stating the current language was overkill. She questioned language requiring businesses to levy a 15-cent for a bag, stating the Ordinance should not prohibit this charge but also should not require the charge. Finally, she stated language in the ordinance should be revised to define 'reusable carryout bags.'

Council members deliberated on Ms. Welch's comments. Additionally, Council discussed enforcement of the ordinance. Solicitor Bresnan suggested that after public comment, Council take a straw poll to provide him with directive in preparing revisions to the draft ordinance.

EAC member Nancy Roecker-Coates of 208 Southern Avenue stated she was in favor of keeping the 15-cent charge in the ordinance. Mary Spross of 366 Forest Avenue stated it was important to educate the public and change their behaviors for the good of the environment. Sal Boccuti of 300 Rosemary Avenue stated that Council should not be telling businesses what they must charge, urging Council members to allow businesses to make business decisions. The owners of Sweet Briar Ice Cream & Café urged Council to remove the cost for bags proposed to be charged upfront from the ordinance, stating that paper bags cost 40% more, and the cost eventually will be passed down to the customer. They stated most businesses are already asking if utensils are needed. They made a request for Borough-provided signage stating that requiring patrons to ask for straws or utensils was a requirement of the Borough and was not initiated by the businesses. They acknowledged the supply chain difficulties they were experiencing and asked Council to consider allowing a supply chain exemption and that businesses be allowed to use their discretion to navigate with the community without involving Code Enforcement. Mrs. Siskind stated that business hardship applies to the entire ordinance.

Council held a considerable amount of discussion on single use plastic utensils (forks, knives, spoons, sporks) including a discussion on plastic toothpicks and cocktail accessories and whether to include them in the ordinance. Mrs. Siskind noted that there are certain food items where it is very clear the customer will need a utensil and therefore, she stated it would be ridiculous to have to ask for one. Mr. DeRuosi suggested removing the category of utensils from the ordinance because inclusion of them in the ban would be cost prohibitive to businesses. He added that the current draft ordinance was more burdensome than the original. He asked whether this ordinance would be enforced for food trucks and

at the Farmers' Market. Ms. Hughes suggested certain businesses, such as those that sell water ice, should be exempt from the utensils portion of the ordinance. Solicitor Bresnan stated that would open the door for an 'unequal treatment' argument. Ms. Henderson encouraged Council to hold a Town Hall meeting with businesses before moving forward on the ordinance. Mrs. Siskind suggested a Town Hall be held at a monthly Ambler Main Street meeting. Ms. Forst stated that the businesses know this is not an enforceable ordinance, noting that other than Sweet Briar, they were absent. Mr. DeRuosi asked about setting the effective date for the ordinance. Ms. Endicott suggested Council select a transitional good time for the restaurants, possibly late winter next year.

Mrs. Siskind took a straw poll of Council's intent. The majority of Council members agreed to have Solicitor Bresnan remove forks, spoons, sporks, knives and chopsticks from the ordinance. It was agreed that language on requiring signage should be removed since these utensils could be included in FAQs flyers. Further, it was agreed that language on a mandatory 15-cent charge for a bag be removed.

Solicitor Bresnan will move forward and prepare a revised draft of the ordinance for consideration by Council.

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 Mr. DeRuosi.

**Executive Session:**

1. An Executive Session was held on an employment matter.

**The Committee will consider the following action this evening:**

1. Consider making an offer of employment for the vacant water department position.

**In In other business the following was reviewed:**

1. The vacant water department position has been advertised. Interviews will be scheduled.
2. National Public Works Week is May 15-21. A luncheon will be provided to the crews.

Mr. DeRuosi 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 payment of the **April 2022** bills in the amount of **\$1,023,610.84**. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Consider executing a renewed lease agreement with MCIU/Head Start Program for the 2022-23 school year, with the same terms and conditions as set forth in prior lease. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

Consider adoption of Pension Resolution 2022-07, allowing Finance Manager Albert Yaghooty to administer the employee plan. Seconded. All Aye. Carried.

### **Public Utilities Committee**

*Approved at Committee Meeting:* Resolution 2022-06 was approved authorizing the grant application to MIRIA for the NWWA Interconnect (at/near Ft. Washington Ave. and Susquehanna Rd.), new 12” pipeline at Loch Alsh Ave. and Ft. Washington Ave., carbon media removal, and system PFAS testing projects with an estimated total project cost of \$1,485,000. Based upon a MIRIA grant match of 4.5 times the Local Effort, this requires a Local Effort contribution by Ambler of \$270,000. Motion to approve. Seconded. All Aye.

**Salary & Personnel Committee** – The committee recommends and Mr. DeRuosi moves:

Consider offering employment to a candidate for the vacant water department position. 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