

**AVONDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 8, 2023
7:00 PM**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: President, Paul Morgan, Vice President Stephanie Reichert and Council members Mike Essmaker and Janet Watts. Lucas Ortiz was absent. Mayor Susan Rzucidlo, Engineer Tom Wilkes, Treasurer Joan McVaugh and Administrator Sharon Norris were also in attendance. Also present were three members of the public.

CALL TO ORDER – President Paul Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and announced the meeting is being recorded. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT – There was no public comment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – There were no announcements.

SOUTHERN CHESTER COUNTY REGIONAL POLICE REPORT – Lieutenant Joseph Versagli gave a summary of Police activity in Avondale and the surrounding communities for the month of October. The Department has hired a new officer who will be starting in mid-November. He also reported that trick or treating went well and the kids seemed to enjoy their night. Council had no questions for the Lieutenant.

ENGINEER REPORT AND WATER/WASTEWATER PLANT UPDATE – Engineer Wilkes summarized his written report and noted that the pavement study will be presented at the December 19, 2023 meeting. The Mayor discussed existing grants and the Local Share grant with Mr. Wilkes and Council. Treasurer Joan McVaugh updated Council on the recent upgrades to the sewer plant using the grant monies.

BUSINESS:

Consideration of Eagle Scout Project – Eagle Scout Nathan Schwing provided a written plan to make and install three benches in the new Veterans Memorial Garden area. Nathan was unable to attend the meeting due to a school related commitment. Nathan's project did not require a monetary donation from the Borough. Mr. Morgan called for a motion. Council member Mike Essmaker made a motion that Council approve Nathan Schwing's Eagle Scout Project to build 3 wooden benches for the Veterans Memorial Garden at no cost to the Borough. Once it is determined where the benches will be placed in the Veterans Memorial Garden, Nathan will secure them in their new location. The motion was seconded by Council member Janet Watts. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 4-0.

400 Chatham Street Subdivision – The property owners, Mr. and Mrs. Chris Pyle, and the potential buyer, David Nunn, brought in their plan to build a small house on the subdivided portion of this property. They did not have a recorded plan that showed the subdivision, but they did have an unsigned copy of the plan and a copy of a recorded deed that showed the subdivision. They were before the Council to get a sense of whether Council would be in favor of the subdivision if they were unable to find a recorded copy of the plan and had to resubmit. The Council, Engineer and the applicants discussed details of the project and the process for submitting a plan when the time comes. The Council looked favorably on this project.

Resolution 2023-10 Authorizing Application to the Local Share Assessment Grant Program Administered by the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for Well Connection – Mayor Susan Rzucidlo explained the grant is to cover the costs of connecting the two new wells that are not yet online with the two existing wells. She emphasized that this grant required a contribution of \$27,000 from the Borough. The Council, Ms. McVaugh and Mr. Wilkes joined in the discussion with the Mayor. Mr. Morgan called for a motion. Mr. Essmaker made a motion that the Council adopt Resolution 2023-10, authorizing application to the Local Share Assessment Grant Program for a well connection grant in the amount of \$868,680. Engineering costs to the Borough associated with this grant project should not exceed \$27,000. Council member Janet Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Consideration of and Authorization to Advertise the 2024 Budget – The Council has reviewed the preliminary budget at several meetings. There were no adjustments made tonight. Mr. Essmaker made a motion to approve and authorize the 2024 Preliminary Budget for advertising and adoption at the December 19, 2023 Borough Council meeting. The preliminary combined budget expenditure amount is proposed at \$3,053,713.75. Council member Stephanie Reichert seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Resolution 2023-11 Authorizing the Chester County Treasurer to Collect the Borough Real Estate Tax – Currently the CC Treasurer collects the Borough real estate tax. To continue to collect the tax, the Borough must pass this resolution. Mr. Essmaker made a motion that Council adopt Resolution 2023-11 authorizing the Chester County Treasurer to collect the Borough real estate tax for the years 2024 and 2025. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

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

- On November 13, 2023, she will be attending a Zoom meeting with PennDOT to discuss the ongoing Historic District issue which seems to be stalling any progress on the Bridge repair on Route 41.
- The Mayor would like Council to present a proclamation for Dirk Robinson at the upcoming December Borough Council meeting thanking and acknowledging him for his many years of volunteerism at the polls and during the election season.
- December 2, 2023 Avondale Tree Lighting – volunteers from the high school will help decorate and assist during the event. There will be KMC dancers, Christmas carols, cookies and cocoa and Santa too! The event runs from 5 PM – 7 PM

OTHER

Community Garden Guidelines: Ms. Reichert presented an updated guidelines sheet for Council to review. She addressed a recent complaint received in the office by a garden member. The Council approved the use of the updated guidelines.

Holiday Light Contest – Ms. Reichert requested that Council approve having a 2023 outdoor holiday light decorating contest since last year's was a popular event. The contest will run from December 18 – December 22. The Council was in agreement. All Council members agreed to have their votes in by 8:30 PM on December 22, 2023. Awards will be announced on Facebook and the website and awarded at the first meeting in January. Council discussed prize amounts and decided on cash prizes as follows: 1st place will be \$150; 2nd place will be \$100; 3rd place will be \$75.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Ms. McVaugh discussed needing the signed forms from the Fire Company to submit to Keystone Collects so Avondale Fire Company volunteers can get a reduction in their EIT tax. Ms. Watts will speak with Mr. Swift at the Fire Company.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Morgan called for a motion. Mr. Essmaker made a motion to approve the October 17, 2023 minutes as presented. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Morgan made the following announcements:

- a. The next Borough Council Meeting is Tuesday, December 5, 2023 @ 7 PM
- b. The Borough Christmas Tree Lighting is December 2nd from 5 PM – 7 PM
- c. The Borough office will be closed November 21 through November 24, 2023 for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

PUBLIC COMMENT – There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned on a motion by Mr. Essmaker and seconded by Ms. Watts at approximately 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Norris

Sharon Norris, Secretary