

**Borough of Ben Avon**  
**7101 Church Avenue, Ben Avon, Pennsylvania 15202**  
**Regular Meeting of Council – January 16, 2018**  
**Minutes**

**Call to Order**

President, Jennifer Bett, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Council Members Present**

Jennifer Bett, Earl Bohn, Michele Boyd, Henry Casale, Megan Dolan, Ken Opiery, and David Stoeckle

**Council Members Absent**

**Others Present**

Melanie Holcomb, Mayor  
Anne Sweeney, Esq., Solicitor  
Lisa Cronin, Secretary  
Dale Regrut, Public Works Foreman  
James Rupert, Chief, Ben Avon Volunteer Fire Department  
Norbert Micklos, Chief, Ohio Township Police Department

**Public Participation**

Doug Silk, President of the Ben Avon Borough Volunteer Fire Company, and residing at 7224 Church Avenue asked if council could address the problem of vehicles being parked between the posted “No Parking between Sign” signs. The non-compliance is impeding the fire company’s ability to respond. Mr. Casale asked if this was happening because it was not being enforced or that additional enforcement is needed? Mr. Silk could not say if it was an enforcement issue, just that this is a problem for any fire company responding to fires. Mr. Opiery explained that it is a no parking zone per ordinance. Mrs. Boyd suggested a ticket be issued to violators and that that would get the message out. Mrs. Bett asked the Police Chief if he could do that and he agreed that he would.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion: Mr. Casale; Second: Mr. Stoeckle; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2017, council meeting. Earl Bohn abstained.

Motion: Mr. Opiery; Second: Mr. Casale; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on December 28, 2017. Earl Bohn abstained.

Motion: Mr. Bohn; Second: Mrs. Boyd; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2018, Reorganizational council meeting with the correction of adding Jennifer Bett as taking the Oath of Office.

**Financial Report - Report given by Ken Opiery**

Financial Reports for December 2017 and January 2018 will be presented to council at the regular council meeting on February 20, 2018. Mr. Opiery explained to the new council members that this has been the process for a long time. Invoices are still coming in and there are

year-end accruals for the prior year that is recorded. The final financials for 2017 and January 2018 will be presented at February's council meeting

**Administration Report** –*Report given by Earl Bohn*

Mr. Bohn confirmed that at the mayor's request, the borough secretary prepared and circulated her job responsibilities and a summary account of the monthly duties to most of council. He offered to arrange a meeting with Co-Chair of Administration, Mrs. Dolan, or anyone else who is interested, to review that with him once they had a chance to look it over. Council agreed to add council member, Michele Boyd, to signing checks from Northwest Bank on behalf of the borough. Council members received their Financial Statement of Interest that needs to be completed by all council members and the solicitor, as well as the previous members of for 2018. Those forms should be completed and returned to the borough office by the date on the form.

**Public Affairs / Communications Report** – *Report given by Jennifer Bett*

Mrs. Bett said that she met with former council member, Phil Brind'Amour, and he gave her the information he had so that she can take over. She would like to revamp the website and council member Mr. Stoeckle volunteered to work on updating it and, Michael Bett will be working on it with him. Mr. Stoeckle had suggested a fresh look would be good but would not change the basic function(s) of the website. Mrs. Bett thought some changes on our website would make it more user/consumer friendly too. Police Chief Micklos suggested that council might want to look into utilizing the Savvy Citizen as a tool to communicate with the residents. He suggested maybe even the QVCOG could get involved in it.

**Public Safety/Code Enforcement Report**–*Report given by Earl Bohn*

Mr. Bohn said that in the packets for this meeting, there were November 2017 and December 2017 incident reports along with a 2017-year end report. These reports, along with the monthly police report, will give an idea of what the nature of the calls are and the number of personnel involved. The Fire Chief and the President of the Ben Avon Volunteer Fire Company invited all council members to come to the fire station to see the fire drills/practice that take place on any Wednesday night at 7:00 p.m., with the exception of the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month.

Mrs. Bett said at one point the current Public Safety/Code Enforcement was under "Public Maintenance" and asked if Earl and/or Ken could explain how it morphed into what it is now. She thought that public safety was under the realm of mayor and was hoping to get clarification. Mr. Bohn responded that the mayor is the civilian command but did not know of a time where there was a "Public Maintenance" committee and that predated him. Mr. Opiery said there was a time, when there was as Public Safety committee for the Police department and a Public Safety committee for the Fire department. It was two separate committees and those were combined into one. And then code enforcement came along and it just fell into place there because it's about public safety so they all became one.

**Public Works Report** – *Report given by Ken Opiery*

Mr. Opiery expressed gratitude to the Public Works crew, Dale and Mark, for the good job they did, and continue to do, in keeping the boroughs roads safe this winter. Mr. Opiery also wanted to inform new council members that the borough does not maintain the part of Perrysville Road after Merton leading up to Ben Avon Heights and down to Gass Road as that is a state road maintained by PennDot.

**Mayor's Report** – *Report given by Melanie Holcomb*

Please see Attachment A.

**Police Chief's Report** – *Report given by Police Chief Norbert*

The chief asked if council had any questions on his monthly report that Ohio Township Police submit. The Mayor commented on some of the numbers and said it was very informative. Also, see above comments under Public Affairs Report.

**Fire Chief's Report** – *Report give by James Rupert*

The chief wanted to make council aware that the fire on Alder Drive that was discussed earlier had a class 5 hording situation, with 5 being the worse, and that hording does exist in our community and it is difficult and dangerous for fire fighters to do their job. It is also a health hazard for the people living there.

**Solicitor's Report** – *Report given by Anne Sweeney*

**Executive Session:**

Motion: Mr. Stoeckle; Second: Mr. Bohn; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:08 p.m. to discuss legal matters.

Motion: Mr. Opipery; Second: Mr. Stoeckle; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn from Executive Session and reconvene Regular Session at 8:31 p.m.

Solicitor, Anne Sweeney, will send Mr. Richard J. White and Eric Shultz, Park Manager at Avonworth Community Park a letter clarifying the borough's position that the previous council member was illegally appointed and Mr. Mike Schwartz is still our voting member for the Avonworth Municipal Authority. Mrs. Sweeney explained that it was inappropriate to motion to appoint that council member at the December 12, 2017 regular council meeting before Mr. Schwartz's term expired on December 31, 2017.

**New Business**

There is a Tri Borough Joint Planning Commission meeting that council members are invited to on January 22, 2017 at the Avalon Borough building at 7:00 p.m. Council member Michele Boyd is planning on attending as well as council President Jennifer Bett.

Council member, Michele Boyd, had a resident ask why the Port Authority Maintenance Department hasn't cleaned the bus stop and that they were responsible for maintaining and keeping the bus stop structure clean and asked that the borough follow-up as it has not been done. Borough secretary said she would contact the Port Authority in early spring to get on the schedule for a cleaning.

Council President Bett asked that the committees think about what project(s) will be coming up this year and to present what their goals might be for this year to the regular council meeting in February.

Motion: Mr. Opipery; Second: Mr. David Stoeckle; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve changing the rent payment schedule for Anchor and Anvil Coffee Shop to ten monthly installments of \$900.00 per month for the months of March through December in 2018 and 2019. Payments of utilities will continue to be paid monthly. Solicitor, Anne Sweeney, will draft an amendment to reflect the new rent payment schedule.

**Old Business**

Motion: Mr. Bohn; Second: Mrs. Dolan; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to appoint council member Michele Boyd to Co-Chair the Administration committee.

Council President Bett said that the appointments to the following boards have been confirmed:

Zoning Board: Peter Herchenroether, Jack Chalmers, and Robert Shelton

Tri-Borough Joint Planning Commission: Scott Keener, Catherine Houska, and John Busse

Avonworth Municipal Authority: Voting; member Mike Schwartz; Advisory members; Terry Hartnett. There are still two remaining seats that need to be filled in the Advisory capacity.

The borough still needs to appoint member(s) to the Flood Plan Administrator and Emergency Management Systems Administrator.

**Adjournment**

Motion: Mr. Bohn; Second: Mr. David Stoeckle; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourned the meeting at 8:34 p.m

Respectfully submitted,

*Lisa Cranin,*

*Borough Secretary*

## Ben Avon Mayor's Report

January 2018

- Attending ongoing Local Government Academy courses for newly elected officials through March.
- Joined the PA State Mayors Association.
- Accepted an invitation to breakfast with Senator Wayne Fontana on 1/20, along with other Council and Mayors from the North Boroughs.
- Reached out to other new Mayors in the North Boroughs.
- Met with Executive Director of the Quaker Valley Council of Governments.
- Pursuing, with other Council members, volunteers to fill our Emergency Management Coordinator position.
- Communicated request from Anchor & Anvil owner Andy Theobald to Council re; lease addendum.
- Reached out to our representatives on Zoning Board, Avonworth Municipal Authority and the Tri Borough Joint Planning Commission to confirm their willingness to continue to serve in their current capacities.
- Took request from Community Presbyterian Church to switch direction of snow plowing at the end of Marvin Way, to keep their handicapped path clear.
- Spoke with Jeff Hawk, Public Affairs Officer with the Pittsburgh District, US Army Corps of Engineers about the Emsworth Dam situation. He expects several weeks of careful work before the barges and ice can be cleared away. Future weather will be a big factor. There is concern upstream of the dam for flooding. Also for tributaries in surrounding areas.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Melanie Holcomb  
Mayor