



# Borough of Ben Avon

## Council Meeting Minutes October 20, 2020

The Borough of Ben Avon Council met in a regular voting session on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 virtually and at 7101 Church Avenue for the purpose of transacting General Business. President Jennifer Bett presided and opened the meeting at 7:01 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **ROLL CALL**

Council Members Present: Jennifer Bett, Henry Casale, Megan Dolan, Ken Opipery, Kara Roggenkamp, David Stoeckle, Rick Wagner

### Others Present:

Mayor Melanie Hughes-Holcomb, OTP Chief Joe Hanny, Catherine Houska (JPC), Mary Smith (JPC), Borough Secretary Terrie Patsch

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - *There was no public participation*

### **PRESENTATION** – *Peter Herchenroether, Zoning Hearing Board*

Mr. Herchenroether submitted his resignation effective December 31, 2020, from the Zoning Hearing Board. Mrs. Bett expressed appreciation on behalf of council and the residents of the Borough on his many decades of service to the community. Mr. Herchenroether wanted this opportunity to share with the board some important insight as to the purpose of the ZHB and his thoughts on finding a new member to serve.

Mr. Herchenroether also asked that council consider some form of celebration marking the 100 year anniversary of the Borough building.

### **BOROUGH REPORTS**

#### Mayor's Report – Mayor Melanie Hughes-Holcomb

- Two applications under consideration for handicapped parking spaces for Borough residents.
- Avon Club is considering hosting an event next month. It would be a fundraiser for the local food bank.
- Trick or Treat details have been posted online and at the Borough hall reflecting the event to be held on October 31, 2020 from 6 to 8 PM. Mayor Holcomb asks that all residents abide by social distancing and sanitizing practices recommended by the CDC.

#### Police Report – Chief Joe Hanny

Chief Hanny reported a quiet month in the Borough with 59 calls. As there have been a number of car thefts in the neighboring communities, he reminds all residents to remove valuables from their vehicles and lock the doors.

#### Ben Avon Fire Department Report – No report given



## Borough of Ben Avon

### Solicitor's Report – *No report given*

Solicitor Anne Sweeney requested an executive session to discuss pending legal action.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion: Mr. Casale; Second: Mr. Stoeckle; Motion carried to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2020 council meeting.

Motion: Mr. Pipery; Second: Ms. Roggenkamp; Motion carried to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2020 work session meeting.

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE**

Motion: Mr. Pipery; Second: Mr. Casale; Motion Carried to approve the Revenue and Expenditures report for September, 2020 as presented.

Motion: Mr. Pipery; Second: Mr. Casale; Motion Carried to approve the bills listed on the Accounts Payable statement in the amount of \$238,085.70

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### Administration

Mayor Holcomb requested further investigation into obtaining a security camera for the Borough Office to enable the Secretary to see who is entering and leaving the building.

#### Public Affairs and Communication

A statement from PA and Communication Chair Jennifer Bett:

The PA Dept. of Health continues to encourage residents to stay at home as much as possible. When going out in public, please wear a facial covering and maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet to help mitigate the virus spread. As of today, October 20, the Allegheny County Health Department has conducted 259 tests of residents in Ben Avon with 15 confirmed cases. For best practices, please follow the guidelines of the Allegheny County Health Department and the Center for Disease Control.

Ben Avon Borough continues to operate remotely by calling 412-766-7704 or sending email to [benavon@benavon.com](mailto:benavon@benavon.com).

The latest information may be found at [www.benavon.com](http://www.benavon.com). Savvy Citizen, Facebook and the Ben Avon website continue to serve as the primary information sources. Questions can be found on the website or one can contact a local council member.

#### Public Safety/Code Enforcement

Mr. Stoeckle said the quote from the insurance company on the proposed new fire truck would be \$2616 per calendar year.

Mr. Stoeckle stated the latest report from the Code Enforcement officers was uploaded to the shared drive this afternoon. This report includes the result of the inspection of an Airbnb property that has had repeated complaints from neighboring residents.



## Borough of Ben Abon

### Public Works

Mr. Pipery reported the new leaf machine has been picked up and is in operation. Dale and a returning part-time seasonal employee will begin leaf collection next week as the weather allows. Mr. Pipery stated that very few applications were received for the temporary/seasonal help positions, however, he is working with a temp agency from the city to place several workers as the season progresses.

The full time applicants are currently being screened and the interview process will begin soon. Mr. Pipery stated the timeline for hiring one to two Public Works laborers would be in the next several weeks.

With the leaf collection season beginning, Mr. Pipery renewed his concerns of the safety of staff working on Ohio River Boulevard. As was the case last year, no leaf collection can be safely performed on that stretch of highway. Letters will be sent from the Borough office notifying residents to bag and place their leaves with the weekly garbage collection.

Mr. Pipery shared with council the report from the Public Works Supervisor, Dale Regrut, that the backhoe will need major repairs and/or replacement in the near future. Mr. Pipery will research the options and review the budget and present his findings in November.

### Quaker Valley COG

Mr. Wagner reminded council the annual COG dinner will be tomorrow, October 21. This year's event is virtual, and the guest speaker is Jon Delano. Mr. Wagner, Mrs. Bett and Borough Secretary Terrie Patsch will be attending.

Mr. Wagner will also forward a link to the Borough office to be sent out to council members concerning a survey for the COG and ask them to respond.

In addition, Mr. Wagner has been attending some CONNECT events recently, and gained useful information concerning the fire department challenges many municipalities are facing. Mr. Wagner has discussed with Mr. Pipery feasibility studies done several years ago. If council is interested in initiating a new study through the DCED they would need to first reach out to other community leaders and ask for a letter of intent.

**NEW BUSINESS** – *there was no new business*

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### Joint Planning Commission

Ms. Houska reported they are waiting for the Borough to pass the resolution setting the solicitor and engineer for the next period rotation. As the wording was not clear, Ms. Houska will review and resubmit the proposed resolution.

Ms. Houska also reminded council that the JPC will be sending out an invoice for operating expenses to enable them to change from a free cloud storage service which is no longer meeting their needs, to an Office solution. The charge should be close to \$400 per municipality.



## Borough of Ben Abon

Ms. Houska stated the commission continues their work on revising the signage and fence ordinances.

### Ordinance 2020-05 – Diversity and Inclusion

The vote on this ordinance was tabled until the November 17, 2020 council meeting pending review of the changes.

### Ordinance 2020-04 – Young Lungs at Play

Motion: Mrs. Dolan; Second: Mr. Stoeckle; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve and adopt the restriction of tobacco and vaping products at Borough parks.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion: Ms. Dolan; Second: Mr. Pipery; Motion Carried to adjourn to executive session at 8:50 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter.

Motion: Mr. Wagner; Second: Mr. Pipery; Motion Carried to adjourn from Executive Session at 8:51 p.m. to return to regular session.

### **FURTHER ACTION**

Motion: Mr. Pipery; Second: Mr. Wagner; Motion Carried to accept the resignation of Mr. Edward Nuttall from the position in Public Works.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion: Mr. Pipery; Second: Mr. Wagner; Motion Carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terrie Patsch  
Borough Secretary