

Borough of Jefferson Hills  
Agenda Meeting of Council  
June 9, 2021

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

4. Report from Borough Boards and Commissions

Nicole Blosl and Michelle Zacur gave an update for the Recreation Board community events for the past six weeks. First concert was held the end of May. It was nice even though the weather was not and went over well. The night markets have been a success. Ashley is going to extend them to the end of August, ending August 26<sup>th</sup>. Community Day was a great turn out, everyone seemed to be happy about it. Something to consider in the future is better lighting in the park for cleaning up afterwards. Final concert is scheduled for July 30<sup>th</sup>, Scenic Route will be playing beginning at 7:00 p.m. at Andrew Reilly Park. The block building at Gill Hall Park is coming along nicely. The high school students have been volunteering their time to paint the mural. We are hopeful for future events including a golf outing in October, a Fall Festival in October, a Holiday Festival in December and potentially a 5K in the spring. Our first two scholarships have been awarded to Christian Colosimo and Cassidy Como.

5. Borough Resident/Taxpayer Comments on Agenda Items

Leo Stanton, 3015 Walton Road, requesting a rough entry be repaired on the bridge entry. Located at the sharp bend on Walton, it is dangerous to pull in or pull out, you have to shut the engine off and listen. My son called the state, and they passed the buck to the Borough. Wanted the Borough's help to get that fixed and put up a hidden driveway sign.

Mrs. Bucy stated Mr. Volpe has already been working on another incident on Coal Valley and would like him to speak on this.

Mr. Volpe stated for us to put a sign on PennDOT road, we must ask their permission. They will come out and give us their permission and then we can get the sign and maintain it.

Mr. Stanton, thank you for cutting the weeds along there also.

Mr. Volpe stated about two years ago Council put the heat on PennDOT, and they did come out and we walked the whole road, had a whole list of things that needed done, but they have not done it. They did cut the weeds.

Joseph Stanton, 4013 Walton Road, stated when weather gets bad and rains really hard the creek bed, where there is no creek bed in front of his house, floods the driveway and comes in the basement. I called the state but did not get anywhere. There are also a couple places along the

road where it is caving in. I am here to see if you can reach out to PennDOT and help me get these items fixed.

Kevin Polick, 2030 Knight Road, Madam President and Council members, my family and I would like to express our appreciation of Council's majority approval of last month's agenda item to create/finance an interim full-time two-person shift crew for JHFR Floreffe station.

We did not expect how the impact and importance of that approval would be.

The afternoon lightning storm of June 30<sup>th</sup> heavily impacted our home. Initially, I thought the strike hit our house as I saw things falling to the ground as I looked out the front window. Somewhat relief came over me as I went outside and saw no initial structural damage knowing that my son was upstairs. Relief was quickly gone as my wife yells to me about electrical smoke odor coming from the basement. My eldest daughter smartly then called 911. The daughter who we just brought back from the hospital where the day before she had emergency surgery and I later learned of her jumping out of the chair from the enormous blast we heard. As the family begun to quickly evacuate the home and move away from the structure, the odor of gas was now noticeable in the front. During this quick moving event and shock, it was truly comforting hearing Floreffe's siren in the background knowing help was on the way allowing my continual concentrate on my family's safety.

As JHFR, JH Police and other fire departments continued to arrive at our home, I saw first-hand how blessed we are with these professionals. Luckily (but I know that's Standard practice for them), the gas company was called and quickly the gas was shutoff.

As investigation continues today, the timing and events that occurred that afternoon, the importance of the squad quickly getting there and shutting off the gas eliminated any future injuries and/or deaths as well as structural damage.

Again, my family thanks Council's approval for the fulltime shift crew, we thank JHFR and all the other first responders that came as well as the Allegheny County Fire Marshall.

Thank you and I hope this does not happen to anyone else.

Mrs. Steffey asked Mr. Polick, for those that do not know where your home is, would you mind elaborating a little more as to where your home is?

Mr. Polick stated, my home is on Knight Road, which is from Ridge going down towards Walton, the old farm on Knight. The house dates back to the 1780's. The gas line, that right now evidence shows, the strike hit the outside the gas line, hit the tracer line and went the quarter mile to the house and impacted the house on the inside. Today we also see that it also hit the right side hitting the house in two positions. The only reason we are still here is because the gas water tank took the huge impact of the strike and was destroyed by the strike. That is what saved the house and saved us.

Tracy Khalil, 5035 Walton Road, good evening members of Council, I am here to thank the members of Council Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Sockman, Mrs. Bucy, Mrs. Ielase, and Mrs. Steffey for adding the second shift crew at the Floreffe station to enhance the fire protection for the

residents of Jefferson Hills. We are better off as a community today than we were yesterday because of your vote to create a second shift crew.

I also wanted to voice my concern with Mrs. Ruscitto's vote of no, specifically because of her reason of not having enough information. In my 12 years as a member of Council I never used not having enough information as a reason to vote no. In fact, I don't recall any of my fellow Council members in those 12 years using that reason. Mrs. Ruscitto has been a member of Council for a year and a half. In that time, she has had an opportunity to educate herself and become knowledgeable in all aspects of Borough business. From the budget, to engineering, to police, and yes, fire protection. As a member of Council, you are afforded 10 days to research any item on the agenda to help educate yourself on the topic. The Council packets are typically ready by Friday afternoon. Members of Council then have five days to review the packet and prepare for the meeting. Speaking from experience, there were agenda items which I had no questions for. Others I had numerous questions. And in some cases, based on the discussion during the agenda meeting, I would have questions based on the discussion. From the agenda meeting is another five days to research further any item where one may have questions and then ask them at the voting meeting the following Monday.

While Mrs. Ruscitto did engage in the conversation at the Wednesday agenda meeting and appeared to be receptive to adding a second shift crew at the Floreffe station she again voted no using the reason she needed more information. If she truly needed more information, then it begs the question why she did not ask as many questions as she needed to be fully informed in either meeting.

In closing my hope is that Mrs. Ruscitto be prepared to vote on every agenda item in the future and to ask as many questions as needed to have the information, she requires to make an informed and educated vote.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated thank you Mr. Khalil, I would have been more appreciative if you would have come and talked about that to me personally. I would always speak to you, you know that. But there are certain pieces of information that I am not exactly privy to, sadly, but thank you for your time and thanks for coming.

Mr. Khalil stated I would certainly come at any time that you would like to meet, if you would like to express those questions at any time, I would meet with you.

6. Discussion to approve the monthly bills

Mr. Montgomery stated the Allison Park contracting payment is under the wrong account number. Mr. Drager stated he will correct that.

Mrs. Bucy stated she would like to discuss something in the next executive session regarding the conferences for the board members.

Mrs. Steffey stated for all the legal services charged on the monthly bill, I would like to see more of a detailed account of the charges.

Mr. Drager stated he created a spreadsheet template for legal breaking down the time and rate to keep it standard for them. We could request more information.

Mrs. Steffey stated it was in our packet when I first began showing what they were billing us for.

Mr. Reynolds stated maybe we can show some consistency between all employees and all contractors. If we are micromanaging legal fees, we should micromanage engineering and other items like fire hall and how they are spending their money. Many people have complained about how much money we spend on engineering fees when we have an engineer in house.

Mrs. Steffey stated we get the bills for Gateway already in our packets.

Mrs. Bucy stated Mr. Drager if we can have the legal fees in the same manner as engineering.

7. Discussion to approve the monthly payroll
8. Discussion to approve minutes of agenda meeting June 9, 2021
9. Discussion to approve minutes of regular meeting June 14, 2021
10. Discussion to adopt Resolution No. 26-2021, acknowledging the achievements of Lieutenant Kevin King who served as Officer-in-Charge during the absence of a Jefferson Hills Police Chief throughout the Chief selection process

Mrs. Bucy stated that presentation will take place on Monday.

11. Discussion to present Presentation of Council and Borough achievements from January 2020 - July 2021

Mrs. Bucy stated since I have been asked and have been working with Mr. Stinner, I will explain this. Someone had forwarded a letter to me stating that the Council has not accomplished too much during this time period. We went through the minutes and reports, and we will have a PowerPoint presentation outlining what we have done.

12. Discuss setting a public hearing date and time for the conditional use application at 115 Gill Hall Road

Mrs. Steffey asked for more of an explanation on this.

Mrs. Bucy stated it is a demolition and an addition for a gym at the old synagogue property on Gill Hall Road.

13. Discussion to authorize the purchase of two WatchGuard 4RE in-car dash cameras from WatchGuard Video for \$10,415.00 to be installed into recently ordered police interceptor utility vehicles as part of the upfit by Rally Specialist, Inc.

14. Discussion to approve Application for Payment No. 2 and Final from SHACOG for Swede Construction Corporation in the amount of \$18,797.50 for work completed on the CD 46 Andrew Reilly Memorial Park ADA Upgrades – Phase 2 Project, subject to the receipt of an invoice from SHACOG
15. Discussion to approve Application for Payment No. 2 and Final from SHACOG for Minniefield Demolition Services, LLC in the amount of \$3,810.00 for work completed on the CD 46 Jefferson Hills Demolition Project, subject to the receipt of an invoice from SHACOG
16. Discussion to approve Application for Payment No. 1 and Final from Jet Jack, Inc. in the amount of \$80,072.65 for work completed on the Joint Municipal SHACOG Sanitary Sewer Lining – Year 14 – Contract B Project, subject to the receipt of an invoice from SHACOG
17. Reports

Fire Chief:

Nothing further

EMS:

Not present

Engineer Glistner:

Mr. Glistner stated he has two additional items to add for Monday. As Council is aware, we awarded bids with SHACOG for the annual O&M work that we do for joint Municipal work through SHACOG. The CCTV contract was awarded in April this year and in May of this year we awarded the manhole-to-manhole lining contract. The process has continued, since then we notified SHACOG that we are in concurrence with the bid. The final step before they can release the contracts to the contractors is to enter into an administrative agreement with all the Municipalities that are participating in that contract. There are two agreements that I will add to your packets that go out Friday. It is the standard administrative agreement that we get every year for these contracts that discusses cost sharing standard contracts. This just came in after packets were prepared last week so we will get it added on Monday.

Mrs. Steffey stated I just have a comment on the Engineer's report. Item two on Beedle Park. I wanted to bring to everyone on Council's attention that the new concession stand that was put up there, that within 48 hours of being accessible to whomever had a key. I was sent pictures of tobacco being put into the cooler that was meant for only premade foods and store-bought drinks. We have not even had our second visit from Allegheny County. It does state in here there will be a follow-up inspection while in use. This was a warning to those that are using the concession stand, they will be back to do a second inspection while in use. I would hate for something to be shut down before we even have it up and running within a year's time. That is a health code violation.

Mr. Reynolds stated just so everyone knows that was directed towards me. The reason there was tobacco in there, my baseball team was up there, and we got a bad storm in between the double header. One started at 3:00 p.m. and the other at 5:30 p.m. It got washed out, half the Borough had flooding issues. There were many items that I had to put in storage that people left under the pavilion and the dugouts. I do not throw anybody's property away. I put chairs in the storage shed, other food that was placed in the refrigerator. The rainstorm came on Sunday, no one else had access to it, I thought it was safe. I thought it would be better to put the tobacco in there instead of on the table where some kid could of came into the park and take the tobacco. If by me putting the tobacco in a spot where a child could not have gotten it was wrong, then I apologize.

Mrs. Steffey stated a lot of people put a lot of work and time into that facility and to me, that is a big deal. I would hate to see something be shut down. To be honest, I did not have any proof whether it was you or anyone else, I did not even know who had the key at that time. That is why I was making a general blanket statement. So, thank you for admitting to it.

Consulting Engineer:

Nothing further.

Finance Officer/Treasurer:

Nothing further.

Public Works Director:

Nothing further.

Chief Dziezgowski:

My report will be in the packet for Friday.

Mayor Cmar:

Welcomed the new Police Chief to our Borough and I am looking forward to working with him. We did discuss speeding on 885 and we are working on that.

I met with Ashley on the Recreation Board about upcoming events.

Borough Manager:

My report will be in packet on Friday.

Solicitor:

Council did meet prior to meeting for executive session for personal and litigation matters.

18. General Business

Mr. Reynolds stated:

My sincere condolences to the Petrovitch family. Paul was a great guy, rest in peace, we lost a valuable member.

Mrs. Ielase stated:

The library's summer reading program continues through July with special programs featuring a magician and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. We have had 102 kids from Pre-K through fourth grade attend three programs.

Adults can win a \$50 visa gift card by participating in the Read Around the World Challenge. Pick up your reading passport at the library, and if you read a book set in or written by someone on each continent by the end of August you will be entered into drawing for the gift card.

The Friends of the Library will host a book sale July 16-18. Do nations can be dropped off July 12<sup>th</sup> and July 13<sup>th</sup> during library hours.

The library continues to add in-person programs for children and adults. Visit [www.jeffersonhillslibrary.org](http://www.jeffersonhillslibrary.org) for a full schedule of events.

The library will be working with Plus Public to develop a new logo and branding identity and to do a complete redesign of the library website to make it easy to navigate and accessible. Plus Public will hold two brainstorming and development sessions and I think we would benefit from having a few Council members participate. If you would like to volunteer or need more information, please email her at [farabaughd@einetwork.net](mailto:farabaughd@einetwork.net).

The library started a monthly e-newsletter highlighting our events and services. If you would like to be added to the list, email [farabaughd@einetwork.net](mailto:farabaughd@einetwork.net).

Mrs. Steffey stated:

Something to bring to our new Chief's attention, I have received comments from some residents. I met with Mr. Snodgrass, Mr. Stinner, and Mr. Reis at the old high school. On top of that, I have gotten some complaints that this seems to be the new hangout spot late at night, if we could have extra patrol up there it would be appreciated.

Mr. Volpe, are there any update on the Park Street issue? Mr. Volpe stated they will be going down tomorrow; they could not find that address.

On a bigger scale, Mr. Glistler and Mr. Volpe, when we get big storms like we are having right now, on Old Clairton Road, when the wind blows hard, our power goes out for hours. With West Penn Power being the provider, how do we go about contacting them and coming out and looking at the entire gride and transformers? Can we start this process? I would be happy to help with that if you could give me some directions.

Mr. Glistler stated we have a new contact we can reach out to and get direction.

Mr. Montgomery stated:

Recap of the SHACOG meeting as follows:

- Police Chiefs Advisory Committee:
  1. Met via zoom.
  2. Driver training started.
  3. CIRT (Cooperative Incident Response Team) had one call out in May.
  4. CIT (Cooperative Investigation Team) had no call outs.
  5. ART (Accidental Reconstruction Team) had no call outs.
- Fire Chiefs Met
  1. Working on major training event.
- Joint Civil Service Police test is August 7, 2021. Deadline was July 2, 2021. Physicals will be in the a.m. and written test in the p.m. at Castle Shannon Fire Department. They did not have many applicants, which seems to be the trend these days. Not too many people want to be police officers.
- Last option exercised with Cargill salt contract.
  1. Estimates were due June 24, 2021, Borough's estimate is in.
  2. Price will remain \$78.82 per ton.
- Fall commodities to be bid.
- Act 152 Demolition had 70 applications through SHACOG.
  1. Awards end of July.
- CDBG 46 one project complete, eight in progress.
- CDBG 47 award letters issued.
- CDBC 46 projects are complete. Reilly Park ADA Upgrade No. 2 and Demolitions all paid in full due to invoices being less than project estimates.



- Attended the ALOM conference with Mrs. Bucy, Mrs. Ielase and Mr. Stinner. Four of the major items they covered were:
  1. Maximizing use of stimulus dollars
  2. Panel with county Council members
  3. Best Practices for Managing Pension funds
    - a. Moderated by Randall Rhodes of Rhodes Law Group. Pleasant Hills pension board solicitor. I went to the Pleasant Hill Pension board meeting and asked Mr. Stinner to join me since he works with it more. It took them 15 years to get where they are 100% funded. It is a large amount of money that the Borough puts into this. We have put \$577,200 into it this year. If we can get a better return, it would be better for the employees and the taxpayers. We need to work towards Pleasant Hills model of Pension.
    - b. Mrs. Bucy made an impromptu speech about recruiting fire fighters that was very well received.
- We did get an additional \$7,000.00 from PennDOT for winter season. I hope the Allegheny County follows suit.

Mr. Sockman stated:

Our grandson attends the Gill Hall summer camp. He is one that does not usually get excited over too much, but when he comes back to our house after lunch, he is very excited about all the things that they are doing and are going to do. I thank Council for giving the kids this opportunity.

Mr. Reynolds made a statement about micromanaging. Every meeting I come to, I see more and more of the process of trying to micromanage. That is not the function of this Council. The function of this Council is to work with the department heads, Mr. Stinner, Mr. Drager, Mr. Volpe, and Mr. Glistner, they are the ones that should make the recommendations and bring them to us. We either approve or disapprove them. We cannot micromanage. We are in the business of trying to conduct meetings and conduct business that will let this Borough go forward.

Prior to the meeting I had a conversation with Mr. Baldwin, our videographer, and he lost his father yesterday and our condolences are for you and your family.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated:

I would also like to extend Mr. Baldwin my personal sympathy to you and your family.

Welcome Chief, I am pleased and proud that you are here.

Mr. Khalil, I appreciate you coming up here and sharing your ideas. As you very well know, before I ran for Council, I did that quite frequently myself. I appreciate the fact that you are able to do that as any resident is. What I do not appreciate is the fact that you stated I do not do my research or homework because I do. Sometimes there are certain things that other people have talked about that I may not have all the intricacies of the situation. Anyone that contacts me, calls me, emails me, I always get back to them in a relatively quick fashion. It is important to me; I have a fiduciary duty to these residents. As a matter of fact, I had the same complaints as Mrs. Steffey regarding the high school and I would appreciate it if we could patrol the area a little more for the safety of the residents.

Mr. Stinner there is a person from Wall I would like to follow up with you later who has contacted Mr. Reis and Mr. Sesky about development that has happened around there.

To sum up I do do my homework I am very condescend of the fact that I have a big responsibility being up here.

Mrs. Bucy stated:

I also attended the conference for ALOM June 17-19<sup>th</sup> and one of the things I am now going to be a part of is an organization called Connect, which is out University of Pittsburgh. They are doing graduate studies through the university of merging firehalls throughout the Pittsburgh area. Currently in the Pittsburgh Municipalities, we have more fire equipment then they have in New York City because we have so many fire departments. The first meeting is on July 28<sup>th</sup>. It is such a huge problem especially in southwestern Pennsylvania that they have set up a task force to deal with this.

I am currently in classes with Mrs. Steffey. We just finished today our hazmat aux, which I have to say was absolutely grueling in the heat of the day with that turnout gear on. We are proceeding on Mod 4 tomorrow. I am the oldest living person to have gone through the Allegheny Fire Academy. Training there has been excellent. Hopefully by a week from Friday we will have gone through the exterior work and will be experienced in our burn.

I would like to address the money of the shift crew. Mr. Polick, I am happy you are content and see the validity of the shift crew. I did not talk to you personally, but I understand you were outside on your phone, and you could hear the sirens of the trucks already coming up your street, is that correct? I looked up the population of Jefferson Hills and I only had a 2018 population and I had 11,148 people in 2018. Currently, we are still paying our paid shift crew \$12.00 an hour for a four man shift crew at two different stations, being the 885 station and the Floreffe station, it is costing our community \$576.00 a day. I added up the days from June 14<sup>th</sup>, when we acknowledged that we wanted to put the second shift crew, too the end of year. For June, July, August, September, October and December, there are 200 days. The costs per day, which is \$576.00 a day times 200 is \$115,200.00 for that second shift crew. I divided the \$115,200.00 by the population, which was 11,148, and I got \$10.33. I took the \$10.33 and divided it by 200 days and it came out to \$.51 per day per person for a four man shift crew until the end of the year. \$.51 a day would not buy you a candy bar. I am so glad they were able to assist you. Nobody expects lightening to strike your home and we have some bizarre weather. I am appreciative that you came and spoke to us about it because I am glad to know this investment is served well.

Mr. Reynolds asked Mrs. Bucy are you 100% certain on those numbers? If you do four shift crew times \$12.00, you are paying \$48.00 an hour to have the crew. If you multiply that by 24, that comes out to \$1,152.00 because they are 24 hours a day. It is \$1,152.00 per day not \$576.00.

Mrs. Bucy stated I will double check my math before Monday.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Bucy at 7:53 p.m. adjourned the meeting on motion by Mrs. Ruscitto, seconded by Mr. Sockman, and carried unanimously.

*Executive Session: Personnel, Lawfully Privileged/Confidential, Public Safety Preparedness, Litigation (Jefferson Estates Homeowners Association v. Zokaites Properties et al., Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Docket No. GD-17-011526; Peters Creek Sanitary Authority, et al. v. Clairton Municipal Authority, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, GD-17-017711; AUUE, Inc. v. Borough of Jefferson Hills Zoning Hearing Board, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County Appeal No. 871CD 2020, SA-19-000748; PICCO Superfund site- potential litigation involving WESA and Ashland.*

John P. Stinner  
Secretary/Borough Manager