

The regular monthly meeting of the Ebensburg Borough Council was called to order on Monday, September 25, 2023, at 6:32 p.m. in the Council Room of the Ebensburg Municipal Building by President, Doug Tusing.

- Present: Doug Tusing, President
Cecilia Houser, Vice President
Jeff Ball
Theresa Jacoby
Dave Kuhar
Mike Owatt
Bob Miller
Abraham Remillard, Junior Councilor
Isaac Bradley, Junior Councilor
- Others: Kelly Cook, Borough Manager
Randy Datsko, Mayor
Joseph Loughran, Chief of Police
Danea Koss, Community Development Director
Dirk Johnson, Recreation Director
Matt Gribler, Solicitor
Luke Byrne, Inframark
Dwayne Lowry, Inframark
Mike Bellvia, Pro Disposal
Breanne Berkebile, The Mountaineer Journal
Katie Smolen, The Tribune Democrat

Audience: 15

- A. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Mr. Tusing announce that as a matter of record, Council held an Executive Session directly prior to the Regular Meeting for purposes of interviewing final candidates for the new police officer position.
- B. **Public Comments** – None.
- C. **Junior Councilor** – Mr. Isaac Bradley, a high school junior at Central Cambria High School, was administered the oath of office and sworn in as Ebensburg Borough’s Junior Councilor.
- D. **Consent Agenda**
Ms. Houser made a motion to approve the consent agenda containing the following items. (Owatt)
Motion passed unanimously.
1. Approve report of Inframark for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations.
 2. Approve report of Inframark for the Water Treatment Plant Operations.
 3. Approve the minutes of the August 28, 2023, regular monthly meeting.
 4. Approve the financial statement for August.
 5. Approve payment of bills for September.
- E. **Appointments to Address Council** – None.

F. Consideration of Any Motion(s) to Amend Agenda

Ms. Houser made a motion to amend the agenda to include Council's consideration of a request from the Cambria County Historical Society. They are requesting that the borough serve as applicant for a grant request for a window replacement project at the A.W. Buck House home of the Cambria County Historical Society. (Jacoby) Motion passed unanimously, and the item was formally added to the agenda.

Ms. Jacoby subsequently made a motion to approve the request from the Cambria County Historical Society to have the borough serve as the applicant for the grant request for a window replacement project. (Houser) Motion passed unanimously.

G. Mayor's Report – None.

H. Council President Comments – Mr. Tusing shared that he had received two letters from Mr. Ron Springer. One was on behalf of Dauntless Fire Company citing concerns about the poor conditions of the former County Jail property. The other was a letter of resignation from his post with the Borough as a seasonal landscaper. Mr. Tusing publicly thanked Mr. Springer for his many years of work for the Borough and added that that position would be open and available for next summer.

I. Water/Wastewater Committee

1. Report from Inframark on Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations

Mr. Kuhar shared that Inframark's written report was submitted regarding operations, projects, and activities at the wastewater plant for Council review.

2. Report from Inframark on Water Treatment Plant Operations

Mr. Kuhar reminded that Inframark's written report was submitted regarding operations, projects and activities at the water plant for Council review.

J. Recreation Committee

1. Dog Park Project

Ms. Jacoby stated that the new Dog Park is being used by residents and that the grand opening was a successful event.

K. Street Committee

1. 2023 Street Paving Project

Mr. Owatt reported that bids were awarded to New Enterprise Corporation in the amount of \$175,572.30 and New Enterprise commenced paving on August 24th and completed it on August 30th.

2. Sidewalk and Curbing Project

Mr. Owatt reported that bids were awarded in February to CH & D Construction in the amount of \$136,827.88. The tentative start date for this is September 28, 2023 with an expected completion of October 10, 2023, well before their December 1, 2023 deadline.

L. Administration Committee

1. Full-time Police Officer

Mr. Kuhar reported that four applications were received for the position, and one applicant was unable to make the mandatory testing date. One applicant failed the written examination. All testing is now completed and the Civil Service Board has certified the final list of two candidates. The Chief, Mayor, Manager and Council members interviewed the two finalists.

Mr. Kuhar made a motion to approve the hiring of Jim Bogus as a full-time police officer, effective October 16, 2023, subject to pre-employment medical and psychological exams. (Houser) Motion passed unanimously.

2. 2024 Budget

Ms. Houser reported that preparations for the 2024 budget began with a meeting of the Administrative Committee on September 6, 2023. There is an objective of presenting a preliminary budget at the October meeting which would be finalized in November. Heavy emphasis will be placed on reviewing all services and fees in an effort to avoid an increase in taxes. Council members are asked to provide suggestions for cost savings and/or revenue enhancements to the Borough Manager for consideration in the budget preparation process.

3. Employee Pension Plans

Ms. Jacoby reported that last month, Council passed Resolution 2023-04 establishing an employee contribution rate of 3% (unchanged) for the non-uniformed pension plan for 2024. However, upon further review and discussion with the actuaries, it has been determined that the rate should be increased to 5%.

Ms. Jacoby made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-09 establishing an employee contribution rate of 5% for the non-uniformed pension plan for 2024. (Owatt) Motions passed unanimously.

M. Diversity Committee – None.

N. General Business

1. Ebensburg Municipal Airport

Ms. Cook reported that RACRA requested the Borough engineer to look at the existing hangar, which is owned by the Borough, to determine the feasibility of rehabilitation of the hangar. After this review, the structural engineer determined the hangar could not be rehabilitated.

After July's meeting, Council sought a second opinion from a structural engineer. This engineer recently met with staff and believes it is possible to repair the existing hangar. It is anticipated that a report and the cost for the preparation of specifications for repairs will be received within a month.

2. Garbage & Recycling Contract

Ms. Cook reported that the garbage/recycling contract expires at the end of 2023. Bids were advertised and opened on September 19th. Details of the two bids received are as follows:

	<u>Current</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>
Pro Disposal, Inc.	\$149,780.00	\$236,995.20	\$260,669.40	\$278,140.20
Waste Management		\$290,167.20	\$310,423.20	\$332,198.40
		<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	
Pro Disposal, Inc.		\$297,256.80	\$324,729.00	
Waste Management		\$355,492.80	\$380,433.00	

The bid cost of other related services are:

Pro Disposal	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>
OPTION 1					

Spring clean-up	\$5,000.00	\$6,125.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,500.00	\$7,750.00
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OPTION 2

1 Bulk item per customer per month for scheduled pickup: No extra cost

Additional Can

Cost per month	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$9.00
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Waste Mgmt.	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>
OPTION 1					

Spring clean-up	No Bid
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OPTION 2

1 Bulk item per customer per month for scheduled pickup: No extra cost

Additional Can

Cost per month	\$120	\$128.40	\$137.39	\$147.01	\$157.30
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The borough's current customer charge is \$18.50/mo. There will need to be an adjustment of rates, depending upon the outcome. With the spring cleanup this would result in a fee of \$28.14 a month and without the cleanup it is \$27.62 a month. As in the past, resident rates would stay the same throughout the entire 5-year contract.

A question was asked about the viability of recycling programs in general. Pro Disposal operates the only functional recycling site in Cambria County. In addition to its own customers, they accept recyclables from Waste Management and the county's program. The market is volatile. When the market is poor Pro Disposal is able to store recyclables for later disposal, but storage is limited. There may be times when recyclables do end up in the landfill for lack of any other option.

Mr. Miller made a motion to award a contract to Pro Disposal for weekly garbage collection and recycling service for the 5-year period beginning January 1, 2024 plus Option 1. (Owatt) Motion passed unanimously.

O. Department Report

1. **Police Department** – Chief Loughran reported that a new reporting system has been implemented. It will appear that there has been an uptick in incidents, however, this is just due to the reporting changes that have been made.
2. **Public Works Department** – Public Works Director Josh Surkovich had submitted a written report on the public works department’s activities during the month.
3. **Community Development** – Ms. Danae Koss reported on recent events including the upcoming PotatoFest and Volunteer Appreciation Night and Main Street Happy Hour. She added that Trick or Treat is scheduled for October 29th from 1 to 4 pm.
4. **Recreation Department** – Mr. Dirk Johnson reported that there were no bids received for the swimming pool project and that it would be put out for bid again.

P. Media Comments/Questions – None

Q. Public Comments

1. Ms. Barb Cordoro, Margaret Street, expressed concerns with the poor condition of Lake Street and the danger that it poses to the public.
2. Ms. Jeanne McIntosh, 502 Margaret Street, also expressed concern with Lake Street and stated that it did not get curbed. The Borough will look into the situation further, but it was believed that Lake Street is not an ordained street, and as such, is not the responsibility of the Borough with regard to maintenance or improvements.
3. Mr. Bill Link, Spruce Street, asked if the large can that Pro Disposal will be providing to all residents is required or optional. It was noted that the new cans will be required of all residents, but that a smaller option is available for those who generate less garbage.
4. Mr. Tom Bortel, E. Sample Street, if anyone had looked further out with regard to the pricing for garbage/recycling.

R. Executive Session – As noted above, an Executive Session was held prior to the Regular meeting for the purposes of interviewing final candidates for the new police officer position.

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

Meeting Adjourned 7:12 PM

Minutes Recorded by: Danae Koss, Community Development Director