

SHICKSHINNY BOROUGH
GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING MARCH 8, 2022
MINUTES

The General Meeting of the Borough of Shickshinny Council was held on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, 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: Rosalie Whitebread, Jim Wido, and Jessica Bolles. Absent were Kevin Kruczek and Joe Buchalski.

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

Others in attendance: Mayor Jordan Madl, Bobbi Titus, Sonny Kelchner, Kathy Llewellyn, Holly Morris, Kevin Morris, Valerie Bigelow, Tina Thompson, Josh Gregory, William Reinhard, and Sharon Belles.

President Bolles asked if residents had any comments on agenda items. Kevin Morris supported the election of Ralph “Sonny” Kelchner as the Zoning Officer and the hiring of Roberta Titus as Secretary. He was complimentary of both individuals. Kevin stated that adhering to the “no-parking” on Baer Street was not difficult. He further expressed that he was in favor of placing the ad supporting firefighters but was disappointed that this was never done previously.

President’s Report

Motion made by Rosalie Whitebread/seconded by Jim Wido to elect Ralph Kelchner as Zoning Officer under Larry C. Frace Inspections LLC. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion made by Whitebread/seconded by Wido to hire Roberta Titus as Secretary/Treasurer at a rate of \$17.00/hour, effective February 22, 2022. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Front Bathroom – President Bolles stated that, to date, she has not received a returned call from Chapin with their recommendations to resolve the problem. Bobbi Titus will contact Chapin’s.

Consideration to make Baer Street “One Way” – President Bolles stated that she spoke with the residents living on or near Baer Street and none are in favor with making Baer Street “One Way”. There was discussion on the difficulty to enforce the parking violations without a Borough Police Officer. Sonny suggested finding a towing company to work with. Jessica will discuss this further with Attorney Logsdon.

Status on Crary Street Sink Hole Project – President Bolles stated that this project seems to be held up by Reilly. She has placed several calls and is still awaiting a response. It was noted that the Crary Street paving project is to start in April 2022.

Motion made by Rosalie Whitebread/seconded by Jim Wido to accept and approve the President’s Report. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mayor’s Report – Mayor Madl had nothing to report.

Engineer's Report – No report provided.

Zoning/Code/Property Maintenance Officer's Report – Ralph “Sonny” Kelchner provided Council with a hardcopy monthly report and addressed the following:

There was one zoning permit and one construction permit issued during the reporting period. One magistrate hearing is scheduled for March, with another on hold for 60 days. Three new complaints were initiated. He additionally reviewed the current Property Maintenance Issues and Violations list.

There was discussion on parking on Borough-owned property by residents and the need for consistent enforcement of same. Council noted that parking vehicles that are not roadworthy or do not have current inspections is not acceptable. Sonny will follow up with the Borough parking ordinance numbers for Council to review.

Motion made by Jim Wido/seconded by Rosalie Whitebread to accept and approve the Zoning Officer's Report. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Solicitor's Report – In the absence of Attorney Logsdon, Jessica reviewed the information forwarded by Sean:

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Whitebread to proceed with Resolution 2022-0001 approving the submission of the Luzerne County Pennsylvania Gaming Statewide Local Share Account Grant application for the West Butler Street Stormwater Improvements project. The motion carried by unanimous vote. Resolution 2022-0001 was adopted by unanimous vote.

Furnace Street Fire – It was reported that a letter has been sent to the property owner, with follow up after 10 days. Sean contacted Brdaric and requested a grace period while attempts to collect funds from the property owner are ongoing. Brdaric agreed to not accrue late fees on the invoice during this time.

Historical Society LSA Grant – Sean has been in touch with Chris Cawley, the grant administrator, who indicated all work has been completed and the contractor is awaiting final payment. Sonny indicated the Certificate of Occupancy has been issued, which was needed in order for funds to be released.

Twin Oaks Invoice – Rockview Street/guiderrails project – A letter was sent to John Ackerman requesting a more detailed invoice for the \$16,000 billed.

ARPA Fund Request from Sewer Authority – The request for \$5,000 from the Sewer Authority was received and will be used for COVID cleaning/sanitation of the building. Jessica requested an itemized list to support the \$5,000 expense and stated that this will be tabled until the itemized list is received.

Motion made by Whitebread/seconded by Wido to accept and approve the Solicitor's Report. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report – Bobbi Titus provided the February reports.

Motion made by Whitebread/seconded by Wido to accept and approve the minutes of February 8, 2022. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion made by Whitebread/seconded by Wido to accept and approve the minutes of February 24, 2022. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion made by Whitebread/seconded by Wido to accept the bank balances as of 2/28/22. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion made by Whitebread/seconded by Wido to ratify the February 2022 bills paid. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

The current Deliverables Matrix was provided to Council.

Office Hours – Signs will be posted in the municipal building with public hours of Tuesday through Thursday, 10:00 AM – Noon and 1:00 PM – 3:00, with other hours by appointment. Council noted that the April 5th meeting date would need to be changed to April 6th as the State Representative has requested use of the building on April 5. Additionally, the May meeting may need to be rescheduled due to the Primary Election.

Right To Know Requests – Minutes from 2011 that address the Baer Street “no parking” signs were provided to Holly Morris. Titus reported that, upon review of bills paid during the period 7/1/21 through 12/31/21, \$1114.13 was spent for holiday decor/holiday lights. Holly Morris clarified that the information she wanted was the holiday electricity cost for the Borough.

2020 Financial Audit – Titus reported that Rainey & Rainey will conduct the audit sometime after April 15.

Motion made by Whitebread/seconded by Wido to pay Option A for the annual Flood Insurance through Selective Insurance. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Sewer Authority Proposed Budget for 2022 has been received and will be posted for public view.

Motion made by Whitebread/seconded by Wido to accept and approve the Secretary/Treasurer’s Report. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Correspondence

Press Enterprise – interest in running ad on Support our Volunteer Fire Companies – Deadline 3/17/22.

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Bolles to place a one-column ad for \$67.00. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

PSAB Update was provided to Council.

PEMA Floodplain Management Activities Annual Report for 2021 is due ASAP.

DCED LSA Gaming Act Annual Report – Due March 15, 2022

PennDOT Municipal Outreach Session will be held April 22, 2022. Jessica encouraged Council to attend sessions, if possible.

Old or Unfinished Business

Luzerne County EMA Radiological Emergency Response Fund (RERF) Grant – Deadline 5/20/22 – Jessica noted she sent requests to two companies for quotes on the equipment. Kevin Morris suggested contacting Megan Brown from Talon directly to ask if any grant funds are available directly from Talon as the Luzerne County amount of \$1,500 is less than the amount needed to purchase the equipment. Jessica stated she would send an email to Megan.

New Business

Office Space Rental – Resident Tina Thompson inquired on the possibility of renting the vacant police officer office space from the Borough. Council briefly discussed this noting the office would need to be emptied and a decision would be needed on the monthly rental fee. No action taken.

Dredging creek behind South Main Street – Council discussed dredging the creek and Rosalie provided Council with an email from the Department of Environmental Protection stating that the Borough has no responsibility regarding the maintenance of the creek. Jessica stated that the American Rescue/COVID funds should be able to be used for this purpose. Additionally, all residents would need to agree to allow the contractors on their property and sign liability release waivers stating that the Borough had no liability for 20+ years. It would be necessary for all residents to agree to sign or the project would not be pursued.

Motion made by Wido/seconded by Bolles to proceed with project to dredge the creek. Wido and Bolles voted yes and Whitebread voted no based on the DEP position that creek maintenance was not Borough responsibility. The motion carried.

Repairs to the brakes for the Borough truck through Kenny Evan – All agreed to the repairs.

Resident Comments

William Reinhard provided an updated survey for ongoing litigation between Shickshinny Borough (Pine Hill Cemetery) and William Reinhard. Per Mr. Reinhard, the survey identifies a change to the property line and needs to be filed at the court house. Per Mr. Reinhard, the cost of the filing is the responsibility of Shickshinny Borough per the existing agreement between the parties. He indicated that when the survey is filed, the 20-year litigation would be closed.

Executive Session – An executive session was held from 7:30 PM – 7:38 PM.

Motion made by Whitebread/seconded by Wido to adjourn the meeting. Motion unanimously carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta J. Titus, Secretary
Borough of Shickshinny