

AVONDALE BOROUGH  
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 20, 2024

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Council President, Paul Morgan, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. In attendance were Vice President Mike Essmaker, Members Stephanie Reichert, Janet Watts, and Lucas Ortiz. Mayor Susan Rzucidlo was absent. Also in attendance were Solicitor Kim Venzie, Borough Engineer, Tom Wilkes, Treasurer Joan McVaugh, and Administrator Sharon Norris. Lieutenant Joe Versagli from the Southern Chester County Regional Police Department and Brent Hazelwood from Windriver Environmental (KBX) were present.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Mr. Morgan announced that an executive session will be held after tonight's meeting to discuss personnel.

SOUTHERN CHESTER COUNTY REGIONAL POLICE REPORT – Lt. Versagli recapped the most recent report highlighting traffic on Church Rd. reviewing their second quarter report and reported on the Church Street traffic count. Sgt. Brown happened to be in the vicinity of a victim calling for help and was able to respond before the victim suffered any physical harm. The Borough Council were appreciative of his quick action.

FACILITIES OPERATOR UPDATE – Mr. Hazelwood was in attendance having just attended a meeting of the Water and Sewer Committee. Mr. Essmaker reported on what was discussed:

- Reservoir Cover Update – JH Waters will be doing the repair to the cover the week of August 26th.
- How to bring electricity to the reservoir. Mr. Hazelwood has contacted four solar companies and is trying to get a quote from PECO
- Pipe Data View is currently in the borough making repairs. They had previously found thirty-eight areas in need of repair; however, since the water table is higher at this time, they have found additional areas to repair. The Borough authorized PDV to check in with Mr. Hazelwood periodically as they go around town.
- Wells 13 and 14
  - DEP permitting could take up to 6 months
  - Mr. Lutz provided a projections list of items that need to be considered before the wells can begin operation.
  - Connection from Wells 13 and 14 to Wells 1 and 2 (grant submitted for this project)
  - Operating them separately or blending them together (solve the hardness issue)
  - Redesign backwash valve system from manual to automatic

- Stormwater

Street sweeping to combat flooding – partner with neighboring municipalities to utilize their resources.

It was noted that Pipe DataView did not clean the pipes on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Ms. Reichert asked if we could ask neighboring municipalities that send their stormwater to Avondale to assist the Borough in dealing with it. Mr. Wilkes noted that most storm systems can handle a 5–10-year storm but these recent storms have been much more intensive than that.

- Convert existing tank to EQ tank – The engineer is working on a proposal for this work and will submit an LSA grant application to cover the cost of the project.
- Need to secure a grant to lift the new wells out of the flood plain.

- Mapping is currently taking place and progressing nicely.

**BUSINESS:**

- Formation of Subcommittee to formulate after-hours emergency procedures – The Council has no procedures for after-hours emergencies that do not involve the Emergency Management team. Therefore, it was decided that a committee should be formed to develop an after-hours emergency procedure to include contact information, chain of command, where to get supplies, etc. Ms. Watts volunteered to be on the committee along with Ms. Norris and Ms. McVaugh. They will prepare a procedure for Council’s review at the next Council meeting. Once approved this will be provided to the Emergency Management team for inclusion in the EM Manual.
- Discussion of Stormwater Runoff and its Impact on Residents, especially on Church Road – the Mayor has been contacted by two residents regarding stormwater eroding their driveways. They have asked for assistance from the Borough. The recent storm severely impacted their properties, and the hope is that they can submit the invoice to PEMA for assistance. The Council discussed wanting to assist residents but noted it is also important to spend Borough money equitably.
- Reservoir Cover Replacement Project  
Consideration of Payment Request #5 from Eastern Environmental for the new fencing at the Reservoir – Mr. Essmaker made a motion to authorize payment to Eastern Environmental in the amount of \$4,402.27 for payment #5. Mr. Morgan expressed his concerns that Eastern was not accepting responsibility for payment of certain services the Borough provided during the reservoir cover replacement, and he did not think that this payment should be sent. Mr. Wilkes explained there is a final payment remaining and when that payment becomes due is when the Borough will recoup their costs. The amount of the contract is \$361,000 and currently Eastern has been paid \$300,000. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Morgan voting Nay.
- Right to Know Law Policy Update – Solicitor Venzie explained there have been updates to the Right to Know Law specifically anonymous requests do not have to be filled nor do verbal requests. All RTK requests must be in writing and on the official State Form and reviewed the entire policy. She gave an example of a company which when paid a nominal fee, will flood organizations such as municipalities and school districts with RTK requests. Mr. Essmaker made a motion to approve the right to know policy as presented by the Borough Solicitor. Ms. Reichert seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT – Mr. Morgan asked about the trees from the Wilkinson property falling onto Church Road. Ms. Watts also discussed the state of the trees but was concerned about the bank eroding away without the trees. Ms. Venzie stated that for her to be able to contact a homeowner, a representative of the Borough must take pictures and declare the trees dangerous.

ENGINEER’S REPORT – Mr. Wilkes reviewed his report.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Mr. Essmaker made a motion to approve the June Treasurer’s report with transfers and disbursements as follows:

General Fund	\$145,902.95
Sewer Service	\$ 47,604.79
Water Service \$	\$191,156.31
Parks & Recreation	\$ 2,898.95

Street Lighting	\$ 894.03
Emergency Services	\$ 44,443.60
Sewer & Water	\$ 43,793.93
Leaving a balance in all funds of	\$546,443.74

Ms. Watts seconded the motion. Mr. Morgan called for the vote and the motion carried 5-0.

July Treasurer’s Report

I make a motion to approve the July Treasurer’s report with transfers and disbursements as follows:

General Fund	\$ 84,998.92
Sewer Service	\$ 41,813.39
Water Service	\$157,429.03
Street Lighting	\$ 385.04
Emergency Svcs	\$ 108.90
ARPA Funds	\$161,462.85
Sewer&Water Payments	\$ 40,000.00
Leaving a balance in all funds of	\$615,207.57

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Council member Lucas Ortiz made a motion to approve the June 4 and June 18, 2024, minutes. Council Member Janet Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

OTHER

Avondale Borough Vision 2030: Mapping Our Vision for Tomorrow – Mr. Morgan was approached by three residents who would like to start an Open Space Committee. The Council was supportive of this action. The Council discussed names for the new preserve.

Lead and Copper Service Line and Meter Inventory Program Update – This project is moving forward; the Garage volunteers are gaining access to houses and doing the testing. A handful of residents have done the testing themselves.

Cancelling September 3, 2024, Borough Council Meeting – on a motion by Mr. Essmaker, seconded by Mr. Morgan, the September 3, 2024, Borough Council meeting was cancelled. The motion carried 5-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. The next Borough Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 17th at 7 PM

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Sharon Norris  
 Sharon Norris, Secretary