

EXETER BOROUGH

REGULAR MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY AUGUST 6, 2024 • Exeter Borough Building 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order:- Chairman Pizano called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

Solicitor Hassey reported Exeter Borough Council held an executive session at 6:30pm just prior to the Regular Council Meeting to discuss employment contracts, insurance, and property issues.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Roll Call was taken:

Present: Chairman Joe Pizano, Vice Chairman John Morgan, Councilpersons David Balent, Lori DeAngelo, Joseph Esposito, Carmen Marranca, Richard Murawski; Solicitor Ray Hassey; Mayor Denise Adams (via Zoom); Staff Amy Huntington, Vince Ninassi, Ralph Dixon.

No Person of the Month was named for August 2024.

Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to approve the June 2024 Regular Council Meeting Minutes; seconded by Councilman Marranca; motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report - Amy Huntington read the Treasurer's Report, on file, noting payments of \$35,200 for the annual 2025 non-uniformed pension plan MMO; \$79,041.74 to Stell Enterprises final pay app for Susquehanna Avenue Improvement Project; and \$99,160.85 to Pennsy Supply for Penn Avenue paving project. Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as read; seconded by Councilman Balent; motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence:

Chairman Pizano read the Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority July 30, 2024 letter to U.S. Senator Casey requesting accelerating the review of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' two active flood map studies. Senator John Blake, now the economic development director for U.S. Congressman Cartwright, addressed the Exeter Borough Council and residents, noting that FEMA did not do an adequate job educating the public of the impact of the new maps and that Congressman Cartwright plans to act legislatively through the flood mitigation program and building resilient infrastructure program to assist citizens impacted by the National Flood Insurance Program requirements, and will keep Exeter Borough updated.

Amy Huntington reported correspondence from Mr. Ronald Olaski, 230 Orchard Street regarding pothole repair on O'Keefe Lane; calls and emails from Mr. William Chromey, 328 Donna's Way, Ms. Mary Ruth DeSanto, Laurel Court, and other residents of Wildflower Village, regarding the severe financial burden caused by the new mandatory flood insurance being required by mortgage companies, due to the properties along Hicks Creek being included in the June 20, 2024 revised FEMA floodplain maps for the first time, in an area that has not been flooded in the

major water events of 1972 or 2011. Amy also noted correspondence from Luzerne County announcing August 8, 2024 Tax Sale Bidders list has been published.

Citizens' Input (Agenda Items Only): No input was made.

Refuse & Recycling Report - Amy Huntington read the Refuse & Recycling Report, on file, noting July deposit of \$7,396 and July recycling tonnage of 44.58T; year-to-date, 278.02T.

Report of Committees

- Police/WARP: Chief Turner noted 412 calls to WARP were made last month, 137 from Exeter Borough. Vice Chairman Morgan recommended a traffic signal at Slocum and Schooley Avenues, where the stop sign is frequently run through. The next WARP Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday August 8, 2024 at 7pm.
- Finance & Insurance (Grants) Vice Chairman Morgan reported the USDA Letter of Conditions is very close to being completed and the Wyoming Avenue/Schooley Avenue Sewer Improvement Project will soon be out to bid.
- Fire Department: Vice Chairman Morgan made motion to amend the agenda; seconded by Councilman Balent; motion approved unanimously. Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to approve Mr. Lee Hampton as part-time fire truck driver; seconded by Councilwoman DeAngelo; motion passed unanimously. Councilwoman DeAngelo reminded the Fire Department of the smoke detector event to held in with the September 7, 2024 Paper Shredding Day; Fireman Ralph Dixon noted the fire engine repairs are complete and the engine is back in service, and the ice cream, donut and Firehouse Subs fundraisers will be coordinated.
- Street/Recycling Dept: No report at this time.
- Parks & Recreation: Councilwoman DeAngelo noted the Saturday September 7th Paper Shredding Day will also include a Pay-As-You-Can Produce Market, hosted by The Food Dignity Project and a Smoke Alarm Registration Program, hosted by the Exeter Borough Fire Department. Councilwoman DeAngelo also noted the 2024 Turkey Trot will be held on Saturday November 30, 2024.
- WVSA: Vice Chairman Morgan read the WVSA report, on file. Over 50 lines were flushed this month, camera was run on 3 lines, and noted that Wildflower Drive and Clover Court were worked on July 22 and July 31.
- Zoning: Councilwoman DeAngelo read the Zoning report, on file.
- Hicks Creek: Councilman Balent reported trees on the banks are down now, clearing the creek requires more labor hours than the Exeter Streets Department staff can provide, is a safety hazard, and Luzerne County should be contacted to address the abundance of knotweed, to clear the debris and prepare for future rain events. It was also noted that there

is an issue with several residential fences along Hicks Creek that are within the 10' right-of-way required by Exeter Borough's code.

- Building & Grounds: No report at this time.
- Council of Governments: Councilman Balent reported on the successful collaboration with the COG and Exeter Borough Streets Department on the Thomas Street paving project; and noted an Electronics Recycling date will be announced soon.
- NEPA Land Bank: Councilman Balent noted that all 7 Exeter Borough properties listed in the August 8, 2024 Luzerne County Tax sale are in Birchwood Estates and not of interest to the Land Bank to develop.

There were no Mayor's Remarks or Solicitor's Report made at this time.

New Business:

1. Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to accept the resignation, with regret, of Ron Mruk, Exeter Borough Zoning Officer, effective July 16, 2024; seconded by Councilwoman DeAngelo; motion passed unanimously. Councilwoman DeAngelo added a special thank you to Ron for his generous contributions, assistance, and dedication to enforcing the Borough's Codes; and Vice Chairman Morgan echoed her sentiments.
2. Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to Approve Resolution of Council relating to interim staffing solutions for hiring an as needed secretary substitute on a temporary basis; seconded by Councilman Marranca; motion passed unanimously.
3. Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to approve Resolution establishing the minimum salaries for administrative employees in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, that is scheduled to be in effect on July 24, 2024, only if the Act takes effect and is not suspended by appeal or injunction or otherwise rendered ineffective in which case said minimum salary provisions shall not take effect until such time as appeals, injunctions or other measures have been resolved; seconded by Councilman Marranca; motion passed unanimously.
4. Councilwoman DeAngelo made a motion to complete Pay App #2 to Stell Enterprises for the completion of the Susquehanna Avenue Improvement Project, \$79,041.74; seconded by Councilman Balent; motion passed unanimously.
5. Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to execute the Luzerne County FY21 Community Development Block Grant Requirement for Payment Certificate requesting reimbursement for Penn Ave paving; seconded by Councilman Balent; motion passed unanimously.
6. Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to approve Resolution of Council authorizing that Exeter Borough be reimbursed for original expenditures paid or to be paid from the Borough's general funds in connection with the USDA loan and the sewer improvement project associated with the USDA Loan, in compliance with Section 1.150-2(e) of the United

States Treasury Regulations, as amended; seconded by Councilman Balent; motion passed unanimously.

7. Councilwoman DeAngelo made a motion to approve Resolution of Council to authorize cooperation between Wyoming, West Wyoming, West Pittston and Exeter Township to explore the viability of regionalization of services for municipal code enforcement and zoning; seconded by Councilman Esposito; motion passed unanimously.
8. Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to elect \$0 payment to the 2025 Financial Requirement and Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Exeter Borough Police Pension Plan; seconded by Councilman Murawski; motion passed unanimously.
9. Vice Chairman Morgan made a motion to elect \$35,200 payment to satisfy the 2025 Financial Requirement and Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Exeter Borough Non-Uniformed Pension Plan; seconded by Councilman Balent; motion passed unanimously.

Open to Public:

Ms. Amy Bezek of the Street Art Society of NEPA requested Exeter Borough sponsorship of \$50,000 via LSA Grants to add public art murals to improve the building facades in Exeter. The amount would provide for 5 murals and themes would be discussed with the Borough, no advertising logos or trademarks can be used.

Residents of Byrd Street including Ms. Jo Ann Teel, Mr. Frank Cegelka, Ms. Marianne Schutt, and Mr. Willam Kudrako of Jean Street, requested Borough attention to improving storm inlets and drainage.

Wildflower Village residents Mr. Steve Price, Mr. Steve Snyder, Ms. Sheila Appel, Ms. Michele Ebeling requested Borough assistance with sewer backup issues.

Mr. Carmen Nardoizzi of Penn Ave. requested stronger Borough enforcement of zoning and code ordinances regarding operation of business vehicles and traffic in a residential district and truck idling after hours.

Ms. Lori Reedy of Thomas Street requested a reconsideration of new FEMA floodplain maps drawn in areas that have not been flooded in the past.

Mr. Gerald Stofko of Schooley Avenue requested Borough attention to hazardous sidewalks in front of his property.

Motion to adjourn was made at 8:50pm by Councilman Murawski, seconded by Councilman Esposito; motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Amy Huntington, August 16, 2024.