

AVONDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 04, 2022
7:00 PM

Council Members Present: President, Paul Morgan, Vice President Stephanie Reichert, members Mike Essmaker, Janet Watts and Fernando Tena-Diaz. Mayor Susan Rzucidlo was absent. Joan McVaugh, Borough Treasurer and Sharon Norris, Borough Administrator, were also in attendance.

Call to Order – President Paul Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Avondale Fire Company (AFC) – Chief Guy Swift presented the Avondale Fire/EMS Company's 2023 budget request along with a comprehensive report on Fire and EMS activities. He explained the many factors negatively affecting the AFC (including the closure of the Jennersville and Brandywine Hospitals, the increased cost of gas and the difficulty of getting and keeping staff since the current pay levels are below other companies in the area. They hope to address this salary discrepancy in the 2023 budget. Chief Swift emphasized that the AFC is doing their best to be creative in their spending, look for grants and be honest and fair. The Council asked questions of the Chief and thanked him and the rest of the AFC for their service to the community.

New Business:

Eagle Scout Presentation – Logan Aiken, a life member of Troop 30, presented his plan to build a shed in the Community Garden. The shed has a 10-year warranty and is made of hard plastic. He will do some cleanup in the garden and mulch around the shed as well as put down weed mats in the existing garden beds. Council Member Janet Watts made a motion to approve Logan's Eagle Scout Project to build a shed in the Community Garden and to fund the project at a cost not to exceed \$2,000. Council member Mike Essmaker seconded the motion. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 5-0. The Council agreed that Mr. DiFillipo would provide gravel on which to place the shed. Logan hopes to have the project completed by mid-November.

Shane Morgan, Management Plan Coordinator, White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic River Program – Ms. Morgan gave an update to the Council on the success of the Community Survey and the high response rate which is instrumental in learning about the concerns of the community. A good response rate also increases the chances of a grant award. 82% of those surveyed said they have been impacted by flooding. Along with the focus on managing the stormwater, affordable housing and safer road crossings were also at the top of the list of resident concerns. She also reported on the grant opportunities she has applied for on behalf of the Borough.

Ellen Kohler, Director of Applied Research and Programs at the Water Center at the University of Pennsylvania – Ms. Kohler introduced herself to the Council. Her area of expertise includes MS4 programs and permitting and assisting in finding funding for organizations. She explained that the Borough is in a favorable position to take advantage of the Infrastructure Investment Act which has allotted funds for communities like Avondale due to the Borough's position on the DEP Environmental Justice map. She touched on a variety of funding opportunities including a 5-year principal forgiveness plan through Penn Vest, utilizing the dirt and gravel road program for some of the lower volume roads, green stormwater projects and wastewater projects. She asked the Council to consider what is the highest priority as a community.

Approval of Minutes – Mr. Morgan called for a motion to approve the September 20, 2022, minutes as presented. Mr. Mike Essmaker made the motion to approve the minutes. Council Member Fernando Tena-Diaz seconded the motion. Mr. Morgan called for public comment. There was none. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 5-0.

Finance Committee

Mrs. McVaugh provided a report to the Council and confirmed that she would be presenting a Treasurer's Report once per month beginning October 18th. The approval of the bills would be incorporated into that report. Mr. Morgan called for a motion to approve the bills. A motion to approve the bills was made by Mr. Essmaker. The motion was seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 5-0. The Council also discussed sewer rates, the pros and cons of selling the plant, the rate that New Garden and AQUA pay the Borough and gathering intel from other municipalities regarding their rates.

Mayor's Report

- Consideration of Speed Reduction Devices – due to the Mayor's absence, the Council tabled this discussion.
- Trees on Borough property – the Council discussed the value of trying to sell some of the wood from dead trees on Borough property and decided not to proceed with that idea.
- Autumn Harvest Festival – plans are moving along nicely, and the event is gearing up to be fun for everyone. Volunteers are welcome to help out and vendors are invited to attend.
- Borough Shirts – The Council discussed the benefit of having an Avondale Borough shirt to wear to community events and while attending municipal events outside of Avondale. The Council members were presented with some samples. Mrs. Watts is going to make a spreadsheet to track sizes and style choices.

Other

The Council discussed having Engineer O'Neill discuss the following topics at the October 18th meeting:

- Maintenance and Replacement Plan for the Sewer Plant
- Update on the Cover on the Reservoir
- The status of the new wells

Announcements

Mr. Morgan announced again that the Avondale Harvest Festival is scheduled for October 22, 2022, from 1 PM – 5 PM. He also announced that the next Borough Council meeting will be held on October 18 at 7 PM.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 9:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Norris

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Borough Administrator