
Minutes

Call to Order: Mr. Porco

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Heller

Roll Call:

Mr. Belmonte	Yes	Mr. Porco	Yes
Mr. Karas	Yes	Mayor Heller	Absent
Ms. Katchmar	Yes	Janet Sullivan, Tax Collector	Absent
Ms. Liscio	Yes	Blaine Lucas, Solicitor	Yes
Mr. O'Malley	Yes	Paul Gaus, Engineer	Yes
Mr. Tomasic	Yes	Steven Morus, Manager	Yes

President's Report: Mr. Porco

Mr. Porco noted that council met in executive session prior to committee meetings on June 2nd and 4th to discuss personnel matters; also met tonight re: litigation and will meet following the meeting on personnel matters.

He noted that Community Day will be held on Saturday, July 4th.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Heller

No report.

Tax Collector's Report: Ms. Sullivan

Ms. Sullivan provided a written report.

Officer in Charge Report: Sgt. Williams

Sgt. Williams provided an update on police activities during the past month as well as his activities during that time.

Fire Chief's Report: Chief Heller

No report.

Woodland Hills EMS Report: Adam Knight

No report.

Solicitor's Report:

Blaine Lucas

Mr. Lucas noted that council will consider the storm water ordinance revisions in July.

Wilkesburg Penn Joint Water Authority Report:

Ms. Broz

Ms. Broz presented a report on authority activities.

Public Comment

Vivian Broz, 312 Burlington Road – comments on an article in the Tree City Times that stated the Tree and Shrub Committee and the Late Bloomers Garden Club would be providing dirt and plants for the Bryn Mawr Gateway Project – surprised to find this out because no one contacted either group about the project – suggests checking information before printing articles in the Tree City Times.

Vivian Broz – noted that the Pittsburgh Magazine ran an article on the great lawyers in the city of Pittsburgh selected by their peers and our solicitor, Blaine Lucas, was among the lawyers listed.

Paul Glance, 36 Kenmore Ave. – comments that changing the direction of traffic on Kenmore will create a driveway to Taco Bell, create more traffic on the street and become a safety issue for the children. He is not happy with the decision.

Brian Fite, 25 Kenmore Ave. – states his opposition to the change in traffic flow – we all feel this will create more traffic – inquires about the NO LEFT Turn sign coming out of Taco Bell – missing for quite a while – contacted the borough several times, sign still missing – residents were not notified about the change in traffic.

R. Paul, 23 Kenmore Ave. – resident for 20 years – when Taco Bell was built there were requirements that they had to meet: lighting, noise, Right Turn Only sign, which has been missing for a year, hours of operation changed from 11:00 PM to 3:00 AM, debris, speeding, etc. the residents were not informed of any changes that occurred then and now is no different. It doesn't matter what direction you make the street, who is going to enforce it?

Committee Reports:

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr. Belmonte

Motion: Move to accept the bid of Joseph Palmieri Construction in the amount of \$196,505.00 for concrete paving in the borough subject to negotiating a change order which removes several roadway sections from the bid.

Moved: Mr. Belmonte
Second: Ms. Liscio

Bids opened on May 5 as follows:

Company	Bid	Bid Bond (Yes or No)
Michael Facchiano Contracting	\$237,405.00	yes
Dennis Fleeher Contracting	\$218,976.00	yes
Magnolia Construction	\$223,270.00	yes
Joseph Palmieri Construction	\$196,505.00	yes
Santamaria Landscape & Cement	\$236,273.55	yes

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Belmonte Yes
 Mr. Karas Yes
 Ms. Katchmar Yes
 Ms. Liscio Yes
 Mr. O'Malley Yes
 Mr. Tomasic Yes
 Mr. Porco Yes

Motion: Move to authorize the public works foreman to advertise for sale a used tub grinder.

Moved: Mr. Belmonte
Second: Mr. Tomasic

Voice Vote – all yes

General Report:

1. The speed statistics gathered on Sherwood Road between Morrow and Glasgow will be reviewed by the engineer and reported to council.
2. Committee members were informed that a joint grant submitted by the Turtle Creek Valley COG for the purpose of improving and timing traffic signals along the route 30 corridor has been approved by the Southwestern PA Commission (SPC). The borough's share will come to approximately \$38,000 which represents 20% of the total cost of work to be done in the borough.
3. Bids for a new sewer lining contract will be opened at the July public works committee meeting.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Tomasic

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Motion: Move to approve payment of bills for the month of May in the following amounts:

General Fund Budget:	\$188,114.58
Capital Improvements Plan	\$ 6,432.78
Corrective Action Budget:	\$ 64,829.50
Liquid Fuels:	\$ 932.23
Road Improvement Fund:	\$ 5,330.00
2002 Bond Issue	\$ 14,759.82

Moved: Mr. Tomasic
Second: Mr. O'Malley

Mr. Morus – states he forgot the memo Ms. Liscio e-mailed him re: abstaining from voting incase there are Reinhart invoices.

Mr. Lucas – if you are aware there will be periodic invoices that will need to be abstained from you can keep a written memo on record and or count your vote to indicate approving with exception.

Roll Call Vote:	Mr. Belmonte	Yes
	Mr. Karas	Yes
	Ms. Katchmar	Yes
	Ms. Liscio	Yes / except for Reinhart invoices
	Mr. O'Malley	Yes
	Mr. Tomasic	Yes
	Mr. Porco	Yes / except abstain for Frank Porco, Sr.

Detail of non general Fund Items:

Capital Improvements Plan:	Swimming Pool pump; ball field work at rec center
Corrective Action Budget:	Sanitary Sewer consent order work
Liquid Fuels:	Traffic signals
Road Improvement:	Engineering
2002 Bond Issue:	Public works – new garage

Motion: Move to authorize the manager to inform the borough's auditor, Case Sabatini, that the borough wishes to pick up the option for the 2009 audit at a cost of \$9,990.

Moved: Mr. Tomasic
Second: Mr. Karas

Roll Call Vote:	Mr. Belmonte	Yes
	Mr. Karas	Yes
	Ms. Katchmar	Yes

Ms. Liscio	Yes
Mr. O'Malley	Yes
Mr. Tomasic	Yes
Mr. Porco	Yes

General Report:

1. The committee reviewed the latest budget numbers and the liquid fuels budget to date.
2. Committee members asked the manager to continue the fiduciary liability insurance coverage for the policy pension plan for another year at a slight increase in price (approximately \$300).
3. Members asked that fees for false alarms in the borough be broken out in next years budget to better track them.

BOROUGH PROPERTY

Mr. Karas

Motion: Move to authorize the solicitor to prepare and advertise an ordinance that would prohibit smoking in borough parks.

Moved: Mr. Karas
Second: Mr. Belmonte

Voice Vote – all in favor

General Report:

1. Committee members reviewed previous reports submitted by Gateway Engineers on borough parks. The committee is considering preparing a master plan for borough parks utilizing the recreation board and/or planning commission to assist.
2. The committee asked that borough engineer Paul Gaus provide cost estimates for renovations at Ave L parklet that would include removing part of the parking area except for a handicapped spot and turn area, installation of shrubs around the lot, and planting grass among other work. The committee may consider a motion tonight on soliciting bids for the work depending on that report.

Paul Gaus, engineer – shows council a sketch based on maintaining the handicapped parking at the entrance to the playground area and just having an aisle way to the left making it a grassy area of about 20' x 40' going into the park. Still discussing options for what type of fence to install and whether the parking area would have gravel or be paved.

Include on committee for discussion.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. O'Malley

Motion: Move to authorize the officer in charge and manager to advertise and solicit bids for the purchase of two traffic calming devices that would assess speed and traffic statistical information.

Moved: Mr. O'Malley
Second: Mr. Tomasic

Voice Vote – all in favor

Motion: Move to approve the police department's participation in the East Hills DUI Task Force.

Moved: Mr. O'Malley
Second: Mr. Tomasic

Roll Call Vote:	Mr. Belmonte	Yes
	Mr. Karas	Yes
	Ms. Katchmar	Yes
	Ms. Liscio	No
	Mr. O'Malley	Yes
	Mr. Tomasic	Yes
	Mr. Porco	Yes

General Report:

1. The committee will continue discussions on a new property and evidence policy and a policy for securing video tapes at the July meeting.
2. Members met with Chief Tom Ogden, the consultant hired to assist with the selection of a new police chief.
3. The solicitor provided a large summary of information on mutual aid policies and ordinances in the borough along with draft language on a new ordinance. This will be considered further at the July meeting.

OPERATIONS & POLICY

Ms. Liscio

Motion: Move to approve the minutes from the May 20, 2009 council meeting.

Moved: Ms. Liscio
Second: Mr. Belmonte

Voice Vote – all in favor

General Report:

1. A small independent filmmaker will use the ball fields at the recreation center to shoot scenes from a film he is making about a retiring ball player.
2. The committee asked that the solicitor complete the update of the manager's employment agreement retroactive to January 1, 2009 that will include updated language on the manager's pension plan, the addition of a personal day as a benefit and the extension of severance benefits to 6 months.
3. Members are reviewing personnel evaluation forms drafted by the borough solicitor for personnel affairs.
4. A suggestion has been made that the borough acquires a property along Ardmore Blvd. for use as a library center.

Ms. Liscio would like to have input from council on acquiring property for use as a library center.

Mr. Belmonte comments that he likes the idea from the standpoint of making the business area a community hub.

Ms. Katchmar comments that she agrees but is concerned about the cost to the borough, where would the money come from?

Ms. Liscio comments that long term funding is also her concern and if that can be worked out she has no problem with it.

Mr. Karas comments that he agrees in looking into it but is concerned about the funding.

Mr. Porco comments that the property in question is the old Beacon Auto building across from Speedy Mart.

Motion: Task the planning commission to work with the CDC with the task of investigating the feasibility of placing a library on Ardmore

Moved: Ms. Liscio
Second: Mr. Belmonte

Voice Vote – all in favor

5. Community Day will be held on Saturday, July 4 in the main park. Because of Community Day preparation, borough employees will work their normal hours on Friday, July 3rd and take Monday, July 6th as the holiday.

PLANNING & ZONING

Ms. Katchmar

Motion: Move to approve ordinance no. 988 specifying the location of numbers on residences and other buildings.

Moved: Ms. Katchmar
Second: Ms. Liscio

Ordinance Title Reads as Follows:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF FOREST HILLS, ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 5, PART 2 OF THE FOREST HILLS BOROUGH CODE OF ORDINANCES, PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE, TO REVISE THE REGULATIONS REGARDING THE IDENTIFICATION OF PREMISES.

Note: The major change in ordinance requirements under this change would include the following section:

304.3 Premises and identification. All premises with any structures erected thereon shall have approved address numbers placed in a position which is within the line of sight and plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property, except that address numbers shall not be placed on any structure's garage door. Required address numbers may be placed in a position above a garage door if the address numbers are plainly legible, within the line of sight and plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property and not obstructed at any time by any vehicle or other object located in front of or adjacent to the garage door. These numbers shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be Arabic numerals or alphabet letters. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4 inches (102 mm) high with a minimum stroke width of .05 inch (12.7 mm). The requirements of this section are in addition to and superior to any other less stringent requirements which may exist under the Forest Hills Borough Code of Ordinances.

Roll Call Vote:	Mr. Belmonte	Yes
	Mr. Karas	Yes
	Ms. Katchmar	Yes
	Ms. Liscio	Yes
	Mr. O'Malley	Yes
	Mr. Tomasic	Yes
	Mr. Porco	Yes

General Report:

1. The committee will ask council to consider an increase in rental property inspection fees by \$10 in a new fee resolution effective January 1, 2010. The committee is also considering a similar inspection requirement for homes when they are sold and asked the solicitor to develop the proper language.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

Update on Hosanna House Meeting – Frank forwarded an email to all on the meeting.

Paul Gaus comments that weather permitting the speed humps should be installed next week.

Faith Katchmar: prepared a statement re: civil service protection for the new police chief. **(Statement Attached)**

Mr. O'Malley – this issue has been brought up twice before and voted on by the entire council body, this issue is not eligible for a repeat motion. We are violating Roberts Rules of Order.

Mr. Morus – states that we are not under Roberts Rules of Order, we have our own rules, and fall back on Roberts Rules if we need to and the vote was not taken at a public meeting.

Mr. Porco comments discussions, decisions and votes were made in executive session not a formal meeting.

Mr. Lucas states that any final decision has to be made at a public meeting. Can this issue that Ms. Katchmar raised be voted on tonight, the answer is yes, but it is up to you as to how you want to go about it.

Mr. Tomasic suggests we vote on the motion.

Motion: Move to extend civil service protection to the position of Chief of Police of Forest Hills Borough.

Moved: Ms. Katchmar
Second: Ms. Liscio

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Belmonte Yes
Mr. Karas No

Ms. Katchmar	Yes
Ms. Liscio	Yes
Mr. O'Malley	No
Mr. Tomasic	No
Mr. Porco	No

Mr. Porco makes a few statements on the matter of civil service: within the Western PA area it is about a 50/50 split for civil service protection for a police chief. Many other communities are hiring for accountability, someone to stand accountable for there actions and the actions of there department. We are going to pay this person for there professional leadership and management skills. It doesn't mean they get fired because we felt like it. They would have to demonstrate an inability to do there job.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn or adjourn by acclamation

Moved: Mr. Tomasic
Second: Mr. O'Malley

Voice Vote – all in favor

- Next Scheduled Council Meeting: July 15, 2009
- Next Scheduled Committee Meetings (order to be determined): Tuesday, July 7, 2009 (Borough Property, Public Works, & Planning & Zoning) and Thursday, July 2, 2009 (Finance, Operations & Policy, & Public Safety).

I have prepared a small statement about something that I am very concerned about. It is in regards to Civil Service Protection. By taking away Service status from the Police chief position, the position becomes a political appointment and it's the Council who has the power to appoint or remove him at will. In actuality he then serves and has to comply with the whim of the sitting Council. Even if the rest of the police force is civil service, they still answer to the boss, who answers to the Council. If you honestly believe for a minute that there won't be any politics going on then you really need to evaluate your assessment of this issue. We could expand our political power by removing the chief's position from Civil service but it would not serve the community's law enforcement interests. This could lead to selective enforcement, favoritism, and ticket fixing. Without Civil Service Protection for our Chief the Council of Forest Hills can set the course of action and policies that this person has to follow, but in the same regard it doesn't afford him any protection or control of the actions of current or future elected officials, and that leaves the community at risk. This decision to remove civil service protection will only promote the "good ole boy" mentality.

The Civil Service Act protects employees from arbitrary dismissal, demotion, retaliation, or coercion in any form for political reasons.

The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, and the Reorganization Plans related to it greatly clarified the grounds for taking action against employees whose performance fell below requirements or whose conduct in office became unacceptable. So the argument that this creates a job for life are false. Management needs only to demonstrate that an employee had failed to meet an established standard of performance on a particular aspect of the job, after being given an opportunity to correct any deficits that are presented to them. Civil Service also helps professionalize the workforce in the presence of a politically dominated workplace.

I am adamantly opposed to offering the position of Chief to our officers without civil service protection. It would not be a prudent choice for them or for the community that they serve.

So at this time I would like to make a motion to extend Civil Service Protection to the position of Chief of Police of Forest Hills Borough.