

**MINUTES
BLAWNOX BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regular Meeting March 13th, 2024**

Call to Order

Vice President Stoddard called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. in Council Chambers. A Zoom was set up for anyone that was not feeling well or not comfortable attending in person.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

The roll was called to establish a quorum.

Council Members Present: Elaine Palmer, Christine Carnevali, Katie Coban, and Vice President Randall Stoddard.

Council Members Not Present: Meghan Kennedy and President Deborah Laskey

Also Present: Mayor Anthony Gross, Solicitor Dalfonso, Engineer Gordon Taylor, Junior Council Member Jacob Anthikad and Borough Manager Kathy Ulanowicz. Assistant Borough Manager Mallori McDowell via Zoom.

Comments from the Public

- 1) Thomas Witas Jr. asked council for the date and the media that the open council position was advertised. Solicitor Dalfonso shared that the position was not advertised. Mr. Witas asked if it was required to be advertised. Solicitor Dalfonso shared that it is not required.

Agenda Items

Motion to approve Council Meeting Minutes of the February 14th, 2024 meeting.

Moved: Mr. Stoddard Second: Ms. Palmer Motion Carried: 4-0

Motion to approve bills from the General Fund for February in the amount \$74,793.98.

Moved: Ms. Coban Second: Ms. Carnevalli Motion Carried: 4-0

Mrs. Dolhi 100th Birthday Proclamation – Read by Mayor Gross. The Borough also has citations from Representative Steele and Senator Williams.

Motion to Accept the resignation of John Simmons from Borough Council effective March 13th

Moved: Ms. Palmer Second: Ms. Coban Motion Carried: 3-0

Motion to approve Mark Lombardi to fill the council member vacancy

Moved: Mr. Stoddard Second: Ms. Coban Motion Carried: 4-0

Mr. Lombardi was sworn in to Council by Mayor Gross.

Finance Committee

- 1) Motion to Approve the sale of the 2008 Public Works truck for \$5,800 to Ricupero LLC.
Moved: Mr. Stoddard Second: Ms. Coban Motion Carried: 5-0

Property and Planning

- 1) Committee met for Community Park Planning – Hoping to continue working with the High School students to have music in the park.

Strategic Planning – Nothing at this time

Public Safety

- 1) Fire Department Volunteer recruitment/ incentives for fire fighters, capital improvement budgeting. – The Borough and Fire Department attended a meeting with O'Hara to discuss recruitment, training, and budgeting together.
- 2) Fire Department Application for a SAFER Grant – The Fire Department is putting in a SAFER Grant to get a grant writer to write a grant for recruitment and retention. The Deadline is soon, and they have the stuff together, but O'Hara Township may want to be involved. The Fire Department will be submitting with or without O'Hara.
- 3) Lighted Crosswalk Update – Manager Ulanowicz will sign the estimate for the lighted crosswalk purchase and installation tomorrow. The time frame for the project is 30-60 days. The lights did not cost as much as we received for the grant so we would like to repurpose some of the money for an emergency light for the Fire Department. Senator Williams office said this is something they can help us with.

Public Works

- 1) Meter's ownership size and right away – Commercial meters are expensive, and they are getting old and need to be replaced but it is hard to make the owners replace them. Should we instead take ownership and charge a meter fee over time for the large meters. Council decided to table this discussion for the next council meeting.
- 2) Leak Detection Invoice – There was a leak on Cable Avenue, and we had the leak detection person come out and he didn't find any leaks on our line. So, the resident also had the leak detection guy come out and check their service line. Public Works eventually found the leak and it was on our water line. The resident would like us to pay their bill. We originally were not sure it was our water because it did not test positive for chlorine so we thought it might be storm water. Council feels that since we did not ask them to do the leak detection it is not our responsibility.
- 3) Water Line Inventory – A Lead line inventory is being required by the DEP. Engineer Taylor has provided us with a questionnaire they created that will ask residents about their equipment and the lines in their house. We will be sending it out to residents to submit.

Community Events

- 1) Memorial Day – We are starting to prepare and call people. The committee is interested in maybe eliminating the picnic at the park and maybe making hotdogs and chips at the monument instead. Most people do not attend the picnic at the park.
- 2) Best of Blawnox
 - a. Egg Hunt March 24th – Howard Hanna is in charge of the event and Best of Blawnox will provide the workers. The event will be held from 1 to 3 pm.
 - b. Earth Day April 20th – We will be cleaning up along Freeport Road, although anyone who wants to tackle their own street is welcome. The dumpster will be at the Borough Building. Please bring a broom and shovel if you have one. The rain date will be the following weekend.
 - c. Spring Art Fling June 15th – There will be a basket raffle at the Spring Art Fling because there will be no Fall Festival this year. Although there will still be a Mum Sale.
- 3) Centennial Committee – They are currently running a Sweatshirt Fundraiser. They need to sell more sweatshirts. They also have the Brick Memorial up and running. Manager Ulanowicz was the first order. All of it is done online. The bricks are for a Veteran that has lived or lives in Blawnox. The cost is \$100. Although this is a fundraiser for the Centennial it will still be carried on after the Centennial if there are bricks remaining. The Company requests only 3 lines. We are getting 1,600 bricks to put in as place holders for the ones we will sell. Overbeck's will be doing the work to set the bricks. The committee is also working on an Ornament to sell. They are waiting for an invoice so the Borough can pay for the ornaments. They are requesting 50% down and the rest within 15 days of receiving the ornaments. The committee is also still working on having a painting made from a picture of Blawnox that can be raffled off. The committee shared that they are having trouble getting any traction, they only have \$2,300 in the account. So, the Simmons Family and Jill Fusaro who have been leading the committee are resigning from their positions. They are still willing to help and be involved. Council wants to acknowledge all their work and thank them for their help.

Reports (Available Upon Request)

- A. Manager's Report – No Questions**
- B. Engineer's Report – Nothing new**

Old Business

ALCOSAN Multi Municipal Sanitary Sewer Line Transfer – We are so close to this being complete. Royston finished the work they had to do and ALCOSAN got their report.

363 Walnut Street & 933 Cable Avenue Water Meter Replacement – Solicitor Dalfonso has written a couple of letters, and we are waiting for the time given to run out.

38 Riverside Ct – The Borough has learned that the owners are once again living in this house. Code Enforcement will once again be posting to Condemn tomorrow. This will allow us to give them time to vacate and then we will be able to padlock the property.

Social Media Records Retention – Manager Ulanowicz went back and spoke to the Archival People. They have offered us \$249 a month plus two months free to cover the set up fee. Solicitor Dalfonso shared that if we just didn't allow comments on our Social Media, it may prevent the need for archival. Council decided to revisit in six months.

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New Business

Anti-Retaliation Ordinance – This is an ordinance some local communities have been looking into. It has to do with landlord tenant relationships. While it is covered by the Landlord Tenant Laws it is a way Boroughs can work to prevent landlords from retaliating if their tenants file a complaint. It is something we can do if we want. Council will discuss this again at the meeting next month.

Creative Communities Initiative Grant – We applied for a multi-year arts grant, but we found out we did not get it. When Manager Ulanowicz spoke to them, they said first year applicants never get picked but they were very impressed with our application, and they have a pot of money they can offer to people who do not get the grant. They offered us the money which is \$6,250.00 and Manager Ulanowicz would like to use it to help pay for the Best of Blawnox mural.

Motion to use the money from the Creative Communities grant to help pay for the Best of Blawnox Mural

Moved: Mr. Stoddard

Second: Ms. Coban

Motion Carried: 5-0

Comments from the Public – Non-Agenda Items

The EMA Coordinator would like to share that there are some employees and council members who need to do IS100 and IS700 so that we are in compliance. He will send the Information to Manager Ulanowicz.

The EMA Coordinator would also like to ask about the Tax Relief for Volunteer Fire Fighters. He knows that the ordinance was passed and was wondering where we stood on that. Manager Ulanowicz shared that the Borough had asked the Fire Department for criteria that would make a Firefighter eligible, and we were still waiting to receive that.

Grace, who works with Senator Williams wanted to let Council Members know they can reach out at any time to the office with any questions and problems. They are there to help us with anything we may need.

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

ATTEST:


Kathy Ulanowicz
Borough Manager


Randy Stoddard
Borough Council Vice President