

**AVONDALE BOROUGH
COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 5, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER and 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, Engineer Tom Wilkes, and Treasurer Joan McVaugh. There were three members of the public in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Judy Parsons of 135 State Street commented on the new location of the Hero's Wall. The Council discussed the following reasons for the move: the current location floods and is not ADA compliant. Council directed residents to contact former Council member Dave Besselman with additional questions or comments. Ms. Parsons' niece, who is not a resident of the Borough but donated to the memorial wall fund, also commented on the new location of the Hero's Wall. Council explained the plans for the new Pomeroy Park playground area and how that park expansion will improve the look of the area and will include additional lighting. These improvements will make that end of Pomeroy more appealing and inviting for members of the public to visit. The plan is to hold many events to celebrate Veterans at the new memorial location. Mr. Dale Pusey, 50 Old Baltimore Pike, also commented on this topic.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were no announcements.

BUSINESS:

48 through 62 Baltimore Pike – The property owner, Mr. Dale Pusey, was in attendance to discuss connecting into the Borough's sanitary sewer system, a project he, his brother and the adjacent business owners have been contemplating for the last 15 years. They get their water from Chester Water Authority. Mr. Pusey explained the businesses that operate on these two properties. There is a residential bungalow that also sits on one of the parcels. The original plan was to connect into the Borough system by boring under the railroad track (through the back of his property) and tie into the system near the railroad location. However, after hearing about the new Quarry plan, he and his family are contemplating tying into the new development's lines through the front of the property, a less labor intensive process. Mr. Pusey will continue to try to get a build out timeline from Wilkinson. Changes in personnel at the railroad are what derailed their plans in the first place. Borough Engineer Tom Wilkes explained the permitting process they would need to follow when the time comes.

Presentation And Discussion Of Proposals For Mapping The Borough's Valves, Water Lines, Sewer Lines, Manholes And Stormwater Pipes – Mayor Susan Rzucidlo secured a \$100,000 grant from the Chester County Department of Community Development to map the stormwater, water and sewer lines, the water valves, manholes and fire hydrants. The Borough currently relies on the institutional memory of the public works director and the inaccurate maps on file to find valves and water lines. The Borough received 3 proposals for this project. One proposal will not be reviewed as it involved only mapping what can be seen and relying on the existing maps for the rest of the data. The other two proposals were more in line with what the grant intended. One proposal was from Carroll Engineering, the other was from JMR Engineering. Mr. Wilkes summarized his proposal and answered questions from Council and Staff. JMR Engineering will attend the March 16th meeting to present their proposal. The award will be made at the April 16 Council meeting.

Verizon Stormwater Issue on Church Road – Mayor Susan was able to come to a solution with Verizon regarding their pole that was placed through the Borough's stormwater pipe blocking the flow of water and creating a flooding problem for a neighboring resident. Although Verizon won't move their pole, they will pay Mr. DiFillipo to remove the damaged pipe, install new stormwater pipes and do the necessary work to get the water flowing as it should. Mr. DiFillipo has reviewed the area and Ms. McVaugh explained his plan to do the work. Council agrees with his recommendation and authorized Mr. DiFillipo to provide a quote. Mr. Wilkes will also take a look at the area.

Reservoir Cover Project Change Order 4 – Mr. Wilkes explained the change to the scope of work which includes additional piping interconnections and valves. The pit is not required anymore. The added cost to the project is \$27,000. It should be noted that this is covered by the grant. Council person Janet Watts made a motion to approve Change order #4. Vice President Mike Essmaker seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

MAYOR'S REPORT – Mayor Susan reported on the following:

Updates on Bridge – She continues to work on the Route 41 bridge letter to PennDOT. Mr. Essmaker noted that the bridge is back on the TIP list.

Grants – Mayor Susan is working on a \$10,000 Dockstader grant to continue work at Pomeroy Park.

Pomeroy Park – Mr. Wilkes said the administrative tasks have all been completed and they are on track to begin the work portion of the project.

Events – Bubble Palooza will take place on June 29th. Two of the borough’s four churches are joining to help arrange games for the kids. This will be a free, family fun event.

Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs (PSAB) Annual Conference – Mayor Susan will be attending the conference on June 2 and 3rd. At this time, no Council members will be attending.

Memorial Wall – The walls will be installed in the late March/early April timeframe when the ground dries out.

Lead Service Line Inventory – Students from the Garage Youth Center are working on designing social media, website pages, letters and postcard mailers. The Council would like to hold a Town Hall meeting in both English and Spanish so residents can better understand the Lead Service Line, Drinking Water System Initiative. The Council agreed to May 9th for the Town Hall Meeting and would like to hold it at the Garage Youth Center as long as it is available. If that date doesn’t work May 16th is the backup date.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Water Meter Readings – Treasurer McVaugh requested that Council review the procedure the office staff are following with regard to handling complaints from residents regarding their unusually high water bills and determine if it is acceptable. The Council and Ms. McVaugh discussed the different situations that have arisen. A consensus was reached that if the meter gets an actual read, then the water went through the meter and the property owner is responsible for payment. The meter reading is the only way the Borough can account for water usage. The course of action will be for Staff to discuss with the resident whether there could be a leak and recommend checking sinks and toilets (the Borough has tablets that can be used in a toilet to check for leaks) or hire a plumber to check things out. Additionally, if the owner doesn’t live in the house, then they don’t really know how water is being used. The Borough will continue to check water meters when anyone has a concern about their high bill and replace the meter if necessary.

OTHER – Shane Morgan, Director of the White Clay Creek Association, has requested the Borough’s assistance with a grant application she is submitting. She has contacted the Borough and other municipalities along the White Clay for a letter of support. The Borough would be responsible for attending meetings to support this project. If the grant is awarded, the project would require approximately 15 hours of Borough Staff time. The Council would like to support this effort and Mr. Morgan will sign the Letter of Support.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Mr. Morgan adjourned the regular meeting at 8:00 PM to go into executive session to discuss potential legal issues. The meeting was called back to order at 8:20 PM.

OTHER (Continued)

Avondale Borough Vision 2030: Mapping Our Vision for Tomorrow – the Mayor requested that each Council member come prepared to discuss why they ran for office, what they hope to accomplish during their time in office and what do they envision for the future. Each Council member took a turn explaining their reasons for running, their goals for their term and their visions for the future. Many of the goals and visions were similar: making the Borough walkable by improving roads, sidewalks and streetscapes; Improving intersections and crosswalks; improving parks and playgrounds; getting residents more involved in planning by forming committees; increase resident input; continued investment in the water system and wastewater system; improving the look of Avondale by stepping up property maintenance inspections. Also, stepping up the social media presence to make the public more aware of what is going on in the Borough. All agreed that securing grants for these many goals is necessary. The Council is looking to the Borough Engineer to find as many grant opportunities regarding these goals as possible. The consensus of the Council is that they have accomplished a lot in the time they have been in office and plan to continue the work to achieve their goals. The Borough will publish a list of accomplishments and goals on the Borough website and social media. The Council will continue this discussion at each meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Mr. Pusey commented on the old hardware store at 41 and State Street.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:05 PM on a motion by Mr. Essmaker and seconded by Ms. Watts.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Norris, Secretary