

BOROUGH OF AKRON COUNCIL MEETING- APRIL 13, 2020

Council members present- Thomas J. Murray, Sr., President; Justin Gehman, Vice-President; Darryl Witmer, Kleon Zimmerman, Paul Swangren, Jr., Randall Justice. (Nathan Imhoff not present)

Others present- Mayor John McBeth, Susan Davidson, Borough Manager; Police Chief Thomas Zell, Kenelm L. Shirk III, Solicitor.

Meeting was held at the Akron Volunteer Fire Company. Meeting was properly advertised and posted.

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Paul Swangren, Jr. made a motion to approve the March 9, 2020 and April 3, 2020 Borough of Akron Council Meeting minutes. Randall Justice seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Visitors/Comments from the Public

Nothing to report

Reports

Mayor

Mayor McBeth had nothing to report

Police

Darryl Witmer made a motion to accept the resignation of Officer Paul Cook effective May 9, 2020. Justin Gehman seconded the motion. Chief Zell mentioned that Paul Cook would like to stay on as a part-time officer.

Darryl Witmer voted yes

Justin Gehman voted yes

Randall Justice voted yes

Kleon Zimmerman voted yes

Paul Swangren, Jr. voted yes

Thomas J. Murray, Sr. voted yes
Motion carried

Joe Mikos from the Akron Civil Service Commission (audio) asked about Chief Zell's replacement and what is going on with the entire department because we are running short on time. Joe Mikos stated we need to focus on replacing the full-time officer and the Chief but needs to know one way or the other what to do.

Tom Murray, Sr. stated there is no way to host presentations from other police departments at this time due to the COVID-19. Tom Murray, Sr. also stated whenever a municipality turns things over like the police or water, the municipality loses its identity and he is not in favor of continuing.

Darryl Witmer asked if we can begin a search to take applications for the Chief and full-time officer.

Randall Justice stated unless we talk definitively it might affect how many people will apply.

Chief Zell asked Council members why this came up in the first place. Chief Zell also mentioned that no one from Council ever came to him and said what can we do better and why is it so important that we look somewhere else. Tom Murray, Sr. stated the Akron Borough Police Dept has always done a good job.

Mayor McBeth mentioned that over the years he has tried to keep Council aware of the cost from going with other municipalities and residents were not in favor a few years ago.

Chief Zell mentioned there is a legitimate safety concern with officers working alone and Akron Borough Police Department has a good relationship with the West Earl Twp Police Department.

Randall Justice mentioned he was hopeful we can get presentations to show our constituents by doing a comparison analysis and wish we had more data, but we need to move forward.

Paul Swangren, Jr mentioned he would like to have current data to make an educated decision. Paul Swangren, Jr. also mentioned that safety is a key and his concern what will happen in 2021 and not comfortable putting this off.

Darryl Witmer mentioned that he agrees with Paul Swangren, Jr.

Chief Zell stated we have a written mutual aid agreement with West Earl Police Department. Chief Zell asked why we have to have someone here to do a presentation. Tom Murray, Sr. said we want the departments to do a presentation so we can ask questions.

Kleon Zimmerman mentioned that 95% of the people he spoke to want to keep our police department.

Darryl Witmer mentioned to wait for the end of the pandemic and decide then and it would be better to have a community meeting.

Chief Zell mentioned what would be the point of starting the hiring process if we are still undecided if we are going to keep this department.

Justin Gehman asked Chief Zell if there is someone who can be the interim Chief. Chief Zell said yes but we will be down two officers.

Justin Gehman made a motion to have the Akron Civil Service Commission search for a full-time police officer and to have the stipulations that if we would contract our Police Department that department must take all officers. Justin Gehman withdrew his motion.

Chief Zell notified the crossing guards of Council's decision to continue paying the crossing guards.

Borough Manager Report

Distributed March 2020 Borough Manager Report

March 2020 month-end financials have been reconciled and April 2020 payables will be reviewed by the Finance Committee.

Herbein & Co will present the 2019 audit report at a later date.

Schuylkill Paving was scheduled to pave Walnut Street mid to late April 2020 but due to the COVID-19 that will be at a later date. A letter was sent to the residents on Walnut Street in regards to this change.

Sidewalk work on Front Street is almost completed by Triple K Concrete. Triple K Concrete can not complete the work at this time due to the COVID-19.

Street sweeping will still take place on April 23 and April 24. 2020.

Met with Hanover Engineering to get a plan for an ADA path to the gazebo at the Roland Park. The area was surveyed by Hanover Engineering and they will forward a proposed plan to Council.

The civil judgement for the property at 115 N. Ninth Street for running a short-term rental was paid by the defendants in full.

Tax Collector Report

County Real Estate Taxes collected in February 2020	\$101,325.37
Borough Real Estate Taxes collected in February 2020	\$104,423.34

Fire Chief Report

The March 2020 Fire report was e-mailed to Council and Mayor before the meeting.

Zoning Officer report

Distributed March 2020 Zoning Officer report

Administration/Finance

Randall Justice made a motion to pay the bills as reviewed by the Finance Committee. Kleon Zimmerman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Sue Davidson read the March 31, 2020 month-end balances into the minutes

General Fund	\$121,623.73
Water Fund	\$ 36,787.95
Sewer Fund	\$130,464.23
Hwy Aid Fund	\$255,634.30
General Reserves	\$243,903.33
Water Reserves	\$220,474.69
Sewer Reserves	\$124,674.00
Cap. Projects	\$ 373.32
Community Fund	\$ 3,355.08
Total	\$1,137,290.63
Escrow Fund	\$ 5,950.38

Tom Murray, Sr. reviewed the march Revenues and Expenditures Report

Tom Murray, Sr. mentioned that the Estimated Income Tax will probably fall short of our budgeted amount and we need to carefully consider our projects for 2020.

Paul Swangren, Jr. made a motion to adopt Resolution #00231 extending the base rate for the 2020 Real Estate Taxes until November 30, 2020. Justin Gehman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Justin Gehman made a motion to adopt Resolution #00232 postponing the 2020 County Tax Upset Sale. Paul Swangren, Jr. seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Community Relations

Darryl Witmer mentioned that the 125th Akron anniversary book is on hold and Dick Wanner is waiting until the fall of 2020 to continue with the book.

Darryl Witmer mentioned that Doggie Day in the Park has been moved to the fall 2020.

Parks/Property

Chief Zell mentioned that he does not know how we can regulate social distancing at our parks.

Personnel Committee

Paul Swangren, Jr. mentioned that we will not have a discussion on non-uniform personnel until we sit down with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Public Utilities

The Borough Solicitor will send a letter to Skyview Commons owners in regards to a water meter issue.

Paul Swangren, Jr. made a motion to adopt Ordinance #00100 clarifying the responsibility for maintenance of sanitary sewer laterals and facilities by property owners utilizing the Borough's sanitary sewer system and remedies for violations thereof. Kleon Zimmerman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Paul Swangren, Jr. made a motion to authorize the Code Enforcement Officer, Borough Solicitor and Borough Manager to move forward with the summary proceeding for the property at 1418 Diamond Street for a broken sewer grinder pump. Randall justice seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Old Business

Phase 2 Rail Trail Stream Repair

Tom Murray, Sr. mentioned to hold off on applying for any permits for the Phase 2 Rail Trail Stream Repair until the next Council meeting.

Standpipe Painting

Information on financing from Fulton Bank for painting the standpipe was distributed to Council and Mayor.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for April 27th, 2002 at 6:30 p.m. (via zoom at the Akron Fire Hall) and will be advertised.

Randall Justice made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Darryl Witmer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Davidson
Borough Secretary

SD