

The regular monthly meeting of the Ebensburg Borough Council was called to order on Monday, April 24, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Room of the Ebensburg Municipal Building by President, Doug Tusing.

Present: Doug Tusing, President
Cecilia Houser, Vice President
Mike Owatt
Jeff Ball
Dave Kuhar
Theresa Jacoby
Bob Miller

Others: Kelly Cook, Borough Manager
Randy Datsko, Mayor
Terry Wyland, Chief of Police
Matt Gribler, Solicitor
Danea Koss, Community Development Director
Dirk Johnson, Recreation Director
Josh Surkovich, Public Works Director
Luke Byrne, Inframark
Breanne Berkebile, The Mountaineer Journal
Katie Smolen, The Tribune Democrat

Audience: 9

A. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. **Public Comments** – None.

C. **Consent Agenda**

Ms. Jacoby made a motion to approve the consent agenda containing the following items. (Houser)
Motion passed unanimously.

1. Approve report of Inframark for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations.
2. Approve report of the Inframark for the Water Treatment Plant Operations.
3. Approve the minutes of the March 27, 2023 regular monthly meeting of Borough Council.
4. Approve the financial statement for March and the quarterly transfers.
5. Approve payment of bills for April. An abstention was made by Mr. Tusing with regard to a mileage reimbursement payment to him, and by Ms. Jacoby with regard to a payment to the First Christian Church in memory of Brandon Jacoby.

D. **Appointments to Address Council** – Ms. Laura Wolf, Wolf’s Performing Arts at 226 W. High Street, voiced concerns about the crosswalk on the 200 block of West High Street. In light of a recent accident at the that intersection, she requested that the borough consider making some improvements to the crosswalk and specifically shared ideas like improving the lighting, repainting the crosswalk lines, adding flashing lights around the existing crosswalk signage, etc. She also requested that the borough consider allowing their members to have access to the Borough’s back parking lot until those improvements have been made.

- E. **Mayor's Report** – Mayor Datsko reported that, in addition to problems at the High & Julian Street crosswalk, there have been complaints of motorists running stop signs. He also added a reminder to residents to be sure to trim tree branches along their property that may impede the visibility of any road signs or could possibly scratch passing vehicles.
- E. **Consideration of Any Motion(s) to Amend Agenda** –
Ms. Houser made a motion to amend the agenda to add item 8C to discuss the High & Julian Street crosswalks and revisit the use of the borough parking lot. (Jacoby) Motion passed unanimously.
- F. **Council President** – None.
- G. **Water/Wastewater Committee**
1. **Ordinance #666**
Mr. Kuhar recommended that final approval be granted to Ordinance #666 determining the Borough to incur lease rental debt under the Pennsylvania Local Government Unit Debt Act, by its guaranty of a loan in the amount of \$622,000. (Owatt) Motion passed unanimously.
 2. **Report from Inframark on Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations**
Report was accepted and approved as part of the consent agenda.
 3. **Report from Inframark on Water Treatment Plant Operations**
Report was accepted and approved as part of the consent agenda.
- H. **Recreation Committee**
1. **Dog Park Project**
Ms. Jacoby made a motion to approve the payment request from Straw Construction for \$69,276.82, pending the engineer's approval. (Miller) Motion passed unanimously.
 2. **Swimming Pool Renovation Project**
Ms. Jacoby reported that the Borough received a state grant in the amount of \$134,600 and the renovations are expected to be between \$280,000 and \$350,000. Staff is continuing to pursue more revenue sources but recommends that the project is placed for bid as soon as possible so that the work can be performed this fall. The Borough has the money necessary for the project within the capital projects fund, should no additional funds be secured.

Ms. Jacoby made a motion to approve preparation of documents and subsequently putting the project out for bid. (Kuhar) Motion passed unanimously.
 3. The Recreation Board and Committee recommend the approval of Diane Hoffman to fill a vacancy.

Ms. Jacoby made a motion to approve the appointment of Diane Hoffman to the Recreation Board for a five-year term, expiring 12/2027. (Houser) Motion passed unanimously.

I. Street Committee

1. High Street Waterline Project Paving Repairs

Ms. Houser reported that due to continued cold temperatures, final paving repairs for last year’s waterline project did not start this week as was planned. The contractor is scheduled to initiate work May 1st, weather permitting.

2. 2023 Street Paving Project

Ms. Houser reported that Council has been provided with a list of streets to be resurfaced and a cost estimate of approximately \$185,580. Staff is preparing the bid documents for the project which will be advertised for bid on April 27th and May 4th. Bids will be opened on May 18, 2023 at noon with a scheduled award date at the May 22, 2023 Council Meeting.

4. Crosswalk and Parking Lot

Mr. Tusing resumed the discussion on crosswalk safety and the use of the borough parking lot. He commented that ensuring that our streets are safe is everyone’s first priority and that staff will perform research and seek input from PennDOT to determine how best to improve the visibility and safety of this area. Chief Wyland added that some options could include cleaning the lamp post shades and eliminating the second crosswalk to the west.

A discussion ensued regarding the possibility of re-opening the Borough Parking lot for public parking after 5pm, pending the application of potential improvements to the nearby crosswalk. Ms. Houser made a motion to open the borough parking lot back up to the public for six months, not to include the borough employee parking spaces and no overnight parking will remain in effect. (Jacoby) Roll call was taken:

Houser	Yes	Miller	Yes	Kuhar	Yes
Tusing	Yes	Owatt	Yes	Ball	No
Jacoby	Yes				

Motion passed 6-1.

J. Administration Committee

1. Summer Hires

The following applicants were hired for summer employment:

<u>Summer Public Works</u>	
Tobey Becquet	2 nd yr.
Brock Martin	2 nd yr.
Bob Koscho	2 nd yr.
Gabe Forst	2 nd yr.
Jason Bacho	2 nd yr.
Landen Connor	1 st yr.

<u>Swimming Pool Manager</u>	
Nolan Johnson	8 th yr.

Co Head-Lifeguards

Abbey O'Brien 5th yr.
Karson Johnson 5th yr.

Lifeguards

Jaylee Sikora	6 th yr.	Kayden Magulick	2 nd yr.
Elizabeth Bopp	6 th yr.	Maya Sirsikar	2 nd yr.
Tina Hildebrand	6 th yr.	Gwendalyn Fodor	2 nd yr.
Tessa Novotny	5 th yr.	Naveen Sirsikar	2 nd yr.
Loralyn Simmers	5 th yr.	Jemma Sikora	1 st yr.
Jewel Sikora	2 nd yr.	Ryan Broderick	1 st yr.
Taylor Ream	2 nd yr.	Ian Estep	1 st yr.
Maggie McCullough	2 nd yr.	Deklan Estep	1 st yr.
		Victoria Griffith	1 st yr.

Ms. Houser made it a matter of record that that the persons listed above will be hired to the respective positions and that pay for public works and lifeguards is \$10.50 per hour. The head lifeguard rate is \$11.50 per hour and the pool manager rate is \$14.50 per hour.

2. Police Chief Retirement

Mr. Kuhar reported that long-time Chief of Police, Terry Wyland, has formally announced his retirement effective July 1, 2023. The position should be placed for advertisement.

Mr. Kuhar made a motion to approve the advertisement to fill the upcoming vacancy. (Miller) Motion passed unanimously.

3. Hiring of Police Officer

Council needs to notify the Civil Service Commission of a possible vacancy within the department to begin the hiring process.

Ms. Jacoby made a motion to notify the Civil Service Commission of the need to develop an eligibility list. (Kuhar) Motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Works Vacancy

Mr. Kuhar reported that long-time employee, Randy Lauer, has announced his retirement in July. Public works currently has a vacancy for a Laborer I and interviews have been conducted to fill that vacancy as well as the upcoming vacancy. Jordan McEvoy has been hired with a start date of May 1, 2023. Applications will continue to be accepted for the remaining vacant position.

K. Diversity Committee – None.

L. General Business

1. Blair Pawlowski Retirement

Ms. Cook reported that the Borough's long-term solicitor has announced his retirement at the end of June. The Borough has paid the retainer for the law office of Pawlowski, Long & Gribler

for the full year, as on occasion, Attorney Long and Attorney Gribler have provided services in assistance to Attorney Pawlowski. Staff has spoken to Matt Gribler and the law office will continue to honor the retainer and agreement with the Borough, if Council is so inclined.

Ms. Houser made a motion to approve continuing the agreement and retainer with the law office of Pawlowski, Long & Gribler to serve as the Borough's solicitor for the remainder of the year. (Owatt) Motion passed unanimously.

2. EPA Lead and Copper Rule

Ms. Cook reported that the federal government passed legislation related to the use of lead and copper in water distribution lines and guidelines for compliance were issued by DEP last month. Each water system nationwide will need to provide a full inventory of all services lines within the entire system by October of 2024. This will require multi-point verification, which means personnel will have to confirm the material used for the service lines at the point of entrance to a home or building as well as on both sides of the curb stop.

In addition to the massive amount of fieldwork required by Public Works to investigate each line, a significant amount of data will need to be collected and input into a state database. All of this is far more than current employees can handle and staff is looking into the possibility of part-time assistance for inputting data and conducting inspections. Staff is also considering the purchase of a hydrovac truck which will allow for easier access to the curb stops and avoid the need for countless PA one-calls to uncover and inventory the service lines.

In the meantime, the Municipal Authority has initiated the design phase of a water line replacement project. Funding requirements have already been updated to include elements of the Lead and Copper Rule noted above. In order to proceed expeditiously with the procurement of funds for this project, residents and property owners within the project area will be asked to provide information and photos of their incoming service lines. While such information can be used for now, ultimately those lines will need to be inspected by a Borough representative prior to October 2024.

Ms. Cook shared that staff will continue to examine available options to fill manpower and/or equipment needs, but not formal needs to be taken by Council at this time. She added that the Municipal Authority approved the purchase of the hydrovac machine and that staff will begin scheduling appointments with customers soon.

M. Department Report

- 1. Police Department** – Chief Wyland reported on the recent hoax calls to Bishop Carroll High School and area schools. He shared that the department's response time was under two minutes and around 16 different departments were onsite within 10 minutes. He noted that all went well with just a few minor changes to be made.
- 2. Public Works Department** – Mr. Surkovich reported that the gas company has wrapped up their recent project and two public works employees, Jerry Poruban and Logan Prokop, recently passed their CDL written exams.

3. **Community Development** – Ms. Koss reported on four new business openings; Bono’s Customer Leather, Stahl Sheaffer Engineering, Bootleggers Home Brew Shop and the Back Room Saloon. She included updates on Art in Bloom, the community Earth Day event, and Memorial Day.

3. **Recreation Department** – Mr. Johnson reported on a recent 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament hosted by Bella Mesoras. The tournament hosted 18 teams. He also added that the Tennis Center roof is in need of repairs to prevent condensation from forming inside the structure causing water to drip onto the courts.

N. **Media Comments/Questions** – None.

O. **Public Comments**

1. Mr. John Cobaugh, E. High Street, made the comment that specific times should be added to the parking signage in the borough parking lot.
2. Mr. Mike Murphy, N. Spruce Street, asked how a hydrovac truck would determine if piping is made of lead or copper.
3. Mr. Tom Bortel, E. Sample Street, asked if the copper piping was good or bad.

P. **Adjournment** – There being no further business, Ms. Houser made a motion to adjourn. (Jacoby) Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned 7:40 PM

Minutes Recorded by: Danea Koss, Community Development Director