

**EPHRATA BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 9, 2023**

The regular Ephrata Borough Council meeting was called to order by President Thomas Reinhold at 7:10 PM on January 9, 2023, in the Council Chambers of the Borough Office, 124 South State Street.

In attendance in addition to the President were Vice President Linda Martin, President Pro Tem Victor Richard, Council Members Timothy Barr, Alan Buohl, Kory Musser, Ricky Ressler and Greg Zimmerman, as well as Mayor Ralph Mowen.

Also in attendance were Interim Borough Manager Nancy Harris, Interim Police Chief Christopher McKim and Borough Solicitor Isaac P. Wakefield, Esq., Salzman Hughes.

The following visitors were present within Council Chambers:

Larry Alexander, The Ephrata Review
Tim Auker, 542 N. State Street, Ephrata

Prior to beginning the meeting, President Reinhold made the following announcement:

- Members of Borough Council and Mayor Mowen met in an Executive Session prior to the beginning of the Voting Session on January 9, 2023, to discuss a personnel matter.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Harris provided confirmation of the following:

1. The meeting agenda was posted on the Borough's website and at Borough Hall no later than 24 hours in advance of the time of the meeting.
2. The meeting agenda included a listing of each matter of Borough business that will be or may be the subject of deliberation or official action at the meeting.
3. There were no changes made to the meeting agenda after it was posted.
4. The meeting agenda was made available to individuals in attendance at the meeting.

In response to President Reinhold asking if there were any requests to add an item of Borough business to the meeting agenda, Ms. Harris advised of the following:

1. Addition of Action Item: Borough Council's acceptance of a proposal from Personnel Partners to provide interim Human Resource services.

President Reinhold asked for a motion to accept the revised meeting agenda with the additional Action Item to be included prior to the Approval of Checks and ACH Register. Mr. Barr moved and Vice President Martin seconded to approve the revised meeting agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice President Martin moved and Mr. Barr seconded that Borough Council approve the December 5, 2022, Work Session Meeting Minutes and the December 12, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

After time allotted for citizen comments and with no one in attendance wishing to speak, President Reinhold closed the public comments section of the meeting until the end of the meeting agenda.

ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS

Mr. Barr moved and Mr. Ressler seconded to approve the Acceptance of Reports. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Safety Committee

The Public Safety Committee met on December 19, 2022, at 6:30 PM at Ephrata Borough Hall, 124 South State Street.

Approval of Agenda:

Sgt. Randolph provided confirmation of the following:

1. The meeting agenda was posted on the Borough's website and at Borough Hall no later than 24 hours in advance of the time of the meeting.
2. The meeting agenda included a listing of each matter of Borough business that will be or may be the subject of deliberation or official action at the meeting.
3. There were no changes made to the meeting agenda after it was posted.
4. The meeting agenda was made available to individuals in attendance at the meeting.

Committee Chair Buohl asked if there were any requests to add a matter of Borough business to the meeting agenda. Seeing none, Mr. Buohl asked for a motion to accept the meeting agenda as posted. Mr. Richard moved and Mr. Ressler seconded to approve the meeting agenda as posted. The motion carried unanimously.

Action Items:

1. **Pioneer Ladder Truck Lease Agreement:** Mr. Ressler questioned whether the Committee had already addressed the lease; in which, Mr. Buohl stated he thought they had as well and Mr. Richard stated that he wasn't sure they had voted on it. Sgt. Randolph clarified that from previous meeting minutes the lease agreement had not been voted on because the title had not yet been received. All three Council Members were in favor of moving the agreement forward at the next voting session. Mr. Kiefer questioned the lease agreement section related to changes permitted to the truck. He expressed concern regarding whether minor changes would be prohibited. Sgt. Randolph noted that the lease, Section 6, states that the prohibition applies to major changes. Mayor Mowen clarified that the lease also specifically allows for equipment installation.

Discussion Items:

1. **Lancaster Harm Reduction Project:** Mayor Mowen stated that a group was to come in to give a presentation regarding supplying free, clean syringes; however, this is being put off until a future meeting. Discussion surrounded the legality of providing syringes without a prescription. It was proposed by Mayor Mowen and Mr. Reinhold to put off the invitation for presentation at a Committee meeting by Lancaster Harm Reduction Project until at least February 2023.
2. Mr. Gockley reported that the plans for the New Year's Eve Downtown Ephrata Celebration event are being finalized and there was a recent meeting to discuss safety aspects. Mr. Gockley reported things appear to be in good shape. Discussion surrounded the fireworks display safety and proximity to buildings and spectators. Mr. Gockley stated that he is comfortable with the safety plan in place. He also reiterated that roads around the event area will be closed from 1:00 PM through approximately 3:00 AM. Pioneer Fire Company will be staffing the fire house for a portion of the New Year's Eve event. Mr. Richard asked about road closure permits and Mr. Gockley confirmed that the event has the appropriate permit.

3. Ms. Stonebreaker stated that Covid hospitalization rates are lower than previously with them having approximately nine patients currently admitted for Covid.

December 2022 Borough of Ephrata Management Report
 December 2022 Borough of Ephrata Operations Report
 December 2022 General Ledger Report
 Ephrata Pioneer Fire Company December 2022 Report
 Lincoln Fire Company December 2022 Report
 Ephrata Community Ambulance Association December 2022 Report
 Ephrata Community Ambulance Association Annual Operations Report 2022
 Ephrata Emergency Management December 2022 Report
 Mainspring of Ephrata November 2022 Meeting Minutes

Prior to the Acceptance of Reports, Mr. Zimmerman asked that the Fire Companies provide year-to-year comparisons broken down by municipality in their reports; in which, Ms. Harris advised his request will be discussed at an upcoming Public Safety Committee meeting. Ms. Harris, in referencing the Management Report, asked Council for their feedback regarding the new format. Vice President Martin advised she liked the new format and thought it was easier to read. Mr. Ressler advised he has difficulty reading the graphs and requested they be tweaked in an easier-to-read format.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Buohl moved and Mr. Richard seconded that Borough Council authorize the President of Borough Council to execute the Lease Agreement with the Ephrata Pioneer Fire Company for the Seagrave Model TV0HCT Marauder 95 Foot Aerialscope Mid Mount Non-Quint Platform Fire Truck, VIN 1F9FN38T1NCST2031 for a term of fifteen (15) years. Motion carried unanimously via roll call vote.

Personnel Committee

Vice President Martin moved and Mr. Richard seconded that Borough Council ratify the following Ephrata Borough Council documents. Motion carried unanimously.

- a. By-Laws
- b. Code of Ethics/Conflicts of Interest Guidelines
- c. Rules of Order
- d. Borough Council Meeting Guidelines
- e. Committee Meeting Guidelines
- f. Budget Night Policy
- g. Telecommunication Policy
- h. Whistleblower Policy
- i. Guidelines for Employee Evaluations
- j. Performance Management Process
- k. Performance Evaluation/Borough Manager
- l. Performance Evaluation/Chief of Police

President Reinhold moved and Mr. Richard seconded that Borough Council accept the proposal from Personnel Partners to provide Human Resources Support Services dated January 9, 2023, subject to the change in the minimum term of the proposal from four months to three months of service. Motion carried

unanimously via roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF CHECKS 49845 THROUGH 50117 AND THE ACH REGISTER DATED DECEMBER 29, 2022

Mr. Ressler moved and Mr. Richard seconded that Borough Council ratify the payment of bills performed by Staff since the last regular Council meeting in the aggregate amount of \$2,389,234.07. Motion carried unanimously.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

With no visitors wishing to address Council, President Reinhold moved onto the Discussion/Announcements portion of the meeting.

DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Ressler expressed his appreciation for Staff's efforts on the new Management Report.

Mr. Barr commended Ms. Harris on her taking on the work she is doing.

Mr. Zimmerman, in referencing the Management Report, requested if Staff could add their completed goals and/or projects; in which, Ms. Harris requested that to be deferred for the time being due to the management team taking on additional tasks during this time of transition. Mr. Zimmerman was agreeable to Ms. Harris' request.

Mr. Zimmerman encouraged Council Members to attend the upcoming Lancaster County Borough's Association's Winter Meeting to be held on January 25, 2023.

Mr. Zimmerman advised that there will be a vacancy on the Ephrata Recreation Center's Board at the end of 2023 and commented, "... it would be nice to have some representation from Council" on the Board.

Mr. Richard extended his appreciation to both Ms. Harris and Lt. Christopher McKim for "... doing what they're doing and stepping up" in their new roles.

Mr. Richard commented that he appreciated receiving a thank you letter from the Cloister Associates for the monies they received from the Borough.

In response to Mr. Richard's inquiry as to how Mainspring's first New Year's Eve Event was, Vice President Martin advised she has heard so many compliments about the event. Additionally, Mayor Mowen advised he attended the event commenting, "... the music was great ... the beer garden was active ... the ice sculpture was neat ... the fireworks were awesome ... it was a really, really nice night." Mr. Richard replied that he was glad to hear such positivity regarding the event commenting, "... it's events like these that are building momentum within the community."

Mr. Richard, addressing Ms. Harris, advised he observed that the railing is broken at the Oak Street Bridge and inquired if it was going to be repaired; in which, Ms. Harris advised she will have the matter looked into.

Interim Police Chief McKim echoed the positive comments regarding Mainspring's New Year's Eve Event noting that Emergency Manager Randy Gockley is already planning for safety at next year's event.

Vice President Martin commented that when she began assisting with the planning of community events five to six years ago, the thought went through her mind, “What if nobody shows up?” However, over the years, she has observed these events begin to escalate or “gain traction” which is really neat to see.

Vice President Martin also encouraged Council Members to attend the upcoming Lancaster County Borough’s Association’s Winter Meeting to be held on January 25, 2023.

Vice President Martin, addressing Ms. Harris, referenced a notation on the Management Report regarding a CivicPlus Notification Demonstration and inquired if those are the push notifications received on their phones. Ms. Harris advised that this was a separate matter as there are mass notification requirements in place resulting in Staff viewing a demonstration from CivicPlus on a system they have available - CivicReady. Vice President Martin requested that when a system is ready to be implemented that Council have a demonstration on it; in which, Ms. Harris advised she will do so.

Vice President Martin, addressing Ms. Harris, inquired if GMS Funding Solutions could provide a report regarding the grant monies they have assisted the Borough in obtaining; in which, Ms. Harris advised her request will be discussed at an upcoming Budget and Finance Committee meeting.

President Reinhold expressed his appreciation to Ms. Harris, Lt. McKim and Solicitor Isaac Wakefield for the roles they have taken on.

President Reinhold advised he is currently finalizing the Municipal Moments schedule for 2023 noting that Casey Ellis, Ephrata Area Social Services, will be presenting at the February 13, 2023, Voting Session.

Mayor Mowen commented on the homelessness issue advising that he recently found out that organizations in Lancaster City were sending some of their homeless population to Ephrata. Mayor Mowen advised he made contact with those organizations and requested they stop doing so; in which, all organizations advised they would cease immediately. Mayor Mowen concluded his comments by stating, “... he does not want Ephrata to be the dumping grounds for the County.”

Mr. Richard inquired if Council is going to continue to ask members of the Ephrata Ministerium to provide the invocation for their meetings; in which, Ms. Fasnacht advised she has been in contact with Pastor Wes Dudley from the Ephrata Area Ministerium who informed her he has not been able to enlist volunteers to provide the invocation. President Reinhold requested Lt. McKim bring this matter up at the upcoming Ephrata Area Ministerium meeting to see if there is any interest for them to provide the invocation at future meetings.

President Reinhold advised he is appreciative of Mayor Mowen’s efforts regarding the homelessness issue within Ephrata. President Reinhold commented that he has observed a group of homeless individuals congregating along the street beyond City Gate. President Reinhold noted his preference would be to see these individuals gather within City Gate’s facility rather than along the street.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Martin moved and Mr. Barr seconded that Borough Council adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy E. Harris, P.E.
Interim Secretary

SJF