Borough of Jefferson Hills

Regular Meeting of Council

February 8, 2021

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 (via zoom), Reynolds, Ruscitto, Sockman, Steffey, Vice President Montgomery and President Bucy answered to roll call. Mayor Cmar, Finance Officer Drager, Solicitor Gabriel, Lt. King, Borough Engineer Glister, Public Works Director Volpe and Borough Manager Stinner were also present.  Mr. Minstermen was absent.

BOROUGH RESIDENT/TAXPAYER COMMENTS

Pete Doel, 420 Old Clairton Road, just a reminder, it is the Borough’s responsibility to provide their residents with adequate fire protection. We have debated for years now, whether we need a merger, whether GH can open independently, and we will continue to do so for years, if we don’t put aside our differences and start working towards tomorrow.

A very realistic plan to move forward could be:

1. Drop Lawsuit
2. Reopen Gill Hall as an independent fire company
3. Allow access to all departments for all members

I understand there is a lot of animosity between the groups, and a lot of mistrust. Even members of council have been quoted many times saying they don’t believe a merger could work.

I think there’s a lot we, as a community could do, to help rebuild trust and a working relationship. Why not have all the departments compile a wish list of things their stations need? Maybe a better area for the guys who are on the paid shift crew. Maybe we need some framing and drywall to help give them a place to be while waiting for calls. Maybe some overdue upkeep to their buildings and facilities. Why not have some community weekends where members from all three fire departments, along with members of the community get together to work on these wish list items? It gets the members working together, it gets the community involved. It gets us talking and working together so we can start to learn from one another and get passed all the anger and differences.

How about some days where we have tours of the fire departments, have others show up with trucks, and discuss with the community the different equipment and the purpose each serves. Might actually get some kids interested in becoming a fireman someday, which could help build up our volunteer base.

All that said, it’s been 2 years since we’ve had adequate fire protection in the GH area. So, if GH is closed permanently tonight, what has council done to prepare? Have you found a lot to build new? Have you received any quotes on building a new fire department? Any quotes on trucks and equipment? If not, why? And are you prepared to raise taxes for a new department, in the middle of a pandemic, when many people have lost their jobs, having trouble paying their taxes as it is, and when Borough revenue is surely down already.

Finally, I’d like to ask everyone sitting on council, and I expect you all to answer. God forbid, you leave here tonight, and as you approach your home, you see it’s on fire. Your children, spouse, grandchildren, etc. are inside. A truck from GH pulls up. Are you going to allow them entry into your home to save your family, or are you going to refuse their help?

Solicitor Gabriel stated it’s not a question and answer time and we won’t get into a debate about i

Mr. Reynolds stated: I went up to Gill Hall Soup fundraiser and one item that came up to me from a concerned resident is they have foster children in the house. They have to go through a lot of check and balances to have the children there. One of them is a firehall within a certain proximity. This has created a huge situation for them.

Joy Mann, 2621 Ridge Road, I started watching the meetings more recently, so I don’t have the background of the past four years that this was going on. I was challenged by someone after I made a comment, to look back into the history of this, so I did. The fact that there has been no compromise is disturbing. It seems to me that there is more give and take take take. I agree there has to be more protection in Gill Hall area and I think they have adequate protection. I think Jefferson is stepping up and doing it, but I went out found the facts. I have 173 signatures from residents that want this to move on. It’s been two years of fighting to open up something they don’t want to open. They refuse to do what they need to do. They refuse to compromise. So, if that’s the case, they don’t open, that’s their choice. They should merge. Bethel Park is three times our size and they do it, why can’t we.

Mr. Reynolds stated, we choose to close them down and argue what’s compromise and what’s not. I talked to Elizabeth Township, they all work together, and they all get their allotment and they all work together for the safety of the residence. They both have said they have never worked together in a scene.

Ms. Mann stated there was a reason. There’s an ordinance that says you don’t get to fight fires because you don’t do your job adequately.

Mr. Reynolds, two sides to every narrative they want people to believe, the truth is somewhere in the middle and we lost that.

Ms. Manns stated I agree there are always three sides of any story, but I have found by watching meetings, that your opinion is not to find a middle. I respect their opinions and dedications to their fire hall. If they refuse to comply it moves on. I don’t get to say I don’t want to do my job today, but I will next week.

Mandy Kozlowski, 118 Hillview stated, I understand the concept of being proud of your fire department. I have and have had generations of my family members volunteer for Floreffe and I am very proud of that. The merger was a tough decision for them but put their pride aside to do what’s best for the community and I commend that. All I’m asking is for them to put the residents first.

Chuck Cudlipp, Member of Floreffe VFC and JHFR stated: I’ve been a member of the volunteer fire service in Jefferson since 1977. I first joined Large Volunteer Fire company when Pappy was chief, and then later moved up to Jefferson 885. After many years as an active firefighter at 885, I moved down in the Floreffe area and joined that department over 20 years ago. So I’ve been an active firefighter in Jefferson for almost 44 years.

I’ve heard lots of talk about consolidation over the years, but I never thought I’d see this getting done. As a longtime member of Floreffe and other Jefferson fire companies, I too had concerns about one station taking over another station. About 4 years ago, I was worried about the Borough shutting Floreffe down, when the Fire Consolidation Study was done. Fortunately, Councilman Frank Sockman stepped in and asked that Floreffe be given one last chance, and the Borough did. We realized that the Borough was serious about shutting us down, and we admitted that we needed help, and that we needed to make some changes.

After that, we voted out the old chief and brought Don Withers back as the new chief. We started to train with 885 and do a better job of record keeping. The Borough bought us a vehicle exhaust system. And our station voted to support the consolidation. Things started looking up.

After working with 885 for over two years now, I can say that this consolidation is the best thing that ever happened to Floreffe and the entire borough fire service. We all get along like one big family. We can walk into each other’s station and everyone greets us as friends. We share in equipment and get to know each other outside of the fire company. And because of these friendships, we have a better response at the calls. Again, this consolidation is the best thing that ever happened to the fire service in Jefferson, since I started in 1977.

So, I wanted to reach out to the firefighters at Gill Hall and let them know this. Consolidation is a good thing. And if any of them have a concern about how this is working out, give me a call.

Deb Cudlipp, Member of Floreffe VFC and JHFR stated: I’ve been a member of Floreffe Volunteer Fire Company for 18 years now. I have one son that’s now in his late 20’s. I was raised in a family that served in the Navy, so I understand what service to others is all about in the volunteer fire service

I never paid much attention to the merger talks. But I did have a concern about members of another department trying to take over Floreffe. But during the Fire Department Task Force meetings, I could see that Don Withers and Jay Girman thought it would be a good thing to agree to consolidation, so I was went along with the idea.

Now that Floreffe and 885 are working together, I feel we are a much better department. When it was just Floreffe, we did very little training. But nowadays since we started the merger, I regularly attend the training drills on Thursday nights, that are run by Chief Chalfant and Assistant Chief Allan from 885. Sometimes we drill right at Floreffe. Chief Chalfant is a state fire instructor and he has taught me to be a better firefighter in so many ways. I especially like the training classes where we learn to use the aerial.

As a firefighter in Jefferson Hills, I think this consolidation is the best thing that ever happened. I know that some of the firefighters at Gill Hall want to remain as an independent station. But I’d be glad to talk to them about how things are going at Floreffe and tell them that the good things far outweigh the bad. I’d be glad to have a conversation with any of Gill Hall’s members that have a concern about how this is working out. But I recommend that they be open to consolidation.

Don Withers, Member of Floreffe VFC and Station 2 Deputy Chief for JHFR stated: I joined Floreffe Volunteer Fire Company in 1977, when I was 19 years old. My dad was the president of Floreffe back when we had 50 members.

Our fire hall was the social center of the Floreffe community when I was growing up. My brother Dale had joined earlier, and I joined a couple of years later– everyone in the Withers family was involved with Floreffe in some manner. The Ladies Auxiliary was active with their volunteer work. I also volunteered on the ambulance crew in those early days. Later on, I worked my way to being the fire chief for the entire department – several times. So, I’ve been an active firefighter or line officer for Floreffe for over 42 years now.

With my long family background running the department, I too had concerns about the consolidation. I didn’t want the members from some other station having a say over how we ran Floreffe. I know that thru JFR, we were already sharing the cost of the trucks. But sharing our fire hall was another story. And the long-time Life Members had concerns too. But the Sohyda report really woke us up. We were more concerned with our charter that we were with our ability to fight fires. We realized that the Borough isn’t just threatening to decertify us, they are actually ready to do it. I credit Councilman Frank Sockman for giving us one last chance.

So, in late 2017, the members of Floreffe made some tough decisions and I became Chief again. But Max Stanton, Dale Withers, Bruce Biddle, Bob Seleski and several others were all for the change. We didn’t want the residents of Floreffe to go without a fire department, so we agreed. We followed the Borough’s guidelines and put three members on the fire department task force. We started to train with 885. The Borough bought us a new vehicle exhaust system and turnout gear cleaners. I realized that having this close connection with the members and line officers of 885 and the Borough was only going to help the Floreffe station.

After working with 885 for over two years now, I can say that this consolidation is the best thing that ever happened to Floreffe. During calls, I can immediately see who’s coming to each call. If I’m unavailable, I let all the officers for both stations know that I’m out of the area and know that there’s someone there to take my place. I also know that the crews responding from other departments are well trained, and there’s an officer in charge that we can trust. I am constantly discussing equipment purchases with 885, to make sure we standardize on battery packs, vehicle extrication equipment, radios, gas analyzers, heat guns, and other essential equipment. Every Wednesday, Chief Chalfant sends his shift crew down to our station run all the portable equipment and check the battery levels on our air packs and gas analyzers. We never had this luxury before. I can honestly say this consolidation is the best thing that ever happened to the Floreffe area for emergency coverage.

So, I wanted to reach out to all the line officers at Gill Hall and let them know that this is the best thing that could happen for them too. Consolidation is a good thing. And if any of the line officers at Gill Hall have a concern about how this is working, I’d be delighted to talk to them and see what we can do to improve this relationship.

Mr. Reynolds stated to clear this up, the Sohyda report was done by the DCD. What I have in front of me is the document. Just so you understand when the document says we should merge here is why. The letter of intent was approved by the local government center for local government services to conduct an assessment and feasibility study of combining fire companies. Never once does it say in here is to see if it’s best to keep the fire departments separate. Scope of services for the assessment of the fire service delivery system and feasibility study of combining the three volunteer fire companies within the municipality. Again, before study was done, it was ordered to read that way. It wasn’t a choice it was ordered this way.

Kara Breisinger and Michelle & Stephen Gardiner all sent the same form letter to be read:

Dear Jefferson Hills Council:

We, as residents of the Borough of Jefferson Hills, would like to see our tax dollars being put to work for us. At the February 2, 2021 Council meeting, the proposition was set forth by Councilwoman Steffey to make a decision regarding the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company consolidation that has plagued our community for over 5+ years. We have grown tired of the antics of the Council and feel that at this time, it is in the best interested of the community as a whole to either request that GHVFC join with Jefferson Hills Fire Rescue (comprised of 885 and Floreffe) and for the three individual companies to work together under an umbrella company as recommended in the Sohyda consolidation study or to move on with Plan B, whether that involves the land lease that was proposed by Councilwomen Bucy and Steffey or the purchase of land and the installation of a metal pole building in the Gill Hall area. It has been clear that GHVFC is not interested in pursuing the consolidation option, but it is our understanding that the option can remain available to them should they have a change of heart in the future. GHVC has proven in the past that they are incapable of providing fire protection services as an independent organization and the option to allow them to open up and operate as such shows a lack of concern for the residents, we implore Council to make a decision for the entire community of Jefferson Hills.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Mr. Sockman moved to approve the monthly bills, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ielase moved to approve the monthly payroll, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve minutes of agenda meeting January 6, 2021, seconded by Mr. Sockman and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Steffey moved to approve minutes of regular meeting January 11, 2021 and continued regular meeting on January 20, 2021, seconded by Mrs. Ielase and carried unanimously.

Mr. Reynolds moved to recertify and reactivate Gill Hall VFC Station 179 as an independent Borough Fire Company and restoration of the Allegheny County 911 run cards as to reflect their territory prior to January 12, 2019, 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:

Vickie Ielase NO

Mr. Montgomery NO

Mr. Reynolds YES

Mrs. Ruscitto YES

Mr. Sockman NO

Mrs. Steffey NO

President Bucy NO

Mr. Reynolds moved to table to recertify Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company and add them to Allegheny County 911 as Station 180-3 with the condition Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company merges with Jefferson Hills Fire Rescue, 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:

Vickie Ielase NO

Mr. Montgomery NO

Mr. Reynolds YES

Mrs. Ruscitto YES

Mr. Sockman NO

Mrs. Steffey NO

President Bucy NO

Mr. Sockman moved to recertify Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company and add them to Allegheny County 911 as Station 180-3 with the condition Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company merges with Jefferson Hills Fire Rescue, 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:

Vickie Ielase NO

Mr. Montgomery YES

Mr. Reynolds NO

Mrs. Ruscitto NO

Mr. Sockman YES

Mrs. Steffey YES

President Bucy YES

Mr. Reynolds questioned the way that it reads would be more accurate if it says takeover instead of merger. Saying merge represents it’s a mutual agreement. It’s more of a takeover then a merge. Gill Hall would have to agree to hand over their equipment and building.

Mrs. Steffey stated it was my motion I would like it to stand as it is. If Mr. Reynolds wanted that motion, he should have made it at the discussion meeting.

Solicitor Gabriel stated I do recall several motions last meeting.

Mr. Reynolds stated no official or discussion on what Mrs. Steffey stated in the agenda meeting. Are we violating sunshine laws where residents didn’t have an opportunity to view this motion and voice their opinions?

Solicitor Gabriel stated it’s a complicated issued with a lot of discussion. The only change was the station number. Allegheny County will work with the Borough on the station number not a huge issue.

Mr. Reynolds stated it is a big deal that they give 180 complete control and should be read as a takeover not a merger and the residents should have an opportunity to voice their opinion.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated former council left us with the fruitcake at Christmas that keeps getting regifted. There’s been ample discussion about this. 885 wants the merger, Gill Hall does not want to merge, the same deal tried to be orchestrated in homestead. They didn’t agree and it ended as that. I believe this has gone on entirely too long. In the interim, what is the plan? To me the best plan is Gill Hall is there, its functioning, it’s open, there is a building. Let them try to exceed. If they succeed great. Let them try. If they don’t succeed, shame on you. I believe you can. There is mutual aid that would help you and are obligated to help you.

Mrs. Bucy asked are we voting on #10 as the language stands? Solicitor Gabriel stated yes, the maker can modify if they choose. That’s the motion on the table. It’s in the pervy of Council if they want to vote on it. There is no violation to the sunshine act. No legal issues.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated as we stated we can also apply to Mr. Reynolds motion. This is going on for 5 years and there needs to be a settled.

Mr. Reynolds stated the reason for his table is that he has documents through 2018 where Gill Hall was never for the merger and never represented, they were for the merger. They raised money for the building, the Borough does not have claim to the property or the equipment. This is just one more way to damage the image of the Gill Hall Fire Department.

Mr. Sockman moved to distribute $40,000 of revenues from the Fire Tax Fund to JFR, which shall allocate from such distribution $20,000 to each of the two fire companies Borough Council recognized as providing fire service in the Borough of Jefferson Hills, as stated in Resolution 5-2019, 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:

Vickie Ielase YES

Mr. Montgomery YES

Mr. Reynolds NO

Mrs. Ruscitto NO

Mr. Sockman YES

Mrs. Steffey YES

President Bucy YES

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve paying off the remaining balance of Aerial ladder truck (truck 180) in the amount of $54,962.92 and reallocating the approximate $1,100 back to the Fire Dept. budget, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

Mrs. Ruscitto asked what truck we are paying off?

Mr. Drager stated this is just the aerial truck at 885. The money was put into the account lump sum will save us the interest.

Mr. Montgomery moved to authorize Borough Administration to work with PFM Financial Advisors, LLC, as Independent Financial Advisor; Dickie McCamey, & Chilcote, P.C. as Bond Counsel; RBC Capital Markets as underwriter; in conjunction with the issuance of the Bonds Series of 2021, for the purpose of refinancing the 2016 Bonds, seconded by Mr. Sockman and carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

Mr. Reynolds made a motion to table to give another month to give us an opportunity to look at other companies to get the best option for our residents, Mrs. Ruscitto seconded motion.

Mrs. Ruscitto asked Mr. Drager in your professional opinion, would it harm us to look at other options, would it be beneficial?

Mr. Drager stated it is always good to shop around. We do have until next month to get the ball rolling. No decisions will be made with this motion.

Mrs. Ruscitto asked if we have any other options in line?

Mr. Drager stated we have other options, but this company is the only one what we have worked with in the past.

Mrs. Bucy asked Mr. Drager if in his opinion was this company reputable and good to work with?

Mr. Drager stated he’s not sure if there are other companies to work with. They worked well with me and answered all my questions in a timely manner

Mrs. Ruscitto asked Mr. Drager would it harm us or be beneficial to us to look around.

Solicitor Gabriel stated Mr. brown approached me and indicated he has done the previous bond issue in 2016 and significant savings could be accrued by refinancing the bond. It is worth investigating. Borough will realize savings for several thousand dollars.

Mr. Drager stated we would save well over 300,000 savings over the term

Mr. Reynolds stated he wanted to thank Solicitor Gabriel for calling this to our attention. I just want to make sure we look at our options and entertain a couple of offers. I’m not questioning if they are reputable or not.

Mrs. Bucy asked if it’s tabled, how many of these other companies and do you have any other suggestions?

Mr. Reynolds stated we don’t know what we don’t know.

Mrs. Bucy stated we have a timeline.

Mr. Reynolds stated can we tell them this is the timeline and see if they can put an offer forward. We don’t know if we don’t know.

Mr. Stinner stated this was also expediated because we have all the issues from the original bond so that made it easier. Do you know if we can refinance our bond with another company or do we have to use this one?

Mr. Drager stated he think you can, but I don’t know for sure.

Solicitor Gabriel stated we are not locked in but will save time and we have to take action by next month.

Mr. Drager stated next month is a hard deadline.

Mr. Montgomery stated there are several options to decide. To have to recreate that, I would have a concern for the timeline.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated it appears to me we don’t have the time to do this adequately with someone else and I don’t want to let this opportunity slip by of saving the residents that amount of money. I wish we could in the future explore other options and look at other people.

Mr. Reynolds stated if we approve this right now, is there any movement that would be done in a month?

Mr. Stinner stated if there is a hike in the interest rate, we won’t be locked I n.

Mr. Drager stated we have until March 29th to lock in but he’s not sure.

Mrs. Ruscitto stressed the fact in the future to get more choices on everything.

Mr. Montgomery stated we will make a choice next month on the kind of refinancing we want to do.

Mrs. Bucy stated she assumes other companies will want to come in to give a presentation also.

Mr. Reynolds asked if we could have a special meeting to decide what we are going to take.

Mr. Stinner stated he would like to have a confirmation on the rate lock. It’s thousands of dollars we could save.

Mr. Reynolds withdrew his motion to table.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to table until April for joining Clairton Municipal Authority (CMA) litigation with other members of upstream communities, seconded by Mr. Reynolds. 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:

Vickie Ielase NO

Mr. Montgomery NO

Mr. Reynolds YES

Mrs. Ruscitto YES

Mr. Sockman NO

Mrs. Steffey NO

President Bucy YES

Mr. Montgomery moved to join Clairton Municipal Authority (CMA) litigation with other members of upstream communities, seconded by Mr. Sockman. 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:

Vickie Ielase YES

Mr. Montgomery YES

Mr. Reynolds NO

Mrs. Ruscitto NO

Mr. Sockman YES

Mrs. Steffey YES

President Bucy YES

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Mrs. Ruscitto reiterated the statements I made on Wednesday, this case was pushed back, it switched judges from Connelly to Ward. Nothing is going to heard until April 16th. I would also like to state a Solicitor in neighboring borough stated we were joining this lawsuit when we haven’t decided, and I find that disturbing. I would like to know who gave him this information and it’s inappropriate. He’s either lying to a judge or getting the information from Jefferson. Brian Segris, CMA’s Operating Manager, just resigned, he’s tired of the nonsense. By nonsense I mean tap freezes, fracking and dumping sewage in the river. There’s no way to make that water useable again. CMA just dumps this into our rivers. CMA has racked up over half a million dollars of professional fees in the past year. I feel there is a neighboring borough in Canonsburg that proposed a forensic audit and I cannot vote until I see that audit at the end of the month.

Mr. Montgomery moved to ratify the access agreement between Hercules LLC and the Borough of Jefferson Hills, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to ratify Resolution 03-2021 to reappoint Daniel Chiacchia to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Zoning Hearing Board (Term ending 12/31/25), seconded by Mr. Sockman and carried unanimously

Mrs. Steffey moved to ratify Resolution 04-2021 to appoint Dean Collins to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Zoning Hearing Board, finishing the term for Beverly McConeghy (Term ending 12/31/24), seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ielase moved to appoint Kevin Polick the Environmental Advisory Council (Term ending 12/31/24), seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ruscitto questioned term ending date of 2024; it was stated at a public meeting that it’s on a first come first serve bases yet there is someone that applied prior with a term ending of 2022.

Mrs. Lewis explained they are four-year terms, and this was an added seat and the terms were already in place to stager and therefore this one gets the full four-year term.

Mr. Reynolds moved to table to adopt Borough of Jefferson Hills Code of Conduct Policy in relation to seasonal recreation permits, 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:

Vickie Ielase NO

Mr. Montgomery NO

Mr. Reynolds YES

Mrs. Ruscitto YES

Mr. Sockman NO

Mrs. Steffey NO

President Bucy YES

Mr. Sockman stated we have two meetings, an agenda meeting and a voting meeting. This is a voting meeting. The comments are to be made at the agenda meeting and shouldn’t be rehashed at the voting meeting. Let’s conduct ourselves as a business.

Mr. Reynolds stated he doesn’t appreciate not being able to voice my opinion voicing feedback from the residents over the weekend.

Mrs. Steffey moved to adopt Borough of Jefferson Hills Code of Conduct Policy in relation to seasonal recreation permits, 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:

Vickie Ielase YES

Mr. Montgomery YES

Mr. Reynolds NO

Mrs. Ruscitto YES

Mr. Sockman YES

Mrs. Steffey YES

President Bucy YES

Mr. Reynolds stated he would like to make a motion to table this to review the document. If you read the document, I think we are overstepping our boundary here. We are going to be telling leagues they have to present budgets and if they are going to use our fields, they have to have open meetings. We are going to tell these organizations how to run their organizations.

Mrs. Steffey stated she disagrees, this was given to Council to look over last week. Mr. Reynolds is on the recreation committee and looked over it then. Their budgets should be public knowledge to keep them honest. Plus, they ask us for money, we should see what they have to offer as well.

Mr. Reynolds we shouldn’t be policing these leagues and looking into their finances. We should not be focusing on individual teams. If they are paying for a permit, that should be as far as it goes.

Solicitor Gabriel stated from a legal standpoint the Recreation board are just a recommendation body only. It’s Councils’ decision to accept or reject. In terms of overreaching on budget #5, that could be an issue.

Mrs. Bucy asked are you recommending #5 be taken out?

Solicitor Gabriel stated you may want to modify it.

Mr. Stinner stated the Code of Conduct policy if adopted, correct?

Solicitor Gabriel stated yes, it’s the Borough’s decision if they want to adopt it or not

Mr. Reynolds stated we are now getting involved in how teams run their teams. It’s their right to run the organization as they want.

Mrs. Bucy asked if when this was presented to the Rec Board, did you make the same objections at that time?

Mr. Reynolds stated that doesn’t matter, I have a right to voice my opinion. I would make a motion to table it to review the document further.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to adopt standard operating procedures (S.O.P.’s) for Borough Advisory Commissions, Boards, and Councils, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to approve Resolution 07-2021 for recognizing and establishing the proper protocol for placing items on the meeting agenda for consideration, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated a lot of things Mr. Sockman was referring to fall under #21.

Mr. Montgomery stated the idea is to put a deadline on when the items of the agenda could be put on.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to authorize exploration and creation of ordinance for impact fees tied to real estate and other development in the Borough of Jefferson Hills, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery asked if it is for transportation and recreation? Answer was yes.

Solicitor Gabriel stated we put this in our fee resolution, but an ordinance has to be passed in order to enforce the fees. We will be the first Borough to have an ordinance for these fees.

Mr. Montgomery asked if transportation impact fee is that in relation to the borough roads? Answer was yes.

Solicitor Gabriel stated we will have to have a transportation study done to see how much it affects our roads.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated they can get answers to those questions at their meeting tomorrow.

Mr. Sockman moved to accept the proposal of Tri Star Motors in the amount of $39,998.00 to purchase one (1) 2021 Ford Explorer Police Interceptor utility AWD police vehicle under the SHACOG Purchasing Alliance Program, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve Application for Payment No. 1 from Allison Park Contractors, Inc. in the amount of $157,225 for work completed on the Waterman Road East Stabilization project, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Sockman moved to approve the Work Authorization dated January 26, 2021 from Gateway Engineers, Inc. to assist the Borough with preparation of the specifications and bid package for the 2021 Paving Program in the amount not to exceed $3,000.00, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ielase moved to approve the Work Authorization dated January 28, 2021 from Gateway Engineers, Inc. to provide the Borough with general Operations and Maintenance support for all 2021 Operation and Maintenance Projects in the amount not to exceed $12,000.00, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve the Work Authorization dated January 28, 2021 from Gateway Engineers, Inc. to assist the Borough with surveying and preparation of an easement exhibit and legal descriptions for the relocated Jefferson Pointe Sanitary Sewer in the amount not to exceed $4,500.00, seconded by Mrs. Ruscitto and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve SHACOG to award the bid of the CD 46 7.5 Andrew Reilly Park ADA Upgrades Phase 2 project to Swede Construction Corporation in the amount of $45,275.00, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Sockman moved to issue Request for Proposal (RFP) for security camera and access control system for Borough Municipal Complex, seconded by Mrs. Steffey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Sockman asked if that includes all properties?

Mr. Stinner stated it will replace all cameras at the Municipal facility and then we can look to expand in the second step to include the parks and fields.

Mr. Sockman moved to commence internal financial control review of Borough of Jefferson Hills Volunteer Fire Companies with Schneider Downs & Co. Inc., seconded by Mrs. Ielase. 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:

Vickie Ielase YES

Mr. Montgomery YES

Mr. Reynolds NO

Mrs. Ruscitto YES

Mr. Sockman YES

Mrs. Steffey YES

President Bucy YES

Mr. Reynolds stated my concern about misappropriation of funds that this doesn’t go far enough.

1. Reports

Fire Chief

Nothing to report

EMS

Not present

Engineer

Nothing further to report

Consulting Engineer

Not present

Finance Officer/Treasurer

Nothing to report

Public Works Director

Nothing to report

Lt. King, Commander in Charge

Nothing to report

Mayor

Our Community Relations Coordinator Grace Duda and I are working in keeping the website up to date on vaccine locations. A number of pharmacies have them and to check borough website for details.

Wish Jan Reschenthaler the best in retirement.

Also thanked Dave Graffam for years of service on the Library Board.

Congratulated Bob Zirkle for completing the hazmat awareness class.

The Succup family for the 52 yards their nephew made for Tampa Bay.

Wanted to say she is disappointed Gill Hall was forced into a merger they didn’t want.

Manager

Nothing to report

Solicitor

Council did meet in Exec session on litigation and personnel matters.

Brief was filed in Commonwealth Court on the AUUE case. Just today UPMC requested an additional reply and are actively pursuing the appeal.

1. General Business

Mr. Montgomery stated:

I want to wish Vickie well and speedy recovery.

Also Mrs. Ruscitto a speedy recovery.

Mrs. Steffey stated:

Thanked Mr. Glister working with me source out PennDot contact for getting traffic study done on 885 and coal valley.

Mr. Sockman stated:

Mr. Volpe how’s equipment holding up. Mr. Volpe stated they are loaded and ready for the snow with just one breakdown.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated:

Expressed her gratitude to Jan Reschenthaler and Dave Graffam for years of service and dedication to our borough library.

Good luck to Mr. Volpe and his crew with the impending weather.

Also stated her disappointment that they joined the lawsuit.

Mr. Reynolds stated:

Apologized to Gill Hall organization and residents, we still don’t have a plan for you to have fire protection. Call just went off on Arnoni and could have been there, makes no sense.

Mrs. Bucy stated:

I have spent considerable time with Mr. Drager, who provided me with a lot of information. The Borough of Jefferson Hills has a 5.66 tax mileage, County 4.73 and School has 21.447. If we are to be equal to have good schools, sometimes we have to have a tax increase to have really good facilities. Since there is a dramatic difference from 5.66 and 21.447, there may have to be an increase sometime in the future. He said a ½ mil would general 463,000, just a little bit of information.

I also want to have the best fire protection in this borough. I felt when the people that were sitting in the mediation and heard Floyd Wise’s, DCED Mediator’s proposal, it made an excellent compromise. During the 6 months’ probation time that he suggested thus far, there were 162 calls that they could have been on. We have a right as Council to make sure their certifications are done, and we have a right to have access to the buildings.

I wish Vickie good luck being home bound until February 22nd. She recently had surgery and Mrs. Ruscitto also had surgery. We wish them a speedy recovery.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Bucy adjourned the meeting at 8:57 p.m. on motion by Mrs. Ruscitto seconded by Mr. Reynolds and carried unanimously.

John P. Stinner

Secretary/Borough Manager