

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

REPORT FROM BOROUGH BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

None

BOROUGH RESIDENT/TAXPAYER COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Reynolds stated I have a letter here from Pete Doel.

Mr. Stinner read the email from Mr. Peter Doel, 420 Old Clairton Road, "I'd like to go through the timeline since Gill Hall was shut down. First, a reminder that thanks to a right to know, we know for a fact that there is no Borough certification for a fire department. None. In 2019, Gill Hall was decertified for walking out of a meeting discussing the terms of a possible merger. Shortly after, the Council, at that time, voted in favor of taking their land, building, and assets by eminent domain. However, they never actually acted on that decision. In 2020, the new council voted to reopen Gill Hall. They then decided to set up terms of their reopening along with a probation period. Gill Hall met every criterion except for being able to give access to their building to other departments due to a lawsuit filed by JFR and EMS and their wanting to keep their Station Number 179. In November of that year, Council voted to temporarily decertify them again to give Council time to work on a plan. Immediately after that vote, Council was able to vote to give every penny for fire relief to 885 and Floreff. Council never did provide a new plan to get Gill Hall open despite their promise. During that year, and in 2021, Council discussed a possible plan to turn an abandoned bus garage on the Old Matthews Bus Garage lot into a temporary substation. They waited so long to act on it, that by the time they voted to research to see how much money it would cost to get it to a point where it could be a substation, all of the garages had already been torn down. Council then discussed buying land and building a new substation. They even authorized money to be used as hand money. In February 2022, I came to a meeting and asked how long this would take, how much it would cost, if we'd need to rezone a lot, etc. I was told we had just formed a safety committee and all discussions about the fire departments would be held there instead of in the old regular council meetings. I was also told they would absolutely do their due diligence to get all of this information and it would be done by that committee. This is the only committee that meets during work hours when most residents can't attend. They will not record those meetings. No agenda is posted online, and no minutes are posted online, even on a social media post. President Steffey stated very little is discussed in these meetings concerning the fire departments. I tried to attend one meeting, and it was canceled shortly before it was to start. The next meeting, I attended, President Steffey was not there. Neither were the fire chiefs. I again asked about the progress on a fire station in the Gill Hall area and received no answers. As far as I know, the check for hand money was returned to the Borough and no more progress has been made on that project. The only thing I'm aware of is the investigation President Steffey mentioned at last month's meeting. I'd like to point

out that investigation is because the Borough is sending false information about Gil Hall to our State Attorney General's Office. If I were Gill Hall, I'd be filing a defamation suit against the Borough, as well as President Steffey, as I believe she's the one who directs our solicitor on such actions. They are attempting to force Gill Hall's hand."

Mr. Stinner stopped reading when the allotted 4 minutes had expired.

AGENDA ITEMS

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

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

Mrs. Bucy moved to approve minutes of agenda meeting January 4, 2023, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Budd asked was the correction made on page 100 for Chief Pascoe's name?

Mrs. Harris responded yes.

Mrs. Bucy moved to approve minutes of regular meeting January 9, 2023, seconded by Mrs. Ruscitto, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to appoint Jeffrey Donatelli to one seat on the Borough of Jefferson Hills Zoning Hearing Board for a term expiring December 31, 2024, seconded by Mrs. Bucy, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to advertise one seat on the Jefferson Hills Borough Police Pension Advisory Committee, seconded by Mrs. Ruscitto, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Lynch moved to advertise one seat on the Environmental Advisory Council expiring December 31, 2023, seconded by Mrs. Ruscitto, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to advertise Request for Proposals (RFP) for auditing services for fiscal years ending 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025, seconded by Mrs. Bucy, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to adopt Resolution No. 04-2023 authorizing the disposition of certain public records consistent with the schedules and procedures for the disposition of records as set forth in *The Municipal Record Manual* approved on December 16, 2008, as amended March 28, 2019, seconded by Mrs. Bucy, and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to adopt Resolution No. 05-2023 which provides preference in rentals of Shelter and Community Centers for all active members in good standing in one of the three agencies recognized by the Borough of Jefferson Hills to provide emergency services to the residents, seconded by Mr. Lynch. The vote was not unanimous, and a roll call vote was taken per Borough Code, which requires that the minutes show the actual votes by name, below are the votes of each Council Member.

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

Five members voted yes, and one member voted no, motion carried.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to adopt Resolution No. 06-2023 requiring all Borough Boards and Commissions to conduct a reorganization vote to elect officers during the first meeting of each year, seconded by Mr. Lynch, and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Bucy moved to move an additional \$2,000,000.00 to the Borough of Jefferson Hills PLGIT account to capitalize on higher interest earnings, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to ratify a 3-year subscription agreement between Cyclops Technologies, INC., a Florida Corporation d/b/a Platesmart Technologies and the Jefferson Hills Police Department (JHPD) which would permit the JHPD to utilize proprietary license plate recognition software called “Platesmart” at the cost of \$325.00 per existing and all new License Plate Recognition (LPR) cameras licenses (8-LPRs X \$325.00=\$2,600.00) during the term of the agreement along with an annual subscription fee of \$2,200.00 as recommended by the Allegheny County District Attorney’s Office and Western Chiefs of Police Association at a total annual cost is \$4,800.00, seconded by Mr. Lynch.

Mr. Montgomery stated if there is a dispute, the agreement said it had to go to Hillsborough, Florida. Tell me what that is about.

Chief Dziezgowski stated I am not a lawyer, but the agreement was vetted by the Western PA Chiefs Association solicitor. I ran it past our attorney. They did not have an issue with it.

After discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to authorize the sale of the one asphalt paver and one roller from the Borough of Jefferson Hills Public Works Department on Municibid, seconded by Mrs. Bucy, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Lynch moved to authorize the advertising of the Ordinance and the public hearing for the rezoning of lot and block 1134-C-200 located along Scotia Hollow Road from R-2 Medium Density Residential District to C-1 Commercial District as recommended by the Borough of Jefferson Hills Planning Commission, seconded by Mrs. Ruscitto, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to advertise and initiate the review of amendments to the 2022 Zoning Ordinance No. 891, seconded by Mrs. Bucy, and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to adopt Resolution No. 03-2023 granting preliminary plan approval for land development addition and alterations for Steel Center CTE designated as SP-3-2022, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Bucy moved to approve the Work Authorization dated February 3, 2023, from Gateway Engineers, Inc. for work on the revised voting district mapping and legal descriptions that was previously completed in the amount of \$8,000.00, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Lynch moved to approve the Work Authorization dated February 3, 2023, from Gateway Engineers, Inc. to provide the Borough with general Operations and Maintenance support for all 2023 Operation and Maintenance Projects in the amount not to exceed \$11,000.00, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve the Work Authorization dated February 2, 2023, from Gateway Engineers, Inc. for General 2023 GIS assistance in the amount not to exceed \$8,000.00, seconded by Mr. Lynch, and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Bucy moved to approve the Work Authorization dated February 3, 2023, from Gateway Engineers, Inc. to assist the Borough with contract development and construction administration and inspection services for the 2023 Paving Program in the amount not to exceed \$5,000.00, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ruscitto moved to approve Work Authorization dated February 1, 2023, from Gateway Engineers, Inc. to assist the Borough with preparing revised conceptual designs and cost estimates for a new soccer field at Beedle Park and to help prepare a DCNR grant application in the amount not to exceed \$8,000.00, seconded by Mr. Lynch, and carried unanimously.

BOROUGH RESIDENT/TAXPAYER COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

REPORTS

Fire Chief

Not Present

EMS

Not Present

Engineer

Nothing Further

Consulting Engineer

Not Present

Finance Officer/Treasurer

Nothing Further

Public Works Director

Nothing Further

Police Chief

Chief Dziezgowski stated I want to remind everyone that tomorrow is the funeral for Officer Sluganski from McKeesport Police Department. There is going to be a large funeral procession in the Brownsville Road and Route 51 area. The procession will entail Brownsville Road in Brentwood, Church View Avenue in Baldwin Borough, portions Route 51 in Baldwin and Whitehall, Lebanon Church Road in West Mifflin, and Curry Hollow Road in Pleasant Hills. You can expect several delays in those areas. Officers are going to be staging at the Century III Mall parking lots around eight in the morning and then traveling to the funeral home, which is in Whitehall. Please plan accordingly. West Bruceton will be opened and will not be closed to help with alleviate some of the traffic concerns.

Mrs. Budd stated that Provost Road will also be open temporarily tomorrow for the same reason.

Mayor

Nothing Further

Manager

Nothing Further

Solicitor

Solicitor Gabriel noted for the record that Council did not meet in executive session this evening either prior to or after this meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Mr. Reynolds stated I am going to use some of my time here to first tell everybody the reason why I voted no on No. 15. I do not think it is our job to provide preference to anybody or any organization. It is our job to treat people fairly and equally.

Since Mr. Doel did not have an opportunity to have his letter read, I am going to use some of my time here to finish Mr. Doel's letter. I want to address some of his concerns.

Mr. Reynolds continued to read the letter from the top of the second page. "The only thing that I'm aware of is the investigation President Steffey mentioned at last month's meeting. I'd like to point out the

investigation is because the Borough is sending false statements, false information, about Gill Hall to the State Attorney and State's Attorney General Office. If I were Gill Hall, I would be filing a defamation suit against the Borough as well as President Steffey, as I believe she's the one who directs our solicitor on such actions. They are attempting to force Gill Hall to hand all property, building, and assets to one of the remaining departments. In my opinion, this case will take quite some time to resolve. The suit over the truck has been going on for years. I can see the courts deciding Gill Hall's hand over the equipment but not the land or the buildings they own. So how much longer do we have to wait as residents for adequate protection? If your attempts to steal Gill Hall through the court system fail, we're back at square one. Four years, three different councils, and so far, not a single viable option to provide residents with adequate fire protection. Also, to address some statements Chief Chalfant made at last month's meeting. He stated that people on social media are spreading lies, and that 885 and Floreffe are not suing Gill Hall over a truck. The information I received came directly from John Thatcher. JFR and EMS is the entity suing Gill Hall. The entity is made up of Gill Hall, 885, Floreffe, and EMS. Each organization gets one vote; 885, Floreffe, voted all for the lawsuit. So yes, both organizations absolutely voted for this suit and are part of the organization that is forcing this suit. He also stated that they are directed by Council to file this suit. That tells us while Council was setting up requirements to reopen Gill Hall, which include shared access to their building and equipment, they were also working very closely with 885 and Floreffe to set up a situation where that could never happen. These organizations, Council, have made sure it would not be possible for Gill Hall to reopen."

Mr. Reynolds responded to Mr. Doel, there are a couple things that you said in your letter I would like to respond to. You said it was about them wanting to keep their station number 179. I do not believe the issue was ever about keeping that number. It was about keeping their independence and being able to control their own destiny, something that they have put over 70 years of work into obtaining.

When you say immediately after that vote, Council was able to vote to give every penny for fire relief to 885 and Floreffe. That is just an understatement. The "foreign fire relief," if that's what you are referring to, was only a part of it. They were also able to receive all of the fire tax money that was generated. This year it will be over a million dollars in funding that they are going to receive in revenue.

The Matthews Bus Garage was never truly talked about. What would it have really helped to have another station in Floreffe? It never would address the residents that are in the Jefferson Hills section. Justin Allan said that those residents will always have to rely on neighboring communities to be first there. When roads get closed, no fault of their own, that access is cut off. Those people, at that point in time, they may be waiting for somebody to drive from Floreffe. They are in harm's way. I always said, I wish there was something that I could do. After listening to your letter, I am going to take somebody from the Gill Hall Volunteer Fire Company's social media page, and I am going to donate a fire extinguisher. If the Borough refuses to supply adequate fire protection for those individuals, the only thing that I can do is donate a fire extinguisher. I will pull it once a month. I will let you know at the council meeting who won the fire extinguisher.

Mr. Montgomery stated I have a brief explanation of the budget for last year. All the accounting has been done. We received 107% of the revenues anticipated, which is the good thing. We spent 94% of the expenditures that we expected to spend. That is a surplus, and good news. We did not purchase a truck. The biggest thing was the revenues increased in all categories, which was not expected.

Mr. Lynch stated I want to, once again, offer my condolences to the family and friends of Officer Sluganski of the McKeesport Police Department. It just seems like we keep seeing tragedy after tragedy to those who answer the call, by keeping an eye on us and upholding the peace and order in our communities. I count my blessings every day for our guardians of the street. They help us avoid evil so that we may live a good life. There was a time when being a police officer was a tremendous and valued career. We have become a society that accepts the fact that many will die in the line of duty. Yet the few who continue to wear the badge will never accept that defeat. They will see those ugly things so that we will not have to. They will defend and preserve the goodness of this Earth, no matter how big or how small it may be.

I also wanted to give a quick shout out to the Geo Mac Veterans Foundation. They reached their goal of \$1,022.00. That number might seem less from their previous goal, but actually, it is a special number, nonetheless. Ten, obviously, being the month that Geo lost his life. The 22 stands for the 22 veterans that die from suicide every day. It definitely goes a very long way, from somebody who has experienced this, to see someone going out of their way to help. It does make it worthwhile. It is great to see that we are in a community that has such pride in standing behind our men and women who took up arms and defend our nation. Ms. Girman, if you are out there listening, thank you so much. I believe that packing day will be this Sunday at Floreffe Fire Hall. I am sure she can use the help. I will definitely be there to see what I can do to help. For all those veterans out there, in Jefferson Hills, we do not leave anybody behind.

I want to give a shout out to Christina Ripley, whose time and effort went into constructing our letter and our outline for the EAC. I also want to mention Ms. Lori Bartrug and our Borough Manager, Mr. Stinner, for getting all of our Borough emails set up and helping us transition into Microsoft Teams. We are looking for some big things from the EAC this year.

We received numerous complaints about the Millstone Village Development. We were hearing complaints about materials being left behind and that they were being buried under the ground. Mr. Stinner sent our Code Enforcement Officer to investigate the matter. Reports with evidence have come back that the construction company has been disposing of these materials properly. We also contacted the DEP. We investigated any claims that were warranted. Hopefully, that will satisfy our residents complainants. If there are any more questions, you can reach out to Mr. Stinner or myself. We will be happy to assist you in any way we can.

Mrs. Bucy announced that April 22, 2023, is Earth Day. We are also planning a cleanup in the Borough on that day. I would like to invite all the council members, EAC members, and any other adults that would like to come to help us clean up these roadways that are in desperate need of it.

The Cloverleaf Food Bank is on February 20th. If anyone needs food bank assistance, please feel free to contact me.

I would like to remind residents that the Public Safety Meeting is on the last Monday of each month. This month it will be February 27th at 2:00 p.m. We are looking forward to having the emergency plan ready. The Environmental Advisory Council was also concerned with the recent East Palestine, Ohio, train accident and the hazardous materials the train was carrying. We want to fine tune the emergency plan to have a more specific response in Jefferson Hills.

One of the things I like to see as a member of council is when residents attend a Council meeting to cite a concern that they have in the Borough. On two separate occasions, we had residents come and speak about the traffic that was on Route 885. In our police report, this was addressed by Officer Ryan Pokorny. I have a letter dated January 12th that was sent to the PennDOT and the Traffic Division about the traffic on Route 885. There were pictures enclosed. There were responses from PennDOT on January 13th, and February 7th.

Mrs. Bucy read the email that was received from Allegheny County Department of Public Works. "Officer Pokorny, I am preparing a work order for the truck length restriction signs for Scotia Hollow Road. I just want to clarify the locations, and we will permit to post signage on the Ridge Road SR 51 Interchange, if that is the correct location." I would like to let these residents know that this was addressed by the Police Department in the Traffic Division. I hope that this aids in that hazardous situation. I want to thank Chief Dziezgowski and Officer Pokorny for their due diligence on the matter.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated along the lines of what Mr. Lynch was saying about Millstone Village, I would like to let the residents know that development in Jefferson Hills is a tricky business. If something is zoned residential, it is out of our hands. We cannot control residential developments when a property is zoned residential.

Mr. Montgomery stated when a development is zoned properly, and they are in compliance with the requirements of the zoning district, it is out of our hands.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated what we can do is try to police what is happening. We did do that by sending the Borough inspectors to investigate the situation.

Chief Dziezgowski, I would like to bring to your attention that it is exceedingly messy outside of the Millstone development. I believe it is the developer's responsibility to clean the roads the end of their workday. Is there something that we could do to possibly look into that for the residents?

Chief Dziezgowski responded Mr. Glistler usually has a contact for those contractors.

Mr. Glistler stated if there is a complaint filed, we would reach out to the developer. Ultimately, any sediment exiting the site falls underneath the jurisdiction of Allegheny County Conservation District. The Conservation District was out there on Friday because that was one of the entities we followed up with after we received that complaint last week.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated thank you. I appreciate that, for myself and the residents. I do travel on Gill Hall Road quite frequently.

The library has a full-time opening for a children's librarian. More information can be found on the library's website and on the employment page of the Borough. AARP and the library are partnering to provide free income tax preparation for eligible individuals. This is a great service. Call 445-895-9665 to make an appointment. The Grief Support Group begins Tuesday, February 28th at 6:00 p.m. It helps participants explore and understand the grieving process, experience compassion, and find hope through the comfort of others. You can register on the library's web website for that also. CCAC and Synergy

Group will offer Retirement Planning Made Simple on March 7th and 14th. Register at Shopcommunity.ccac.edu. The Mahjong, Scrabble, and Knitting and Crocheting Clubs continue to meet weekly at the library. Visit their event calendar for more information and dates. All the information for aforementioned items will also be available on the library website.

Thoughts go out to our neighbors in Elizabeth Forward. The fire at the high school was quite a tragedy that we had over the weekend. There are a host of people that are collecting and coordinating for those students. It is really difficult when you plan a musical and all of your instruments are destroyed, and your costumes are ruined. The band has plans to go to Florida. There is a lot that we could do. Please check to see what we can do to help. My thoughts and prayers are with the community.

Mrs. Budd stated I wanted to take a moment and thank everyone involved in the Voter Reapportionment effort. As Councilwoman Bucy said last week, this has been an arduous two-year effort, and I thank her for spearheading this committee. While everyone's efforts need applauded, I particularly want to thank Dave Oster, who put in countless hours organizing various facts and figures and keeping those items straight for the committee. This also could not have been done without the efforts of Borough Manager John Stinner, Borough Engineer Mike Glistler, and Borough Solicitor Deron Gabriel. They had the most tedious and time-consuming of tasks with this endeavor.

Another reminder for everybody that if you think something is wrong, or you are not really sure if it is an emergency, or even if it seems minor, please call 911. That is the best way and the quickest way you can get a hold of the Police Department.

Chief Dziezgowski responded exactly. Our direct communication right now, outside of business hours and even during business hours, should be 911 for emergency and nonemergency. For general reports you still should contact our police department during business hours. But emergency and nonemergency calls for service should be 911.

Mrs. Budd stated please keep the police and all first responders, along with the family of McKeesport Officer Sluganski, in your hearts and minds tomorrow as he is laid to rest.

In response to the comments earlier, there is adequate fire protection in the Gill Hall District with Jefferson Hills Fire Rescue.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Budd adjourned the meeting at 7:41 p.m. on a motion by Mrs. Ruscitto, seconded by Mrs. Bucy and carried unanimously.

John P. Stinner
Secretary/Borough Manager