

SHICKSHINNY BOROUGH
GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 3, 2023
MINUTES

The General Meeting of the Borough of Shickshinny Council was held on Tuesday, January 3, 2023, in the Council room of the Shickshinny Municipal Building. President Jessica Bolles called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Per roll call, the following members of Council were present: Joe Buchalski, Rosalie Whitebread, Jim Wido, and Jessica Bolles. Absent was Kevin Kruczek.

President Bolles led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance and then welcomed others in attendance.

Others in attendance: Mayor Jordan Madl, Bobbi Titus, Sgt. Thomas Hegland, Patrolman Joshua Switzer, Rickey Noss, Kevin Morris, Mike Steeber, Barry Noss, Stephen McDaniels, Mike Duda, and Shaun Agostinelli. (Please note: If any residents did not sign in, their names may not be included as attending.)

President Bolles asked if there were any comments from residents in attendance on the agenda items. There were no comments.

President's Report – President Bolles reported on the following:

Sergeant Hegland, Salem Township Police Department, provided an overview on their plan for acquisition and installation of License Plate Readers within the area. The readers will assist law enforcement with stolen vehicles, amber alerts, domestic violence cases, etc. They would like to install one of the solar-powered readers on the traffic light pole at the Shickshinny/Mocanaqua Bridge. Sergeant Hegland stated that their insurance would cover any necessary repairs for damage to the traffic light as a result of the reader. He stated that a letter indicating permission from Shickshinny Borough for the installation would be needed in order for Salem Township Police Department to proceed.

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Whitebread granting permission for the Salem Township Police Department to install a license plate reader on the traffic light at the Shickshinny/Mocanaqua bridge. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Borough Employees thanked Council for the \$40 bonus they received for Christmas.

Fire Chief Stephen McDaniels informed Council about the protocol to make changes to the Luzerne County 9-1-1 Alarm Cards. Mike Duda stated that one of the issues was waiting for hours for towing companies to arrive at a scene where there are no injuries and no fires and no reason for the fire company to remain onsite. Chief McDaniels stated that the changes were made to not respond to “no injury accidents/no fluids down” calls.

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Bolles to give blanket authorization to make necessary changes to the Luzerne County 9-1-1 Alarm Cards to Chief McDaniels, Mocanaqua Volunteer Fire Department, on behalf of Shickshinny Borough. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

President Bolles reminded all that the Luzerne County Special Election will be held at the Borough Building on Tuesday, January 31, 2023.

President's Report (continued):

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Wido to accept and approve the President's Report. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Madl reported that he spoke with Northwest Area School District regarding the possible relocation of the bus stop and was informed that no changes will be made by the school district this school year. The school district was going to send a letter to parents reminding them of appropriate behavior at bus stops.

Shaun Agostinelli, Vice President of the Northwest Little League, provided insurance information, as requested, for use of the park for baseball practice. Additionally, he provided an update on plans to prepare the baseball field for the Spring season. Shaun obtained an estimate from Tomassacci Tree for \$1,000 for the initial clean up of the baseball field area.

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Buchalski for Shickshinny Borough to hire Tomassacci Tree to perform the initial cleanup of the baseball field area for \$1,000. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Mr. Agostinelli will contact Tomassacci Tree to perform the work and send the bill to the Borough.

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Bolles to accept and approve the Mayor's Report. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Zoning/Codes Officer Report – President Bolles provided the following report on behalf of Henry Mleczynski:

Jessica reviewed revisions to the Zoning Permit Fee Schedule, noting that the biggest change was the amount for zoning hearing requests. She noted that our current zoning ordinance will need to be revised to allow changes to permit fees to be made by Resolution rather than an Ordinance. It was noted that a fee for the Short-Term Rental Ordinance should be included. There were many questions and the issue is tabled until the next Council meeting.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to approve the Zoning/Codes Officer Report. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Solicitor's Report – President Bolles reviewed the Solicitor items in Attorney Bill Stephens' absence:

President Bolles believes that the lien for 125/127 W. Union Street has been completed.

President Bolles did not have any new information on the status of recording the deeds for the William Reinhard Subdivision.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to accept and approve the Solicitor's Report. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Wido No votes: Whitebread Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report – Bobbi Titus provided the December report.

Rosalie Whitebread stated that she could not approve minutes as she does not receive them with adequate time to review prior to the meeting. Bobbi suggested that she prepare the draft minutes and place a copy in each Council member's mail bin at least one-week prior to the meeting. Ms. Whitebread agreed with that approach.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to accept and approve the minutes of December 6, 2022. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Wido. No votes: Whitebread Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to accept and approve the minutes of the Budget Meeting of December 29, 2022. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Wido. No votes: Whitebread Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Wido to accept the bank balances as of 12/31/22 and ratify the December 2022 bills paid. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

The December Deliverables Matrix was provided showing the dates completed for current required deliverables. Additionally, the January Deliverables Matrix was provided to show the various reports requiring January completion.

Bobbi reported that the 2020 Financial Audit was filed by Rainey & Rainey CPAs and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development on December 14, 2022.

Bobbi reported that QuickBooks reports needed to begin the 2021 Financial Audit were sent electronically to Rainey & Rainey on 12/27/22.

Bobbi reported that there will an audit of the 2021 Liquid Fuels Report is scheduled for January 17, 2023. All requested files will be sent electronically.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Wido to accept and approve the Secretary/Treasurer's report. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Street Department – President Bolles provided the following report from the Street Department:

Ed Sadowski provided prices to do snow removal and/or cindering of the hills in the Borough. The rate is \$110/hour for use of the truck, plow, and spreader. President Bolles noted that this would reduce the number of hours needed by Borough employees, the 3rd person in the Street Department would not be needed, and Mr. Sadowski's services would not be needed for every storm. There was considerable discussion on affordability and the number of inches of snow that would trigger contacting Mr. Sadowski for his services. Council also discussed his repair services for heavy equipment that would be done on-site at the Borough Garage.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to call in Ed Sadowski to plow Borough hills, as needed, for snowfalls of 3" or more. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread. Abstain: Wido, due to friendship with Mr. Sadowski. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to contact Ed Sadowski for on-site repair of heavy equipment if needed. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread. Abstain: Wido, due to friendship with Mr. Sadowski. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Street Department (continued):

The Street Department reported there is a leak in the Garage roof. Mayor Madl stated he will come into the building to determine where it is leaking.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to accept and approve the Street Department report. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Correspondence – President Bolles reported the following items were received:

An email was received from Chris Goetz, PennDOT, on the mileage reduction for the 2023 Liquid Fuels Allocation. Council had many questions on the changes/reduction made. Bobbi will try to get Mr. Goetz to attend a future Council meeting and get clarification on the removal of Cemetery Road from the approved mileage. Bobbi will try to enlarge the map from Mr. Goetz for Council for the next meeting. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

A Letter of Interest was received from Peters Consultants, Inc. for any future Borough Engineer opportunities.

The new 2023 Bidding thresholds were received.

Minutes of the November 15, 2022 meeting of the Sewer Authority were received.

A directive of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) was received from PEMA. A copy was provided to the Emergency Management Coordinator.

2023 updates for PIRMA were received.

Notification of an increase from 0.06% to 0.07% in the employee withholding rate for 2023 Unemployment Compensation was received.

An updated flood guide was received from the National Flood Insurance Program.

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Buchalski to accept and approve the Correspondence. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Old or Unfinished Business

Status of Crary Street Sink Hole Project – LSA Grant – \$44,916 Balance in Grant. No update.

2022 LSA Grant – Public Works Vehicle – Grant \$93,463 vs. Revised Quote \$120,542 – The grant expiration is June 30, 2025. – Bobbi will follow up with the Ford dealer.

Letters of Interest were received by Tina Thompson and Barry Noss for the seat on the Sewer Authority Board. Jim Wido stated that he feels Barry Noss has been doing a good job on the Sewer Board.

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Buchalski to appoint Barry Noss to the Sewer Authority Board seat. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Wido. Abstain: Whitebread. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Rosalie questioned why a vote was not done for Tina Thompson. President Bolles explained that a motion was received and passed for Mr. Noss in that position.

A Letter of Interest was received by Attorney Kristyn Giarratano Jeckell of the law firm of Elliott GreenLeaf, P.C. to serve as the Shickshinny Borough Solicitor as needed for Zoning Hearings.

Old or Unfinished Business (continued):

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to appoint Elliott GreenLeaf, P.C. as the Shickshinny Borough Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Wido to accept the Old or Unfinished Business. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

New Business

The 2023 Tax Rate Resolution should not have been approved until after the 2023 Budget was approved, therefore a re-vote of the Resolution is necessary. Resolution 2023-0001 replaces Resolution 2022-0005.

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Buchalski to accept and approve Resolution 2023-0001 for the 2023 Tax Rate to remain the same. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Applications to place bids on six Luzerne County Repository Sales properties have been completed and are ready for signature. A Repository requirement is a resolution be passed approving Jessica Bolles as the appropriate signer on behalf of the Shickshinny Borough.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Wido to accept and approve Resolution 2023-0002 naming Jessica Bolles as the authorized signer for the Luzerne County Repository Sales application documents. Yes votes: Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Abstain: Bolles. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

President Bolles reported that Solicitor Stephens was to review Ordinance 2022-0003 – Borough Council Members Attendance. Issue tabled as Attorney Stephens was not in attendance.

President Bolles expressed her opinion that more structure is needed for the various Shickshinny Borough Advisory Boards before new appointments occur. Issue is tabled and will be placed on next meeting agenda.

President Bolles addressed the 2023 Borough Council Committee Appointments, stating the appointments remained the same as 2022. Rosalie Whitebread stated that she wanted removed from the following Committees: Building, Planning, Pole & Light, and Safety.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to approve the 2023 Committee Appointments. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Wido. No votes: Whitebread stated she would vote “yes” only if removed from the Building, Planning, Pole & Light, and Safety Committees, otherwise it is a “no” vote. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Notification from PA American Water was received that requires Backflow Assembly Testing by January 18, 2023. Bobbi Titus stated that Larry Frace and Petroski Plumbing were used for this testing previously.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to schedule the required Backflow Assembly Testing with Petroski Plumbing. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

New Business (continued):

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Buchalski to approve Port Elevator to conduct the 3-year elevator relief valve pressure test at a cost of \$650.00. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to approve the New Business. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

Comments from Residents

Rickey Noss stated that the Sewer Authority Board wants to meet with Council as not all Sewer Board members were in attendance at the December 29, 2022 meeting. President Bolles stated that a meeting was not necessary as the session was for Council to ask questions of the Sewer Board Solicitor and all questions were addressed.

Rickey Noss asked when action will be taken on Kevin Kruczek's Council seat due to Mr. Kruczek not attending Council meetings. Jessica stated that Attorney Stephens will review Council's position on this.

Motion made by Buchalski/seconded by Bolles to adjourn the meeting. Yes votes: Bolles, Buchalski, Whitebread, Wido. Absent: Kruczek. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta J. Titus, Secretary
Borough of Shickshinny