

MINUTES
BLAWNOK BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regular Meeting October 11th, 2023

Call to Order

Vice President Stoddard called the meeting to order at 6:30 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: Katie Coban, John Simmons, Vice President Randall Stoddard, and Christine Carnevali.

Council Members Not Present: Meghan Kennedy, Elaine Palmer, President Deborah Laskey

Also Present: Mayor Anthony Gross, Junior Council Member Jacob Anthikad, Engineer Gordon Taylor, Solicitor Samuel Dalfonso, and Borough Manager Kathy Ulanowicz.

Comments from the Public

Homeowners from Carla Drive – There was a pothole that was patched. Is that permanent? It is cold patch and will be permanent at least until the weather breaks. It is too cold for asphalt. Dan the president of the Carla Drive Homeowners Association also has an issue with parking on Carla Dr. near the intersection with Center Ave. They would like a line painted in the area where a van parks making it hard to get in and out of Carla drive, it is not a wide Street and there are no sidewalks. There was a lengthy discussion about the property at 108 Carla Drive and the at home business. Finally they would like to know about the \$45 line fee, what it is for and how long it will be here. Councilman Stoddard says he does not believe it will go away. It was the most economical way for people to contribute to the repairs of the sewer system. Borough Manager Ulanowicz shared that it partly pays for the processing of sewage and the repairs of the sewer lines. They would like to know why they can't charge the fee to every apartment, we can only charge if there is a line and meter.

Agenda Items

Motion to approve Council Meeting Minutes of the September 13th, 2023 meeting.

Moved: Mr. Stoddard

Second: Mr. Simmons

Motion Carried: 4-0

Motion to approve bills from the General Fund for September in the amount
\$1,497,995.78

Moved: Mr. Stoddard

Second: Ms. Coban

Motion Carried: 4-0

Finance Committee

- 1) Borough Administration is working on the draft budget for 2024. Soon council will have it for their review. The budget will be on the agenda for advertisement for November.

Property and Planning – Nothing at this time

Strategic Planning – Nothing at this time

Public Safety

- 1) Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development recommendation discussion – Councilman Simmons shared that council all received a copy of the study on the fire department merger. The DCED study has a recommendation for a merger. Councilman Simmons feels we need to do a little more research before we make a decision on the merger. Manager Ulanowicz would like to know if Borough Council would authorize Blawnox Borough to move forward with looking into a merger with the local communities? Councilman Stoddard feels it is important to look into it. Solicitor Dalfonso shared that there is an attorney out of Greensburg who is one of the top guys who deals with Fire mergers like this. He suggests that as we move along with this it might be good to utilize him as a resource. Everyone is on board with moving forward with how this might work.
- 2) There is going to be a meeting with PennDot next Friday on the Crosswalks at 1:00pm.

Public Works

- 1) 210 Walnut Street Water Update – Mr. D'Alessandro no longer has running water in his garage and he thanks us for our hard work. Solicitor Dalfonso asked if we ever found anything. Manager Ulanowicz shared that there were two things first there was another break on Walnut that Public Works fixed and then also they changed some valves. There was a valve that went to the old water system and they fixed it and it made a difference.

Community Events

- 1) Movies/ Music in the park – Fox Chapel has a busking club and Christine wondered if maybe we could ask them if they would be interested in playing in the park. Jacob is part of the club and he will work with Christine on some programming for the spring. Councilman Stoddard asked if we heard anything about movies in the park. Manager Ulanowicz shared that our budget is tight so she isn't sure that we could do many movies in the park. She said she hadn't looked into it much but she will continue to look.
- 2) Best of Blawnox Update – They just had their fall festival. It was very successful and was a gorgeous day. They had 29-33 ish vendors and sold lots of Mums. Carol Hillwig organized and did a fabulous job. Collected about 3 boxes of food for the new Food Pantry.
- 3) Centennial Committee Update – they are moving along. They still have t-shirts for sale. You can buy them on their website. The bar crawl is scheduled for October 21st. This will coincide with the Fire Department Car Show. The Car Show was postponed to next weekend. You can get your band for the bar crawl online. They have started going around asking for donations. They are also looking into the idea of the bricks around the monument. There is an interest from some people in buying some bricks. The idea still needs to be flushed out a little bit.

Reports (Available Upon Request)

A. Manager's Report – No questions

B. Engineer's Report – Gordon Taylor – In the packets

- 1) They submitted the CDBG 50 grant for the 10 water line valves.
- 2) They gave us the information to submit an LSA Grant for the McKinley Avenue Stairs.
- 3) Our basketball court is almost finished. Manager Ulanowicz was concerned about the end of the court because there is a wall with a path below it. We did a change order for fencing, but Manager Ulanowicz didn't realize they only planned to put some fencing for the two edges but not along the wall. Mayor Gross suggests that we should put up some signs that say do not climb. Solicitor Dalfonso feels that we are covered and people are putting themselves at their own risk by climbing. The other issue with the court is that the tension wire was not installed at the bottom of the fence. We are going to have them come back and install that.
- 4) Manager Ulanowicz shared that we got the Greenway Trails grant money and then we will not submit for the DCNR money until KGD is totally done.

Old Business

Chuvale Sherriff Sale has been Postponed – He has a new payment plan for his bankruptcy so we can not Sheriff Sale him.

Carr Sheriff Sale 209 Summit Drive – Mr. Carr was scheduled for Sheriff Sale but he filed for bankruptcy.

Rock Snake Update – It is going to be installed near the monument. Ms. Schade has created a sign and a few pieces and they are on Manager Ulanowicz's desk.

LSA Sidewalk Money Update – Manager Ulanowicz contacted the gentleman to see if we can repurpose the additional funding. We have to get estimates for what we want to do and submit it with a plan and he will try to get it approved. Manager Ulanowicz has two sidewalk companies giving an estimate for repairing the outside ramp to the Managers office.

New Business

Cooper Siegel Library Jill McConnell – She wants to thank us for our financial support and for working with her for trying to bring more services to our community. In 2022 they resumed full hours and gave library cards to every student in the Fox Chapel School District, about 4,000. They just completed a new strategic plan. As part of the new strategic plan they just submitted a \$78,000 RAD Transformative Community Grant. One of the projects is the remote access pickup lockers that would be on Tony Martini's property near Jersey Mike's. One locker will also be a return locker. They are also adding these lockers outside of the Sharpsburg library. They are also embarking on a 2 million dollar Capital Campaign. They will also be applying for a \$750,000 Keystone grant. Most of the funds will be to rehab the lower level of the library. Mayor Gross wondered if they can track the use of the library cards given to the school district? They can but have not yet. Vice President Stoddard wonders if they are in touch of other libraries in the area to see if they can get funding ideas.

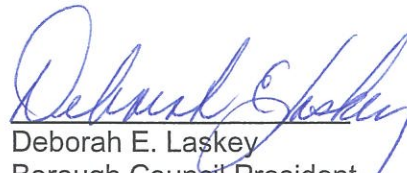
Comments from the Public – Non-Agenda Items – No Comments

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

ATTEST:


Kathy Ulanowicz
Borough Manager


Deborah E. Laskey
Borough Council President