

AVONDALE BOROUGH  
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 19, 2024

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Vice President, Mike Essmaker, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. In attendance were members Stephanie Reichert, Janet Watts, and Lucas Ortiz. President Paul Morgan was absent. Also in attendance were Mayor Susan Rzucidlo, Solicitor Kim Venzie, Engineer Tom Wilkes, Treasurer Joan McVaugh, and Administrator Sharon Norris.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

**BUSINESS:**

- **Consideration of Ordinance 2024-282: Authorization to Advertise** – Ms. Janet Watts made a motion that Council authorize the advertising of Ordinance 2024-282, redirecting .20 mills from the Streetlighting tax to the Emergency Services tax. This is not a tax increase. Mr. Lucas Ortiz seconded the motion. Mr. Essmaker called for discussion. The Council reiterated that this is not a tax increase, but a redistribution of the existing millage. Mr. Essmaker called for the vote. The motion carried 4-0.
- **Consideration of 2025 Proposed Budget and authorization to advertise** – Treasurer Joan McVaugh reviewed the changes from the previous meeting as follows: The sign budget was increased to \$2,000; the income from the Emergency Services tax was reduced; the transfer from the General Fund to Emergency Services Fund and the increase to the trash rate are now reflected. Ms. Stephanie Reichert made a motion that Council approve the 2025 proposed budget and authorize it for advertising. The budget will be adopted at the December 17, 2024, meeting. Ms. Watts seconded the motion. Mr. Essmaker called for the vote. The motion carried 4-0.
- **Consideration of Resolution 2024-11 authorizing application to M&T Bank for a Line of Credit** – Mr. Ortiz made a motion that Council authorize application to M&T bank for a line of credit in the amount of \$200,000 and authorize the Treasurer and any two members of Borough Council as authorized signers on this account. Ms. Reichert seconded the motion. Ms. McVaugh noted that the Borough Code allows for the use of a line of credit as a short-term loan to be paid back when tax revenue comes in. Mr. Essmaker called for the vote. The motion carried 4-0.
- **Resolution 2024-12 Recognizing April 2025 as Pennsylvania 811 Safe Digging Month** – PA One Call asked that Pennsylvania municipalities pass this resolution. Pennsylvania 811 (PA One Call) is a utility notification information center with 53 years of continuous service to Pennsylvanians. Their mission is to prevent damage to underground facilities, promote safety and provide an efficient and effective communication network among project owners, designers, excavators, and facility owners. Mr. Ortiz made a motion to recognize April 2025 as PA One Call Safe Digging Month. Ms. Reichert seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.
- **Memorial Wall** – Project Summary: Borough Council has been working on finalizing the Memorial Wall for over 2 years. The Veterans Memorial Committee initially started the Hero's Wall project. The project was not completed when the current Council was elected. At that time, the new Council would not take on this project as it had already gone over budget and directed the Veterans Memorial Committee that it was their responsibility to complete it. As time went on, it became apparent that the Veterans Memorial Committee was not going to complete the project. To honor the sacrifice of those who have served, the current Borough Council had to get involved. The bone of contention was that the current Council did not want to spend any more of the taxpayers' money on this project than had already been spent. When the new monument walls were put into place, they did not attach properly to the existing monument, creating an unattractive gap on either side. The Borough was told that the existing wall was not measured properly and that's why they didn't fit. Additionally, it was felt that the existing location didn't drain properly. A volunteer had donated the time to move the monument and walls to a new location with better drainage adjacent to the newly revitalized Pomeroy Park and offered to fix the monument so that the walls would look like they were attached and correct the misspelled name. Unfortunately, the volunteer was not able to complete the project and had to drop out. Out of respect, the current Council agreed that it was important to see this project completed. After speaking to and meeting with a handful of monument professionals, the Council

was presented with a quote from Luminella Memorials. Luminella suggested separating the 3 pieces on one large base and changing the finish of the base to a rocky finish to help prevent visible damage to those surfaces. Currently the base is marked up and is in two pieces. And they will repair the misspelled name. The total cost for this work is \$4,060. This is the lowest quote the Borough has received by over \$2,100. Council members opined about spending more Borough money than has already been spent and their dissatisfaction with the way the former Council handled this. Mr. Essmaker called for the vote. The motion was 2-2 with Mr. Essmaker and Ms. Watts voting nay. Mayor Susan broke the tie with a vote in favor of Luminella Memorials performing the work. The motion carried 3-2.

**ENGINEER'S REPORT** – Mr. Wilkes reviewed his report. Mr. Essmaker asked about the Multi Modal grant which is a reimbursement grant. Ms. Reichert asked if the 1.25" service line on Poplar can be upgraded as part of the LSA grant. Mr. Wilkes will include that project in the grant application. Ms. McVaugh suggested that, at the time of the work, residents be given the opportunity to replace their line from the curb stop to their house. The cost of that work would be the responsibility of the resident, but it would save them money since the curb stop would be exposed during the work period. Mayor Susan asked about Wells 13 and 14 and the 55-gallon drums at the plant which need disposal. Mr. Wilkes will get back to Council regarding the status of Wells 13 and 14.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT** – Solicitor Venzie reported she started the 10-day lien process against two property owners due to their outstanding accounts and lack of responsiveness to Borough communications. The staff will provide her with a list of all property owners with outstanding balances. Ms. Venzie discussed the AQUA invoices and payments with the Treasurer and Council.

#### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

- The new playground looks great. The Staff is still gathering quotes for fencing. Volunteers from the Garage will paint the asphalt with decorations and games.
- PennDOT – a resident asked to put a stop sign near Church and Garner to slow down traffic that is coming from New Garden. The Mayor contacted PennDOT who said they would perform a study and have the results by the end of the month.
- Santa Train is December 14<sup>th</sup> – It will leave the Kennett depot at 10 am with stops in Toughkenamon, Avondale, West Grove, and Oxford. We do not know exactly when it will arrive in Avondale, but if more information becomes available, we will post it on Facebook and the website.
- The Mayor announced that the Kennett Rotary and Kennet Light will be disbanding at the end of the year. She is attending a program entitled "From Asphalt to Opportunity: Transforming Communities through Parking Policy Reform" and hopes to bring back some good information from that. She also reported that the grant workshop sponsored by Senator Kane's office was worthwhile and informative.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Mr. Ortiz made a motion to approve the November 6, 2024, minutes as presented. Ms. Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

**OTHER** – Ms. Reichert is working on the holiday light contest flyer.

**ADJOURNMENT** - The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Sharon Norris*  
Sharon Norris, Secretary