

CHESWICK BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
December 12, 2023

A meeting of Cheswick Borough Council was held on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at the Cheswick Borough Building, 220 S. Atlantic Avenue, Cheswick, Pennsylvania. Frank Meledandri called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Frank Meledandri, Acting President	Bill Kuzmirek
Dan Carroll, Mayor	Jeff Curti, Zoning Officer
Shawna Ecker	Lorraine Zebrine, Secretary
Karen Matisz	Matthew Pitsch, Engineer
Brad Yaksich	
Kathy Gillard	
George White	
CharLee Rosini, Solicitor	
Jaime Varshine, Assistant	

There was one resident in attendance.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Rami Ashamalla, 1536 Linden Street asked to be heard related to a tax issue and requested that the Council waive the penalty assessed.

MINUTES:

- Brad Yaksich motioned to approve the November 14th, 2023, Caucus meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Kathy Gillard and carried.

AVJSA REPORT:

Brad Yaksich had nothing to report.

AVRPD REPORT:

Brad Yaksich reported on the November activity by type. The Board approved the hiring of a full-time officer in January and the need for Joe Ferraro to continue to facilitate the Civil Service exams.

MAYORS REPORT:

Mayor Dan Carroll commented on the productive meeting of the AVRPD Board.

ZONING OFFICER'S/ INSPECTOR'S REPORT:

None

TREASURER'S REPORT:

None

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

CharLee Rosini delivered the solicitor report commenting on the work on the following:

- On-going litigation related to the Bastin v. Cheswick Borough, et. all claim with preliminary objections scheduled for February 27th, 2024.
- Contact with the AC Elections division regarding a tied Council seat.
- To determine a plan regarding a 'stolen' handicap sign
- Awaiting direction from Council regarding Short-term rentals
- Waiting for direction from Council on the Intergovernmental Agreement related to the Multi Municipal Comprehensive Plan.
- Awaiting instruction regarding the Fire Department Merger agreement previously sent to the solicitor.
- Awaiting review on a municipal line for emergency tree removal on vacant property.

COMMITTEES:

BUDGET & FINANCE:

- Karen Matisz motioned to approve bill due list #12.23, bills posted 11/15/23 – 12/12/23. Motion seconded by Brad Yaksich and carried.
- Brad Yaksich motioned to adopt the 2024 Preliminary Budget at \$2,675,230.38 advertised on November 17th, 2023, and by:

General Fund:	\$1,460,272.84
Water Fund:	\$ 575,579.54
Sewage Fund:	\$ 474,243.00
Refuse Fund:	\$ 165,135.00
Total:	\$2,675,230.38

Motion seconded by Karen Matisz and carried.

- Karen Matisz motioned to bring before Council and read in summary Resolution 2023-15, fixing the tax rate for the year 2024 for general revenue purposes to be set at 5.60 mills on each dollar of assessed valuation and tax rate for the library referendum to be set at 0.25 mills on each dollar of assessed valuation. Motion seconded by Brad Yaksich and carried.
- Brad Yaksich motioned to approve Resolution 2023-15, fixing the tax rate for the year 2024 for general revenue purposes to be set at 5.60 mills on each dollar of assessed valuation and tax rate for the library referendum to be set at 0.25 mills on each dollar of assessed valuation. Motion seconded by Karen Matisz and carried.
- Brad Yaksich motioned to bring Resolution 2023-16, setting water, sewage, and refuse rates for the 2024 calendar year before council and read in its entirety. Motion seconded by Karen Matisz and carried.
- Brad Yaksich motioned to approve Resolution 2023-16, setting water, sewage, and refuse rates for the 2024 calendar year. Motion seconded by Kathy Gillard and carried.
- Karen Matisz motioned to advertise the Re-Organization Meeting to be held on Tuesday January 2, 2024. Motion seconded by Brad Yaksich and carried.

FACILITIES:

George White commented on the work in getting the salt shed renovated.

GENERAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION:

- Kathy Gillard motioned to appoint Jaime Varshine as Assistant Secretary effective 1/1/2024. Motion seconded by Karen Matisz and carried.

GRANTS:

- Karen Matisz motioned to approve Resolution 2023-17 (Tarentum Resolution #23-26) , a joint resolution between the Boroughs of Cheswick and Tarentum, authorizing the filing of an application for a boating facility grant program committing to an equal distribution for the required match and designating Tarentum's Borough Manager as the authorized official to execute all agreements documents and forms between the Borough of Tarentum and the Commonwealth of PA to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested grant. Motion seconded by Brad Yaksich and carried.

PERSONNEL:

- Karen Matisz motioned to appoint Rebecca Shearer to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Steve Sekaras on the Zoning Hearing Board and with a term ending 12/31/2023. Motion seconded by Katy Gillard and carried.

Karen Matisz agreed to update the resolution related to the appointment/reappointment of Borough Officials and Board members to fill vacancies and/or reappoint those with terms set to expire 12/31/23. Kathy Gillard agreed to follow-up with Joe and Cathy Ferraro regarding their appointed roles on the Zoning Hearing Board and Vacancy Board Chair, respectively.

PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY & UTILITIES:

Brad Yaksich reported that George White will join the EMS Board (Lower Valley Emergency Medical Service)

PUBLIC WORKS:

Frank Meladandri updated Council on the following:

- The progress, or lack thereof on the agreement with Springdale Twp., the board has not passed it, with two for and two opposed, however he will keep working with them.
- The decision to end the agreement with Rugged Utility on a monthly retainer, effective 12/31/23 and to use him as a consultant as needed.
- Bid Specifications are in process for both the Hill and Pine Avenue projects.
- The grant for the Highland Avenue traffic light project is moving along.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

Karen Matisz shared with the Council plans for a Trivia night in February 2024 and pop-up markets in May, June, July, and August 2024. Lastly, three new members of the Community Relations board were recruited.

RECREATION & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Shawna Ecker updated Council on the success of Christmas in Cheswick with the desire to make it a bigger event next year. Related to work with the Recreation Board, Frank Meledandri to provide Shawna with the Resolution to update the Recreation Board members with terms set to expire in 2023.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & SERVICES

None

ZONING & CODE ENFORCEMENT:

Mayor Dan Carroll reported that some of the properties who were notified of non-compliance to Borough code related to maintaining lawns have been mowed.

COG:

In Frank Meledandri's absence, George White agreed to represent Cheswick in the next COG meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Brad Yaksich led the discussion on short-term rentals and shared his conversation with Jeff Curti on the topic. It is Jeff Curti's opinion that the Borough should move forward with an ordinance and has agreed to review the drafts previously presented and provide input.

NEW BUSINESS:

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Brad Yaksich motioned to enter executive session at 8:10 pm to discuss personnel or issues that may result in litigation. Motion seconded by Karen Matisz and carried.

Kathy Gillard motioned to adjourn from executive session at 9:02 pm. Motion seconded by Karen Matisz and carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Brad Yaksich to adjourn at 9:04 PM, motion seconded by Karen Matisz and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Zebrine, Secretary

* Minutes issued from notes transcribed by Jaime Varshine.