

**AVONDALE BOROUGH
COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 06, 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, Council members Stephanie Reichert and Janet Watts. Council member Lucas Ortiz was absent. Also in attendance were Mayor Susan Rzucidlo, Solicitor Kim Venzie, Treasurer Joan McVaugh and Administrator Sharon Norris. Shane Morgan from the White Clay Wild and Scenic Water Program and Ellen Kohler from the Water Center at the University of Pennsylvania were also present.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Morgan announced that the meeting is being recorded and there would be an executive session after the meeting to discuss personnel matters.

BUSINESS:

Update on Community Greening Projects – Ms. Shane Morgan, Director of the White Clay Wild and Scenic Water Program, shared progress on specific watershed projects and resources that benefit the Borough and its residents to mitigate the impacts of stormwater runoff, improve water quality habitat and address community needs. These resources can also be used to identify future projects and help obtain funding support. She also outlined the plan for the greening project at the Garage entitled GSI (Green stormwater infrastructure) Demonstration Project for a permeable basketball area. She explained what the Christina Watershed Municipal Partnership offers to its members; most notable at this time is the meeting for elected officials, staff and volunteers on February 28th and the Technical Assistance Group which offers members guidance on water resource-related issues, free of charge .

Update on Water Infrastructure Support – Ms. Ellen Kohler from the Water Center at the University of Pennsylvania, updated the Council about the Water Center’s engagement with Avondale Borough staff regarding water infrastructure across the drinking water, wastewater and stormwater systems. She explained this engagement is supported by the White Clay Creek Wild & Scenic with National Park Service funding and through the Environmental Protection Agency with funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs act. The goals of this work include supporting the Borough to develop an accurate digitized mapping of the drinking water, wastewater and stormwater system, develop a better understanding of the status of these systems; understanding the capital investment needs for these systems; and collecting information about public and private lead service lines and meters throughout the Borough. Ms. Kohler provided a comprehensive summary of what she and her group have been working on with the Borough Staff, leading up to the most recent project to do an inventory of the Borough’s pipes and water meters. The Borough has partnered with the Garage Youth Center to get this project completed. The Council was very appreciative of all of the efforts both of these individuals and organizations have put forth to assist the Borough with these important issues.

Notary Services – Vice President Mike Essmaker made a motion to authorize Joan McVaugh, Borough Treasurer, to secure a notary commission at a cost not to exceed \$600. Ms. Janet Watts seconded the motion. Ms. McVaugh noted she already had her Delaware notary commission. The motion carried 4-0.

Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) and Deputy EMC gas stipend – the Council authorized the use of gas gift cards for the EMC and Deputy EMC for gas reimbursement after emergency events.

BUSINESS

Ordinance 2024-280 - Updated Trash Services Fee Ordinance – At the September 5, 2023 meeting, the Council authorized an increase to the trash/recycling rate from \$55.00/quarter to \$72.25/quarter effective in 2024. At the January 23, 2024 meeting, the Council authorized the Solicitor to advertise the proposed Ordinance. Solicitor Kim Venzie opened the public hearing, noting the two exhibits (B-1 Proof of publication in the Daily Local News and B-2 providing the proposed ordinance for public inspection to the Daily Local News and the CC Law Library). Before closing the public hearing, the Solicitor asked for questions. There were none. The public hearing was closed. Mr. Morgan called for a motion. Mr. Essmaker made a motion to enact Ordinance 2024-280, increasing the quarterly trash fee to \$72.25 effective with the first quarter 2024 billing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Morgan. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote.

MAYOR’S REPORT - Mayor Susan reported on the following:

- ✓ Bubble Palooza – The Mayor would like to hold an event that would bring together the community in the form of a 4-hour bubble festival held in early summer. She will contact the local churches to see if they would like to join

in the fun. The event will take place at the Second Street Park. She is requesting that the Borough host this event and make it free to the public. She is seeking \$3,500 to cover the cost. Mr. Essmaker made a motion that Council authorize the expenditure of up to \$3,500 for the first Avondale Borough Bubble Palooza. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Updates

- ✓ The Mayor discussed a recent email that was sent from the County and then retracted, concerning using the Borough as a polling location. The Mayor is seeking the consensus of Council on whether they would be agreeable to moving voting to the Presbyterian Church. She noted that both the Republican and Democratic Committee people were in favor of the move. Borough Council would prefer to have voting in the church as it is much larger and gives voters more privacy. The Mayor will work with those involved to try and make this happen.
- ✓ Route 41 Bridge – Mayor Susan spoke to Senator Kane’s office. They reported that the surrounding municipalities want to be involved in the mission to get the bridge repaired, noting that the more involvement from area municipalities, the better chance of a successful resolution.
- ✓ Verizon pole through stormwater pipe on Church Street – after contacting Verizon multiple times and not speaking with anyone, Mayor Susan contacted Representative Sappey’s office. They connected her with a Verizon representative who has been responsive.
- ✓ The Mayor is unable to attend the Feb. 8th SCCRPD meeting and invited any Council members to attend.

OTHER

Heavy truck traffic on local roads due to weight restriction on Route 41 Bridge – Mr. DiFilippo expressed concern about public safety and the faster deterioration of our roads due to the increased number of trucks avoiding the detour over the Route 41 bridge. He suggested we contact the County to pursue whether or not they would allow a weight limit on the State Street Bridge. The Council authorized the staff to contact the County and investigate a weight restriction to prevent this increase in traffic.

Newest Sewer Grant Wish List – Brent Hazelwood, the facilities operator from KBX, presented a preliminary wish list for the new sewer grant. The Council reviewed and discussed the wish list and would like Mr. Hazelwood to develop a replacement schedule which will be finalized once the grant monies are spent.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Council adjourned for Executive Session at 8:22 PM to discuss legal issues. The Council reconvened at 8:36 pm.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Morgan encouraged the Council members to come in and do financial check-ins with the Treasurer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Essmaker, seconded by Ms. Watts, the January 23, 2024 meeting minutes were approved as presented. The motion carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Streetlights** – the Borough received the Pennsylvania PUC buyback approval which allows this project to move forward. It is anticipated that the project will be completed in the springtime.
- **Reservoir Cover** – There was a meeting with Eastern Environmental, Mark Yoder of Carroll Engineers and Mr. Hazelwood to review the project. At this meeting, they reviewed the current plan, and will meet regularly to get the project completed by the June 30, 2024 grant award deadline.
- **Playgrounds** – Mayor Susan is working with HUD to understand the Environmental Review Process.

PUBLIC COMMENT – There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Norris, Secretary