

MINUTES
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
November 2, 2022
7:00 P.M.

The Downingtown Borough Council met at the Municipal Government Center, 4 W. Lancaster Avenue, Downingtown, PA. Members present: President Rakoff, Vice-President Plaughter, Councilors Howard, Horstmann and Ferris. Also attending were Solicitor O'Keefe and members of Borough Staff.

President Rakoff opened the meeting at 7:00 pm. Solicitor O'Keefe stated an executive session was held prior to this evening's Council meeting to discuss personnel issues.

President Rakoff asked for a moment of silence and then a salute to the flag.

Approval of Expenditures (period ending October 31, 2022) - Councilor Horstmann made a motion to approve the expenditures for the period ending October 31, 2022, Councilor Howard seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Borough Council Minutes (October 5, 2022) - Councilor Ferris made a motion to adopt the Borough council minutes of October 5, Councilor Horstmann seconded. One change noted by Councilor Howard prior to the vote was to correct a typo in the first paragraph under New Business. President Rakoff was listed as Vice President in error, with that correction; motion carried unanimously.

Citizens to be Heard

Mr. Pasquale Bucchi of 807 W. Pennsylvania, commented on his concerns about the vacation of Buchanan Alley. He asked Council if he would have access to the rear of his property on Penn Street with the vacation of Buchanan Alley (Ordinance 2022-05). Mr. Sullins stated the portion of Buchanan Alley that would be vacated would not extend far enough to the east to affect access to the rear of Mr. Bucchi's property on Penn Street.

Mr. Jim Girafalco of 299 E. Church Street, commented on his concerns about vacating a portion of Buchanan Alley (Ordinance 2022-05) and asked if an easement could be granted by the Borough to maintain access to his property. Solicitor O'Keefe said the Borough could not grant an easement as part of the Ordinance (2022-05) when vacating a portion of the alley. He stated an easement could be in place already if it was argued that the Borough had previously abandoned the alley or a resident has used the access for a considerable amount of time.

Deferred Business-

Ordinance 2022-05- Vacating a Portion of Buchanan Alley - Vice President Plaughter made a motion to approve Ordinance 2022-05, Councilor Ferris seconded; Motion Carried 4-1 with Councilor Horstmann opposed.

New Business

Viaduct Mill & Farmhouse (Update) – A presentation by Pete and Dana Petrizzio, owners of Farmhouse Coffee and Espresso Bar, the Creamery at the Farmhouse and the former Viaduct Mill, 100, 111, 115 & 119 West Lancaster Avenue . The Petrizzio's gave an update and the history of the Farmhouse, future plans of a new second new location in Caln Township as well as the challenges they faced with the Viaduct Mill building rehabilitation. They talked about parking concerns as a small business and the decision to demolish the former Viaduct Mill building and what future plans they may consider for the property.

2023 Borough of Downingtown Preliminary Budget – Advertise with intent to adopt – Solicitor O'Keefe explained there would be a ten day public review time for the budget and it would then be advertised for formal adoption on December 7, 2022. President Rakoff asked for any question and after a brief update, Councilor Horstmann made a motion to advertise with the intent to adopt the 2023 budget, Councilor Ferris seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Kimberly Venzie, Esq. Representing Residents of Rock Raymond Rd. & Highland Ave. - Ms. Venzie updated Borough Council on resident concerns with the Social Restaurant and the recent addition of the new covered patio associated with a non-conforming commercial property. Noise, traffic and parking were the main concerns created by the restaurant and recent addition. Ms. Venzie also questioned the validity of the zoning approval and the Borough's ability to issue building permits for the addition. Ms. Venzie was looking for a follow up from Council on any relief that could be afforded to the residents regarding this matter. Ms. Karen Steidler commented on behalf of the residents regarding their concerns of the neighborhood and also concerns of missing posted minutes from June of 2022, when residents had last attended a Council meeting.

For the Good of the Order

Councilor Horstmann apologized for the lack of communication that he would like to improve as a representative of the West End.

Councilor Ferris updated Council and the residents on updates from the Historical Commission regarding times of opening for the Log House, the upcoming Tree Lighting, and the Log House Santa. Also an update on the Parks & Recreation Commission's Boo Bash.

Vice President Plaughter updated Council and the residents on the Chamber of Commerce Flag Raising Ceremony on Veterans Day, The Downingtown Tree Lighting Ceremony and the Downingtown Christmas Parade.

President Rakoff updated Council and residents on the Flood Committee meetings and a potential January update for Council.

Adjournment-

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m., seconded by Councilor Horstmann; motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen T. Sullins
Borough Manager / Secretary