

**COALDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
221/223 THIRD ST., COALDALE, PA 18218
August 8, 2023, 7:00 PM**

Executive Session: 6:30pm – 7:00pm Personnel matters were discussed.

Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order by Council President Angela Krapf followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Solicitor Robert Yurchak, Council President Angela Krapf, Council Vice President Claire Remington, Councilwoman Yvonne Stoffey, Councilman Ken Hankey Jr., Councilman Francis Hutta, and Councilman Wayne Figner and Councilperson Cadence Krapf were present. Councilman Jacob Adamitis and Mayor Herb Whildin was absent.

Attendance: There were 10 members of the public and 1 reporter in attendance.

Public Participation:

- Bob Demyanovich, 225 W. Phillips St., addressed one issue.
 - He submitted his letter of interest to be considered for the interim appointment as Mayor since he has been a taxpayer for 40 years and owns several properties.
- Sue Solt, 232 Third St., addressed one issue.
 - She stated that she feels good about everything happening in town. She also acknowledged the demands of the position of Borough Secretary and complimented thanked Jill Figner for the good job she is doing.

Approval of Previous Minutes: **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to accept July meeting minutes. Seconded by Claire Remington and motion carried **unanimously**.

Treasurer's Report / Approval of Bills:

- **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to accept Treasurer's Report. Seconded by Claire Remington and motion carried **unanimously**.
- **Motion** made by Claire Remington to pay the bills when money is available. Seconded by Frank Hutta and motion carried **unanimously**.

Police Report: Read by Yvonne Stoffey.

- July 2023: Total money collected was \$364.61; Total miles patrolled were 1,723; and Total number of calls for service was 113.
- Vehicles # 58 and # 59 needed service; 59 is back in service; 58 is still out.
- The Insignia TV monitor for the cameras stopped working, so a smaller monitor is currently being used for the time being.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to accept Police Report. Seconded by Wayne Figner with a question.
 - He asked what was wrong with the vehicles? 59 headlight and sensor malfunction because water got into the mechanism and 58 overheating. He also asked about the qualifications of Officer Jungbaer to suggest getting 4 new tires on the vehicle.
 - Claire Remington asked who is currently responsible for overseeing the maintenance of the vehicles and the checklist given the chief's absence.
 - Frank Hutta stated that we have a mechanic in the borough workforce to check the vehicles monthly.
 - Claire Remington said that we have a small workforce and vehicle maintenance takes someone away from other duties. She is asking for the use of a checklist and someone to oversee the process.
 - Rich Murphy confirmed that he was required to complete a checklist at his job.

- Frank Hutta inquired about an update on the Chief's circumstances. Angela Krapf stated that personnel details are not discussed in a public meeting.
 - Angela confirmed that Wayne Figner seconded the motion to accept the Police Report and motion carried unanimously.

Mayor's Report: None.

President's Report: Given by Angela Krapf, President

- \$1,341.62 principal / \$0.00 interest collected in July from PLA for delinquent sanitation.
- \$1,975.00 principal / \$83.11 interest collected in July from PLA for delinquent sewer transmission.
- \$3,561.77 principal / \$46.71 interest collected in June from PLA for delinquent real estate taxes.

Secretary's Report: Given by Jill Figner.

- Kistler O'Brien:
 - They inspected the extinguishers. They needed to search for them because they were not in their proper location. Rather than 36 generic extinguishers we have 40. Instead of two 2.5 lb. and two 5 lb. extinguishers, we had 5 of each. All five of the 2.5 lb. needed to be replaced. Four of the 5 lb. were swapped out and one needed to be replaced.
 - When dropping off the Fire Report, Jake Adamitis asked if I could share a comment in his absence. He asked whether we use the fire extinguisher system in the Complex or not. It must be inspected regularly, or a Fire Marshall could cite the borough. This agreed with Kistler O'Brien's recommendation, as well. Angela Krapf stated that this was the opposite of what Kistler O'Brien stated the prior year. She stated that the system would only need inspection if it were turned on for use. She stated she would be willing to speak with Kistler O'Brien about the discrepancy.
 - Claire Remington stated that she would not want to pay the extra cost if it was unnecessary. Kistler O'Brien also requested that each extinguisher remains in or near its designated location. The service tech found several behind a coatrack in the Chief's office, none upstairs or in the basement.
 - While at the office, Jake Adamitis stated that the borough workers used them to put out a fire on Earley Avenue. Claire Remington confirmed that.
 - Kistler O'Brien submitted an amended invoice due to the inaccurate inventory. The original invoice was \$607.00; the amended invoice is \$999.50; the increase is \$392.50.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to pay the \$392.50. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried unanimously.
- Computer Pals:
 - Computer recommended for Treasurer \$525.00 due to its age and potential security risk.
 - Angela Krapf inquired whether the cost was for a new or refurbished. Per a recent conversation with Kyle Kentner, she stated that she preferred to have a new computer.
 - Jill Figner was unaware of the discussion but will verify whether the \$525.00 is for a new or refurbished. Decision on hold pending determination.
 - Hardware recommended to secure uninterrupted service:
 - Ports valued at \$299.99 – No charge.
 - Switch valued at \$199.00 – No charge.
 - Server Update:
 - Functioning well, good decision by Council.
 - Office 365 Kyle Kentner needs to know if the Council chose the recommended Option # 3.
 - The selected option will determine the cost.
 - Restructure Shared Folders on the network:
 - Eliminate old user accounts, keep data, and keep protection.
 - Assign individual users an ID to track work, eliminate duplication – No charge.
 - Exchange Emails using domain: coaldaleborough.org.

- Kyle Kenter needs a list of users to set up individual and group email addresses.
 - Approved users could access email on personal devices.
 - PTD emails would still get to the borough, could eliminate them in the future.
 - Move Cables
 - Borough workforce needs to drill two holes in the floor to run cables underneath – No charge.
 - Phone System
 - Conference Calls, Attendant Menu Options, Voicemail to Email, Call Forwarding, Auto Announcements.
 - Cost for service would be \$220.00 per month and would eliminate existing Verizon bill.
 - Phones could be purchased from Computer Pals or elsewhere.
 - Clarification needed regarding mix-up between Blue Ridge for landlines and Verizon for cell service. On hold – pending follow up.
 - Jill Figner recommended phone system for better service to the public.
 - Claire Remington wanted clarification on the Management Fees and whether we would be locked into a contract or if the borough has the option to discontinue service if unsatisfied.
 - Domain: coaldaleborough.org
 - Recommendation to retain borough control of domain.
 - PTD Internet Service
 - Recommendation to upgrade for faster speed at Borough Hall – PTD package \$92.95
 - Recommendation for slower speed at Borough Garage – PTD package \$54.95.
 - Claire Remington recommended that Jill Figner be the primary contact person with Computer Pals.
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to move forward except for the Treasurer's computer until the cost for a new computer is determined and to place the phone system on hold pending clarification. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Course Vector – Recommendation for new website:
 - Forms requesting information about design preferences for a new website were emailed to Council. Only one response was received. The selection was a good choice because it was user-friendly. Feedback from Council is still needed so that it can be consolidated for final design.
 - The cost of the mock-up that Jill Figner created would cost \$1,050 for the initial design and \$617.00 per year which would include assistance and training.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta proceed with securing a website from Course Vector. Seconded by Claire Remington and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Diversified Technologies Billing System:
 - Application for online payments completed, awaiting e-signature. Both Claire Remington and Lacey Gonzalez provided documentation to be the signer on the account. Claire Remington suggested that it be Treasurer Lacey Gonzalez.
 - The Diversified program that generated errors in the 3rd Quarter Sanitation Billing has been corrected.
 - The backlog of payments, adjustments, penalties, and customer updates can now be entered.
- DCED – Department of Community & Economic Development:
 - Jim Rose of DCED reached out to Secretary Jill Figner and offered information about two programs that could benefit the borough due to a concern about the financial direction the borough is heading toward.
 - The Peer Assistance Program for experienced help, training, and advice. – Free.
 - The StMP Program for a Financial Consultant. Typically, the cost of this program would be 50/50. However, DCED was willing to offer 90/10 which would cost Coaldale approximately \$6,000.00.
 - Claire Remington stated that we are now heading in the right direction financially.
 - Angela Krapf stated that his concern is understandable given the last audit was in 2016; that it was a forensic audit because of the theft. She stated little did we know that it would cost

- \$50,000.00. Now the borough needs to determine who to contact to see if we can resume regular audits, because we can't afford \$50,000.00 per year.
 - Jim Rose proved the documentation that needed to be completed. This documentation was submitted but no response was received from DCED.
 - Claire Remington and Angela Krapf disagreed on the processing of the decision.
 - Claire Remington stated she signed the documentation as per the confirmation of Solicitor Yurchak that she could do so as Vice President when the President was unavailable.
 - Angela Krapf stated that the Sunshine Act was violated because the StMP Program cost \$6,000.00 and a Motion was not made in front of the public.
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to ratify the approval of the DCED Peer Assistance Program. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion did not carry.
 - **Roll Call:** Angela Krapf – no, Claire Remington – yes, Yvonne Stoffey – yes, Ken Hankey – yes, Frank Hutta – yes, Wayne Figner – yes. Jake Adamitis was absent. **Motion** carried.
- JTNB Interest Rate Change:
 - From 7.25 % to 7.5%
 - Claire Remington asked if this was for the light loan.
 - Jill Figner stated that she did not know.
- Letters of Interest for Mayor Appointment:
 - Letters of Interest to serve as Mayor were received from Eric Ramirez, Theodore Bortnick, and Robert Demyanovich.
 - Angela Krapf read the letters to Council and the public.
 - verified that the term was until the end of this year and that a candidate for Mayor would need to be on the ballot this fall.
 - **Motion** made by Wayne Figner to nominate Eric Ramirez to serve as Mayor until December 31, 2023. Seconded by Yvonne Stoffey and motion carried **unanimously**.
 - Solicitor Yurchak stated that the Office of Office could be taken the next day at the District Judge's office in Tamaqua.
- Office Help:
 - Office Help: The Temp Agencies contacted charge \$26.00 to \$30.00 per hour and some require a buyout if the borough chooses to hire the person. Not recommended, cost prohibitive.
- Systems Design Engineering, Inc.
 - SDE Rental Inspection Proposal that outlines fees and services, other than rental inspections, was received and forwarded to Council today.
 - Jill Figner asked if the entire proposal had to be accepted or if specific selections could be made.
 - Luis Negrón, SDE will check into that.
 - Council discussed the \$30.00 rental renewal fees.
 - Frank Hutta stated that the borough is losing money because the fee is too low.
 - Wayne Figner brought up the need for enforcement.
 - Solicitor Yurchak stated that there was an Ordinance but also stated it needs to be enforced.
 - Luis Negrón stated that Systems Design Engineering will get the job done.
 - Council suggested we review the proposal.
 - Luis Negrón stated that SDE could manage the documents, the scheduling, the inspections, the billing, the legal issues, and condemning property. SDE would copy the borough on the on the documentation. He stated that an addendum would be sent August 9, 2023.
- Portnoff:
 - Sheriff Sale: 230 East Street Coal Dale, PA 18218 will be sold on October 27, 2023.

- Solicitor Yurchak stated that Portnoff recommended that we send a representative to secure our interests.
- Claire Remington inquired if the sale was at the Courthouse and if he could attend. Solicitor Yurchak confirmed.
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to have Solicitor Yurchak represent us at the Sheriff Sale. Seconded by Frank Hutta and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Writ of Execution: 12 Foster Avenue Coaldale, PA 18218
 - Solicitor Yurchak recommended that we give approval to Portnoff.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to give permission to Portnoff to execute the Writ of Execution. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Volunteers:
 - The Michael's Organization from Lansford offered to volunteer to help in the office and with maintenance on Community Service Give Back Day on October 13, 2023.
 - Michelle Solem submitted her resume to help in the office and with grant writing.
 - Both items were placed on hold.
- Workers Compensation Insurance – Borough:
 - Per Caleb Sheldon of the Kilmer Group, Angela sent him to speak with me about workers compensation insurance for the Borough.
 - Via email a quote was requested, and he stated that he would need information.
 - Treasure Lacey Gonzalez was emailed for the information.
 - Jill Figner expressed concern about the small window of time before the borough's policy with MRM would expire.
 - Frank Hutta asked for the Borough's cost for the State Workers Insurance Fund SWIF. The 2022-2023 <RM cost was \$28,497.00. The 2023-2024 SWIF cost would be \$35,545, an increase of \$6,048.00.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to proceed with coverage from the Kilmer Group if the cost was lower and the coverage was the same. Seconded by Claire Remington and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Workers Compensation Insurance – Fire Company:
 - The renewal date is September 1, 2023. Two invoices were received.
 - Managed Services Renewal – \$541.00.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to pay the \$541.00. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.
 - Policy Renewal – \$10,815.00.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to pay the \$10,815.00. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.

Solicitor's Report: None.

Fire Report: Given by Jake Adamitis, Chairperson.

- Fire Chief reports 12 calls for July 2023 and 84 calls YTD.
- Rock the Block September 8th, 9th, and 10th. The Parade will be on Saturday the 9th starting at 5:00 PM
 - Request to close the 100 block of W. High Street and the 200 block of 6th St. for parking fire apparatus.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to close those blocks for parking. Seconded by Yvonne Stoffey and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Tamaqua Community Ambulance Association EMS Round Table Discussion of the nationwide crisis of emergency medical services. Jake Adamitis will attend on behalf of the Fire Company and the Borough on Thursday September 14th in Hometown. Angela Krapf stated that the borough was asked to contribute funds for EMS services, so this would need to be discussed during the upcoming budget meeting. Frank Hutta offered to donate.

Code Enforcement/Zoning Report: None

Jr. Council Report: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Building/Complex: Given by Angela Krapf.

- **Borough Garage Vandalism**
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to add a motion. Seconded by Frank Hutta and motion carried **unanimously**.
 - Claire Remington reported that 3 glass block windows on the parking lot side of the building had been smashed and the rocks were inside the garage six to eight feet. The police were called; Officer Soberick responded and contacted the Chief about the cameras. Two neighbors saw the incident. The Fire Company sign across the street from the garage was vandalized as well. The windows were boarded up. Hopefully, we will be able to find out who committed the acts of vandalism.
- **Complex**
 - Claire Remington stated that the Complex floors were finished.
 - Claire Remington inquired about the School Contract. Frank Hutta inquired about a rate increase.
 - Claire Remington complimented the improvement being made but expressed concern about ongoing expenses. She stated that it was never going to be a for-profit building and suggested that we consider selling it back to the school to be used as an educational facility.
 - Wayne Figner, Angela Krapf, and Solicitor Yurchak commented that the school would not buy it back. Wayne Figner stated that it was still in need of major repairs because of the water leaks and expressed concern about the extent of the damage.
 - Frank Hutta confirmed that the building is solid, and the cement is not deteriorating.
 - Angela Krapf stated that around 2013 a structural engineer confirmed the damage was to the plaster, but otherwise the building was solid; it's all concrete and steel beams. She stated that we should ask Frank Hutta for a quote to seal the windows.
 - Wayne Figner inquired about renting the second floor.
 - Claire Remington clarified her concern that taxpayer money was being funneled into the Complex at the expense of taking care of the Borough Hall, Police Department, and street repairs.
 - Wayne Figner suggested we take the long view.
 - Angela Krapf reminded that the school plans to slowly start building.
 - Wayne Figner questioned the funds going toward fire company expenses.
 - Claire Remington explained that Borough Code requires fire protection.
 - Wane Figner responded he was aware of that, but that in the past funds had to be raised to pay for the Fire Company.
 - Angela Krapf stated that she was glad that the money that is coming is offsets expenses.
 - Wayne Figner suggested that we not stop midway through the improvement process.
 - Frank Hutta suggested that we develop a five-year plan and then decide based on achieving the goals.
 - Claire Remington just wanted to address these concerns now rather than not saying anything.
 - Angela Krapf noted that the school has been picking up expenses such as the sewer repairs and has taken over the cleaning as well.

Demolition/Grants: None

Finance/Utilities: None

Handicap: None.

Police: None

Police Pension: None

Recreation/Memorial: None

Streets: Given by Claire Remington.

- Invoice for annual update of crack sealer paid with Liquid Fuels Funds.
- Complaint from 60 E. Miner St. Water run-off to be addressed after street paving complete.

- Received Materials Bid
 - Solicitor Yurchak reminded that Council must approve the Escalator Clause
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to accept the Escalator Clause. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.
 - Solicitor Yurchak opened and read the bid from Lehigh Asphalt.
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to accept the bid from Lehigh Asphalt. Seconded by Frank Hutta and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Milling Machine
 - There is a backlog in the schedule to use the milling machine. Summit Hill is finishing up. Lansford will have it next. Afterwards, Coaldale will have access to the machine.
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to add a motion to discuss the milling motion. Seconded by Frank Hutta and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Hire Additional Borough Worker
 - Claire Remington recommended hiring Chris Turner based on his work performance as a part time borough worker for Coaldale. He would be on a one-year probation.
 - Wayne Figner asked if he could operate a backhoe; Claire Remington confirmed he could.
 - Frank Hutta asked about starting pay; Claire Remington stated it would be in keeping with the contract.
 - Angela Krapf objected to hiring a borough worker without interviewing the other applications.
 - Wayne Figner agreed that interviews should be conducted.
 - Claire Remington stated that she couldn't locate the additional applications.
 - Jill Figner confirmed that there were some applications in the file, however, others were missing.
 - Frank Hutta suggested that the applicants be interviewed the day of the September meeting.
 - Angela Krapf stated that there was a budget meeting that same day and that an alternate day would need to be selected.
- Borough Worker Lead Man Position
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to add a motion to discuss the Lead Man position relative to Brian Erbe. Seconded by Frank Hutta and motion carried unanimously.
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to accept the agreement between the Borough and the Union to promote Brian Erbe to the position of Lead Man with retroactive pay in accordance with the agreement.
 - Solicitor Yurchak inquired about the labor grievance.
 - Angela Krap confirmed the grievance would be withdrawn and the position would be probationary for one year.
 - Motion Seconded by Frank Hutta and motion carried unanimously.

Old Business: None.

- Klines Hill Project
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to add a motion to discuss the Klines Hill Project. Seconded by Yvonne Stoffey and motion carried unanimously.
 - Angela Krapf restated that completing the project with the sidewalk to the driveway at the hospital would cost \$21,000.00 or \$27,000.00 dollars. She stated that Treasurer Lacey Gonzalez confirmed that the funds were available because payroll was under budget because there was only one full time borough worker, and the Chief was not working. However, the Treasurer did insist that there couldn't be any additional \$15,000.00 surprise expenditure that she did not know about.
 - Frank Hutta requested verification that the taxes would not need to be raised to complete the project.
 - Dan Weiksner didn't think it advisable to end the sidewalk halfway up the hill. He stated that it would be better on the opposite side of Klines Hill so that it could tie into the Hospital sidewalk. He thought it might be worth checking into extending the Manilla Grove sidewalk across PP&L property into Seek. He also asked about maintenance in the winter.
 - Bob Demyanovich stated that he thought the sidewalk would extend to 7th Street. He also said the Manilla Grove option might be a way to save money because it would eliminate tree removal.

- Frank Hutta stated that the Manilla Grove option would direct people toward the highway. He also stated that the borough wouldn't be able to get a sidewalk for \$27,000.00 in the future. However, he also stated that the sidewalk would need to be sealed regularly to avoid salt damage.
- Claire Remington asked why we don't hold onto the money instead of spending it.
- Jill Figner asked if the sidewalk is not claimed by the homeowners, does that place liability on the borough?
- Angela Krapf stated that the borough has blanket coverage.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to spend the \$27,000.00 for the sidewalk on Klines Hill. Seconded by Yvonne Stoffey. Roll Call Angela Krapf yes, Claire Remington no, Yvonne Stoffey yes, Ken Hankey no, Frank Hutta yes, and Wayne Figner no. Motion does not carry.

New Business: None.

- Claire Remington made a motion to resign because she was done playing politics.
 - **Motion** was not seconded.
- Wayne Figner made a motion to eliminate the viewing of the Borough cameras in a private residence and stated the viewing of the cameras should be done in the police station. He stated that people need to give permission to be filmed and viewed in the Council President's home.
- Angela Krapf stated that the Chief was requested to monitor the cameras by a person on council. She stated that people do not need to give permission because they are aware that they are under surveillance.
- Wayne Figner made a motion to resign.
 - **Motion** was not seconded.

Adjournment: Motion made by Frank Hutta at 10:05 PM. Seconded by Ken Hankey and motion carried **unanimously**.

SUBMITTED BY:

Jill Figner, Borough Secretary
Submitted for Approval on October 10th, 2023