

Mercersburg Borough Council Meeting
Borough Hall, Mercersburg, PA 17236
February 12, 2024
MINUTES

Attending: Council President Donald E. Stoner, Mayor Dr. Michael Pedersen, Vice President Anthony Frisby, Tom Heefner, Paul Sipes, Kelani Monismith-Craig, Jacob Morgan, Joe Burkot, Borough Secretary Matilda Gorman, Chief John Zechman, and Solicitor Steve Coccorese

Absent: NONE

Public/Press: See sign in sheet.

President Stoner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Vice-President Frisby led the Pledge of Allegiance. President Stoner opened the floor for Public Comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Preston Spahr, 101 South Main Street, Mercersburg provided updates on the status of the Comprehensive Plan. He reviewed that a Steering Committee should be established as part of the process and that the Borough should name a representative on the Steering Committee. He reminded Council that Michael and Paul also participate in the MPSC and could serve in that role. He noted that the Borough Representative can choose either an in-person interview or participate in a tour for the Borough's municipal area. Other large stakeholders such as Mercersburg Academy, FCADC, Chamber, MACWELL, MPC, and MMPW will be part of the process. HRG will collaborate directly with them, especially during the tour and interview process. In the upcoming weeks, HRG will begin preparing a trends report and create a project website. Mr. Spahr noted that the Council will receive a request to provide input which would occur via an email questionnaire. During April and May, Mr. Spahr noted that there will be pop-up events. He reviewed that he anticipates 5 total Steering Committee Meetings which will occur on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 11:00 AM at the location of 1 North Main. Mayor Pedersen requested that it reflected in the meeting notes that in addition to Peters and Montgomery Townships contributing \$5,000 each for this project, MPSC has donated \$35,000 and appreciation should be given to very generous individuals and companies both in and surrounding the Borough. Council Member Morgan asked when the Borough would need to provide the Steering Committee with the Borough's three top priorities. Mr. Spahr said that the Borough should submit those in April.

Mr. Janon R. "Jay" Gray introduced himself and noted that he was running for Pennsylvania House of Representatives seat currently held by Paul Schemel. Jay noted that he would be available after the meeting should anyone wish to speak to him.

Hearing no additional Public Comment, President Stoner moved to the Meeting Minutes.

MEETING MINUTES:

Mayor Pedersen noted a correction on page three of the January 2, 2024, Meeting Minutes, correcting the spelling of J. Zeger's last name. Council Member Morgan noted one additional change on page 5 noting that they voted to not reappoint the Borough Manager for 2024 and adding not to that statement was needed.

MOTION: to approve the Meeting Minutes from January 2, 2024, with the previously noted changes was made by Heefner, second by Sipes, all ayes, motion carried.

Attorney Coccorese noted that the time the meeting reconvened after the executive session was missing from the draft. Secretary Gorman noted that she would research the matter and correct the time for that along with the adjournment time for both.

MOTION: to approve the Meeting Minutes from February 5, 2024, with the addition of the time they reconvened, and the corrected time of adjournment was made by Heefner, second by Sipes, Council Member Morgan abstained as he was not present, remaining ayes, motion carried.

TREASURER's REPORT / BILLS PAYABLE:

Council President moved to the Treasurer's Report and Bills Payable List for the month ending January 31, 2024.

MOTION: to approve the Treasurer's Report and Bills Payable for the month ending January 31, 2024, was made by Heefner, second by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

MAYOR's REPORT:

Council President asked for the Mayor's Report.

Mayor Pedersen relayed that he and Chief Zechman interviewed a candidate for a part-time position on Friday. Chief Zechman is working to complete the background check and if all progresses forward, they will request the Council to meet with the individual next month in executive session.

POLICE REPORT:

Council President moved to the Police Report.

Chief Zechman noted that they received a document from the State Police requesting Public Comment for the services that they are providing. Chief reviewed that it is part of a certification that occurs every 3-5 years. The Chief said that he can post it on the bulletin board and the public can provide comments. He noted that it is known as CALEA.

No additional questions were asked of the Chief and he left the meeting at 7:22 pm.

SOLICITOR's REPORT:

Council President moved to the Solicitor's Report.

Solicitor Coccoresse noted that two individuals approached the Borough to discuss changes to the Zoning Ordinance a few months prior. One discussion was regarding townhomes and the second was by KLS regarding a text change permitting restaurants, retail stores, and taverns in the Industrial Zone. Attorney Coccoresse noted that KLS has reached out and wished to proceed forward. Attorney Coccoresse wished to confirm that Council would like to move forward with the text change permitting restaurants and retail stores if they pay the cost for those changes. Council asked the Solicitor's office to reach out to KLS to clarify their request.

MOTION: to approve to advertise the text change permitting Restaurants and Retail Stores to the Industrial Zone was made by Frisby, second by Heefner, all ayes, motion carried.

SECRETARY's REPORT:

Council President moved on to the Secretary's Report.

Secretary Gorman provided an overtime report for all Borough Employees beginning 2024 and reminded everyone to complete the State Ethics Form and return those to her by April 1, 2024.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

A report was included in the packet for review.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

MOTION: to accept the HARB recommendation to approve 2024-01-01 for the property of 22 North Main Street was made by Sipes, second by Heefner, members discussed the project, and some concerns were raised regarding restoration of the windows, Council Member Morgan voted against, remaining votes were ayes, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Planning Commission appointment Resolution was tabled due to it not being included in packet.

Resolution 15-24 appointing a representative of COG was on the agenda and a signed copy was included in the meeting packet, so no additional action was needed at this time.

Resolution 16-24 was also not included in the meeting packet. After a brief time of Council Members looking for the document. Borough Secretary stated that she too looked for it but after speaking to Dawn Scheller she noted that it does not exist on paper as it is the Council President's job to make the Committee Appointments.

MOTION: to amend the agenda removing Resolution 16-24 from the Agenda as Committee Appointments would be made by Council President without a Resolution, it was asked to amend the list of Committees with the following amendments: 4. Streets/Sidewalk and add 5. Nominating, and 6. Summer Playground was made by Sipes, second by Heefner, all ayes, motion carried.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:

- Finance Committee: Stoner, Morgan, and Burkot
- Personnel Committee: Stoner and Heefner
- Property Committee: Sipes, Monismith-Craig, and Burkot
- Streets/Sidewalk Committee: Sipes, Monismith-Craig, Burkot, and Frey
- Nominating Committee: Frisby, Monismith-Craig, and Heefner
- Summer Playground Committee: Frisby, Stoner, and Morgan

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: to approve the hanging of black balloons on meters for the Overdose Awareness Day on March 6th was made by Heefner, second by Monismith-Craig, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to appoint Judy Bonciu to serve on the HARB Board as the Licensed Real Estate Broker Member via Resolution 11-24 was made by Sipes, second by Monismith-Craig, all ayes, motion carried.

Council Member Morgan volunteered to attend the meeting to discuss the County-Wide Tax Reassessment matter on February 15, 2024, at the Salzmann Hughes Chambersburg Office.

MOTION: to approve the scope of work as presented in the Boyer Ritter letter dated January 10, 2024, and authorize Council President and Borough Manager to execute the document was made by Heefner, second by Sipes, all ayes, motion carried.

