

**AVONDALE BOROUGH
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 6, 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. Also in attendance were Mayor Susan Rzucidlo, Treasurer Joan McVaugh and Administrator Sharon Norris.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Mr. Morgan announced that there would be an executive session after tonight’s meeting to discuss personnel and legal issues.

SOUTHERN CHESTER COUNTY REGIONAL POLICE – Chief Greenwalt was in attendance to present the Department’s bi-weekly report.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Mr. Vance Pennington, president of the Carillon Homeowners Association (HOA) described their concerns with stormwater issues and was seeking financial and engineering assistance to develop a preventive maintenance program. Borough Council said they would consider his request. Mayor Susan recommended contacting the State Representatives for grant opportunities.

BUSINESS:

- **Chester County Planning Commission** – Rachel Griffith and Ryan Mawhinney from the CCPC presented a summary of the VPP grant program opportunities and the Open Space Accelerator program. The Council had questions for Ms. Griffith and Mr. Mawhinney, and they discussed a trail connection feasibility study, the creation of an official map and the challenges the Borough faces with applying for grants that require a match.
- **Resolution 2024-09** – Ms. Reichert made a motion that Council approve Resolution 2024-09, supporting the State’s efforts to commemorate the Nation’s 250th birthday in 2026. The motion was seconded by Mr. Essmaker. Mayor Susan Rzucidlo noted that the County requested that all municipalities adopt this resolution. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 5-0.
- **Resolution 2024-10** – Mr. Essmaker made a motion that Borough Council adopt Resolution 2024-10, acknowledging application to the DCED LSA grant program for \$250,000 to fund road repairs in the Borough to include Poplar Street, Chatham Street, and a portion of Pomeroy Avenue. This grant is a no match, reimbursement grant. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 5-0.
- **Minor Street Speed Limit Reduction** – Mayor Susan has received requests to reduce the speed limit on Minor Street to 15 MPH. Since Minor Street is a dead-end street, the Council discussed the pros with reducing the speed and agreed it was a reasonable idea. Ms. Watts made a motion to reduce the speed on Minor Street to 15 mph. Mr. Essmaker seconded the motion. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 5-0.
- **Memorial Wall** – Borough Council considered two new quotes to finalize the Memorial Wall monuments and get that project completed. One quote gave two different solutions for consideration. One quote was to place the three upright pieces separately on 3 bases. The other was to keep the three uprights on one single base but spaced apart. This quote also recommends changing the front, back and side finishes of the base to a rock finish to help prevent visible damage to those surfaces. This solution was the most agreeable. Mr. Ortiz will check with a colleague who works in the monument industry and get back to Council with his findings. This will go on the next available agenda. Mr. Pennington participated in this discussion.

MAYOR REPORT – Mayor Susan reported on the following:

- The Pomeroy Park Playground will be finished by the end of November. She recommends having a grand opening celebration when the Memorial Garden is completed.
- A resident of Minor Street requested a streetlight on Minor. The Mayor recommended she get a petition from other residents on the street who were in favor of streetlight and bring that to Council. Council supported this approach.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Mr. Essmaker made a motion to approve the October 15, 2024, minutes as presented. Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 5-0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

September Treasurer’s Report – Ms. Watts made a motion, seconded by Mr. Essmaker, to approve the September Treasurer’s Report with transfers and disbursements as follows:

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|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| General Fund | \$126,177.22 |
| Capital Improvements | \$131,140.00 |
| Sewer Service | \$ 26,903.81 |
| Water Service | \$ 4,600.25 |
| Parks and Rec | \$ 82,613.08 |
| Streetlighting | \$ 88.74 |
| ARPA Funds | \$ 33,471.98 |
| Sewer & Water | <u>\$ 91,337.40</u> |
| Leaving a balance in all funds of | \$541,027.34 |

Budget Discussion – Ms. McVaugh reviewed the proposed budget which considers a tax increase of 1 mill to the emergency services tax, and moving .20 mills from the streetlight tax to the emergency services tax. Currently, the Emergency Services tax only covers approximately 40% of the actual cost of providing Emergency Services to the Borough residents. The cost of streetlights has been significantly reduced since the Borough transitioned to LED lights and now owns most of the lights in the Borough. The Council discussed the rising costs of all services and considered raising the trash collection rate to meet what the Borough actually pays for that service. Council members and the Mayor were not in favor of increasing the emergency services tax, but all Council members were in favor of raising the trash fee to \$100 to meet the actual cost. They agreed to move .20 mills from streetlights to emergency services. That change will be reflected on property owners’ 2025 tax bills.

The Treasurer and Council discussed using tablets instead of printing paper copies of meeting packets, reports, etc. Not only will this save money on supplies, it’s better for the environment and Council members would prefer to read information on a tablet. Council directed Ms. McVaugh to be on the lookout for reasonably priced tablets. Ms. McVaugh also asked Council to consider securing a line of credit for times when the Borough has committed to projects that come due at the same time and the Borough has to wait for grant reimbursement. Ms. McVaugh will set up a meeting with M&T Bank.

OTHER

- a. Avondale Borough Vision 2030: Mapping our Vision for Tomorrow – no update

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. The next Borough Council meeting will be Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 7 pm
- b. The Annual Tree Lighting is on December 7, 2024, from 5-7 pm
- c. Do not miss the Santa Train – December 14 (time TBD)
- d. Holiday Light Contest Runs from December 3 – December 15. Prizes will be awarded at the December 17 Borough Council Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION – at 8:53 pm the Council adjourned the meeting to enter into an executive session. The meeting was reconvened at 9:05 pm.

SOUTHERN CHESTER COUNTY REGIONAL POLICE CONTRACT – Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve the SCCRPD contract for a three-year period beginning in January 2025. Mr. Essmaker seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Norris

Sharon Norris, Secretary