

Borough of Ben Avon Heights

Tuesday, January 7, 2020 - Council Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of council was held at Avalon Fire Hall at 7:00 P.M.

A quorum is in attendance

Present:

Council Members: Cuteri, Dawley, Mihalko, Neunder, Stiller, Radcliffe

Mayor: Dismukes

Solicitor: Vogel, Tucker Arensberg

OTPD: Chief Hanny

Avalon Fire: Chief Berie

Secretary: DiNuzzo

Residents:

Mr. Cuteri began the meeting at 7:13 PM.

- 1. Mayor swore in new council members and elected officials:** The mayor swore in the following members:
 - a. **Kim Gourley (4-year term)**
 - b. **Steven Stiller (4-year term)**
 - c. **John Radcliffe (4-year term)**
 - d. **Gregory Mihalko (4-year term)**
 - e. **Jacquelyn Neunder (4-year term)**

- 2. Reorganization**
 - Call meeting to order:**
 - a.) **Nominate and vote for council president:** Mr. Cuteri asked council if anyone had a nomination for president of council. **Mr. Stiller nominated Mr. Cuteri as president of council.** There were no other nominations. **All voted unanimously for Mr. Cuteri to be president of council.**
 - b.) **Nominate and vote for council vice president:** Mr. Cuteri asked council if anyone had a nomination for vice president of council. **Mr. Cuteri nominated Mr. Radcliffe as vice president of council.** There were no other nominations. **All voted unanimously for Mr. Radcliffe to be vice president of council.**

- 3. Discuss appointment of empty council seat for 2-year term:** Mr. Cuteri announced to council members that they had a volunteer for the two-year council position. Mr. Cuteri asked Mr. Dawley to please stand and state his name and address. **Mr. Radcliffe made a motion for Mr. Dawley to be appointed to the two-year council seat. Mr. Stiller seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 4. Mayor swore in Mr. Dawley.**

- 5. Determine council committee members sub-committees:**
 - a. **Streets/lights/water:** This position was currently vacant. Mr. Dawley volunteered for this position.
 - b. **Fire/police:** Mayor Dismukes
 - c. **Emergency management:** Sgt. Beck, Mayor Dismukes, Mr. Cuteri
 - d. **Sewers:** Mr. Stiller
 - e. **Recreation & green spaces:** Mr. Radcliffe
 - f. **Planning:** Mr. Cuteri
 - g. **Finance:** Mayor Dismukes, Mr. Cuteri, Mr. Radcliffe
 - h. **Digital communications:** Mr. Brown, Mr. Stiller
 - i. **Insurance:** This position was also vacant. Mrs. Neunder volunteered for this position.

- 6. Listing of positions for the Borough:**
 - a. **Borough Secretary:** Jessica DiNuzzo
 - b. **Solicitor:** John T. Vogel, Esquire
 - c. **Borough Engineers:** Lennon Smith Souleret
 - d. **ACORD Executive Committee Chair:** Damian Liska

- e. **ACORD Board:** Terrie Brightman & MaryBeth Bolam
- f. **Tax Collector:** Kim Gourley
- g. **Auditors:** Hosack, Specht, Metzler and Wood
- h. **Emergency Management Coordinator:** Sgt. Adam Beck, OTPD
- i. **Zoning Officer:** Thomas Price
- j. **Deputized Real Estate Tax Collector:** Jordan Tax Services
- k. **Judge of Elections:** Jennifer Knuth (2021)
- l. **Sewage fee collections:** Jordan Tax Service
- m. **Planning Commission Members:** Alan Cuteri, Justin Griffith, Michael Weir
- n. **Building Inspectors:** Building Inspection Underwriters of PA, Inc.
- o. **Fire Chief:** Charles Berie
- p. **Police Chief:** Joe Hanny
- q. **Emergency EMS Service:** Northwest Emergency Medical Services
- r. **Wage Tax Collection:** Keystone Collections Group
- s. **Water Service:** West View Water Authority
- t. **Sewer Fee Collection:** Jordan Tax Services

A motion was made to accept all positions listed other than tax collector by Mr. Radcliffe. Mrs. Neunder seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. **Approval of December minutes: A motion was made by Mr. Radcliffe to approve the December 2019 meeting minutes. Mr. Mihalko seconds the motion.** Mrs. Neunder mentioned that the spelling of her name is Neunder, there were a few spots where her name was misspelled as Neunder. **The December minutes passed unanimously.**
8. **Approval of December financials:** This item is tabled until next meeting, bank statements were unavailable in time for this meeting as council met a week earlier than usual due to reorganization.
9. **Fire report:** Chief Berie reported for the month of December, there was one tree down that they were called to by Shannopin country club. Tree sales were great, they sold out this year and from what he heard, Santa in the park also went well with a really good turnout. He was unable to attend as he was called into work.
10. **Police Report:** Chief Hanny reported for the month of December there were a total of 105 calls, 93 of those being routine. He also noted the accident that took place on December 19th, 2019 on New Brighton Road a driver drove off of the road into a resident's fence. No one was hurt.
11. **Engineers report/ Road paving update:** Mr. Heyl stated they are currently working on closing out the road program with Shields. Mr. Radcliffe asked if Columbia was supposed to seed behind the new curbing they had put in on Banbury as it looked to him as if only a small area had been completed. Mr. Heyl stated that yes, this should have been done and will contact Columbia Gas.
12. **Public comment:** There was no public to comment at this time.
13. **Green Spaces update vegetation, LED lights for Borough sign:** Mr. Radcliffe updated council that during the holiday season he had the Ben Avon Heights sign lit up, and got a lot of positive feedback from the residents. When Spring comes around, he will install an LED light to illuminate the sign at night.
14. **Ordinance 343:** This Ordinance is for the tax rate of 2020, which will remain the same rate as last year of 7.95 mills. **A motion was made to adopt Ordinance 343 by Mr. Radcliffe. Mr. Stiller seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
15. **Ordinance 344:** This Ordinance is for the Alcosan sewer rates for 2020. Council at previous meetings discussed the rate and decided against the rate increase suggestion, and decided to decrease to 3 dollars per gallon. **A motion was made to adopt Ordinance 344 by Mr. Radcliffe. Mr. Stiller seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.** Mr. Stiller suggested we should send something out to the residents informing them of the decrease for 2020 sewer rate of borough to offset the increase in ALCOSAN rates. The current sewer reserve account has sufficient funds to cover 110% of the annual sewer costs.
16. **Zoning application submissions report:** Ms. DiNuzzo reported for the month of December, one submission for 14 Devon Lane. This was reviewed by Mr. Price, and he felt this should be reviewed by the Zoning Hearing Board. Once a date is determined by the zoning hearing board, Ms. DiNuzzo will submit the date in the Citizen and will also inform residents through email.
17. **Secretary/treasurer:** Mr. Vogel asked what the history of the secretary/treasurer was with Ben Avon Heights as he noticed old documents had Ms. Raves as secretary and treasurer, and Ms. DiNuzzo as just secretary. Mr. Cuteri stated that with the reorganizing, council felt there was no need to combine the two titles as Dennis Piper does much of our financials. Mr. Vogel will check to see if officially Dennis Piper should be listed as our treasurer. Ms. DiNuzzo will also check Borough files to see if we did anything official.
18. **Directory:** Ms. DiNuzzo noted that Mr. Wensel has been working hard at updating our very outdated directory over the past few months. He approached Ms. DiNuzzo with a price for a printed directory as it's been many years since the Borough supplied residents with a printed copy. Council discussed this, and although they all would like to continue going

digital, due to the extensive work Ms. Wensel has put in on this directory, council put this to a vote. **Mr. Radcliffe made a motion to approve printing for the Ben Avon Heights Directory. Mr. Mihalko seconds the motion. Mrs. Neunder and Mr. Stiller opposed this. The motion passed by majority to print a Ben Avon Heights Directory.** Council did note that this would be the last directory they approve to print and all future directories should be updated electronically and emailed to residents.

19. Executive Session: Began at 7:39pm

Executive session ended at 7:59 pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm

The next scheduled meeting is February 11, 2020 at 7pm at the Avalon Volunteer Fire Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica DiNuzzo, Secretary