

HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
November 18, 2020

MINUTES

THIS MEETING WAS HELD ON ZOOM WITH THE PUBLIC
AVAILABLE BY ZOOM AUDIO

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

- (X) John H. Weierman, President
- (X) John Kroesser, Vice President
- () Salvatore DiLisio Jr. - 8:24PM
- (X) Jason Ferguson
- (X) Lawrence G. Stevens

- () Mayor, Robert L. Kaler III - 7:40PM

The record shows that four members of Council were present at roll call, as well as, Solicitor Catherine M. Harper; Timoney Knox LLP, Borough Manager Michael J. DeFinis, Assistant Manager Jaime E. Snyder and Treasurer Diane A. Farrall. Mayor Kaler joined the meeting at 7:40PM and Councilmember DiLisio joined the meeting at 8:24PM.

1. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA:

Motion: A motion was made by Councilmember Kroesser to Approve the Regular Meeting Agenda of November 18, 2020. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Ferguson and unanimously approved with a vote of 4-0.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Motion to Approve the Minutes of the October 7, 2020 Workshop & October 21, 2020 Regular Meetings

Motion: A motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson to Approve the Minutes of the October 4, 2020 Workshop & October 21, 2020 Regular Meetings. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Kroesser and unanimously approved with a vote of 4-0.

3. PUBLIC INPUT: President Weierman asked if there was any Public Input. The Public was allowed to comment from Zoom audio during this time. No Media Present.

Owen Wilcox, 32 E. School Street addressed Council and asked them to consider allowing the public to join through video and added that he would also like recordings of the meetings made available to the public. Mr. Wilcox added that the OOR and Borough News Magazine had articles on how to hold public Meetings. Mr. Wilcox also asked Council to address the wage increases listed in the budget, specifically the Assistant Manager, and stated he had completed a RTK salary search request from similar size municipalities and believes the Borough is not in line with similar size municipalities in the area. Mr. Wilcox also addressed other proposed increases in the budget with electric, sewer, and taxes and highlighted the high electric rates the Borough has vs. PPL and PECO. Mr. Wilcox added that he is also requesting that the electric rates be added to the electric bills as he believes they used to be listed and are no longer. Mr. Wilcox also stated that he did not see future infrastructure needs addressed in the budget and requested a place for a future fund for budgeting infrastructure projects. Lastly, Mr. Wilcox asked that all Committee Meetings be advertised just as the Council and Planning Commission Meetings.

President Weierman stated that he will address Mr. Wilcox's concerns and asked Assistant Manager Jaime Snyder to start by explaining how the Borough performs salary searches.

Assistant Manager Jaime Snyder highlighted that the Borough is part of the Montgomery County Consortium of Communities where she is Vice President and stated that the Borough has access to a salary search data base based on job descriptions and years of service. Assistant Manager Snyder added that this data base is comprised of all municipalities in Montgomery County and allows the Borough to search each municipality and compare salaries which is then shared with the BF&L Committee as a recommendation on salaries.

President Weierman added that the Borough had started a succession plan about 2-3 years ago as the current Manager is planning on retiring and as part of this succession plan the Borough has decided they would like to retain Ms. Snyder based on her performance and knowledge and has worked to budget compensation for her moving into that position that is comparable to other salaries in Montgomery County thus is why that position has a larger increase in the budget than the rest of the staff. President Weierman also touched base on the Public Works Director Salary as it may look higher but the line item is for two people; for the retirement of the current Public Works Director and the hire of the New Public Works Director. President Weierman added that the overall percentage increase, on average, in the proposed budget showed a 2.5% salary increase for all the rest of staff and Public Works Department.

President Weierman addressed Mr. Wilcox's concern with the electric rates and stated that the Electric Fund is most definitely a revenue source that we make use of to avoid the need for significant RE Tax increases. President Weierman added that we can share

with you the rates for local municipalities as well as PECO and PPL and you will find the Borough is very comparable. Councilmember Ferguson added that often times the IOU's such as PECO or PPL do not show you the added transmission and capacity charges so the numbers can be misleading when you see their rate vs. the Borough's all-in cost.

President Weierman stated that the major transfer from the Electric Fund to the General Fund is for police services which are projected at \$925,000.00 for 2021. President Weierman added that this transfer allows the RE Tax Rate to stay low while allowing the Borough to continue to provide the needed health, safety, and welfare services to our residents.

President Weierman asked if any other Councilmember would like to add any comments at this time.

Councilmember Kroesser referred to President Weierman's comments regarding Assistant Manager Jaime Snyder and highlighted why the Borough choose to retain Ms. Snyder and reviewed her compensation based on her skills, knowledge, and love for the Borough.

Mr. Wilcox stated that his comments are just a general concern, nothing personal and thanked Council for taking the time to explain the budget and address his comments.

Councilmember Ferguson added that he appreciates Mr. Wilcox joining the meetings as Council should be held accountable for their decisions and enjoys getting feedback from residents. Councilmember Kroesser stated that he agrees, and every resident is important and it is important to hear their concerns.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Manager DeFinis made the following announcements:

- ZHB is scheduled to meet on November 19th at 7:00PM via ZOOM
- Hatfield Chamber of Commerce is scheduled to meet Monday, November 23rd at Noon via ZOOM
- HMHS is Scheduled to Meet Tuesday, November 24th at 7:00PM via Facebook
- The Borough Office will be Closed Thursday & Friday November 26th & 27th for the Thanksgiving Holiday
- The Planning Commission is scheduled to meet on November 30, 2020 at 7:00PM via ZOOM
- Borough Council Meetings Workshop December 2, 2020 & Regular Meeting December 16, 2020 at 7:30PM via ZOOM

Manager DeFinis stated that the goal was to try to return to Council Chambers in January for in person meetings but with the COVID spike and numbers increasing this option has been taken off the table.

President Weierman spoke about the Borough's new sign at the complex and thanked staff for all of their work on the project.

5. STANDING REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MAYOR:

President Weierman asked for any information for EIT and Treasurer Diane Farrall stated that the last time she looked it was 351 and we were at over 400 YTD last year.

6. OLD BUSINESS / DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. HTMA Upper Interceptor Replacement Project Payment Request No. 3 Final Payment

President Weierman stated that this is the Final invoice for the HTMA interceptor work.

B. Resolution 2020-23 Transfer of Funds

President Weierman stated that this Resolution goes with the final interceptor payment for HTMA as we will be moving funds from Harleysville Bank to pay for the final invoice.

C. E.R. Stuebner Payment Request No. 19 Final Payment

Manager DeFinis stated that this is the final payment under the contract with Stuebner for \$ 19,626.35 and KCBA has signed off on it.

D. 43 Roosevelt Avenue Subdivision Waiver of Time Limitations

Manager DeFinis stated that this is a Waiver of Time Limitations signed off on by the developer as he will need time to take all recommendations made by staff and consultants into consideration before submitting a formal plan.

E. Conditional Use Hearing: 40 West Broad Street Scheduled for December 2, 2020

Solicitor Harper stated that the hearing was scheduled for December 2, 2020 and that the advertisement has been placed in the North Penn Reporter.

F. 2021 Budget Advertising Requirements

President Weierman stated that this memo was reviewed previously. All of Council thanked the BF&L Committee and Staff for all of their work on the 2021 budget.

G. 2021 Meeting Dates

President Weierman stated these are the proposed 2021 meeting dates. Any conflicts please let Manager DeFinis or Assistant Manager Jaime Snyder.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Citizen of the Year

President Weierman stated that there will be no formal event this year due to COVID but any suggestions for a 2020 Citizen of the Year are welcomed.

Councilmember Ferguson suggested essential workers such as Giant or Shoprite Employees.

President Weierman added to get any suggestions to Assistant Manager Jaime Snyder prior to the December 2, 2020 Workshop Meeting.

B. Years of Service Award

President Weierman stated that we have two five-year service awards to recognize for this year.

C. 2021 Estimated Assessed Tax Valuation

Manager DeFinis informed Council that the 2021 Estimated Tax Evaluation for the Borough is \$136,326,040.00

8. 2021 BUDGET REVIEW:

President Weierman stated that last meeting we took extended time to review the significant changes and we are not going to do that this time unless questions arise. President Weierman stated he will just highlight any significant changes.

President Weierman stated that this version of the budget has a small tax increase of a quarter mil from 1.75 to 2.0 and fire tax of .25 in addition to that for a total of 2.25 mils. President Weierman stated that the last tax increase was November 2016.

President Weierman highlighted changes in this budget version of an increase to the flat billed amount for electric for two categories from \$8.62 to \$12.00 monthly and an increase to the flat quarterly EDU fee from \$40.00 to \$45.00 for sewer.

President Weierman added that all three proposed budget increases would cost the average homeowner less than \$100.00 per year in increased fees. President Weierman added that if any increase would not be considered he would state that the sewer increase flat fee could be eliminated but it is reminded that the Sewer Fund Balance is based on an increase of 21 homes in 2021 and if these developments do not go through or are delayed, we will not see that revenue in the Sewer Fund.

President Weierman asked for any thoughts from Council. All Council agreed to keep the flat sewer EDU quarterly increase in the proposed budget.

Councilmember DiLisio stated that he would like to support the BF&L Committee on all budget recommendations. Councilmember Kroesser stated that he supported the budget and highlighted how it would impact all residents and not put the full burden on the electric users.

Councilmember Ferguson addressed the Capital Projects Fund and thanked Assistant Manager Jaime Snyder for the grants received and significant savings for the Borough over the next several years.

President Weierman stated that this proposed budget will be on for consideration and approval at the December 2, 2020 Workshop Meeting and is on for consideration and approval to advertise tonight. President Weierman added that changes can be made up to 10% of the total budget without having to readvertise if we realize we need to change or miss anything.

9. ACTION ITEMS: (the public was taken off mute for any comments)

A. Motion to Consider Resolution 2020 – 23 Transfer of Funds for the HTMA Upper Interceptor Replacement Project Payment Request No. 3 Final Payment in the Amount of \$56,020.00 (fifty-six thousand twenty dollars)

Motion: A motion was made by Councilmember Kroesser Approve Resolution 2020 – 23 Transfer of Funds for the HTMA Upper Interceptor Replacement Project Payment Request No. 3 Final Payment in the Amount of \$56,020.00 (fifty-six thousand twenty dollars). The motion was seconded by Councilmember DiLisio.

President Weierman asked if there were any comments or questions. There were no comments or questions.

The motion was approved unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

B. Motion to Consider Payment Request No. 19 to E.R. Stuebner for the Municipal Complex in the Amount of \$19,626.35 (nineteen thousand six hundred twenty-six dollars and thirty-five cents)

Motion: A motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson Approve Payment Request No. 19 to E.R. Stuebner for the Municipal Complex in the Amount of \$19,626.35 (nineteen thousand six hundred twenty-six dollars and thirty-five cents). The motion was seconded by Councilmember Kroesser.

President Weierman asked if there were any comments or questions. There were no comments or questions.

The motion was approved unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

C. Motion to Consider Advertising the Availability of the Borough of Hatfield Budget Appropriating Specific Funds for 2021

Motion: A motion was made by Councilmember Kroesser Approve Advertising the Availability of the Borough of Hatfield Budget Appropriating Specific Funds for 2021. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Ferguson.

President Weierman asked if there were any comments or questions. There were no comments or questions.

The motion was approved unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

D. Motion to Consider Advertising schedule a hearing tax ordinance December 2, 2020 Workshop Meeting

Motion: A motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson Approve Advertising schedule a hearing tax

ordinance December 2, 2020 Workshop Meeting.
The motion was seconded by Councilmember
DiLisio.

President Weierman asked if there were any comments or questions. There were no
comments or questions.

The motion was approved unanimously with a vote
of 5-0.

10. MOTION TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF THE BILLS:

President Weierman and Manager DeFinis reviewed and answered questions regarding
the bill list.

Motion: A motion was made by Councilmember Kroesser
to approve payment of the bills. The
motion was Councilmember Ferguson.

President Weierman asked if there were any comments or questions.

Comments were made about the low AMP bill.

The motion was approved unanimously with a vote
of 5-0.

11. MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Motion: A motion was made by Councilmember Kroesser to
adjourn the Regular Meeting November 21, 2020.
The motion was seconded by Councilmember
Ferguson and unanimously approved with a vote of
5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:38PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jaime E. Snyder
Assistant Manager