

**FORTY FORT BOROUGH
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 2024**

The August council work session was held on Monday, August 19, 2024 at the Borough Bldg., 1271 Wyoming Ave., Forty Fort, PA with council President, Thomas J. Murray, III, presiding.

President Murray called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM with the following council members present: Phil Mertz, Frank Mazza, Cara Devine, Dave Sieminski, Kristy Dadurka & Sara Michaels. Also present were Mayor Brian Thomas, Solicitor, Atty. Greg Skibitsky, Police Chief Dan Hunsinger, Code Officer, Tom Craig, DPW Supervisor, Rick Kamus and Borough Manager, Bonnie Arnone.

RESIDENTS AND TAXPAYERS:

Maureen Salley, 106 Center St. stated that the borough should be cognizant of any standing water due to mosquito infestation and the threat of the West Nile Virus. She repeated her question about the "No Parking" and "No Parking 2-5 AM" signs along River St. questioning whether there was parking allowed there or not. She also reiterated that she would like to see all borough events more widely publicized. Finally, she stated her dismay at not having any spirit left regarding the re-opening of the pool and the committee's lack of reports.

Karen French, 12 Englewood Terrace, questioned who she could contact about the fallen trees on railroad property behind her home. She has reached out to Swoyersville Borough and the Redevelopment Authority, who currently owns the railroad property, to no avail. Atty. Skibitsky will take her name and phone number and pass this on to the Redevelopment Authority's solicitor.

The Park & Recreation Committee reported on the progress of the Fall Festival event stating that they currently have 38 vendors confirmed, baskets promised for the basket raffle, monetary donations, etc. The event will be held on Saturday, October 12, 2024 from 2-6 PM.

MINUTES AND REPORTS:

Council has been given copies of minutes and reports from the prior month to review. These will be voted upon at the September 3, 2024 council meeting. They include:

7/15/24 Special council meeting minutes	7/15/24 Council work session minutes
8/5/24 Council meeting minutes	July 2024 Code Office Report
July 2024 Kingston/Forty Fort Fire Chief Report	July 2024 Tax Collector Report
June 2024 FF Volunteer Fire Chief Report	July 2024 FF Volunteer Fire Chief Report
July 2024 Police Chief Report	July 2024 Treasurer's Report
July 2024 Manager's Time Sheets	5/21/24 WVSA Meeting minutes
6/19/24 WVSA Meeting minutes	6/19/24 WVSA operations & infrastructure mtg minutes
SPCA 2 nd Quarter 2024 report	Nesbitt Foundation donation for Handicap Swing needed repairs

Chief Hunsinger requested that council amend the current Disturbance of the of the Peace Ordinance

For Barking dogs and had sent them his recommendations for review. This proposed ordinance Amendment will be prepared by Atty. Skibitsky and voted to advertise at the September 3, 2024 Council meeting.

Council member Phil Mertz prepared a policy and proposed Resolution that would deal with the dissemination of information regarding lawsuits involving Forty Fort Borough and its employees. Atty. Skibitsky will draft this Resolution for consideration at the September 3, 2024 meeting.

Council next discussed dangerous tree removal throughout the Borough. Consideration of waiving permit fees and re-planting deposits was discussed to make it easier for residents to manage older & dying trees on their tree lawns. The discussion also included the purchase of bare root trees to plant in areas in need throughout the borough.

Code Officer, Tom Craig, discussed with council his proposal for changes within the Quality-of-Life Ordinance. Council will consider these changes to be discussed at a future meeting.

Borough Manager, Bonnie Arnone, reported that the borough needs a crossing guard for the Dana Elementary School for the upcoming school year.

AROUND THE TABLE:

Mayor Thomas reported that a \$10,000.00 donation had been received from the Nesbitt Foundation to assist with the needed repairs to the Handicap swing at the Forty Fort Park which is such an important piece of equipment to the park. He also noted that this donation was made possible through the efforts of Ed Kopec of Edwards Landscaping.

Mr. Mertz asked if the Fire Police might be able to assist with the crossing guard duties until one could be hired. Ray Elias of the Volunteer Fire Co. stated that he would check on that.

Mr. Mazza reported that he has been working on a policy for the Recording of Meetings for the Borough Council to review and should have it for everyone in the near future.

Ms. Devine reported on National Night Out event which will be held on Friday, August 23, 2024 at the Sports Complex. She also stated that the urinal in the men's room on the first floor is not working. Mr. Kamus stated that this happens often and the only way to completely fix the problem would be a complete plumbing upgrade to the building. Ms. Devine also asked that the Message board that is in the entry way of the River St. entrance of the Borough Building can be completed showing the location of all offices.

Mr. Sieminski asked council to contribute anything they would like to have in the Fall/Winter Newsletter which he will begin work on.

Ms. Dadurka reported that there has not been any activity with the pool committee over the summer and she hopes to re-instate meetings in the fall. She is still awaiting news on the grant that was submitted.

Ms. Michaels echoed Mayor Thomas's comments about the importance of getting the Handicap Swing operational and thanked Ed Kopec and the Nesbitt Foundation. She also reported that while litigation is on going with the Civil Service Commission, all activities have been halted which include the process of hiring an additional police officer.

Borough Manager, Bonnie Arnone, reported that typically at this time of year, the following years parking permits are ordered and sold to those residents just moving into town. As there had been some discussion about the elimination of the parking permits, council's thoughts were requested

on this topic. General consensus was that council needed more information in order to make this decision. While the yearly annual income between parking permits and the tickets issued to offenders amounts to between \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00, a consideration must be accounted for the time & cost of police officers who must go to court to fight those individuals who plead not guilty to the fines.

Ms. Arnone also reported on the large number of Right to Know requests that have been received in 2024 and in particular, from certain individuals over the course of several weeks. One resident has made 18 Right to Know Requests for various items over the last few weeks, which has created a backlog for the Administration office. Discussion ensued on solutions to this problem.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At this time, 7:56 PM, council adjourned into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation.

ADJOURNMENT:

Council re-convened the work session at 9:00 PM and the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 3, 2024 at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Arnone
Borough Manager