

Borough of Jefferson Hills
Regular Meeting of Council
May 11, 2020

The regular meeting of Council was called to order by President Bucy at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Center, 925 Old Clairton Road. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Council Members Ielase, Reynolds, Ruscitto, Sockman, Steffey, Vice President Montgomery, Mayor Cmar and President Bucy answered to roll call. Borough Manager Stinner, Solicitor Gabriel, Chief Roach, Borough Engineer Glister and Public Works Director Volpe, Finance Officer Bennett and Consulting Engineer Minsterman were also present.

CITIZENS/TAXPAYERS COMMENTS:

None.

MONTHLY BILLS:

Mr. Sockman moved the April bills be approved, seconded by Mrs. Ielase and carried unanimously.

MONTHLY PAYROLLS:

Mr. Sockman moved the payrolls for the month of April in the amount of \$267,049.68 be approved, seconded by Mrs. Ielase and carried unanimously.

MINUTES:

Mr. Montgomery moved the minutes of agenda meeting April 8, 2020 be approved, seconded by Mrs. Ruscitto and carried unanimously.

Mr. Sockman moved the minutes of regular meeting April 16, 2020 be approved, seconded by Mrs. Ielase and carried unanimously.
Mr. Montgomery stated a correction to the minutes should reflect Mayor Cmar and Mr. Reynolds were present at the meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to authorize the hire of Grace Duda as the Borough of Jefferson Hills Community Relations Coordinator at a salary of \$40,000.00 per year, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve Resolution 08-2020 for final approval to the land development plan known as SP-2-2020, Kurt Lesker Land Development, seconded by Mr. Sockman and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ielase moved to approve Application for Payment No. 1 and Final from Insight Pipe Contracting, LLC in the amount of \$20,832.51 for work completed on the Joint Municipal SHACOG Preventative Maintenance–Year 9 Project, subject to the receipt of an invoice from SHACOG, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve Application for Payment No. 1 and Final from Jet Jack, Inc. in the amount of \$20,577.10 for work completed on the Joint Municipal SHACOG Sanitary Sewer Lining – Year 12 –Contract B Project, subject to the receipt of an invoice from SHACOG, seconded by Mr. Sockman and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ielase moved to approve Invoice #20618 from DuraEdge Tools & Equipment, LLC in the amount of \$8,900.00 for the T-Ball infield improvement work completed at Andrew Reilly Memorial Park, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mr. Sockman moved to approve Application for Payment No. 2 and Final to C. Crump, Inc. in the amount of \$8,227.50 for the Rt. 51 Stream Restoration Project, seconded by Mrs. Ielase and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve Change Order No. 1 from Bronder Technical Services, Inc., dated April 27, 2020, in the amount of \$275.60 for the State Route 837 and Walton Road Signal Replacement project, seconded by Mr. Sockman and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve Change Order No. 2 from Bioni Drilling, Inc., dated April 29, 2020 to extend the contract completion time of the Andrew Reilly Memorial Park ADA Upgrades – Phase 1 Project from April 30, 2020 to June 30, 2020, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Sockman moved to recommend to SHACOG the award of a bid to Soli Construction, Inc. for the Joint Municipal SHACOG Sanitary Sewer O&M Point Repairs – Year 9 Project in the amount of \$262,435.00 with the Borough’s share being \$69,490.00, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ielase moved to recommend to SHACOG the award of a bid to Jet Jack, Inc. for Sanitary Sewer Lining Project – Year 14 – Contract B (MH-MH Lining) in the amount of \$159,845.00 with the Borough’s share being \$104,160.00, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ielase asked if this was under-bid. Mr. Glister stated yes.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve the Work Authorization dated May 1, 2020 from Gateway Engineers, Inc. for the preparation of the specifications and bid package along with construction administration services for the Waterman Road East Stabilization project in the amount not to exceed \$20,000.00, seconded by Mr. Sockman and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve payment to A – Z Communications for \$6,000 for the creation of a Borough seal; paper and electronic images for use in Borough websites and social media platforms; and the intellectual property rights for the Borough, seconded by Mrs. Steffey. Mr. Reynolds stated there is no signed contract with this company. Mr. Stinner stated the contract was signed last year by previous Council. Mr. Reynolds asked if the Borough received three bids for this work. Mr. Stinner stated he received bids via phone. Mr. Montgomery stated because the cost is under \$11,000.00, no formal bid was required. Mrs. Bucy stated because the amount is under \$11,000.00, phone bids will be considered appropriate. Mr. Gabriel confirmed work under \$11,000.00 are not required, but the Borough can, as a practice, request 3 bids for all work. The vote was not unanimous and a roll call vote was taken. Per the Borough Code, which requires that the minutes show the actual votes by name, below are the votes of each Council Member:

President Bucy	YES
Vice President Montgomery	YES
Vickie Ielase	NO
Mr. Reynolds	NO
Mrs. Ruscitto	YES
Mr. Sockman	YES
Mrs. Steffey	YES

Motion to approve payment to A – Z Communications for \$6,000 for the creation of a Borough seal; paper and electronic images for use in Borough websites and social media platforms; and the intellectual property rights for the Borough carried 5-2.

Mr. Montgomery moved to authorize payment for \$4,800 to Zacur Contracting Inc. to pay the Borough’s portion of the \$9,600 cost for erecting a new pavilion at Andrew Reilly Memorial Park, seconded by Mrs. Steffey.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated this was approved by former Council and therefore doesn’t believe they can vote no to payment. However, she has questions about who recommended and approved. Mr. Sockman stated former Council called and went to ask contractors. Mr. Reynolds stated we should vote no because of nepotism. The address is Costa Homes and Mrs. Steffey works for Costa. Mrs. Steffey stated the previous Council voted on this, of which she was not a part. Mr. Volpe stated a contractor did the lumber work and beams and Public Works will do the concrete work and take down the old pavilion. Mrs. Ruscitto asked Mr. Volpe for the quote he received, Mr. Volpe agreed. Mrs. Steffey asked if the pavilion is complete? Mr. Volpe stated there is about one day of work left. Mrs. Ielase moved to table the payment for \$4,800 to Zacur Contracting Inc. to pay the Borough’s portion of the \$9,600 cost for erecting a new pavilion at Andrew Reilly Memorial Park, seconded by Mr. Montgomery. The vote was not unanimous and a roll call vote was taken. Per the Borough Code, which requires that the minutes show the actual votes by name, below are the votes of each Council Member:

President Bucy	YES
Vice President Montgomery	YES
Vickie Ielase	NO
Mr. Reynolds	NO

Mrs. Ruscitto	YES
Mr. Sockman	YES
Mrs. Steffey	YES

Motion to table the payment for \$4,800 to Zacur Contracting Inc. to pay the Borough's portion of the \$9,600 cost for erecting a new pavilion at Andrew Reilly Memorial Park carried 5-2.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve Cargill Salt Contract option year through SHACOG for Winter 2020-2021 season, seconded by Mr. Sockman and carried unanimously.

Mr. Sockman moved to authorize 6-8 summer workers for the Borough of Jefferson Hills Public Works Department, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

FIRE CHIEF:

Nothing to report.

BOROUGH ENGINEER:

Mr. Glister stated construction is underway at Beedle Park.

FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER'S REPORT:

Nothing to report.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Report in packet.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT:

Nothing to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Inaudible statement read by Mrs. Cmar.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:

Nothing to report.

GENERAL BUSINESS RESIDENTS:

Henry Lantz, of 1305 Collins Avenue, had an email read by Mrs. Bucy thanking Mr. Reynolds for saving Floreffé VFC and battling to keep Gill Hall VFC open. He believes the Borough should provide Gill Hall VFC with financial support and 24-hour shift crew coverage. He would like to

see police and EMS reports on calls. He asked why we are paying Costa to build a pavilion? He also asked why residents didn't see the Borough logo?

Lisa Bucizo, of 3041 Shady Timber Lane, to speak about recertification. Lisa asked what is being asked on the Fire Company audit? Are tax payers paying for this audit? What are we mediating exactly? What is the condition of Gill Hall VFC equipment? How are we funding Gill Hall VFC? How are we paying a shift crew, with tax payers money? How is progress being measured? We need facts.

Mrs. Bucy read Mayor Cmar's statement which was not previously audible:

STATEMENT FROM JANICE CMAR

I have a few comments about fire protection in the borough. I appreciate the recent action of Council to recertify the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company. It was simply unacceptable to deny fire protection to the most populous area of the community. The most outrageous statement made during the past two years is that the Gill Hall neighborhood is actually safer without the Gill Hall VFC. Tell that to the residents or the insurance companies. Do we need to coordinate fire services in the borough - yes. Do we need standardized reporting in the borough - yes. Do we need standardized training and sharing of equipment - yes. Can we accomplish these matters without a full merger - yes of course. In the oft referenced DCED study, a partial consolidation is even suggested as an option on page 38.

We see an evolving landscape for fire services in Pennsylvania. The number of volunteers decrease monthly. The age of volunteers is increasing. Shift crews have made an appearance. Our residents want and demand efficient, cost effective fire protection. They want a fire truck ASAP in their neighborhood when its necessary. Until we get to regionalization or county-wide fire services, we need to carefully consider all our options and what works best for us here. The 885 Fire Company has found success through paid shift crews. The evidence to that is right in their roster - their firefighters are from Monongahela, Monessen, Port Vue, Munhall, Cecil, Pittsburgh, Clairton, Elizabeth, West Elizabeth, Ellsworth, Charleroi, McKeesport, Belle Vernon, Brentwood, Dravosburg, West Mifflin and McDonald - their firefighters are generally not residents of Jefferson Hills. The Gill Hall VFC, meanwhile, has never had a paid shift crew and must rely on volunteers from the neighborhood.

have heard from Gill Hall residents - the silent majority - over the past two years on this matter - there has been outrage over council's decision last year to decertify. But I've also discussed this matter with residents from the 885 area, the Ridge Road area and the Floreffe area - where there are equal amounts of outrage over decertification. I've spoken to officials in other municipalities - the consistent response I've received is that this is a power grab and a political matter. A political matter. Think about that. These officials believe we have reduced a fundamental service to simply politics. That bothers me greatly - it should bother all of you. I have watched GHVFC officials harshly criticized by some of my colleagues on council and other firemen, viciously denounced publicly simply because they do not agree. There are volunteers with 30 and 40 years of service to the community. We should instead be praising their accomplishments and conducting parades in their honor. Where's the dignity?

With recertification receiving approval at the Special Meeting of April 27th, there are still issues. Some council members want to withhold funding for GHVFC and forbid them from their annual fundraising drive done in the Gill Hall area. They want to subject GHVFC to audit prior to the release of any governmental funds. Please do conduct the audit, but stop placing roadblocks that

are designed to drive GHVFC out of business. It's inconceivable to me that the distribution of monies over a four-year period was \$598,922 for the 885 station, \$46,020 for the Floreffe Station and \$31,044 for Gill Hall. In the fourth year Gill Hall VFC received \$1. Consider that the Gill Hall VFC's coverage area, which extends to the intersection of Elliot Road and Old Clairton Road, consists of 52 % of the assessed value the borough and 52% of the fire tax revenue. These data are from Allegheny County. If we lose the Gill Hall Fire Station, the cost to build a new fire house is simply prohibitive. There are competing demands for scarce governmental dollars and we are now in the COVID-19 age which means reduced tax revenue.

If the Borough wants to develop Operational Procedures for Fire Protection my suggestion is to have both JHFR and GHVFC both at the table for their input. In the meantime, let's release governmental funds and eliminate the roadblocks to success. In the end, fire protection needs to begin in the Gill Hall area now.

Mrs. Bucy stated Council has been working in Executive Session on a plan for Gill Hall VFC.

Mrs. Steffey moved to continue discussions on Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company, seconded by Mrs. Ruscitto. The vote was not unanimous and a roll call vote was taken. Per the Borough Code, which requires that the minutes show the actual votes by name, below are the votes of each Council Member:

President Bucy	YES
Vice President Montgomery	YES
Vickie Ielase	YES
Mr. Reynolds	NO
Mrs. Ruscitto	YES
Mr. Sockman	YES
Mrs. Steffey	YES

Motion to continue discussions on Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company carried 6-1.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Mrs. Ruscitto thanked the volunteers from the Neighbors Helping Neighbors Program, Ms. Trbovich, Mr. Minsterman and Gateway Engineers. She congratulated Grace Duda on her position.

Mr. Montgomery stated the Allegheny Elections Department will make a final decision by June 1, 2020 on polling places due to the pandemic.

Mrs. Steffey congratulated Grace Duda on her position. Mrs. Steffey stated that an account in Mayor Cmar's statement was a discussion item in Executive Session and should never had been made public.

Mr. Sockman stated Gill Hall VFC did not receive \$1.00, they received \$6,00.00. Mr. Sockman stated the third shift crew for 885 was never formally put on record last year and he would like to rectify that tonight. Mr. Reynolds stated Gill Hall VFC still hasn't been rectified. Mrs. Bucy stated

the money was budgeted, and we need to fix this. Mr. Sockman stated the decision was made because Gill Hall VFC was closed. Mr. Reynolds stated he is behind 885 VFC having their shift crew and he wants Gill Hall VFC to have a shift crew as well. Mrs. Bucy stated they will discuss further in Executive Session.

Mr. Sockman moved to formally approve a third paid shift crew at 885 Volunteer Fire Company, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mr. Reynolds stated 885 should drop the lawsuit against Gill Hall. His neighbor, Henry is entitled to his own opinion. Mrs. Steffey's uncle is Donny Withers and she shouldn't be voting on anything to do with Gill Hall VFC because it's a conflict of interest. Mrs. Steffey asked Mr. Gabriel to address the conflict of interest. Mr. Gabriel stated an uncle does not disqualify Mrs. Steffey by law for regular voting, there is no direct financial interest.

Mr. Reynolds moved to take \$20,000.00 from the General Fund and give it to Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company, seconded by Mrs. Ielase. Mr. Montgomery stated that money will come out of tax money later this year. This year's income is going down and unemployment may reach 90% due to the pandemic. Mr. Montgomery moved to table taking \$20,000.00 from the General Fund and give it to Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company, seconded by Mrs. Steffey. The vote was not unanimous and a roll call vote was taken. Per the Borough Code, which requires that the minutes show the actual votes by name, below are the votes of each Council Member:

President Bucy	YES
Vice President Montgomery	YES
Vickie Ielase	NO
Mr. Reynolds	NO
Mrs. Ruscitto	YES
Mr. Sockman	YES
Mrs. Steffey	YES

Motion to table taking \$20,000.00 from the General Fund and give it to Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company carried 5-2.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Bucy adjourned the meeting at 8:59 p.m. with an executive session to follow regarding personnel from which Council would not return.

John P. Stinner
Secretary/Borough Manager