**BOROUGH OF ELIZABETH**

April 23, 2019

Regular Meeting of Council

**Members Present:** Paul Shaner, Chad Rager, Robin Payne-Main, Julius Brown, Gregory Huschak, Cynthia Morris and Andrew Miklos

**Absent:** None

**Also Attending:** Police Chief William Sombo, Solicitor Krisha DiMascio and Mayor Barry Boucher

R**ecorded by:** Pamela Sharp, Secretary

**Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

The regular meeting of Council was called to order at 7:00-PM by Council President Paul Shaner. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. President Shaner stated that, prior to the Council meeting, Council members met in an executive session to discuss personnel matters. President Shaner stated that the meeting is being recorded for the purpose of minute-taking.

**VISITORS**

**Will Prince** from the EADC said that his organization thinks that the Borough will benefit from the seasonal closing of Plum Street. Not only will this potential “Town Square” bring the community together, it will also draw people from neighboring communities to come into town. If Council is agreeable to the seasonal closure of Plum Street, the EADC will invest in this venture by improving this outdoor space by adding aesthetically pleasing features such as trees, shrubs, bistro lighting, and a new concert stage. EADC is also pledging to reach out to churches and other community organizations to consider using this space for community events such as family game nights, activities for kids, a community kiosk, and flea markets. If Council decides to make the closure permanent, the EADC will work with the Borough to add features such as trees, topiaries, planters, and outdoor furniture. This space could become a hub to connect the business district with the riverfront. G. Huschak said that there will have to be physical barriers on either end of Plum Street so that traffic does not inadvertently enter the roadway. Police Chief Sombo said that there are traffic barricades that are inflated with water, which makes them quite sturdy. In the event of an emergency, the simple act of pulling the plug will deflate the barricades by releasing the water. G. Huschak asked Mr. Prince how the EADC plans to secure the outdoor furniture so that it does not get taken and so that it will not become an airborne hazard in the event of high winds. Mr. Prince said that he will be happy to work with Council regarding this concern. Vice President Rager said that, for a temporary, seasonal closure, sand bags may be used as furniture weights.

**Stephanie Ziacan** from the EADC said that she fully supports everything that Will Prince presented. She said that she believes that this will draw people into the Borough.

**Sandy Kirkman** said that she is on the local Township team for the handling of lost dogs. She recently learned that the Borough currently has no animal control person. Police Chief Sombo told her that he will be in the office on Friday if she is interested in meeting with him to discuss this further.

**Gabe Nowak** said that his plans for the train car have been submitted to CEA, and the zoning matter regarding the proposed sign has been handled. He will be resuming work on the property, and he hopes to finish this project on schedule. Solicitor DiMascio said that she will contact Craig at CEA to let him know that there is no zoning issue with regard to this project and that he should contact Mr. Nowak directly if he has any further questions. Mr. Nowak said that the train car project is being handled in two phases. Phase I is getting the train onto to the ground, and Phase II will be the remodel of the train car.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by C. Morris and seconded by Vice President Rager to approve the Minutes of the March 26, 2019, regular meeting of Council. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

Regarding the Minutes of the April 5, 2019, special meeting of Council, C. Morris said that she would like the Borough Secretary to correct the start time of the meeting. It began at 4:30-PM rather than at 5:30‑PM. A motion was made by A. Miklos and seconded by G. Huschak to approve the Minutes of the April 5, 2019, special meeting of Council with a correction showing that the meeting start time was 4:30‑PM as opposed to 5:30-PM. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

A. Miklos asked about the two invoices from Meter Feeder at $190 each. The Borough Secretary said that these invoices are the monthly fees for February and March 2019. Solicitor DiMascio said that she recently sent Meter Feeder a letter to terminate their services. President Shaner told the Borough Secretary to go ahead and pay the February and March invoices; however, Meter Feeder should not be sending any further invoices, and the Borough will not be paying any future Meter Feeder invoices.

The Borough Secretary said there is an invoice for the annual renewal of the major medical policy for K-9 Ryker in the amount of $685.42. This amount represents the full annual premium. This can be paid from the K-9 Account. Also, there is an invoice from Riverside Veterinary Hospital dated February 7, 2019, in the amount of $117.56 for veterinary services for K-9 Koda. Police Chief Sombo said that Officer Helinski took K-9 Koda to the vet back in February of this year. Since then, this K-9 has been terminated. A motion was made by C. Morris and seconded by Vice President Rager to authorize the payment of the invoices on the payables report dated 4/18/19. **Those in favor: R. Payne-Main, J. Brown, C. Morris, Vice President Rager, G. Huschak, and President Shaner.** **Those opposed: None. Those abstaining: A. Miklos abstained because one of the expenses being authorized is a reimbursement to him for a Public Works expense that he paid. Motion passes 5:1.**

**REPORTS**

**Mayor Report**

Police Chief Sombo read the following Monthly Complaint Report:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Monthly Complaint Report for March - April 2019** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alarm | 8 |  | Animal Complaint | 9 |  | Assist EMS | 15 |  | Assist Police | 5 |
| Assaults | 9 |  | Arrests | 13 |  | Burglary/Theft | 4 |  | Criminal mischief | 4 |
| Details | 3 |  | Disturbance | 4 |  | Domestic | 3 |  | Local ordinance | 5 |
| K-9 | 1 |  | Motor vehicle crash | 5 |  | Suspicious person | 5 |  | Traffic stops | 37 |
| Traffic complaints | 10 |  | Welfare check | 4 |  |  |  |  | **TOTAL:** | **144** |

Mayor Boucher asked Council to vote to enter into a contract with Police Chief William Sombo. A motion was made by President Shaner and seconded by A. Miklos to accept the agreement between the Borough of Elizabeth and William Sombo for a three-year period, expiring on December 31, 2021. **Those in favor: A. Miklos, R. Payne-Main, J. Brown, C. Morris, Vice President Rager, G. Huschak, and President Shaner.** **Those opposed: None. All in favor, motion was carried.**

Mayor Boucher asked Council to authorize the hiring of Spencer Allen, Kristopher Duncan, and George Schmetzer as part-time police officers for a one-year probationary period per the terms and wage rates as set by the collective bargaining agreement. A motion was made by A. Miklos and seconded by President Shaner to authorize the hiring of Spencer Allen, Kristopher Duncan, and George Schmetzer as part-time police officers for a one-year probationary period per the terms and wage rates as set by the collective bargaining agreement. **Those in favor: C. Morris, R. Payne-Main, J. Brown, Vice President Rager, A. Miklos, G. Huschak, and President Shaner.** **Those opposed: None. All in favor, motion was carried.**

Mayor Boucher swore in Officer Duncan and Officer Schmetzer. Officer Allen was not available to attend this evening’s meeting.

President Shaner read the following

**Treasurer’s Report:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **03/23/19 - 04/19/19** | | | | |
| **Bank Account** | **Bank Balance** | **Income** | **Expense** | **Ending Balance** |
| General Fund | 16,512.14 | 69,477.07 | 49,732.72 | 36,256.49 |
| Payroll | 150.99 | 26,660.00 | 26,670.73 | 140.26 |
| Special Projects | 621.74 | 37,327.98 | 5.00 | 37,944.72 |
| K-9 Fund | 1,498.94 | 37,327.98 | 37,347.93 | 1,478.99 |
| Liquid Fuels | 63,212.28 | 13.55 | - | 63,225.83 |
| Totals | 81,996.09 | 170,806.58 | 113,756.38 | 139,046.29 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Loans** | **Maturity Date** | **Loan Amount** | **Principal Paid** | **Balance Owed** |
| FCB - TAN | 12/31/2019 | 75,000.00 | - | 75,000.00 |
| PNC - Car Loan | 5/1/2019 | 39,500.00 | 38,781.51 | 718.49 |
| PNC - Mortgage | 3/31/2023 | 115,000.00 | 30,571.95 | 84,428.05 |
| PNC - K-9 Car Loan | 2/4/2021 | 55,431.52 | 32,281.28 | 23,150.24 |
| Totals | - | 284,931.52 | 101,634.74 | 183,296.78 |

A motion was made by G. Huschak and seconded by Vice President Rager to accept the Treasurer’s Report dated April 19, 2019. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

**Solicitor**

Solicitor DiMascio said that the Elizabeth Borough Municipal Authority’s Solicitor, Amy Schrempf, attended last month’s meeting to request the Borough’s vacation of three paper streets for their pump station project. At that meeting, Solicitor Schrempf provided detailed information about the locations of these three paper streets, and Council voted to authorize the advertisement of these street vacations. Solicitor DiMascio said that she will give the Borough Secretary the appropriate advertisement so that she can properly advertise this for the May meeting, and the Municipal Authority can move forward with their pump station project.

Solicitor DiMascio said that, today at 6:30-PM, there was a public hearing to deal with the proposed zoning map changes. There was a motion to continue this until May 28th for an additional change that Council wants to make to the map. New notices will be going out, as well as new postings and new advertisements. This hearing will take place at 6:30-PM, prior to the May 28th regular meeting of Council. Solicitor DiMascio stated that Mackin Engineering did not charge the Borough for the additional change. The only cost that will be incurred by the Borough is the additional advertising cost.

Solicitor DiMascio thanked Mr. Nowak for allowing the Borough to make this additional zoning map change, even though it adds an additional month to the finalization of his zoning matters.

A motion was made by G. Huschak and seconded by C. Morris to accept the Solicitor’s report. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

**Building Inspector Report**

President Shaner said that everybody should have received the March 2019, Building Inspector report. Any questions about the report should be directed to the Building Inspector through the Borough Secretary.

**Animal Control**

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

**COMMITTEES**

**Finance and Budget**

No report.

**Public Safety**

G. Huschak said that, in March 2019, Southeast Regional Emergency Medical Services responded to 25 emergency calls. The average response time was 6.0 minutes.

Police Chief Sombo said that the Police Department needs to order new parking permits. The Borough Secretary told him that all current parking permits expire in 2019. He said that the cost is $210 per box. The Borough Secretary said that one box contains only 100 permits. She will need to order a minimum of 200 permits. A motion was made by A. Miklos and seconded by Vice President Rager to approve the purchase of new parking permits at $210/box. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

A. Miklos said that, since the Borough does not currently have a meter maid, the Police Department will be enforcing parking meter violations. Police Chief Sombo added that he has been told by many residents that very few people are putting money in the parking meters because everybody knows that the Borough does not currently have a meter maid.

A. Miklos stated that Council needs to make a decision about the disposition of the Police Department’s 1998 Lexus that is no longer used for police work. A motion was made by Vice President Rager and seconded by A. Miklos to auction off the 1998 Lexus through Coparts. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

Police Chief Sombo said that the auction fee is only $85, and it is in the interest of Coparts to get the best deal possible on the vehicles that they auction since Coparts receives a 2% commission on the final auction price.

**Public Works**

A. Miklos said that the repairs to the front loader are almost complete. It should be ready sometime this week.

A. Miklos said that the gas shut-off valve issue with the Masonic building on Plum Street has finally been resolved. The actual cost to fix this has not been determined since the Borough has not yet received an invoice for the work.

A. Miklos said that the replacement car battery on the 2018 Dodge will cost $512.60. Hopefully, this will take care of the problem.

A. Miklos said that he and a representative from Comcast took a walk through the Borough so that he could show Comcast all of the low-hanging wires throughout town. Comcast said that they will try to clean up their wires sometime next week. A. Miklos said that, once Comcast is done, he will contact Verizon and ask them to do the same.

A. Miklos said that he and the Borough Secretary met with Comcast about the telephone system at the Borough building. Comcast said that they will see if the Borough is eligible for any special discounts that it is not currently receiving. Comcast asked the Borough to select a main point of contact and a secondary point of contact for handling Comcast matters. A. Miklos said that the main contact should be the Borough Secretary, and the secondary contact should be a member of Council.

A. Miklos said that the State Legislators are willing to assist the Borough with the removal of the bump‑outs throughout the central business district. No time frame for handling this has yet been established.

**Parks and Recreation**

R. Payne-Main said that the annual clean-up day will be on Saturday, May 11, 2019. The two areas of focus are the War Memorial and the park on 7th Avenue. Those volunteers who wish to clean up the Veterans’ War Memorial can meet with Wendy Buza at the Memorial at 9:00‑AM. She, along with other members of Council, will be cleaning up the park. Volunteers who wish to help clean the park should be there at 9:00-AM on Saturday.

R. Payne-Main said that Saturday, August 17, 2019, is the annual Kids’ Day event at Duke Park. She corrected herself and said that this park was recently rededicated, and everybody should be calling it *Jacob’s Park*. The new sign for the park is being donated by Jacob’s mother.

R. Payne-Main said that she still wants to hold a Town Hall Meeting this year. She will help to advertise this event as soon as Council picks a date.

Vice President Rager said that Phase 1 of the Riverfront Project is currently underway. Once Phase 1 has been completed, the larger project, located behind the BINGO Hall, will begin. Hopefully, this will be done by mid-summer. He added that he applied for the CITF grant to wrap the project around Market Street so that Market Street becomes an integral part of the project.

Vice President Rager said that he is going to apply for a GTRP grant to create a walkway along the riverfront on Water Street to tie into the larger project. He will be working on this over the next several weeks. He added that Carla Barron from the COG is assisting him.

Vice President Rager said that the Borough needs to get the hillside sprayed for weeds before the weeds start taking over the hillside. A. Miklos said that he will get estimates.

**Ordinance**

Vice President Rager said that, once Police Chief Sombo gets settled in, he would like to see the implementation of an ordinance officer to handle such matters as high grass and property maintenance issues. Police Chief Sombo said that he has already been looking into this. He said that there is a program called *The Quality of Life Program* which takes property maintenance issues, such as high grass and weeds, and allows law enforcement officers to issue property maintenance “tickets” rather than “non-traffic citations.” This system allows the Borough to bypass the magistrate process - which is both time-consuming and expensive. Solicitor DiMascio said that she is familiar with the program. She said that this was implemented effectively in Allentown. Police Chief Sombo said that he will write up a general summary of how this program works, and he will present it to Council.

**Personnel**

Mayor Boucher said that the Public Works Department needs to hire a new part-time employee. A. Miklos said that this should be a seasonal employee for the summer, so the position might be a good fit for a college-bound student. A motion was made by Vice President Rager and seconded by A. Miklos to advertise for a new part-time, seasonal Public Works person. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

**Economic Development**

None.

**Planning**

A motion was made by C. Morris and seconded by A. Miklos to reschedule the zoning map changes public hearing for May 28, 2019, at 6:30-PM, prior to the regular meeting of Council. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

Vice President Rager said that he has an estimate in the amount of $270 to replace the sign in front of the Borough Building. The current sign is confusing, and it needs to be changed. A motion was made by Vice President Rager and seconded by A. Miklos to replace the sign in front of the Borough Building at an amount not-to-exceed $300. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

A motion was made by R. Payne-Main and seconded by C. Morris to approve the Memorial Day Parade Special Event Application. This event is on May 27, 2019, and it begins at 9:00-AM. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

A motion was made by C. Morris and seconded by R. Payne-Main to approve the *Sounds of Summer on Plum Street* special event application with the seasonal 92-day Plum Street closure, from June 1, 2019, through August 31, 2019, and a curfew of 10:00-PM, contingent upon receipt of proof of insurance from the event sponsor. **Those in favor: G. Huschak, Vice President Rager, A. Miklos, J. Brown, C. Morris, R. Payne-Main and President Shaner. Those opposed: None. All in favor, motion was carried.**

C. Morris said that the EADC can give its insurance certificate to the Borough Secretary.

C. Morris said that there are many details which need to be discussed, such as the best type of outdoor furniture to be used, the type of barricade that should be used, and the best way to coordinate the use of this space by the public. She added that, although this Plum Street closure is only going to be temporary right now, she believes that this space is going to be extremely popular and well-received.

Solicitor DiMascio said that it is important to understand that groups who wish to use this space will need to submit a special event application for Council to review.

Jeremy Rager said that he still has public safety concerns about closing off this street to vehicular traffic in the event of an emergency. President Shaner said that many people have expressed this concern. It is something that will need to be discussed in more detail. Jeremy Rager suggested the use of a barrier that will block traffic, but that is not necessarily a permanent structure, such a large flower pot or a planter. Vice President Rager said that his fear is inattentive drivers turning down one of the barricaded sections of Plum Street and colliding with a barricade or running into a crowd of people.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business before this Council, a motion was made by R. Payne-Main and seconded by C. Morris that the meeting be adjourned at 8:12-PM. **All in favor, motion was carried.**

**I enter these Minutes into the public record having been duly recorded and accepted at a public meeting.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Pamela J. Sharp, Secretary**