

**EPHRATA BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 14, 2019**

The regular Ephrata Borough Council meeting was called to order by President Susan Rowe at 7:00 PM on January 14, 2019, in the Council Chambers of the Borough Office, 124 South State Street.

Pastor Wes Dudley, Dove Westgate, offered the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

In attendance in addition to the President were Vice President Thomas Reinhold, President Pro Tem Melvin Weiler and Council Members Timothy Barr, Linda Martin, Ricky Ressler, Victor Richard, Gregory Zimmerman, and Mayor Ralph Mowen.

Also in attendance were Borough Manager D. Robert Thompson, Director of Finance and Administration, Christine Moore, Police Chief William Harvey, Recording Secretary Stephanie Fasnacht, and Borough Solicitor James R. McManus, III, Esq.

The following visitors were present:

Rich and Dawn Burgess, Ephrata
Tim Auker, 542 N. State Street, Ephrata
Andrea Glass, President, Ephrata Performing Arts Center
Bob Checchia, Vice President, Ephrata Performing Arts Center
Preston Cuer, Treasurer, Ephrata Performing Arts Center
Robin Payne, Secretary, Ephrata Performing Arts Center
David Dierwechter, Director, Ephrata Performing Arts Center
Debbie Havert, Member-At-Large, Ephrata Performing Arts Center

PROCLAMATION – ARBOR DAY 2018

Mayor Mowen read a proclamation which proclaimed an event celebrating Arbor Day occurred on Friday, April 27, 2018, in the Borough of Ephrata.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Barr, seconded by Ms. Martin, and unanimously passed that Borough Council approve the December 3, 2018, Work Session Minutes, and the December 10, 2018, Regular Meeting Minutes.

MUNICIPAL MOMENT – EPHRATA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (EPAC)

Ms. Andrea Glass, President, EPAC, opened by thanking Borough Council for inviting the EPAC team to share some of the important work that they are doing, to advise of their 2019 goals and initiatives and to also bring awareness of some of the challenges they are facing. Ms. Glass advised that the entire 2019 Executive Team is in attendance for an opportunity to get to know more members of the EPAC community.

Ms. Glass advised that 2018 was one of EPAC's most successful seasons ever – both artistically and financially. Ms. Glass continued by stating that Ephrata Borough has a renewed focus on economic development and believes that EPAC can play a major role in that. Ms. Glass advised EPAC is critical to community development and the arts. Ms. Glass advised EPAC is an

economic driver for Ephrata Borough and is an integral part of both the Lancaster and Berks County performing arts markets. Ms. Glass advised EPAC has had both a short-term and a long-term positive impact on the quality of life of the citizens here in the Borough and in neighboring communities.

Ms. Glass advised the theatre has the capacity to seat 294 patrons for any given performance. Ms. Glass advised in 2018, there were eight (8) major productions with an average of 11 performances per production. Ms. Glass advised at capacity, EPAC can potentially serve 25,000 theatre goers. Ms. Glass advised in 2019, EPAC will print and distribute 15,000 playbills to their patrons. Ms. Glass advised visits to EPAC's website average approximately 6,500 a month with an increase to approximately 10,000 per month around the time of a production. Ms. Glass advised EPAC's Facebook page has just under 6,000 followers; further advising, EPAC has quite a presence on both Facebook and Instagram. Ms. Glass advised, in addition, reviews of performances regularly appear on "Broadway World," in the local "Ephrata Review," as well as the LNP newspaper and "The Reading Eagle."

Ms. Glass advised recently EPAC won 13 "Broadway World" awards including both the Best Play for "Peter and the Star Catcher" as well as Best Musical for "West Side Story" – one of the best-selling shows in EPAC's history. Ms. Glass further advised through testimonials, critical reviews and personal reviews, they are reminded daily of the ways that theatre is touching the lives of many right here in the community.

Ms. Glass advised they are continuing to expand services in 2019, but there is a need for additional assistance in order to do so. Ms. Glass advised all of the funds required to produce main stage productions, Kids4Kids programs and community outreach efforts come from individual donations, from corporate sponsors and from grants. Ms. Glass advised the members of the Development Team are in attendance at tonight's meeting who, in 2019, will be tasked with raising just under \$300,000. Ms. Glass advised those funds do not include the needs to support infrastructural upgrades such as lobby upgrades, conference room upgrades, sound upgrades and lighting upgrades.

Ms. Glass advised they are aware that additional performing arts centers are opening across Lancaster County who will be located in newer venues, have additional amenities (i.e., food and beverage service) and located in very desirable areas. Ms. Glass further advised in order for EPAC to continue to be an economic driver in Ephrata Borough, it is important they remain competitive in a lot of different ways. Ms. Glass advised in 2019, EPAC will be forming a Strategic Planning Task Force to start to address some of the challenges and to plan for their future sustainability in the Borough.

Ms. Glass provided an overview of the programs on schedule for 2019 (including "The Humans," "Ragtime," "Pippen," "Newsies" and "My Fair Lady"), as well as an overview of the upcoming Kids4Kids February production, "Mary Poppins, Jr." Ms. Glass advised their Kids4Kids program serves approximately 500 school-age children each year and the impact of the program is immeasurable. Ms. Glass advised EPAC has received a Cultural Arts Grant from the Borough in the past to assist with their Center Stage summer camp. Ms. Glass advised they are looking at adding another camp dedicated to campers entering grades 9-12 as well as offer some additional workshops, as well as workshops catered to those with special needs. Ms. Glass further advised for the third year, their "EPAC on the Edge" series returns with this year's focus being on the LGBTQIA+ communities.

Ms. Glass continued by advising that EPAC is very much committed to serving the citizens of Ephrata Borough through outreach efforts with other organizations including the Lancaster County Community Foundation and the Pennsylvania Council of Arts.

Ms. Glass introduced Mr. Bob Checchia, Vice President, who provided an overview of building improvements (HVAC system and lobby restrooms) as well as current goals to upgrade the floor, currently bare concrete, in the classroom area. Mr. Checchia advised that “they are trying to stay ahead of an “older” building” which will take a lot of money and effort.”

In conclusion, Ms. Glass again thanked Borough Council for their time and opened the forum to questions.

President Rowe asked Ms. Glass for introductions of fellow members of EPAC’s Executive Team; at which time, each member present provided their name and role(s) at EPAC.

Mayor Mowen expressed to all in attendance, “If you have not been to events there, you have missed things greatly!” and thanked EPAC members for putting on high-quality productions. Mr. Ressler added, “... the performances there and the caliber of people and actors there are second to none.”

Mr. Barr advised he was thinking about trying out sometime in the future – but not this year due to the number of productions being musicals.

Ms. Rowe expressed her appreciation to Ms. Glass and the rest of the EPAC representatives for their time and presentation.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

It was moved by Mr. Reinhold, seconded by Mr. Ressler, and unanimously passed that the public comment section of the meeting be closed until the end of tonight’s agenda.

ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS

It was moved by Mr. Barr, seconded by Mr. Zimmerman, and unanimously passed to approve Acceptance of Reports consisting of the following documents:

Highway Committee

The Highway Committee met on Monday, January 7, 2019 and discussed the following:

1. The Committee reviewed a professional services agreement with Becker Engineering of Lancaster, PA for time and expenses associated with their Construction Period Services Proposal dated December 17, 2018 to provide construction observation services for the UGI “Get Gas” gas main extension project. Services by Becker Engineering being provided because Engineering Department is inadequately staffed to perform these activities at this time. Per prior agreement, UGI will reimburse the Borough for all costs of construction observation/inspection for this project. The Committee will recommend that Borough Council award a professional services agreement to Becker Engineering of Lancaster, PA at their January 7, 2019 work session meeting.
2. The Committee reviewed a letter request from Michelle Kready, Manager at Cocalico Place, dated December 5, 2018 to temporarily close and restrict parking as necessary on East Franklin Street between Lake Street and South Maple Street on Tuesday, February 12, 2019

from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM for safety reasons while a rooftop HVAC unit is replaced at their facility. Their request also includes provision and removal of all traffic control devices by Ephrata Borough Public Works. The Committee will recommend that Borough Council conditionally approve the requests subject to neighbor notifications, provision of a satisfactory certificate of insurance naming the Borough as additional insured and attendance at a meeting with Borough staff to discuss traffic control, emergency vehicle access and safety concerns at their January 7, 2019 work session meeting.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Personnel Committee

It was moved by Vice President Reinhold, seconded by Ms. Martin, and unanimously passed that Borough Council ratify the Ephrata Borough Council By-Laws as presented with no revisions.

It was moved by Vice President Reinhold, seconded by Mr. Ressler, and unanimously passed that Borough Council ratify the Ephrata Borough Council Rules of Order as presented with no revisions.

APPROVAL OF CHECKS 36361 THROUGH 36697 AND THE ACH REGISTER DATED JANUARY 2, 2019

It was moved by Mr. Richard, seconded by Mr. Ressler, and unanimously passed that Borough Council ratify the payment of bills performed by the staff since the last regular Council meeting in the aggregate amount of \$1,044,070.83.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no comments or remarks from attendees.

DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Zimmerman requested a status update on the solar project; in which, Mr. Thompson advised he received an email advising energizing and testing has begun at the site. Mr. Thompson further advised that a control cabinet was approved by PPL which will have to be custom made (expected delivery at the beginning of March) and hopefully by the end of March, the site will be operational.

Mr. Zimmerman requested a status update on the PILOT program; in which, Mr. Thompson advised there has been limited success with the program. President Rowe explained to those in attendance who may be unfamiliar that PILOT (Payment In Lieu of Taxes) is a program where the Borough sends letters to all of the tax-exempt properties and request they give a small payment in lieu of the taxes they would be paying.

Ms. Martin advised she wanted to compliment the cabinetry in the lobby. Mr. Thompson advised many awards have been accumulated over the years and which should be shared with members of the community; therefore, the reason for purchasing the curio cabinets.

Mr. Reinhold advised he made contact last week with Mr. Thompson regarding the solar project as a lot of people, including those residing in Ephrata Township and Clay Township, are starting to ask questions. Mr. Reinhold concluded that "... it has been a process, but we're getting very close to the finish line."

Mayor Mowen reminded Council about the special Public Safety Committee meeting on Thursday, January 24, 2019, and requested all to make an effort to attend to learn about the status of the emergency services within the Borough. Mayor Mowen advised in the 2018 Fund Drive (as of November 30, 2018), only 16.1% of businesses and residences in the Borough gave a donation to the fire company. Mayor Mowen advised out of 5,838 residential properties, only 950 gave a donation and out of 438 commercial properties, only 59 gave donations for a grand total of \$66,000. Mayor Mowen advised the fire companies struggle to get money to operate and he cannot believe that few of people within the Borough feel it is necessary to give donations to the people who are there 24/7, 365 days a year – rain, sleet, snow, hurricanes – to protect them and they just don't take care of them. Mr. Richard inquired, "... is it kind of normal for the ... the low numbers ... is normal in this kind of stuff." Mayor Mowen replied that donations used to run in the 20-25 percentile range; however, over the last few years, the number of donations has really trailed off.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Barr, seconded by Mr. Richard, and unanimously passed that Borough Council adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

D. Robert Thompson, Secretary