

The agenda meeting of Council was called to order by President Steffey at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Centers, 925 Old Clairton Road. Following Pledge of Allegiance, Council Members Bucy, Lynch, Montgomery, Reynolds, Mrs. Ruscitto (via Zoom), Vice President Budd, President Steffey, and Mayor McCaffrey answered to roll call. Mayor McCaffrey, Borough Manager Stinner (via Zoom), Finance Officer Drager, Solicitor Gabriel, Borough Engineer Glister, Public Works Director Volpe, Police Chief Dziezgowski were also present. Mr. Minsterman was absent.

Mrs. Steffey stated at this time, we're going to make a change in the agenda. We're going to move to Agenda Item number 10, motion to present proclamation to Carrie Fascetti, Christina Hansen, and Girl Scout Troop 16091 for their efforts to improve energy efficiency at the GBU. Girls, if you'd like to come up front, please?

**Presentation of proclamation to Carrie Fascetti, Christina Hansen and Girl Scout Troop 16091 for their efforts to improve energy efficiency at the GBU**

*WHEREAS*, sustainability and energy conservation are the responsibilities of all Americans; and

*WHEREAS*, sustainability and energy conservation are not only environmental challenges, but present economic challenges as well; and

*WHEREAS*, the Borough of Jefferson Hills is no different than any other community, and has to prioritize sustainability and conservation to prevent pollution, reduce the amount of energy it uses, and educate its residents on sustainable best practices; and

*WHEREAS*, the Girl Scouts of America are **committed to environmental stewardship and promoting girls' involvement in science, technology, engineering, and math**; and

*WHEREAS*, the Girl Scouts of America have created the "Get Moving" journey, which helps girls understand where they fit in with using their energy to save and protect the Earth's energy; and

*WHEREAS*, Girl Scout Troop #16091 completed an audit of the Gill Hall Community Center and presented a checklist to the Borough for the "Take Action" portion of the project that "encourages girls to develop a project that is sustainable;" and

*WHEREAS*, because of their efforts, the Borough of Jefferson Hills implemented the Scouts' recommendations for the Gill Hall Community Center; and

*NOW THEREFORE*, I, Carrie McCaffrey, Mayor of the Borough of Jefferson Hills, do hereby proclaim our support for the efforts of Girl Scout Troop #16091, particularly, Giana Fascetti, Kaitlyn Hansen, Ava Lobaugh, and Marissa Trklja; and

*IN WITNESS WHEREOF*, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Borough of Jefferson Hills to be affixed this 11th day of April 2022 in recognition of their efforts in the community.

BOROUGH RESIDENT/TAXPAYER COMMENTS

Ned Trbovich Jr., 335 Joan of Arc Court, I live in Jefferson Ridge Plan, I use Peters Creek Road a lot and was wondering if there is a plan from Council to improve that road. I know paving the entire road in one year would be difficult and too costly, but after hearing the planned paving list for this year I was disappointed as Peters Creek Road is in much worse shape than the roads mentioned. Pothole repairs are not enough I believe and while complete reconstruction would be nice I know it is costly so even an overlay of a portion each year would be helpful. Thank you for your time and all your efforts I look forward to hearing your plan.

Mrs. Steffey asked Mr. Glister if there is any plan on the books for Peters Creek Road.

Mr. Glister stated not at this moment. Public Works, I think it was two or three years ago, we seal-coated the road, which is tar chipping it, and part of the issues we have down there is with during heavy rain events and stuff, the creek actually comes up and tears off portions of the road and damages it on a regular basis. But Mike and I can talk about it again and revisit that.

Jan Cmar, 918 Old Hickory Lane, as a former member of Council and a former mayor, I am asking our Council to please reinstate the run cards for the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company. To terminate a 70-year-old institution is an insult to the people who built this company and volunteered their time throughout the years. It should never have come to this point – if the fire company was lacking in performance, the Council should have provided a helping hand rather than a government takeover.

Should Council go ahead with their plans to permanently decertify GHVFC and build a new fire station, all we will have is a paid fire department, more congestion at Waterman Road – Gill Hall Road intersection, and millions more in Debt Service. Realizing that we live in the 20's and that times have changed, I shudder to think of how the brave men and women who provided exemplary service to the community, at their own time and expense, would feel.

Construction of a new fire station would be at the expense of a Recreation Center for our community because of scarce resources in an ever-changing world. A recreation center was a hot topic just several years ago - until the fire service delivery model effectively trumped discussion of this important community project.

Let's put politics aside and instead employ common sense - let's put the taxpayers and citizens first rather than the special interests of the Council. The 885 and Floreffe Fire Companies were given a helping hand when in need – the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company should be afforded the same opportunity.

Diane Peconi, 100 Spinghouse Drive, good evening, I am a resident of Jefferson Hills. I will not be able to attend the meeting tonight, but I will be joining virtually on Facebook. Thank

you so much for making that an option so residents can join from anywhere! (I guess technology can be great sometimes.)

I had some questions for clarification about agenda items 31-35. What is the purpose of reactivating to then decertify a volunteer fire company? I know there is talk about developing the land actually behind my neighborhood for a potential new fire station. Prior to and development, what environmental impact studies will or have been taken and when will those results be made public?

How will a committee be formed and oversee safe building if a new department is constructed? The neighborhood behind the proposed building already has a known history of runoff concern from rain, especially heavy rain, the development puts them at a higher risk for additional runoff.

Was a cost-benefit analysis done to compare refurbishing the old Gill Hall site to the new one?

What reaction time for the community and/or public comment period is available?

Are there concerns about proximity to an elementary school and emergency vehicles leaving in a rush?

What will this do for taxes in a community that just build a new high school?

Most importantly, why is a new site being discussed when there is an existing structure that would work for the community?

I would appreciate any follow-up you can provide. Thank you for all that you do! Have a great night.

Mrs. Steffey stated I'm not going to go into answering a lot of these, but I can tell that there's maybe a little bit of miscommunication or confusion. So, I definitely want to clear that up for Ms. Peconi if she's watching. The purpose for the Agenda Items when she asked the purpose of reactivating to then decertifying a volunteer fire company. Those agenda items are just to give Council the opportunity to vote whether they intend to recertify or keep the Gill Hall independent, or whether to decertify. So, it's not that we're actually voting all to recertify and then voting to decertify. That's the choice of Council and that's how it's lined up on the agenda.

The other couple questions, we have established a Public Safety Committee. And a lot of those tests and research analysis that you've mentioned in here, cost benefit analysis for an old site and for a new site will be discussed in our Public Safety Committee. At this point in time, the discussion of a new substation is just in the very nuanced stages, infancy stages. That's why the Public Safety Committee was formed. The last question that I can answer and then I will personally respond to Ms. Peconi and answer all of these questions. But, a lot of these have been answered in our previous meetings as well. And we typically don't respond to the taxpayer comments. I will do this in email so that you have answers. Most importantly, why is the new site being discussed when there is an existing structure that would work for the community? The existing Gill Hall

building is owned by Gill Hall. So, the Borough has no recourse to take in order to make decisions on behalf of that building, whether it needs updates or upgrades, that would be for Gill Hall solely to decide since they are the owners of the building. And that's the one question I knew the answer to right off the bat. The rest of the ones, I will be happy to respond to you and make sure that we have everything cleared up just for your information purposes.

Mr. Reynolds stated maybe for that, maybe elaborate, too, that like we don't own Floreffe, and we don't own 885 either. We don't own any of the fire halls. Have we on occasion gone through and paid for exhaust systems and upgrades and so forth like that to help the volunteer fire departments out or the paid crew we have?

Mary Kathleen Reynolds, 1313 Collins Avenue, as a lifelong resident I have dedicated much of my time to the betterment of our community. For over a decade I held a seat as a member of Council. In that time, I always voted for equal and fair treatment of everyone in our Borough.

It pains me to see how after 70 years of service the treatment that Gill Hall VFC has received. There is nothing fair about the way that they have been treated over recent years. We have allowed the influence and the merger agenda of a couple individuals to divide our community. Gill Hall VFC should never have been deactivated in the first place and it would only be proper to re-activate them as soon as possible. When 885 VFC needed help they got it. When Floreffe VFC needed help they got it. What did Gill Hall VFC receive? A Council pushed takeover.

Please remember that when Gill Hall VFC was shut down, they had a much stronger and more trained membership than Floreffe VFC. Where is the fairness in that?

Throughout the process, it seems that the Gill Hall residents have been forgotten. Over the past couple years, they have not received the same quality of fire protection for their families as other areas of the Borough have received for their families. Any talk of building another firehall in the Gill Hall area will take time and continue to put these residents in harms way. Pleasant Hills and Broughton should not be straddled with the primary burden of protecting our residents in our most populated area. They should be thanked and supported by our Borough for their assistance while our childish battle continues.

Our residents should ask why the portion of their tax dollars dedicated to fire protection was allocated to other parts of the community while they received inadequate protection. The Gill Hall residents should at the very least receive a refund for that portion.

I applaud the members of Gill Hall VFC for their continued battle for their independence. Please keep up the hard work, your community needs you. Thank you.

Pete Doel, 420 Old Clairton Road, I think we all know how tonight is going to end. I believe everyone has their marching orders and tonight's votes will be five to two against Gill Hall on all motions. I firmly believe this doesn't have anything to do with their performance over their 70 years of service and everything to do with the bad blood between them and the remaining fire departments. Despite being asked multiple times, not a single member of Council has ever been willing to pull the data to determine if the shutdown of Gill Hall was justified or if they were unable to serve the Borough. I believe JHFR wants the Gill Hall building and equipment but not

the volunteers and that everything that's led up to this moment has been very calculated decisions and actions by JHFR and Council to permanently shut down Gill Hall.

For instance, the lawsuit by JFR and EMS. A condition of Gill Hall's reopening was shared access to building and equipment. The lawsuit prevents that from happening. You've put them in a no-win situation. I know at one time, Council voted to take Gill Hall by eminent domain. I have a message from President Steffey where she informed me that JHFR asked Council to build them a new department and she had to break the news to them that the Borough does not have the funds to do so.

You've talked about procedure and who would be in charge with different fire departments within the Borough? You use this against Gill Hall, yet there had been procedures in place for decades. I'm not aware of a single issue following these procedures over the years. And while you use this as a reason to keep Gill Hall closed, has a single member of Council urged JHFR ever reached out to Gill Hall to discuss these procedures or how this would work? Council lied to us about having 885 and Floreffe certifications and not Gill Hall's. They lied to us about the run card data being deleted and unrecoverable. They lied to us that it would take four months to restore Gill Hall as 179. They lied to us that they need to reopen as 180-3 to get the run card set up the way they'd like. All of these are proven lies, even this motion tonight to close Gill Hall permanently. Not that they would, but there's no reason they couldn't vote on the motion next month to reopen Gill Hall. This is yet another attempt by Council to mislead our residents. Because no one in Council wanted to pull the response time data, I decided to do it myself. When I mentioned an example where 885 and Floreffe's times were poor not due to their abilities but due to the distance their stations are from the emergency, we were told by Justin Allan that the county's data is wrong, that they were in store mode, so their times are not accurate. Last week, Councilwoman Budd also stated this data was wrong. I found another right to know asking the county how these times are populated. The county responded. First of all, the County 911 has hundreds of operators on at any given time. This is an essential service. You will not receive a busy signal or be placed on hold when you call. Storm mode only affects dispatch times as they may need to prioritize emergencies. If they get a call for a house fire and a call for a downed tree, they will prioritize the fire and dispatch units to that emergency first. Every time listed on the reports are still 100% accurate. You may see a slight gap between when a call comes in and when a unit is dispatched, but those timestamps are still 100% true, as are the times that show when a unit is enroute, arrives on scene, et cetera. The county confirmed that what our Assistant Chief, Justin Allan, is telling the residents is 100% false. People may wonder why Council and JHFR are fighting so hard to keep Gill Hall closed. As of the middle of 2021, our Borough has paid out over \$2.2 million in less than four years' time to 885 and Floreffe. In that same time period, they paid Gill Hall \$65,000. And now we're looking into spending upwards of 3 to 5 million to build these guys a new department a mile from Gill Hall. It's all about the money, as long as they can keep Gill Hall closed to get every penny the Borough pays out. And right now, we're in a situation where they have us over a barrel. They've made it clear they will not be questioned on their procedures or how they spend their money. They come here month after month demanding more money. We give it to them without any checks or balances. We really have no choice.

Brian Hutson, 420 Old Clairton Road, good evening. I just wanted to make some clarifications from some statements that was from the agenda meeting. With Gill Hall's equipment, with the exception of the truck that's involved in the litigation, the rest of our vehicles are in good

working order and have been inspected. Our membership, we still continue to get new members from time to time. They are still continuing with training, with drills, and they're also continuing their education to obtain additional certifications. They're doing this only because they belong to companies outside of the Borough.

Regarding mergers, the comment was made other Boroughs have merged their fire departments. While it may have been good for them, Gill Hall's position is and always have been, we are not opposed, we never have been opposed to Floreffe and 885 merging. If that is what's best for them, we wish them the best. We really do hope they succeed. They need to.

At this time, Gill Hall feels that it can currently best serve the residents of the Gill Hall corridor and the Borough of Jefferson Hills as an independent fire company. With that said, we also realized that maybe five to 10 years down the road, after that merger is completed, after looking at it, it may be beneficial for Gill Hall to join, and we would explore that at that time.

Karen, regarding your comments about giving access to Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company, this is not new. I have said this before. Until the lawsuit is resolved, nobody gets access to that hall, period. Once the lawsuit has been resolved, we would address it at that time. There are certain circumstances where certain people would be denied access to that fire hall because of past personnel issues. I'm not going to go into it at this meeting. But the vast majority of people, once that lawsuit has been settled, would have access to our building. That is not new. It should not be new to you because we have said that time and time and time again for the last four years.

Now, Ms. Steffey, you made the comment where we excluded you. If that's how you felt, that was not intended that way. I did talk to Calvin. The reason why it was sent to the two people in addition to the solicitor as it was, there was a problem with the email address we had for the solicitor. The email kept being kicked back. So, we felt if we sent it to other people in Council, it would get to you. It was not to exclude anybody. If that's how you interpreted it, again, that's not what our intentions were. We did not do that to exclude anybody. We just wanted to make sure that it got to somebody who could get it to the Solicitor. That's all there was. It was no more than that. So, if it was perceived otherwise, it was not our intention.

Ms. Budd, you made mention of the mediation. When the mediation first started, the merge did come up as a topic. It was discussed in detail, and it was agreed upon that that was a subject that would not be agreed upon at that time. And that was put aside, and we continued on with the mediation. There were a lot of other topics that we did agree upon, like working together, drilling together, and other things. And you also mentioned, you brought up Chief Sohyda. He was not part of that mediation. That study that you're referring to was done long before that study ever happened. He was not part of that.

John Thatcher, 604 Gill Hall Road, good evening. I'm here as the President of the new Jefferson Hills Fire and Rescue. And as a past member, the Fire Captain, Vice President of Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company, past President of JFR EMS, and as a lifelong member of Gill Hall. When the fire department task force was organized, I resigned from Gill Hall to show impartiality. So, I have a pretty good understanding and background of everything going on with these fire department issues. First thing I want to say is this stuff of challenging my response time has got to stop. It's hard enough to get volunteers as is in this organization, let alone try to poke fun of them.

They should be thanked for getting up at 4:00 o'clock in the morning and putting out those house fires. They do it for nothing. It needs to stop.

I also want to share my views about the consolidation and show my support for a yes vote on Agenda Item 35. My first point is that the consolidation is not about the name of the deed on any one fire department. It's not about what station it is to respond to calls. Consolidation is not about how pretty the flagpole is at anybody's station, or how many sets of turnout gear you're hanging up there. It's not about the World War II plaques or the name of their charter. This consolidation is about people. It's about the volunteer firefighters and the people that they serve. It's about the line officers who have the appropriate training to run command at every emergency. This consolidation is about having an ample roster of volunteer firefighters that have full Firefighter I certifications to rescue your family when your house catches on fire. It's about having members that are certified to cut somebody out of a burning car. It's about having firefighters to provide medical assist when your husband or your wife, your son falls down the stairs or your grandpa has a heart attack.

This consolidation is about the efficient use of Borough tax dollars to make sure the funds are being used appropriately for buying firetrucks and turnout gear and not being spent on this crazy litigation between the fire departments. This consolidation is about public safety and the volunteers that support it. Vote for yes on Agenda Item 35 and move this consolidation forward, so we can have a well-trained crew throughout the entire Borough.

Furthermore, this consolidation has been in the works for over 20 years. Longtime members of our community started this process back in the late 1990s, with Mary Larcinese as mayor. She supported it. At the time, firefighters such as Mickey Plavchak Scott Deutsch, Alvin Henderson, Tim Yavoich, Mike Persichetti, were all instrumental in getting this old Jefferson Fire and Rescue and EMS established. Eric Rossi, another resident of the Borough, prepared the articles of incorporation, and they were dated October 17th, 2000, almost 22 years ago.

The arguments we've heard here at all these public meetings for over the last several years even go back into 2005 and 2010. Twenty-two years ago, JHFR was incorporated for the purpose of, this is quote, "protection of life and property from all hazards relating to fire rescue and emergency medicine." It was also formed to maintain a spirit of cooperation and friendship among the people of all the member organizations, the elected officials, employees, and residents of the Borough Jefferson. Later in history, Mayor Mike Green also supported the consolidation. However, none of those Council members at the time wanted to threaten to shut down of underperforming fire companies and make all this happen. But then in 2017, the Nick Sohyda report came out and put the proper light on all this and the fire department task force was created.

The point is, the members of Council here tonight, you're not the first elected officials to grapple with these difficult issues. The task force also took on these issues. And the Jefferson 885 and the Floreffe Volunteer Fire Departments realized everybody needed to consolidate and agreed to dissolve their assets and donate them to the new JHFR. Gill Hall still refuses to cooperate, and we still don't know why. All they say is they want to remain independent and receive half of the public funds dedicated to the fire service. They couldn't even give a reason to the judge in the lawsuit, why they didn't want to consolidate. They've been saying this for almost four years now. It's getting old.

I also asked the public to consider all the hard work our volunteers have performed to create JHFR. We are now in our fourth year of operation. We have our nonprofit status, and we have formal recognition.

Mr. Reynolds asked Mr. Thatcher, when you refer to this training, when your JHFR firemen go through and receive their Firefighter I training, is their Firefighter I training any different than the Firefighter I training that the Gill Hall members would be receiving?

Mr. Thatcher stated Mr. Reynolds, with all due respect, I'm not obligated to answer any of your questions.

Mr. Reynolds stated second, I'd like to comment. And you don't have to answer the question. When this Sohyda report came up a couple of different times tonight, and has come up before in the past, what the residents need to know in the context that this Sohyda report is being referred to is 100% false and misleading. This Sohyda report, when the DCED does this, they do not come into a community and tell you how to run your fire service. What you have to do is when you apply for them to come in and take a look at it, you fill on a scope of service and a directive. And in that directive, that directive tells them you lead them on the path in what you want to hear. So, in this case here, it was how to merge the fire departments. They came in, they did the study and said, if you're going to merge them, then this is how to do it. It was not designed from the DCED to come in here and say that the merger is better than allowing somebody to stay independent. So, in the context that this thing keeps getting referred to is 100% a lie for the residents. I think the residents need to understand that. If you got any questions, you could call to the DCED, they will be the first ones to tell you, they will not get involved in big government and come into a community and say, this is how you have to run it, this would be best. They take the community's wishes and what they're inquiring on, how they would see it in the future. And then they will do the study to tell you, here's the map, here's the road. It's not the Sohyda telling you, this is what we have to do. I wish we would stop referring to it and trying to lie, because it's almost an absolute lie to the residents when you're trying to mislead them into saying that the DCED recommended this.

Mrs. Steffey stated either way, it's a moot point because upside, downside, right, left, either way, Gill Hall has refused to merge.

Mr. Reynolds stated but the residents need to understand, when we're using it in the context to say that a specialist came in and told us that the merger was the best. That is 100% not the case. It was Council at that point in time. And you even have a lady over there sitting that would tell you that the directive for it was to tell us how to accomplish this, not if we should go down that path. So that is 100% misleading and I've heard it until I'm blue in the face and for residents, call the DCED. They'll tell you the truth.

Mr. Thatcher stated briefly, I'll make one more statement just to finish my thought.

Mrs. Steffey stated I'm sorry, but you are past your four minutes.



Bob Gulla, 1301 Collins Avenue, at the agenda meeting, I brought up about fracking in the Borough. I'm wondering if indeed there is going to be fracking in this Borough. And if so, will the residents of this Borough be notified of where the fracking is going to be taking place?

Mrs. Steffey stated so far, the only knowledge that we have is of that Sarah Well-Pad in Union Township, which is across behind the Sunoco Station there. So, it's not in the Borough, but we do acknowledge that residents have been asking about lighting concern, noise pollution, things of that nature. And we are currently in talks with EQT. And also, we have a representative coming to our Environmental Advisory Committee on April 27th. I think I mentioned that to you at our agenda meeting that that's open to the public. So, we will also have, I believe a tour is going to be set up to tour the well-pad for residents and for Council as well. That's going to be provided by EQT so that they can answer any questions and concerns for anyone that attends that tour. And then also, on the other end of the situation is going to be, I'm not sure of the name. Councilwoman Ruscitto, can you please mention the name of Ms. Marcucci's Environmental Integrity.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated Environmental Integrity Program.

Mrs. Steffey stated she will be at our Environmental Advisory Committee on the 27th to also answer questions for our residents.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated the only thing that I would like to say to Mr. Gulla is, it's all well and good that EQT wants to allow us now to take a look at things and scope things out. If they were on the up and up, I just feel that that would have been done a long time ago, when they would have asked us to look at those facilities and such. That's the only thing I have to say, thank you.

Mr. Reynolds asked how long ago was it that we received formal notification? I know we were notified twice. How long ago?

Mr. Glister stated it was November of 2021. Are you talking about for the Sarah Well-Pad?

Mr. Reynolds stated I live in that area and I can tell you, a lot of the residents are concerned because as the crow flies, it may be in Union Township, but it is in their backyard, and they're going to have to live with the pollution, whether it be sound, noise, light contaminants or trucks that go there, so forth like that. They're going to have to deal with the long-term effects of this. And a big concern of mine also is that, Bobby, I think what a lot of people keep forgetting is, if a crow flies from Pumpkin Center, where that Sarah Well-Pad is and heads towards Beedle Park, very close proximity. And actually, if you take a look at if a crow flies from that Sarah Well-Pad to the individuals that are along the Gill Hall corridor that's in Patriot Pointe and so forth like that. Take the hills and the bumps out of the way and it's very close.

Mrs. Steffey stated Mr. Gulla, I would urge any resident that has any questions whatsoever to attend the Environmental Advisory Committee on April 27th. and then we'll also be advertising when the tour will be set up for the well-pad.

AGENDA ITEMS:

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

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

Mr. Lynch moved to approve minutes of agenda meeting March 9, 2022, seconded by Mrs. Budd and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Budd moved to approve minutes of regular meeting March 14, 2022, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve minutes of special meeting March 28, 2022, seconded by Mr. Lynch and carried unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 10 already completed.

Mrs. Budd moved to appoint Tom Dugan to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, seconded by Mr. Lynch and carried unanimously.

Mr. Reynolds stated there's, what, eight of the Comprehensive Steering Committee? How many does this take us up to? Because I know we appointed a bunch before. I mean, some of those that were appointed were over a year ago, they may or may still not have interest. I've just like to say we're going to have 20 on these eight so that they know to keep applying or not.

Mrs. Steffey stated adding all of these tonight, it would take us up to a total of 13, but we did receive one resignation this evening, so that would take us down to 12. The resignation will be put on the agenda for next month.

Mr. Reynolds asked how many do you think we're going to go to?

Mrs. Steffey stated when we spoke to Ms. Easton, our new planner, she had recommended that we get to about 15 to 18.

Mr. Reynold stated just for everybody out there they asked that we get the churches involved, other organizations, and so forth. Is that on top of that so if anybody out there is listening.

Mrs. Steffey stated the Steering Committee would collaborate with Ms. Easton, and they would open up and hold a get-to-know type of ordeal, socials, I would say. And that way, you can get the other residents involved such as your churches and any other organizations that would like to have interest in.

Mrs. Ruscitto asked it would just be an informal meeting?

Mrs. Steffey replied yes.

Mr. Montgomery moved to appoint Floyd Hughes to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, seconded by Mrs. Ruscitto and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Budd moved to appoint Christopher Little to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, seconded by Mrs. Bucy and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Budd moved to appoint Jason Hrebik to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, seconded by Mrs. Bucy and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Bucy moved to appoint Mike Viola to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, seconded by Mr. Lynch and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Bucy moved to appoint Howard Riley to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, seconded by Mrs. Budd and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to appoint Judith A. Kaufmann to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, seconded by Mrs. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Bucy moved appoint Brian D. Brodeur, Esq. to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, seconded by Mr. Lynch and carried unanimously

Mrs. Budd moved to appoint Blaine Allen to the Borough of Jefferson Hills Recreation Board (finishing the term of Ashley Delgado term ending 12/31/22), 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 Steffey	YES
Vice President Budd	YES
Mrs. Bucy	YES
Mr. Montgomery	YES
Mr. Lynch	YES
Mr. Reynolds	ABSTAINED
Mrs. Ruscitto	ABSTAINED

Mr. Reynolds asked has the background checks been done?

Mrs. Steffey asked Mr. Stinner, do you know if the background check has been done on Mr. Allen?

Mr. Stinner stated no, I don't believe so. It's always contingent upon appointment.

Mrs. Steffey stated so, once appointed, we do the check and then if anything comes back, then we'll be notified.

Mrs. Budd moved to lease copier for the Borough of Jefferson Hills Planning Department from Ford Business Solutions for the lease price of \$154.00 a month for 36-months, or \$5,544.00 for the life of the lease, seconded by Mr. Lynch and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve repair work on power phase monitor AHU4, Boiler Room unit heater blower, bearing replacement on AHU6, and blower motor replacement on Unit No. 2 through ABM Building Solutions, LLC, for \$10,615.00, seconded by Mrs. Bucy and carried unanimously.

Mr. Lynch moved to adopt Resolution No. 15-2022 amending the salaries, compensation, and wages for Borough of Jefferson Hills Public Works employees as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Laborers' #1058 for the years 2022 - 2026, seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Bucy moved to adopt Resolution 16-2022 amending Resolution 28-2021 to state "the Borough desires to continue to provide adequate fire protection for its residents and shall issue Shift Crew reimbursements on a monthly basis", seconded by Mrs. Bucy and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Bucy moved to approve Ordinance 887 that is updating Chapter 5, Section 514.4 of the Property Maintenance Code to include the following language "Shrubs shall be maintained and pruned to a reasonable height and not be allowed to restrict access to a structure" and "Trees, shrubs, or other vegetation whose limbs or parts thereof project into a public right-of-way, thereby interfering with the normal use of said right-of-way", seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to authorize the Solicitor and Special Counsel to proceed with drafting an Ordinance to govern the Jefferson Hills Borough's Pension Plans, seconded by Mrs. Bucy and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Budd moved to authorize the installation of a Calcium Nitrate chemical drip system in the 837 pump station from Univar Solutions at an estimated cost of approximately \$1,000.00 for installation and \$16,000.00 per year for the Calcium Nitrate additive subject to Gateway Engineers verifying that the floors in the pump station can carry the dead load of the 3,500 pound Calcium Nitrate tote and not until Univar Solutions tests the incoming influent's hydrogen sulfide levels to determine the appropriate Calcium Nitrate drip rate, seconded by Mr. Lynch and carried unanimously. The first 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. After some discussion, a second vote was retaken and carried unanimously:

President Steffey	YES
Vice President Budd	YES
Mrs. Bucy	ABSTAINED
Mr. Montgomery	ABSTAINED
Mr. Lynch	YES
Mr. Reynolds	ABSTAINED
Mrs. Ruscitto	ABSTAINED

Mrs. Steffey stated I'm going to vote yes. And I'd like to point out that this was on the agenda for last week. If we needed more information, why weren't we discussing it then?

Mrs. Ruscitto stated I do have a question which may change my vote. Did you say that we will be testing?

Mrs. Steffey stated yes, the way that it's read, Mrs. Ruscitto and I went over this with Mr. Glister today, is that this is upon the results of the testing, correct, Mr. Glister? Do you want to explain it the way that we discussed this afternoon?

Mr. Glister stated correct. The way this motion was written, it's authorizing the installation of the drip system purchase of the calcium nitrate. But the way we originally got the quote from Univar, we didn't have ample time to complete testing. So, the drip rate that was provided by Univar that estimated the \$16,000 per year, they made some assumptions. So, that's why we added the contingent upon testing the incoming influent for hydrogen sulfide. We'll take a look at what we're seeing at 837 pump station, as well as what we're seeing coming in from Union Township. We'll probably have to do a couple of tests at each location. Once we get that information, we'll have a better idea of what we're looking at and how we can adjust the drip rate. The drip rate is not going to be consistent all the time anyways, because it's contingent upon how much wet weather flow we're experiencing. If it's like the last couple of weeks, we have a lot of heavy rain there's a lot of infiltration into the system. And anything that's in the system, sewage and hydrogen sulfate would be diluted. And then if you were to run the test during an extended period of dry weather, all those concentrations would be higher. We would want to do a couple testing under some various circumstances to make sure we have a better understanding of what we're looking at.

Mrs. Budd stated I also recall you saying that we have some time to do this.

Mr. Glister stated correct. The request from the Solicitor for the WESA Board spelled out that they would like to see action within 120 days. I think we're about 30 days into that. We still have about two or three months to do some testing and take a look at what we have before we implement any kind of system.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated I would like to say that I am in agreement with Mrs. Steffey, there's been a lot of bad blood between our Borough and WESA and I would like to make steps towards having a healthier relationship in the future. So, I will vote yes.

Mrs. Steffey stated we're going to do another roll call, Ms. Ruscitto. But just so we clarify, again, that this motion, Mr. Glister, in my interpretation, is contingent upon what our testing results will determine. And then at that point, we will proceed with either installing or would we have another motion to put on?

Mr. Glister stated the assumption right now is that the best way to treat the hydrogen sulfate would be at the pump station. But if we're finding the source is coming in from Union Township, then that might change our thought process. Then we might come back to Council and say, hey, this testing actually revealed that it wasn't originating in the wet-well pump station and the forced paying to WESA but rather maybe from Union Township. So, there is possibility depending on the test results that we would change the recommendations on how to proceed.

Mrs. Steffey asked Mr. Gabriel, you feel that the way that this motion is written and that we would be protected that we wouldn't have to move forward with any kind of installation or purchase of the calcium nitrate if the results come back that it is indeed not coming from our portion?

Solicitor Gabriel stated yes, this motion is subject to Gateway Engineers verifying certain matters. So yes, I do feel it's contingent.

Mrs. Steffey stated with all of that clarification, Toni, can we please have another roll call?

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve Work Authorization dated April 1, 2022, from Gateway Engineers, Inc. to prepare and submit three General Permits applications for necessary in stream work to protect Borough roadways at three separate locations in the amount not to exceed \$15,000.00, seconded by Mrs. Budd and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Budd moved to purchase Contract Documents and Specifications from the Engineers Joint Contract Documents Committee in the amount not to exceed \$3,000.00, seconded by Mrs. Bucy and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to recommend to SHACOG the award of a bid to State Pipe Services, Inc., the lowest responsible bidder, for the Joint Municipal SHACOG O&M CCTV Year 12 Project in the amount of \$294,300.00 with the Borough's share of \$125,100.00, seconded by Mrs. Bucy and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to award the 2022 Paving Program Base Bid including Add Alternate 1, Add Alternate 2, and Add Alternate 5 to A. Liberoni, Inc., the lowest responsible bidder, in the amount of \$541,675.90, seconded by Mr. Lynch and carried unanimously.

Mr. Reynolds moved to reactivate Gill Hall VFC as an active independent 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 Steffey	NO
Vice President Budd	NO
Mrs. Bucy	NO
Mr. Lynch	NO
Mr. Montgomery	NO
Mr. Reynolds	YES
Mrs. Ruscitto	YES

Mr. Reynolds asked do we need to go through the next couple? If they're not an active independent fire company?

Mrs. Steffey stated I'd rather, if they're on the agenda.

Mr. Reynolds moved to restore Gill Hall VFC run cards to reflect the status prior to January 13, 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:

President Steffey	NO
Vice President Budd	NO
Mrs. Bucy	NO
Mr. Lynch	NO
Mr. Montgomery	NO
Mr. Reynolds	YES
Mrs. Ruscitto	YES

Mr. Reynolds moved to restore Gill Hall VFC members to the SWIF Workers Compensation Policy, 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 Steffey	NO
Vice President Budd	NO
Mrs. Bucy	NO
Mr. Lynch	NO
Mr. Montgomery	NO
Mr. Reynolds	YES
Mrs. Ruscitto	NO

Mr. Reynolds asked even with them not being active, could we in fact put them back on the SWIF, which costs nothing for us so that they can continue to go and train? Right now, a lot of them have gone across the river, and they're not in our area and they go and train under Blaine Hill. Even if they're not active, since it doesn't cost our residents a dime, could we still consider activating them and allowing them to have this insurance so that they could go to school, finish their training, so forth?

Mrs. Steffey asked haven't they been training though? I am confused in understanding.

Mr. Reynolds stated right now, we're forcing them to go over there and get engrained and become a Blaine Hill fireman.

Mrs. Steffey stated so technically, since they are a volunteer with Blaine Hill they're under their Workman's Comp.

Mr. Reynolds stated they're under their but I'm just saying, let them still have the pride. They started as Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company, let them have the pride of wearing that helmet and wearing that gear and still representing a fire hall. Now obviously, they're not going to have a fire hall to come home to. They're going to be able to go and whether it be Elrama a neighboring community. Maybe some of them will end up in Broughton some over Blaine Hill. Like Dylan is doing his while he's over at Elizabeth. They're scattered through all. But, I wouldn't mind seeing them at least be able to wear the letters of the Gill Hall where they were getting their start.

Mrs. Steffey stated we're not going to have conversation back and forth. We're going to keep order, please.

Mr. Reynolds stated I didn't think you wanted to answer any of my questions anyways, Mr. Thatcher.

Mrs. Bucy asked Mr. Drager, I just want to know as far as liability. If someone is on a workman's compensation that we're paying for and there's a claim that's submitted, that's when we have to pay the money, correct? How does that work?

Mr. Drager stated we pay monthly installments. But the way it was brought up a few months back is since they are not under the borough umbrella, they cannot be put on our workers comp. Just as if you would have health insurance, you couldn't just put a random person on your health insurance.

No motion was made to restore Gill Hall VFC vehicles to the Borough of Jefferson Hills insurance policy was made, motion dies.

Mrs. Budd moved to direct the solicitor to prepare an ordinance to permanently decertify Gill Hall VFC from the Borough of Jefferson Hills, seconded by Mr. Lynch. 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 Steffey	YES
Vice President Budd	YES
Mrs. Bucy	YES
Mr. Lynch	YES
Mr. Montgomery	YES
Mr. Reynolds	NO
Mrs. Ruscitto	NO

Mr. Reynolds asked before we vote, for the residents out there that's listening, is there a pro and con? Like I said, we're not actually taking a certification away from them. That word actually does not fit and apply here. There is no certification to take away. But apparently, we're still going to vote on it anyways. But is there any advantage to putting the permanent terminology behind it. Because like Mr. Doel said, we could come back in here next month and say to activate them. What is the reasoning for permanently?

Mrs. Steffey stated to be honest, the way that, and correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Gabriel, but if there is no agenda item any further on Gill Hall, we're done speaking about it publicly. This is the last time that we are able to discuss this. And I have that authority, correct?

Mr. Reynolds stated wait a second. So, residents can't come up here and continue the discussion even though it's the fire protection for their house and their family and their whole life just because a couple individuals up here are choosing to put a permanent tag on it?

Mrs. Steffey stated the way that the agenda is written, and when Borough resident taxpayer comments come up, it is only on agenda items.



Mr. Reynolds stated so, we're going to start to censor in this case?

Mrs. Steffey stated I will certainly allow them to speak. But we are not going to continue a 45-minute dissertation back and forth during a meeting.

Mr. Reynolds stated whether you sit there, and we say Mr. Gulla, there was nothing on here about fracking, but we allowed him to come up and talk about fracking.

Mrs. Steffey stated that's what I'm saying. I will allow them to speak, for sure.

Mr. Reynolds stated so, if the residents want to keep coming up here and talk about the fire hall they can.

Mrs. Steffey stated as the President, I do have that discretion. And at this point in time, I would certainly allow them to speak. I certainly don't want to take anyone's voice away from them. But I also have the authority to stop the discussions back and forth so that we can continue on with the rest of our agendas.

Mr. Reynolds stated even though it's such a large topic where it's divided our community?

Mrs. Steffey stated it is a large topic. It's also been a large topic that has been discussed over and over again for the past two and a half years. This Council, I believe, by making these choices and these votes tonight, are choosing to move forward with another option.

Mr. Reynolds stated so, the advantages is A, make sure that Gill Hall can never have another opportunity come up to talk.

Mrs. Steffey stated well, no, that's not the advantage. I will say this, every time that the word decertify has been brought up, it has been put out on this meeting floor that, well, they were only temporarily decertified. So, we can't have it both ways.

Mr. Reynolds stated Frank Sockman was one who put the temporary on.

Mrs. Steffey stated correct.

Mr. Reynolds stated decertification was the wrong terminology and I said that since they day 1. Just because we've made a mistake and kept continuing to talk about this phantom certification.

Mrs. Steffey stated well, Mr. Reynolds, the certification, permanent, temporary, whatever you want to call it, activated on the run cards, you can use whatever terminology you like, but this does need to be put on the agenda voted on, so that the next step which would be to contact the PA Auditor General's Office informing them of the status change, which is going to be permanent of Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company. So yes, we do need to have this in order to move forward. This is not just, you know, throwing it out there.

Mr. Reynolds stated this is to take their fundraising capability away. Again, we're going out there and we're telling the Attorney Auditor General, to go and take a look at Gill Hall and strip any ability they have to operate and function as an organization.

And two, I just want to make sure that it comes across loud and clear, Melissa, and I know we've been trying to get along to move this thing forward. But what this is going to actually do is Gill Hall, the ability for the residents to request discussion on Gill Hall is going to start and end with you if you choose not to put it on there. It will never go on the agenda again. So, you are ultimately taking the responsibility for all these residents that you will decide if Gill Hall will ever go back on this agenda again, as long as you are the President of Council. Is that correct?

Mrs. Steffey stated I'm taking the responsibility to allow the public to speak, and I certainly will allow them to do that.

Mr. Reynolds stated but for Gill Hall to get on there, it starts and ends with your decision then, correct?

Mrs. Steffey stated Mr. Reynolds, this has been a conversation over the past two and a half years. There has been no movement from Gill Hall whatsoever when it comes to a merger.

Mr. Reynolds stated there's been no movement from JHFR.

Mrs. Steffey stated I disagree. They have been asked to include them in the merger operationally. They did extend that out to them when asked. As far as moving forward with the Auditor General, I'm sorry but sometimes things have to come to a close. You have to take the proper steps to have that happen. And it is unfortunate, but this is a decision that Gill Hall was standing by. I commend them for standing by what they feel is best for them and what they feel is best for their residents.

Mr. Reynolds stated when we talk to the Auditor General, when we explain to them about, are we offering fire protection to our residents, I'd like to know what our answer is.

Mrs. Steffey stated my answer is unequivocally yes.

Mr. Reynolds asked who's providing it? Is it JHFR?

Mrs. Steffey replied yes.

Mr. Reynolds asked then why are they still 885 and why are they still Florefffe?

Mrs. Steffey replied, and we've discussed this. The finance papers have not been signed together.

Mr. Reynold stated they have not made any move. They've had this opportunity for a couple of years, too. They are still not a merged company, and everybody keeps referring them to as merged. They've taken tax dollars as a merged company for JHFR. And they've also taken it as separate organizations, as Florefffe and 885. It seems to be whatever they choose. They're not merged as JHFR. So, they take our taxpayers' tax dollars, and then they turn around and send the mailer around, which is almost like a subscription to say, send us more money for our merged JHFR, even though we're not JHFR at this point, because we're not merged. But please send us more money and nobody's tracking. They go down to Florefffe. All those fundraisers, all those food trucks, everything, who's watching over that money that's being made and where it's going?

Because it's being presented to the taxpayers that they're supporting this merged group. And again, they are not merged.

Mrs. Steffey stated again, I understand your concern and your question about whether they are merged or not. It has been explained by Mr. Chalfant, it's been explained by Mr. Thatcher. I've tried to explain it as well. So, the next step would be possibly for JHFR's attorney to send a letter, and I would gladly pay for it to put this to rest. In my opinion, they are operationally merged. They were waiting for Gill Hall to decide whether or not they wanted to come on board. Gill Hall has decided not to come on board.

Mr. Reynolds stated Mr. Chalfant has said it was not about necessarily Gill Hall coming on board. It was what was going to happen to the money. If Gill Hall did not come on board, Brian Chalfant was not going to merge Floreffe and Elrama and have two recognized fire departments, where they would get half and Gill Hall would get half. It was all about the money and it was all about the power.

Mrs. Steffey stated I think it's all-encompassing. I mean, that's what a merger comes down to as well. That's why we were trying to facilitate an operational merger.

Mr. Reynolds stated and again, operational merger is nothing more than when they show up on a call, they work with mutual aid with all the other remaining companies. When they showed up down in Elrama, Lenny Bailey, Elrama was the first on that site. Elrama was the, what do you call it, the site, he led the site. JHFR worked hand in hand with them. I don't understand why it's good enough for them to work with Elrama when they have no record or knowledge of their trained firemen. But yet they refuse to work with somebody in the Borough and other organizations. And it all comes back to when they're putting out a fire with Elrama, they're working for the cause and that's to put out that fire. If Gill Hall, it would have been reinstated, they might have to share some money. They're not getting Gill Hall's, just like we said before, they're not getting any resident out there that thinks that you'll also just turn over something that they worked for 70 years for. That's like saying, you paid off your mortgage, but the bank can still come and take your house. I mean, it's just absurd.

Mrs. Steffey stated I understand Mr. Reynolds. I respect the passion that you've had for this, I'm not trying to argue whatsoever and trying to definitely give you your voice here. And I know that there are other residents that are concerned. I got the emails tonight. I'm not negating that whatsoever. But there are also residents that live in the Gill Hall area, some of them sitting in the audience tonight that don't have that comfortable factor. And a lot of proof has pointed to it.

Mr. Reynolds stated so like Gill Hall has always said, they have more of a comfort with a zero instead of.

Mrs. Steffey stated, and I have to disagree with you.

Mr. Reynolds stated all right, let's move on because if we keep chatting about it, it's just going to go on forever.

Mr. Montgomery moved to formally adopt 2022 bid limits, as contained in Act 92 of 2011 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, seconded by Mrs. Budd. 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 Steffey	NO
Vice President Budd	YES
Mrs. Bucy	NO
Mr. Montgomery	YES
Mr. Lynch	NO
Mr. Reynolds	NO
Mrs. Ruscitto	NO

Mrs. Bucy asked I just wanted to know, are we going with the amount that's stated on the paper?

Mrs. Steffey asked which would be the \$21,900.00 and over?

Mrs. Bucy stated yes, that's what I want to know. Because currently, right now, we have a \$5,000.00 threshold. In this motion, are we going to go to that 21,900.00.

Mrs. Steffey stated yes, if we vote for this specific Act, it would be for that numerical number.

Mr. Reynolds stated and, Karen, correct me if I'm wrong, the 5,000 that we adjusted it was to protect against political favors, special interests, the arguments that we had whether a pavilion was being built by somebody, so it was there designed to protect the taxpayers from special interest in.

Mrs. Steffey stated I think, as stated before, the \$5,000.00 limit was just so that we were notified by staff.

Solicitor Gabriel stated that notification continued to occur, is that the question?

Mrs. Steffey replied yes.

Mrs. Bucy asked so we're still going to be notified?

Mrs. Steffey replied yes.

Mr. Drager stated the \$5,000.00 in the finance policy was to put in front of Council.

Mrs. Bucy asked it was to be put in front of Council?

Mr. Drager stated in fact, it was \$1,000.00 to notify.

Mrs. Steffey stated I know that Mrs. Ruscitto, we discussed it in executive session or the agenda meeting, and we weren't sure if it was to be voted on in front of Council for a particular item \$5,000.00 and over, or if it was just to be notified.

Mrs. Bucy stated my only concern is that's almost a 400% increase. I realized that things have gone up with the cost expenditures, and we would probably be coming back with a lot of items, because they're going to be well over \$5,000.00. But are we allowed to set maybe a limit of not reaching the \$21,000.00 and maybe saying \$10,000.00 or \$12,000.00 to kind of allow for the inflation costs? Do we have to go with that number \$21,900.00? That's what I'm asking.

Mrs. Steffey asked would you just suggest, Mr. Gabriel, to vote this down then or table this or if we wanted to do our own limit?

Solicitor Gabriel stated yeah, these are the state limits. You're not compelled to go with the state limits. You can't make them any higher. You can make them lower if you want a Council policy decision to have lower bid limits, you're permitted to do that as well. But that's a Council decision.

Mrs. Steffey stated I have no problem either way.

Mr. Reynolds stated I think it absolutely has to go down. Because in this case here, you can have somebody that's say the position of a Borough Manager that could turn around and hire, we had questions before, whenever Mr. Stinner hired his wife's firm to do the logo. This is why we lowered it to protect against that. You shouldn't be able to sit here and spend these taxpayers' dollars here without any question and nobody policing other than a Borough Manager just sitting there saying, OK I'm choosing my friend to do it because my friend does a good job.

Mr. Stinner stated asked if he could say something.

Mrs. Steffey stated no, I will Mr. Stinner, thank you. For the record, that marketing company or whatever it was, was hired by the previous Council, I believe. Correct? We've established that. Let's move on.

Mrs. Bucy stated my question is, I'll give the example of the air conditioning down there. I know it constantly has to have service, and I thank you, Mr. Drager, you brought it to our attention that the bid was over \$5,000.00. But we want to have air conditioning especially in the police department.

Mrs. Steffey stated sooner rather than later.

Mrs. Bucy stated it gives us some latitude. But what's happening right now, if I'm correct, Mr. Drager, the bids are going up because of inflation. So, I don't want a stranglehold not getting a service in, but at the same time, also having a protection against over-expenditures.

Mr. Reynolds stated if something like a repair like that would be considered an emergency, correct?

Mrs. Bucy stated not always.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated I think it is to inform us if it's \$5,000.00 or less, just to let us know as Council so that nothing slides by that we somehow have to answer for at a later date.

Mrs. Steffey asked \$5,000.00 or less, Mrs. Ruscitto, or \$5,000.00 or more?

Mrs. Ruscitto stated if it's \$5,000.00, we, as Council, like you discussed, will be notified.

Mr. Pascoe stated I think the confusion is this. Every year, the state Commonwealth of Pennsylvania comes up with the minimum amount or maximum amount until you must, if you're using municipal funds, get three bids. Last year, I don't know exactly what that amount was, but it was \$20-some thousand dollars. It wasn't the five. So, I think things are getting comingled here. There are two things. Number one, the amount of the \$21,000.00 whatever it was, if it reaches that threshold, no matter what, how you vote, you must have the minimum three-bid threshold. You make your own financial policy; you can tell your staff anything between \$5,000.00 and the three bids has to come to you guys for approval. But it doesn't mean you need three bids. So, I don't know if you want to put a three-bid threshold on a \$6,000.00 purchase, but you may want it to come before Council for approval.

Mr. Reynolds stated I think we understand that. That's what we were talking about. Currently, right now, if this gets approved, then there could be a \$6,000.00 expenditure on, like under number 36, then even the members on Council don't even have to be informed about it.

Solicitor Gabriel stated right now, just to clarify, the state law says if you're going to bid it, you have to bid it out if the contract is \$21,800.00 and over. If the contract is between \$11,800.00 and \$21,800.00, you'd have to have three bids procured. So, you have to get three quotations, verbal or written. If it's under \$11,800.00, then you don't have to get bids. However, that's where you fall into that area where you want to come back to Council.

Mr. Reynolds stated in the state that's essentially a recommendation.

Solicitor Gabriel the state law is when there's for financial controls, you're able to do, it's up to Council in terms of what type of notification you want to have to all Council and what kind of approval you want to have for that area where you don't have to have formal bids.

Mr. Reynolds stated all I'm saying is that I look around and I talk to the residents and residents are sick and tired of paying so much in taxes to live in this Borough. It's getting out of control, and it doesn't seem to be that there's any stop. Since we did that, Mr. Drager can go through with things that could have just been approved for somebody's political favor. Mr. Drager has gone through, put things out there, researched the prices, and found and saved the taxpayer money. I don't know why, when we've made progress, to tighten the belt, to tighten the purse strings to help our residents, why we would just sit here and say, OK, now let's get fat on it again and let's loosen the belts and money can be spent without anybody knowing about it. I don't understand why we would go backwards.

Mrs. Steffey stated well, I would have to say that by Mr. Drager doing his job very well and saving us money, that I trust in his discretion as well. I don't care either way. This was just something that came down from the state, and I figured, with inflation and everything going up, that if we wanted to put it on, it's totally fine.

Mr. Reynolds stated it's not very often that I agree with Karen, but it's far too big of a jump.

Solicitor Gabriel stated these figures are just for the record. The bid limits are to advertise and seek formal bids for \$21,900.00 and over. We need to get three quotes if it's between

\$11,800.00 and \$21,900.00. In anything under \$11,800.00, you don't have to have any formal bid or quotes required under the state law.

Mrs. Steffey stated we're still going to be notified. Someone's can notify me if they buy a box of pencils. I don't care.

Mrs. Budd stated we'll be notified for every purchase, basically, with the bills.

Mr. Montgomery stated I think Jon Drager said that he wanted to, with the air conditioning system in the police department malfunctioning, he wanted to be able to address it.

Mr. Reynolds stated that was an emergency.

Mr. Montgomery stated that's not really an emergency.

Mr. Reynolds stated yes, it is.

Mr. Montgomery stated it's April. I mean, you could say, it's not an emergency. He was concerned. It is expensive. he got a second from Siemens. What he did originally was right, and he confirmed that.

Mr. Reynolds asked, and don't you think that the residents deserve that peace of mind?

Mrs. Steffey stated let's vote on it and find out. OK?

Mrs. Bucy stated I just want to have one more question. So, are we saying that in the event of an emergency, the discretion of the finance director can be used to solve a problem that doesn't match these numbers?

Mrs. Steffey stated that's always been for an emergency situation yes.

Mr. Reynolds stated that's always been the rule.

Mr. Reynolds stated but at least, in this case here, we could have sat there and if somebody wanted to question say, hey, wait a minute, I don't believe that that was truly an emergency, then you have some personnel issues and some so forth that would have been held to. We still have the freedom to handle the emergencies. So, I don't understand why we're bumping it up just to bump it up.

#### REPORTS:

Fire Chief

Chief Chalfant I just want to clarify something for the residents that it was said that I at one time said that I was going to padlock the doors and not allow the fire department to respond. Our organization is a democratic organization. We are not allowed, or I don't have that power to do so. And as far as merging, I don't have the authority to stop the merger either. It's a vote by both organizations. So, we're just going to end up right there.

Mr. Reynolds stated the three individuals from Gill Hall that was over there in that room, Brian, and I sat over there as, at that point, a member of the fire hall liaison. You in fact, said that. It would have been on tape that I requested that we should have been taping those meetings from the very beginning. But you were the only one that would not allow those meetings to be taped. If you would have allowed it to be taped like the other ones requested, we would have been able to sit here and again disprove what you're saying.

Chief Chalfant stated Mr. Reynolds, I'm not going to sit here and go back and forth with you. Because I can tell you a lot of things that were said inside that meeting. I'll tell you a lot of things that were said. But if you want to discuss it outside, in private with everybody outside, not here, we will.

For the residents as well on Council on June 21<sup>st</sup> of 2018, we had some catastrophic flooding here in Jefferson Borough. In July, I approached Council and they award us \$36,000.00 to start a swift water rescue team. And at that point in time in August, we put 12 members through the training. This past weekend, not this weekend, the weekend before, five additional members acquired their training, the beginning of their training. I like to applaud them and everybody else who took the class that day being 34 degrees and snowing. We spent eight hours in Slippery Rock State Creek and McConnell's Mills. Additionally, three of Chief Pascoe's members also took the class for serums. That brings Jefferson Fire Rescue Swift Water Team up to 20 members that have achieved their certification.

Recently we purchased another watercraft, it's a NRS ARS 115 boat that can be used for swift water rescues and specifically for ice rescues. I personally witnessed a child fall through the ice down on a pond last year playing hockey. As fast as he went in, he came out pretty quick because he realized the water was pretty cold. But we're just preparing ourselves in any event we have any additional emergencies. So again, we're up to 20 people now and we're slowly but surely progressing forward.

Mrs. Steffey stated I know that the swift water has become a very vital important part of our emergency responders here in the Borough. And we've been able to lend aid to our neighboring communities as well with them. So, we're very proud of that.

## EMS

Chief Pascoe stated the only thing I want to report maybe on a little bit of a lighter note is within the last 30 days, we were dispatched to two sudden cardiac arrest events in the Borough. One occurred, a later age 50-year-old-person over in the Gill Hall region on night turn where we were assisted by the Jefferson Hills Police Department. The other one occurred over off of Route 885 in a housing plan in the late evening about 10:00 p.m. where we had rapid response from the Jefferson Hills Fire Rescue. I consider a cardiac arrest when someone quits breathing, ceases their pulse, gets taken to the hospital, and walks out. That is something that does not happen very often. It happened twice in Jefferson Hills Borough within the last 30 days. We also had a third one that occurred early in the morning at the Matthews Bus Garage, and we were actually asked to come down and meet that person before they boarded their bus to ride it again.



So, I look very, very forward to working with our mayor here and our Council liaisons to bring forward those heroes from the EMS, fire and police because obviously, the system is working well.

Mrs. Steffey stated thank you, Mr. Pascoe, we have been in communication, the mayor, myself, Mrs. Budd, Mr. Stinner to make sure that those individuals are definitely noticed and commended. We appreciate it on both sides of our responders.

Engineer

Nothing further

Consulting Engineer

Not present

Finance Officer/Treasurer

Just one of the things I wanted to mention is I sent out an email last week in regard to the statement of financial interest forms. I spoke to the state ethics office and all of the required boards and commission members, I believe, I put on. I know that we're going to be having a few new ones so I will make sure I get their email and get it out to them. For anyone who did receive the email, if you have any questions, call me. Secondly, we have hard copies here at the office if you want to pick one up or you can submit it online. Either way, make sure we do have a copy on file in the office.

Public Works Director

Nothing further

Chief Dziezgowski

I just like to let the residents know that the police department is also moving forward. One of our patrol officers was reassigned to our first detective division, which will help with complex criminal investigations, will act as a school liaison, evidence custodian, and other duties within the police department to add proficiency and efficiency to the police department. Again, he's going to be very busy, but he will help with more complex cases.

Lastly, just to remind the residents that you'd have a few more days, if anyone's interested, in being a Jefferson Hills police officer. We're taking applications for those candidates. We'll be taking those applications until the 15th and with the test scheduled for the 30th of this month.

Mayor McCaffrey

I again just want to congratulate the Girl Scouts, thank them for coming, for what an incredible job they did.

Also, Chief Pascoe, Chief Chalfant, Chief Dziezgowski, what you guys have done with the cardiac arrests we've had recently is amazing. I understand it firsthand what it is for someone to walk away, and it's phenomenal. We definitely are working to ensure that all of those people are recognized for what they've done.

Manager

I like to just clarify something about Mr. Reynold's remarks about my spouse. She's not employed by that firm. I just thought I'd clarify that for the record.

Solicitor

I just want to note the Council with the mayor met in executive session to discuss litigation or potential liability matter in a personnel matter.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Mrs. Budd stated:

Jefferson Hills Fish Day will take place on Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on Peters Creek Road near Waterman Road. A rod and bucket is all you need to bring. And bait will be provided. There will also be food and prizes, including prizes for the top two largest catches of the day. Anyone over 16 who wishes to fish must have a PA fishing license with the trout stamp. Donations are being accepted for the gifts. If you are interested in donating, please contact the borough offices by phone at 412-655-7735. You can also email the Borough Manager, John Stinner, at [jstinner@jeffersonhills.net](mailto:jstinner@jeffersonhills.net). To make one addition to that, this is a rain or shine event.

A second announcement for the Friends of Jefferson Hills Library Book and Boutique Sale. Thursday, April 28th is the preview party. The sale will occur Friday, April 29th and Saturday, April 30th. Bag Day is Sunday May 1st. You can like the library on Facebook, or you can also visit their web page for more info on this and other events.

I too, would like to commend JHFR, the police department, and SEREMS for their efforts over these cardiac events. I don't think a lot of people understand the stress those situations put our first responders in, and the instant and correct decisions they have to make in extremely stressful type of pressure. So, thank you for your efforts.

Mr. Lynch stated:

I also want to echo with all of our first responders for those cardiac victims. Guys, Bravo, Zulu. The coordination, the communication, saving those lives, that's something I could never imagine myself doing. So, Charlie mike to all you guys.

In addition, I did receive word this week that US Steel Clairton Works, Mr. Stinner, I believe you might have already gotten this, but they are willing to adopt their part of Peters Creek Road for the cleanup, something I hopefully see on the next agenda.

With that being said, I unfortunately will be missing the May meeting and the June meeting as I will be stepping away for my military commitment. So, with that, I want to say once again, it's been an honor being on this Council with each and every one of you. I'm definitely honored here by the residents as well. And we've definitely gotten through some pretty tough hurdles here. But once I get back, I'm looking forward to keeping moving forward with everybody and continue to do some good around here.

Mr. Montgomery asked do you need a motion to authorize the Solicitor to prepare some documentation for US Steel Clairton Works to do that clean-up like the Boy Scouts? Do we need to authorize that now, make that motion and I'll second it so that Deron can prepare the paperwork for next month?

Mrs. Bucy stated I think that they fill out the application through Keep America Beautiful. They're all adults. Part of the reason we always had to have a resolution was if somebody was below the age of 18, because then they had to have parental consent to be on the road because it's hazardous.

Mr. Montgomery asked are they going to use family members?

Mr. Lynch stated they're just employees.

Mr. Montgomery stated sometimes they do bring family members into those things.

Mr. Lynch stated what I gathered; it was employees that were going to be cleaning up.

Mr. Montgomery stated some of the other projects they had up there, they did have family members involved.

Chief Dziezgowski asked do we have the date on that?

Mr. Lynch stated that hasn't been decided yet, no.

Mrs. Steffey asked do we need to have that motion? I mean, if everything's all in well with their application, why can't we just add it on the next agenda?

Mr. Montgomery stated I need to authorize him to do something for next month.

Solicitor Gabriel stated we can get ready for the May agenda? We'll discuss it at our pre-agenda meeting. We don't need a motion or anything. I don't think we need a motion. Just keep note of that for everyone.

Mr. Reynolds stated:

First, I'd like to apologize to the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company organization. You deserve better in your fight to have the right to protect our community moving forward. 70 plus years you would have thought that that would have been enough of a probationary period that, you

know, in a track record that you would have been able to and just work along and help out, it's a shame.

Second, I'd like to apologize to the residents of the Gill Hall district. You deserve better. You pay a premium in tax dollars; part of that money is set forth for fire protection to protect you and your families and your houses. And it's getting reallocated into other parts of the Borough, and you simply are not receiving adequate fire protection. In terms of building a new facility, it's going to take time, so you can sit there, and rest assured that you're not going to have that adequate fire protection. If JHFR comes up here again and says that you are receiving it because of the paid shift crew can get there so fast, well, if they are providing it, then I don't quite understand why we're going through all the motions to put another fire hall here, if they're already getting it. So, to me, it conflicts.

Third, I'd like to apologize to the rest of the residents in the Jefferson Hills community. I think we set a poor example on how to conduct ourselves throughout this whole merger. When Thatcher says about going back 20-some years at that point in time, all those individuals that he named were in fact 885 firemen. 885 firemen at that point, if you go all the way back to the very beginning, they were trying to take over Pleasant Hills also. And Pleasant Hills said, no, Floreffé at that point said no. Gill Hall said no. So, this is nothing new. They just finally got the influence that they needed to accomplish this. Again, I'm sorry, because I think it's our moral duty as we sit up here to take a look at an organization if they needed a little bit of assistance to help an organization out, not to do a government Council takeover of it. When Pete and Brian, Pete came up here and he fought, month in month out for the residents of Gill Hall.

One thing that I would always did tell Pete was, when it comes down to a quote from Brian Miltzer that ran for Council was, you have to be able to count to four. Unfortunately, for Gill Hall and the livelihood of their organization, we couldn't get to three, let alone four. And some of the influence that's with Council members sitting up here, was just simply not going to change.

I'm looking at a quote right here from Karen. Karen was a firehall liaison. She's a member of a task force. But the big thing with Karen was she wanted to make sure that, I guess you could say, this special interest, I'm reading a direct quote, where it says, I know Jackson, Jackson is her son, wants to apply for a position in May. I don't want to burn any bridges. So, with that being said, that's proof that Karen would never have switched, even if it made sense for the community, when she made statements that she would not want to burn any bridges.

If anybody else wants to understand a little bit more about what went down and what happened here, and when I say the influence, you take a look at the individuals, you take a look at what fuels the train. When I say fuel the train, you take an individual like Mr. Thatcher over there, that was put on to the task force, then became President of that organization, then a million dollars' worth of your funding goes over there just to them on a yearly basis. Now we're looking at a piece of property, who are we looking to buy it off of? One of his relatives. That's well-known. So, the other part of that, if you want to take a look, all you got to do is go onto the county website and take a look at the donations that Mr. Thatcher made to the Republic Committee to fund the campaign for some of these individuals to sit up here. You make the determination. I'm not saying anything. But I think what you need to do when you take a look at local politics is you take a look to say what fuels the train. Take a look on the county website, you'll see because those items there

had to be declared. You can make your own determination. I'm not trying to sway you in any way. I'm just saying take a look for yourself and come up with your own opinion. And I guess that's all I have. Again, I apologize that we set such a bad example where this was allowed to continue for so long. And individuals sat here rooted for an organization to fail, applauded every time that misfortune came Gill Hall's way. Watch the way some of the individuals celebrate over this. It's no way that you should bring a kid up, so it shouldn't be acceptable for our behavior here, either. Morally, I think we dropped the ball here. So, thank you very much for allowing me to get a little bit off of my chest. And all have a good weekend. Have a nice Easter.

Mr. Montgomery stated:

I'd like to congratulate the EMS for saving three lives. That's remarkable. I lived through it with my own father, and they couldn't save him. So, I know what that means. I'm very happy to see that you are able to save lives today. That trumps everything else that's been said here tonight. Thanks for that.

8:49 Mrs. Ruscitto left meeting

Mrs. Bucy stated:

First, I would like to wish everybody in Jefferson Hills a happy Easter. And it's one of the few times that we are all being able to get together with our family since COVID. We're certainly looking forward to that blessed holiday.

I'd also like to remind everybody to please stop littering and keep our Borough clean.

In response to my vote, I have prepared a document today. I would also like to first address the comment from Councilman Reynolds. I find it appalling that my son has to be brought into a conversation about a Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company issue. My son completed his education at California University while he was a part-time Officer at Charleroi and Forward Township. He then acquired a full-time job at Charleroi. Later he acquired a full-time job at West Mifflin. I spoke with Chief Dziezgowski last week. I went to see him personally to tell him that my son would not be testing for Jefferson Hills. It's a real shame that my son, who is a graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School and is a resident of this community does not want someone saying to him that he had extra influence in getting a job in this Borough. I repeat, he will not be testing for the Jefferson Hills Police Department. You don't attack people's children.

Mr. Reynolds stated Karen, I didn't bring it up. You're the one that brought it up.

Mrs. Bucy stated also, it is with great pains that I put this response together. And I'm going to read it.

I have prepared a response of my vote of YES to item number 35, the motion to direct the Solicitor to prepare an ordinance to permanently decertify Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company from the Borough of Jefferson Hills.

Four years ago, I witnessed the process of the previously decertifying Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company sitting in the audience as a resident of Jefferson Hills residing in the Gill Hall area.

Also, at that time the previous mayor requested an outside mediator be utilized to assist in settling this dispute. I felt this was a hopeful and a possible means that could be implemented to reach a workable compromise among all the fire stations.

After being elected to Jefferson Hills Council, the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) was contacted and a mediation process was implemented with the DCED facilitator, Madra Clay and a fire prevention expert, Floyd Wise, the Battalion Chief of the City of Harrisburg, PA. Fire Department. Chief Wise was selected by the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company from a list of possible mediators. The other fire companies agreed with this selection. During the sessions, it was stressed by Chief Wise that his primary responsibility was to improve the fire protection service for the entire Jefferson Hills community and not to discuss fundraising activities and fire tax distribution. He would be able to design drills, plans, and strategies to promote efficiency and competency within all the fire companies. During the suggested probation plan the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company, he agreed to evaluate the progress of this inactive company. Fire members from all three stations, 885, Floreffe, and Gill Hall were present. Talks continued among the parties. And after six sessions, both Madra Clay and Floyd Wise determined that the discussions that 885 and Floreffe did agree with an operational merger. Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Department did not want to operational merge. **It should be noted that this operational merger would have allowed Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company to keep their own assets, including their buildings, fire equipment, and firetrucks. They could keep their own charter, they could keep their own fundraising money.** As a result of this disagreement, sessions were ended. A probation plan was written with five options. Gill Hall offered a sixth option, option F. It stated that Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company wanted to remain an independent fire station with no operational merger. Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company wanted to have 50% of the fire tax money.

During the legal action over the firetruck, Judge McVay, attempted to address the issue of resolving the differences between the combined stations of 885 and Floreffe, known as JHFR and Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company. To my knowledge, Judge McVay conducted this truck mediation along with the fire company mediation because Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company stated that they were interested in an operational merger. After viewing photographs of the posters: Stop the corruption, End the merger, Council open up Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company, elect NO ONE from the present Council, in photographs at the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Station House and in front of firemen's homes plus various posts on Facebook, Judge McVay concluded that GHVFC was not genuinely interested in an operational merger. As a result, Judge McVay ended his attempt to resolve the fire company merger issue. With this action, he placed the action of the certification right back in the hands of the JH Council. Since Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company would not operationally merge, JH Council voted to have the two-man paid shift crew at a rate of \$12.00 per hour at both 885 station and Floreffe station for the remainder of the 2021 year. This station two-man shift crew has continued into the 2022 year.

During our first fire liaison meeting of 2022, Melissa Steffey, Hilary Budd, and myself met to discuss how to proceed on the issue of fire protection in Jefferson Hills. We agreed that our Solicitor, Daron Gabriel, should issue a letter to the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company to ask what their position regarding their view of their involvement in the fire protection of Jefferson Hills. GHVFC's response letter stated that they still wanted to be an independent fire station. This letter contained the same position that was presented in the previous document a year and a half ago.

I am a home homeowner and a resident of the Gill Hall area, a member of the fire liaison committee, a Council member who wanted to learn firsthand about fire protection. I completed, along with Mrs. Steffey, 288 hours of fire education and training at the Allegheny County Fire Academy and earned my essential certification. I am a Jefferson Hills Council member, who advocated for an operational merger of Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Department with the hope that with time Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Department could see that a merger is the best way to have the best fire protection in the Jefferson Hills community.

We the members of our community reside in Jefferson Hills. We have one Jefferson Hills Police Department. We have one Jefferson Hills Library. We have one Jefferson Hills Public Works Department. We have one Jefferson Hills Recreation Board, Environmental Advisory Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Board, Public Safety Committee, and are forming one Comprehensive Steering Committee. We have one Jefferson Hills Council with elected officials from all of the residential areas within this community. It is a realistic and obtainable goal to have ONE unified Jefferson Hills Fire Department with three stations.

After the past **four years** of unsuccessful negotiations and receiving the most recent letter by the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Department, stating they **do not** want to have an operational merger, **I must acknowledge that I do not agree with their position**. Two years ago, Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company members voted not to accept the operational merger with **0 yeses and 15 no votes**. Their position has not changed. I am of the belief that the good of a unified Jefferson Hills Fire Department will exceed the good that could be accomplished by one independently operated fire station and two operationally merged fire companies. A new fire department history in Jefferson Hills Borough could be created that combines cooperation and collaboration. I believe, this merger would enhance the safety, competency, and professional growth of all of our firemen, which in turn would provide better fire protection for all of our residents and taxpayers in our Borough. The residents of Jefferson Hills would benefit from this merger. If GHVFC might consider operationally merge in the next four or five years, as stated by Mr. Hudson, I hope they would reconsider it in the next month. Since a minimum of an operational merger among all the stations is needed to move forward to offer the best protection in our Borough, and this merger has been rejected once again by Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company, I have voted to move forward with the motion to have the Solicitor prepare an ordinance to permanently decertify Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company from the Borough of Jefferson Hills.

I thank you for your time in listening to me. I felt it was necessary. I know that we have made the statement that if we vote no that we should explain why. I felt that if I vote yes, I should explain why. Thank you very much.

Mr. Reynolds stated I think you should prepare for the residents, the many times the word operational merger has been used, that we should give them a clear definition of what an operational merge actually entails.

Mrs. Steffey stated:

I'd like to reiterate that when we are up here speaking in general business, especially as council members, that we use professionalism. And we certainly don't fly off the handle and choose

to make statements that are inflammatory and especially being used against someone's family and children.

Secondly, Councilwoman Bucy, I honestly couldn't have said that any better. I know it took you some time to prepare that. And the only reason why I'm saying that and agreeing with you is because we have travelled this path kind of together. We were fire liaisons. You obviously were a little bit longer on that committee than I was. But we did go through the academy together. We have prepared probationary plans and actions together. So, I truly echo your sentiments in your reading.

It is with sadness that I had to vote yes to the decertification permanently. But I have made my statement and kept my stance all along probably for the past year and a half, even though I kept trying to coerce and help with the operational merger to have all companies come together. But it has always been my stance that I will not vote in any favor unless there was an operational merger. There were some statements tonight, even reading through resident comments that when a company is down and out, why not lend them a helping hand just like we did with Floreffe and 885. We gave Gill Hall \$40,000.00 when I first came on Council. That's a huge helping hand right off the bat. I think that that shows that we were willing to work with them and offer them a helping hand. Everyone keeps talking about the history of Gill Hall. The resident comments of them being down and out and volunteerism was low, it was all still under the same leadership. I've made my statements about the leadership in the past as well.

Unfortunately, nothing has changed with that leadership. Possibly, would my vote have changed if there was change in the leadership? Recently, I could say, probably. But I can't trust the fact that under the same leadership, volunteerism won't go back down again. It happens in every company, it goes up and down, it fluctuates. But nothing has changed on top.

Sometimes when things aren't working, you have to get rid of the manager instead of the team players. That's been my vision the entire time with Gill Hall. Yes, they have history. Yes, their volunteerism was down. Yes, they've had issues in the past. But it's the same leadership. So, I can't trust the fact that anything's going to change had we continued to keep giving them a helping hand. It does sadden me that this was their position. I also, for the record, live in the Gill Hall area. I've said all along that this has been a very difficult decision for me, making this decision knowing that my family lives in that area. But I'm also making this decision, knowing and trusting that I do have adequate fire protection. I truly believe in Jefferson Hills.

So, not everybody is fortunate in their municipality to have a fire station one block away from them or next door to them. Some have to travel a few minutes to get to the scene. That is what our companies are doing, and they are doing it well. So, with that, that is my reason with the Gill Hall situation.

I'd like to wish Councilman Lynch the best on his military endeavors. Thank you again for your service here on Council and also to our country. We appreciate you and we'll look forward to welcoming you back in the next few months.

I'd like to extend my gratitude to many of our first responders that participated in Brayden's day this Saturday. Just to see that young man's smile light up when they came by and acknowledged



him. They get to know him just in case anything ever happens, they know who Brayden is. I'd like to thank Chief Dziezgowski for facilitating it. Broughton was involved, Pleasant Hills, Floreffe, 885, Baldwin EMS, our own EMS department was there. We had a few of our own police officers. Am I forgetting anyone, Chief? No, thank you very much. Then he was also very happily surprised when Chief Chalfant came a little later and presented him with his own JHFR T-shirt which he had on at 7:30 the next morning and has become one of his four favorite T-shirts. So, we appreciate that.

I'd like to wish everyone a safe and happy Easter and spring break. And with that, I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Steffey adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m. on motion by Mr. Montgomery, seconded by Mrs. Budd and carried unanimously.

John P. Stinner  
Secretary/Borough Manager