

**BOROUGH OF EDGEWOOD
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BOROUGH OF EDGEWOOD
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD JUNE 5, 2023

Council President Petrolla called the meeting of the Borough of Edgewood to order at 7:30 pm.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call the following responded: Ms. Patel, Mr. Sherman, Ms. Yaney, and Dr. Petrolla. Also present were Mayor O'Donnell, Police Chief Payne, Acting Fire Chief Ben Reynolds, Solicitor McDermott, and Borough Manager Zahorchak. Dr. Blasiolo, Dr. Epitropoulos, Mr. Love, and Junior Councilperson Kochupora were absent.

PLEDGE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

County Council Member DeWitt Walton addressed Council concerning the Independent Police Review Board. Police Chief Payne replied that one concern he has with a Review Board would be a potential lack of knowledge of law enforcement by members of the board. He noted challenges in policing due to inconsistencies in department policies among various municipalities. Councilperson Walton responded that the board does include members with law enforcement experience. Discussion ensued over this matter.

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR: No public comment was received.

AUTHORIZATION TO PAY BILLS

M-1 Ms. Yaney moved to authorize the payment of bills for goods and services received by the borough from the General Fund in the amount of \$80,041.48. Second by Mr. Sherman.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Yaney noted that the only notably large item was a traffic signal payment.

Upon roll call vote the following responded yes: Ms. Patel, Mr. Sherman, Ms. Yaney, and Dr. Petrolla. **Motion carried.**

COMMITTEE ACTION

M-2 Ms. Yaney moved to hire Maura Alford as a full-time police officer pending a successful physical, psychological and background examination. Second by Ms. Patel.

DISCUSSION: Chief Payne spoke briefly regarding the review process and the proposed candidates. He provided his recommendation for both candidates being submitted.

Upon roll call vote the following responded yes: Ms. Patel, Mr. Sherman, Ms. Yaney, and Dr. Petrolla. **Motion carried.**

M-3 Ms. Yaney moved to hire Andrew Hakos as a full-time police officer pending a successful physical, psychological and background examination. Second by Ms. Patel.

DISCUSSION: None.

Upon roll call vote the following responded yes: Ms. Patel, Mr. Sherman, Ms. Yaney, and Dr. Petrolla. **Motion carried.**

M-4 Ms. Yaney moved to rescind Borough Resolution 2021-18 establishing mandatory COVID 19 vaccination requirements and reaffirming other COVID-19 workplace safety policies and protocols. Second by Mr. Sherman.

DISCUSSION: It was noted that the county has already taken a similar action, in leu of the public health emergency being lifted soon. Brief discussion occurred about potential future situations where it may need to be reenacted.

Upon roll call vote the following responded yes: Ms. Patel, Mr. Sherman, Ms. Yaney, and Dr. Petrolla. **Motion carried.**

BUSINESS MEETING

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT Acting Chief Reynolds reported there was a structure fire on Morris St, with significant damage. The department has seen success with recruiting and has welcomed seven new fire fighters recently. The department has been busy responding to eight structure fires in the past four weeks.

There is a new DPW employee who is a member of Rivers Edge Fire Department that would like to be part of the Edgewood VFD. Mr Reynolds requested consideration to allow that person to serve. He noted that he sent a priority list for this person to respond to, which includes calls that are structure related and rescues occurring within the borough, call-outs as a suppression piece to Braddock Hills and Swissvale, especially with high temperature situations, and cardiac arrest calls. Mr. Zahorchak replied that more discussion needs to take place with the Public Safety committee.

Mr. Sherman thanked Mr. Reynolds for the recent work of the department in responding to calls. He inquired whether there were any injuries related to the eight t structure fires. Mr. Reynolds replied that there were not.

WATER AUTHORITY REPORT Mr. Zahorchak read a water authority report on behalf of Mr. Fuller. He stated that the authority met. There were a large number of customers and non-customers in attendance expressing concerns about the authority's practices and lack of transparency. Channel 11 news filmed the meeting. An advocacy group Upstream Pittsburgh was present as well. A resident of the of the flooded Westgate condominium was there concerning a denied insurance claim.

Trouble with automatic payments is still occurring since the authority switched vendors, and the previous vendor refused to continue monthly arrangements and terminated their contract. The new computer system is scheduled to go live in October. Lead line replacement in Edgewood is slated to be done in June. There is newer a law that allows entities to enter into direct negotiation of contracts if no bids are received within fifteen days of the second bid advertisement. This has not been highly publicized.

RECREATION REPORT Mr. Zahorchak reported that T-ball and Softball start this week, with 29 kids registered for T-ball and 17 for Softball. Registration for Fall Soccer starts on June 26 and runs until August 4.

Make Music Day is coming up on June 21, from 5-8pm at Memorial Park. Big Lou's food truck will be there and the Fire Department will be joining us to provide some caffeinated beverages. We have several regional performers lined up and time blocked in for local performers to participate. If you would like to share your musical talents, or know someone who would, please let Abby or Tara (or Mr. Zahorchak) know.

The first movie night is scheduled for Friday, July 14. Starting out the evening, from 7:30-8:30, members of the VFD will be there for a neighborhood 'Touch-a-Truck' event, leading up to our feature film, 'The Bad Guys.' The movie starts at dusk.

Community Day planning is underway. We'll be featuring a portable mini-golf course in the tennis courts. Food and market vendors are being accepted now; the form is available on our website and the newsletter for anyone interested in participating.

PLANNING COMMISSION Mr. Zahorchak stated that the Planning Commission did not meet.

COG REPORT Mayor O'Donnell had nothing to report.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT Mr. McDermott stated that he distributed an electronic copy of the Allegheny County Police Review Board ordinance to council for their review. He requested a brief Executive Session following the regular meeting.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Zahorchak reported that he wished to make a recommendation to extend the bid opening date for the 2023 road paving program from this Friday to next, based on minimal response. There is a sewer line issue on Dewey Street and contractors have been there working to resolve it. A water line break on Lehigh Street occurred today involving a borough catch basin storm catch basin which will need to be inspected.

The line painting program is largely complete. Our contractor is starting work tomorrow on the Dewey St retaining wall. The lot will be unavailable for approximately the next two weeks. The asbestos mitigation at the police department starts Thursday. The carpet installer will return at the end of the month to complete the work. They are unavailable until then due to another commitment. This does leave a two-week gap where the department cannot be used. Officers will utilize other building space temporarily. Borough Council will meet elsewhere on the property during this interruption.

There have been complaints about traffic and parking around water authority work. Language will be redefined on no-parking signage to be more specific to working hours. CONNECT is looking for two municipal representatives from Edgewood to be appointed to the organization. Mr. Zahorchak noted that he is already appointed, and inquired if anyone is interested in being a second appointee. There were no responses.

NEW BUSINESS Ms. Yaney inquired if there is an arrangement that could be made for the two police officers who are out on leave to return in an administrative capacity rather than patrolling or responding to calls as a way to help resolve staffing issues. Chief Payne responded that there are tasks that can be done from the office, however the hours available for that type of work would be too limited to make a significant impact.

Mr. Sherman inquired about updates on the plastic bag ban. Ms. Yaney stated that there is an update in packets. She noted that the next intended step is to submit information to business and request feedback. It was requested to create a summary for businesses. Discussion ensued over how businesses and residents might be able to provide feedback.

M-5 It was moved by Ms. Yaney and seconded by Mr. Sherman to adjourn at 8:20pm.
The aye vote on the motion was unanimous. **Motion carried.**

An Executive Session was held at 8:30 and adjourned at 8:42pm. No action was taken.



Rob Zahorchak, Borough Manager