

The agenda meeting of Council was called to order by President Steffey at 7:04 p.m. in the Municipal Centers, 925 Old Clairton Road. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Council Members Bucy, Vice President Budd, Montgomery, Reynolds, Ruscitto, President Steffey, and Mayor McCaffrey answered to roll call. Borough Manager Stinner, Finance Officer Drager, Solicitor Gabriel, Chief Dziezgowski, Engineer Glister, Consulting Engineer Minsterman, and Public Works Director Volpe were also present. Council Member Lynch was absent.

4. Report from Borough Boards and Commissions

none

5. Borough Resident/Taxpayer Comments on Agenda Items

Bob Gulla, 1301 Collins Ave, stated I see on the agenda that you want to spend one half of a million dollars to buy a dek hockey rink. Is this a joke? There are elderly, limited income residents who could use a break on taxes, garbage, and sewage, yet you want to waste \$500,000.00 for dek hockey. It is a waste because all it is going to do is cost the taxpayers' money. A half a million dollars for dek hockey? Seriously, come on now. Mrs. Bucy, you're involved with the food bank. You know firsthand, people out there are hurting. There are a lot of people that need something, even if it's a little bit of help from a food bank. This Borough wants to consider a half a million dollars for dek hockey. At one time I thought maybe this Council cared about the elderly people who are on a fixed income. After reading this, I'm not so sure about that. Stop and think what that would actually do to the taxes later on down the line. Spending a half of a million dollars when it could be used in a better way to help the people that have been in this Borough all their lives. I feel that there are better ways to spend money in this Borough, rather than to waste it on a hockey rink. Election time is coming up for some of Council. One vote from an elderly person can make a difference whether you get elected or not. One half a million dollars for a dek hockey, that's unconscionable. That's something that I would've never thought this Council could have even considered, a wasteful spending of the taxpayer's dollars on something of that nature.

Mrs. Steffey stated we will discuss more on this agenda item later on. We will explain to you why this came about on the agenda.

Mr. Gulla asked will I be able to rebut something at that time? If you are going to explain something to me, and I may want to rebut what you're saying,

Mrs. Steffey responded no. It seems like we have already gotten your gist on how you feel about it before we even have a discussion on the agenda item.

Mr. Reynolds stated there are some things we discuss that Mr. Gulla may have a question about. I guess at that point in time, Mr. Gulla would have to wait and come back on Monday to ask another question.

Mr. Reynolds stated to Mr. Gulla although you focused on the dek hockey, I think your point is focusing on the increase in expenses to live in this Borough. This Council has had a pattern of irresponsible spending.

Mrs. Steffey asked has that irresponsible spending raised our taxes? Remember we do not vote tonight.

6. Discussion to approve the monthly bills

Mrs. Bucy stated I want to bring it to your attention that last month, Councilman Montgomery brought up a question on a bill that was \$15,681.18. He thought that it was odd that the same amount was to the Cleveland Company and also Caterpillar. He did ask the question about whether or not that was a duplicate payment. Through much discussion, and examination by the finance department, we did find out that was a double payment. I would like to thank Mr. Montgomery for scrutinizing these bills every month.

7. Discussion to approve the monthly payroll

8. Discussion to approve minutes of agenda meeting April 5, 2023

Mr. Montgomery stated on page 175, that should be miscellaneous milling and not billing. The other was on page 179. The CONNECT cards are at Representative Kuzma's office, not Representative Robinson's office.

9. Discussion to approve minutes of regular meeting April 10, 2023

Mrs. Steffey stated on the very last page number 195, it was Mr. Lynch that stated, "Where is the corruption? Who is getting rich?" Mrs. Budd stated, "it costs me money to be on Council."

10. Discussion to approve minutes of public hearing September 12, 2022

11. Discussion to approve minutes of public hearing December 12, 2022

12. Discussion to approve minutes of public hearing April 10, 2023

13. Presentation of the 2021 Audit by Steven Niedenberger, CPA, Hosack, Specht, Muetzel, and Wood

Mrs. Steffey stated he is not in attendance this evening.

14. Presentation by U.S. Steel regarding Environmental and Regulatory Compliance in the surrounding region

Mrs. Steffey stated they are not in attendance this evening either.

15. Discussion to schedule Special Meeting to discuss 2024 Borough of Jefferson Hills Budget

Mrs. Budd asked what was the reasoning behind this?

Mrs. Steffey stated in our finance committee meeting last week Mr. Drager had given two-to-three-year projections for the upcoming budgets. We discussed the need for having a potential special meeting because it is something that we cannot discuss in executive session. It needs to be discussed in the open public. We can have some discussion right now. I suggest that we do.

Mrs. Budd stated I would think it would be better to try to do as much as we can this evening.

Mr. Drager stated it is obviously very difficult to project a year or even two years out. We will have several different items that are going to be key in a few departmental budgets.

In 2021 we did the bond restructuring, which gave us bond relief of \$628,000.00 over the past three years. That will be up. Our debt will go back to what it was previously in the vicinity of \$485,000.00 in 2024 and \$493,000.00 in 2025.

We also will have a new contract for trash and recycling. We are projecting anywhere from a 30% to 40% increase. We will make some of that up with garbage user fees but that budget itself will increase significantly.

My projections were very modest on the capital projects because I am not sure what is going to make the budget for the next two years. In short, with the increases related to our benefits, contractual obligations, committed costs, operating costs and just the bare minimum we are basically going to have to close that gap. We typically use a little bit of the reserve fund every year to balance the budget. Fortunately, over the past few years we have been under budget. We have not had to use it. Next year, with all the major increases that are going to happen, there's a significant portion that we're going to have to either find additional revenue or cut at the very least. It may come from the capital expenditures which could hurt. Then, we will not be able to do some of the upgrades to the Borough.

Mrs. Steffey stated I would like to stress the sentence "find additional revenue". That will play into the other upcoming agenda item that we are going to discuss.

Mrs. Bucy asked since Mr. Niedenberger is not here, does this delay our audit for 2021?

Mr. Drager responded no, it does not.

Mrs. Bucy stated we have a lot of revenue that comes in, but you have your fixed amounts, Fixed amounts means your payroll, your expenses for utilities to run this Borough, et cetera. We actually use about 80% of this budget to pay payroll and the different types of necessities that we need for lighting, gas, and other utilities. We only have 20% that we use for additional sources.

How much do you anticipate we will receive for tax revenue this year, Mr. Drager?

Mr. Drager responded it is about \$5.1 million.

Mrs. Bucy stated 80% of the total general fund revenue goes to payroll, supplies, and transportation. We have 20% left to work with. I want to make sure the public understands.

Mr. Reynolds asked are these projections a public document?

Mr. Drager responded no.

Mr. Reynolds stated is there something that can be put on our website so the residents can be informed?

Mr. Stinner asked is this speculative?

Mr. Drager responded yes. These are projections that I put together based off of our three-year average, and a few of the items that I am aware will increase or decrease. Yes, it is very speculative.

Mr. Reynolds stated if we put it on our website, we just put this as speculation for what is going to happen in the coming years?

Solicitor Gabriel stated it is projected. It is not an actual budget.

Mr. Reynolds stated what is wrong with showing our residents? Residents should see how we are speculating on spending tax dollars.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated this is a forecast. Do you foresee a raise in taxes coming in the future?

Mr. Drager stated there is going to be a significant amount that we are going to have to make up. I do not think at this point in time we can just increase rentals and field permits fees to make up for that difference. That is why I was bringing it to the attention of Council. We have a healthy reserve fund. We were over \$1,000,000.00 surplus in 2020. I think it was about half a million in 2021. We also got the ARPA money for COVID. We are doing well with the reserve fund, but being able to balance the budget without using the reserve fund is why I am mentioning this. We are not going to be able to close that gap without dipping into the savings.

Mrs. Bucy stated would you explain the importance of having 65% in the reserve fund for the public?

Mr. Drager stated our reserve fund policy is something that is very good. Our bond rating was AA plus. AAA plus is the best. We are on the brink of upgrading to AAA plus. Like for personal finances, the more collateral you have, the more likely you will be able to get those lower interest rates. If certain things happen, just like over the past couple years, we have had several landslides. Those landslides are \$100,000.00 to \$200,000.00. We need that money for such unforeseen events. It also looks good for the bond rating and will save money in the long run with lower interest rates if there is debt in the future.

Mrs. Bucy stated we did have some major purchases of vehicles for police and public works. Because of COVID and the supply chain problems, we were not able to get those vehicles. If all of these vehicles that we contracted come in at one time, it will be a major expense. We have held money for the purchases, but it comes out of somewhere,. We hope they do not all show up on the same day.

Mrs. Steffey stated the money was still allocated for it.

Mr. Drager stated it has been 10 budget years that we have not raised taxes. We have grown significantly. There have probably been 1,000 to 2,000 homes built in that period. There are a lot of costs with these developments, for instance, street lighting. We cannot cut street lighting. There are a lot of

costs that are incurred and very little wiggle room. We have our fixed costs, and our committed costs that cannot be cut from the budget. We are limited to what we can do.

Mr. Reynolds asked do you see any harm with us sharing these projections with the residents as we speculate through this. It will give residents an opportunity to plan for their future.

Mr. Drager responded no; it is obviously not going to be what the budget is. I don't have a problem posting it.

Mr. Stinner stated the only issue I would have with that is it will cause confusion in the community if it is put up on the website as this is portrayed as avenue we are proceeding with. We do not know what it is going to look like by the end of the year. The fact of the matter is, there are a lot of variable entries into this budget projection that will fluctuate 100 times before we actually have to put a budget in front of the public. Putting something like this worksheet on the website will confuse the residents. We have a budget that we are following that was passed at the end of last year. We are going to do the same thing again this year because that's how municipalities budget. We don't put public worksheets on the internet because all it does is stir up confusion.

Mr. Reynolds stated there are Council people that have said that they wanted to make this Borough more transparent for the residents. This is an opportunity to be transparent. Give the residents an opportunity to look and see the forecast. If you put forecast on it, it explains that this is not going to be 100% of the budget. It gives us an opportunity to inform residents of what's down the road. If you want to use the word transparency, I believe you start here and you say, okay, here's some of the expenses that we have. This is where your tax dollars are going. There is nothing more transparent than that.

Mrs. Steffey stated we have that already in the budget that is posted on the website. Transparency is not at the risk of confusion.

Mr. Reynolds stated transparency is just not posting a budget at the end of the year.

Mr. Stinner stated it actually precedes the coming year.

Mrs. Budd stated how is posting speculation responsible?

Mr. Reynolds asked am I allowed to share my copy with people.

Solicitor Gabriel stated if you share it, it will have to be explained. It is not a formal record. It is a worksheet. Mr. Drager did indicate he had no objections to sharing it. It is very strictly a forecast.

Mrs. Budd stated will you be sharing any changes that might come from it every single time they happen throughout the year?

Mr. Reynolds stated I'll try my best. That's what we're here for.

Mrs. Bucy stated I think the point was made, Mr. Reynolds and I agree with you. We have been transparent with the fact that the years 2024 and 2025 are not going to be the same as 2023. We see that this is coming. Inflation has hit us just like everybody else.

Mr. Drager stated as of right now I do not see us making it without dipping a significant amount into the reserve fund to balance the budget in 2024 and 2025.

Mrs. Bucy stated that is a statement that we have made publicly. These numbers are going to go up and down. When you have a budget, there are only three roads to go down. Either you raise taxes to help supplement the income, you cut services that will save you money to make the budget, or you do a combination of a little bit of both. We are still trying to find out which of these roads will be the best to serve the community, and still make a budget. One example is road maintenance. I do not want to cut back on paving roads because everybody in the Borough travels on roads. That should be a top priority. Some things will be luxuries, some things are necessities. We as a council have to figure out what are necessities and what are luxuries at this point in time.

16. Discussion to hire _____ for the Park Laborer position in the Borough of Jefferson Hills Public Works Department

Mrs. Steffey stated we have 22 applicants narrowed down by the personnel committee to six. The Personnel committee will be interviewing on Thursday and Friday of this week.

17. Discussion to advertise one seat on the Environmental Advisory Council expiring December 31, 2023

18. Discussion to award the Borough of Jefferson Hills municipal trash and sewer payment processing and bill collection services contract to _____

Mrs. Budd stated we had three that were submitted in the fall that Mr. Drager had put together a comparison for, was there any more submitted?

Mr. Stinner stated there was not. Two proposals were reissued for a sewer and trash collection. If we receive any others by Friday, they will be in everyone's packet for Friday

Mrs. Budd stated the comparison in the fall between the two was very helpful.

Mr. Montgomery asked are these bids the same? How long are they good for?

Mr. Stinner stated we asked for a three-year contract. Two of the companies that have applied submitted previously in June.

Mr. Montgomery stated are they going to honor the prices that they submitted months ago.

Mr. Stinner stated I would need to compare because the RFPs are only good for 90 days. It may not be as good as it was in June. We have to take a look at what we are paying now and compare it to what they are presenting to us.

19. Discussion to award the Borough of Jefferson Hills pension investment services contract to _____

Mr. Montgomery stated there have been some changes that we were not aware of with one of the contenders. We are going to do some investigation. We want to make sure it's done correctly. We are not going to rush this.

20. Discussion to advertise Request for Proposal (RFP) for the purpose of designing a new website for the Borough of Jefferson Hills

21. Discussion to renew facility use agreement with the American Red Cross authorizing the Borough Administration Building as an Emergency Rescue Shelter

Mr. Montgomery asked what is a food service manager? Who will do that?

Mrs. Budd stated it would be for a facility like a school. The contract states if applicable.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated it has to be a contract from the Red Cross.

Mr. Montgomery stated Red Cross will do it, not a Borough employee.

Mrs. Steffey stated I read through this extensively. There is no fee charged by the American Red Cross. There is no fee that we can charge them in order to come in here for the services. The only thing that we are to provide as far as the Borough goes would be custodial services.

22. Discussion to adopt Resolution No. 13-2023 authorizing the Borough of Jefferson Hills to enter into the Settlement Agreements with McKesson Corporation, Cardinal Health, Inc., AmerisourceBergen Corporation, Johnson & Johnson, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Ortho-McNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals, inc., and Janssen Pharmaceutica, Inc., and Agree to the terms of the Pennsylvania Opioid Misuse and Addiction Abatement Trust

Solicitor Gabriel stated this is a class action lawsuit. It is something we should talk about more specifically in executive session since it is a pending legal matter.

I don't know if we have a whole lot of opportunities or any opportunity to really negotiate it. The terms are what they are, and we are a beneficiary. There is a substantial amount of money in the long term that will be distributed to municipalities.

Mrs. Steffey stated it basically stems to the county receiving a significant amount of money, which will be distributed to the municipalities who have entered into the class action lawsuit.

23. Discussion to adopt Ordinance No. 899 amending the Jefferson Hills Borough Ordinances No. 744 and No. 844 governing Public Parks to provide for uniform hours of operation and lighting requirements, and to provide penalties for violation thereof

Chief Dziezgowski stated it is going to unify or provide a uniform procedure for all the parks. Right now, different parks have different lighting requirements, hours of use and it gets confusing for the users of the parks, and quite frankly for everyone in the Borough including myself. This ordinance would provide uniform hours of operation and lighting requirements for those parks.

Mrs. Steffey stated we will have the appropriate signage also to coordinate with these times, which are now going to be streamlined for each of our parks, including Gil Hall Park, which was not included in the original ordinance. Every park will be lit from dusk till 10:00 p.m.

Chief Dziezgowski stated that will also regulate the access control at the parks for the bathrooms to avoid vandalism and to also allow for early morning users of the park to have access to the facilities down there.

24. Discussion to authorize negotiations to purchase South Hills Dek Hockey for an amount not to exceed \$500,000.00

Mrs. Steffey stated the \$500,000.00 mark is the asking price of said property as it stands on the multi list. This came to our attention because as we were already discussing our projections for the next few years that we needed to find another source of revenue. After Mr. Drager was contacted with this opportunity, he had researched the numbers and the financials, and we had a discussion regarding the pros and cons with our staff prior to this meeting. The owner of the facility is here today as well for any questions that council may have for him. Most of us did tour the facility.

We do not want to continually raise taxes. We are battling it out with the school every single year when they are raising taxes on all of us. I am a businessperson and when this opportunity came up, I felt that it was necessary for Mr. Drager to put some financials together. This is a turnkey business. The profits that extend from this are a revenue generating at least \$80,000.00 to \$100,000.00 a year. That is not even running this business at its fullest potential.

This to me is also two-fold because there are also opportunities. This is a nine-acre parcel. Some of the acreage cannot be utilized to add another basketball court or a pickleball court. There are places within this facility that our engineer has looked at and suggested that we are capable of adding two pickleball courts or a pickleball court and basketball court or playground equipment. We have the money to spend as Mr. Drager had informed all of us on council. We also constantly hear the recommendations and the pleas from our residents to add more recreation to this Borough. We need walking trails. We need updated parks. We need outdoor activities. We need places for seniors, children, everybody to go to. We are busting at the seams as far as finding a field or a baseball field or a recreation area for people to go to. Our homes are growing, our residents are growing, but our recreation is not. This is one of the main reasons we also began our comprehensive plan, We have those meetings, and everybody requests more recreation, somewhere to go. What we can do is take opportunities like this and turn it into another area for our residents to go to.

I felt that this was something that needed to be put in front of council. I felt that it was an opportunity that could generate some revenue to help us offset maybe an increase of something that was going to come up in the future. From what we heard from our staff members there seem to be a lot more pros than cons. The \$500,000.00 price is just a list price. It is not what we're going to offer.

It is right off of Worthington Avenue. There are not many of these facilities in this area. There's one in Brentwood and we believe one in South Park. These dek hockey facilities are very well sought after. This gentleman who is the owner has built up the business to where it's a well-oiled machine and these dek hockey leagues come in ready to play. They are ready to write their checks for the rental fees and he made it simple.

Mr. Gulla stated what you're doing is speculating.

Mrs. Steffey stated not necessarily. We have his tax returns.

Mr. Gulla stated you are speculating on the fact that this is going to generate down the road X amount of dollars. The economy is not getting any better. People are going to have to cut back on things. Maybe they're not going to spend the money to send their kid down there to play some dek hockey. They'll let them play a little bit of football, basketball, or baseball in their backyard. Mr. Drager said that it's going to be hard to meet the projected revenue that you're going to need for the next two years without possibly dipping into your reserve. So now, you're eating up money that should actually stay there for down the road in case of emergencies. Mrs. Bucy said, you have to look at what's necessary and what's a luxury. A dek hockey is a luxury, that's not a necessity. Paving the roads, keeping up with the Borough parks and recreation that we have, making things a little more tax worthy for the seniors. I don't care if it's \$300,000.00. That's money that can be used for something else in this Borough besides what you're speculating on.

Mrs. Steffey stated you are also speculating that we are not going to make the revenue that this gentleman has already filed.

Mr. Gulla stated all of a sudden he wants to sell. He is going to make a bundle of money on it.

Mr. Reynolds stated I think there is still so much more that has to be looked into. Mrs. Steffey was talking about other recreation areas that we could offer down there such as playgrounds or pickleball courts. We were talking in an executive session; we do not even know how many of the parking spots are filled whenever they have a dek hockey tournament. We do not even know if it's worth adding a pickle ball or a playground.

Mrs. Steffey asked why are you discussing things that we discussed in executive session?

Mr. Reynolds responded we are talking about this right now. You were talking about revenue. What's the difference?

Mrs. Steffey stated the revenue is public knowledge. It is the tax filings.

Mr. Reynolds stated my biggest concern is will it make a profit for this Borough? You can generate revenue all you want, but if it costs more to run, and it costs more in the liability of having it there, then it is a bad investment.

Mr. Gulla stated is it going to cost more down the road to run this than what it is going to be worth to even have it? There are senior citizens in this Borough that are on a limited income of Social Security that could use some tax breaks. They have to pay for their sewage and pay for their garbage. Give a little bit of reduction in their Borough taxes. Not just take this money and say, I am going to spend it and hope that it generates something.

Mrs. Steffey stated in my opinion, revenue is a necessity as well.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated the revenue that is generated \$80,000.00 to \$100,000.00, is that before or after expenditures.

Al Ernst, owner of South Hills Dek Hockey, responded that is gross revenue.

Mrs. Steffey stated it is not being run to its fullest potential. It has the opportunity to make more money.

Mr. Reynolds stated it also has the potential to cost the residents more money.

Mrs. Steffey stated it is a shame that people cannot think outside of the box in a business aspect. All you are thinking about is raising taxes because that will be the only option.

Mrs. Bucy asked what were the hours of operation? My concern is having an adult there to assist in running it.

Mr. Ernst responded on Sundays, we have games at 6:00, 7:00, 8:00, 9:00, and 10:00 o'clock. They are hour long games. Monday through Friday there are games at 7:00, 8:00, 9:00, 10:00. On Thursdays and Tuesdays, we put some earlier games in. On Saturdays, we will have three or four games in the mornings. We have 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, and 1:00.

Mrs. Bucy stated when we are trying to find somebody to help assist in running it basically they have to be working there at night.

Mr. Montgomery stated I would like to have some sort of geotechnical study done. I would like to see where the sewer lines are.

Mrs. Steffey stated those are all contingencies that would follow if Council decided to pursue an offer.

Mr. Montgomery stated I do not want to be stuck with something slides off the hill.

Mr. Ernst stated I had a geotechnical study submitted 11 years ago.

Mr. Montgomery stated I want a new one. Things change underground.

Mrs. Steffey stated we are not like Pleasant Hills. We do not have a Bill Green Shopping Center. We do not have a restaurant or shopping district that helps offset our taxes. It was on my list when I ran for council to try to bring more businesses to Jefferson Hills.

25. Discussion to authorize sending 2013 Ford Explorer, #257 Code Vehicle, (VIN#1FM5K8AR7DGC35189) to the Perryopolis Auto Auction in May. Explorer #257 will be replaced by a retired police vehicle

26 Borough Resident/Taxpayer Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Mr. Stinner read an email from Joy Mann, 2621 Ridge Road. "On behalf of the Thomas Jefferson Boys Volleyball Boosters, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Chief Dziezgowski and all of our law enforcement officers in Jefferson Hills, as well as the officers from Pleasant Hills and McKeesport who participated in the volleyball game on April 17th. For residents who did not know, TJ Boys volleyball team raised over \$7,600.00 to donate to Officer Chuck Thomas from McKeesport who was injured earlier

this year. Our amazing law enforcement officers came together to show support for our neighboring community in their time of grief and as a parent, I am grateful for the kindness and support that this fun game was able to show our boys on the team, as well as our neighbors who have been grieving an overwhelming loss. Far too often, we recognize our law enforcement officers only when tragedy strikes or when we are in distress, but this was just one of so many ways that our community shows their support and generosity to others. And I as well as I'm sure an overwhelming majority of our community, am grateful. Thank you.”

Tara Watson, 121 MacArthur Road, stated there are two streets that are involved, Lincoln and MacArthur. I am going to speak for the residents that live there.

There are probably 8 to 10 No Parking signs. They were placed there in the '70s because people would park on those streets for the high school games. There is no real value for the No Parking signs. It's a residential area. It involves Lincoln Road and MacArthur. There's one neighbor who calls the police on a daily basis. If you have somebody painting your home or you're having a graduation party or any kind of anything going on, or if you just run in to visit someone, she will call the police. They have to come because those no parking signs are there. They are so faded; you can't even tell they are no parking signs. I am requesting the council to review that area so as to potentially removing those because the police are tired of coming. It's a waste of their resources. They could certainly be helping someone that really needs them. We can't really communicate with her. I thought this would be a better way to go about doing that.

Chief Dziezgowski stated we will always come for a call for service. That is part of our job. I understand where you're coming from. Jefferson Hills has an ordinance for parking and no parking on certain roadways. Some places have signs, some places do not have signs. I brought it to Council's attention. Unfortunately, it is a low priority, but I understand where you're coming from. We will definitely look at it again as a Council because there are some roadways that really need it enforced and signs erected. There is a cost factor to that. Some areas like yours originally caused a problem with the games, but now they don't with parking. All of these things have to be reevaluated. That ordinance has to be reevaluated. I will work with Council, and we'll see what the best solution is.

Ms. Watson stated I appreciate that because it's an abuse actually.

Chief Dziezgowski stated thank you for your patience. Hopefully my officers took that into consideration when they answered the call.

Ms. Watson stated just this weekend there were four calls.

Mrs. Steffey asked Chief Dziezgowski is this something that would be your call, or do we have to revamp the entire ordinance?

Chief Dziezgowski stated we have to revamp the entire ordinance. We have to look at each roadway. We had a long discussion, there are residents that know the ordinance, call us but there's no signage up there, so we can't enforce it. The signage helps awareness and to enforce it on some roadways. On other roadways, probably back in the day they were necessary, but now they're not. I think just like any ordinance, we have to continue to reevaluate to see what is needed in this Borough and what is not.

Mrs. Steffey asked could we put this on our next agenda for next month?

Chief Dziezgowski stated for this roadway specifically, we can remove it from the ordinance. It is going to be piecemealed because we're doing one roadway at a time. That ordinance covers multiple roadways within the Borough.

Solicitor Gabriel stated we can amend the ordinance. It would be more efficient if we could do something more comprehensive.

Mrs. Budd asked would we have to amend the ordinance for each street.

Mrs. Steffey stated we would. I don't want to put all of this work on Chief Dziezgowski and the officers to get it done within a month. But, these residents have been contacting us for quite a while now. It's one area that I think we can help.

Chief Dziezgowski stated when we initially spoke about this Councilman Montgomery brought up some good points. There are certain areas that the residents want those signs. We have to consider that because of the area that it is in. There are some residents like these that want it removed. We have to figure out what the best course of action is. Do we want to just continue piecemealing it, and changing the ordinance every time something comes up? Or do we want to take a couple months and revamp the entire ordinance looking at the streets?

I don't want to cause more work, but I think that Mr. Volpe would be an added benefit to help look at this from a snow plowing and roadway maintenance point of view.

Mrs. Steffey stated once these signs are removed, if you do start having people park up there for games, there's not going to be any recourse. You have to look at it both ways.

I think if we can revisit this, at least this area, because it is directly across from the school, that is why those signs were put there. If we can just make this one amendment next month to the ordinance, I think that would be beneficial.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated thank you all for coming because oftentimes, we do not even know that it is an issue. It is greatly appreciated that you came to tell us your circumstances.

Mrs. Steffey stated in June pre-agenda meeting we will have the amendment for that ordinance for these two streets as long as Chief and Mr. Volpe give us the go ahead.

Jack Mills, 3026 Walton Road, stated about a month ago, somebody bought the Old Stanton Store Property and started moving junk in.. The Stantons are family friends of mine. I remember as a youth going to that store, and it was in pretty bad shape. There is no electricity to the building, no water, and the floor is caving in. There were three people living there, an older gentleman, a young man, and a middle-aged woman. A couple weeks ago, it got condemned and now they put a tent up behind the house and they're living in a tent. There are a couple people that have moved in around me and they're all great people. I am all for new neighbors, but what I am not for is all the filth. If you're living and sleeping in a tent in 30- and 40-degree weather, you're close to dire straits, I would imagine. This situation has the older folks scared. Trying to get ahold of people here in the Borough is almost impossible on the phone. I know a couple of the neighbors did call in. The building was condemned, now they are building a shack up on the hill, and they have a tent. Is that legal in this Borough? You are talking about raising taxes and buying a dek hockey, and we have tent encampment. I've lived in this Borough my whole life, and it's absurd to

think that somebody can buy a strip of land for \$5,000.00 and then move into a tent. It's pretty crazy to me. I have talked to one of the officers a week or two ago, and he said he got an email about it. He was going to investigate it. They put a port-a-john down by the road, that's their bathroom. This is going on in Jefferson Hills. This is not LA. Are we going to have 30 people living in tents behind my house? I just want to know the legalities. If these people need help, we will help them. They are bringing all this junk in and they're putting up shacks. I feel that it is a recipe for disaster.

In regard to the trash, I'm a single person, me and my cat, and there's a lot of widowers and widows in Allegheny County and in this Borough. I pay the same amount of money for trash, which I put out once a month, as a family of five or six. I'm just generating very little trash and then the next-door neighbors have six people and they're putting five, six, seven bags out, they pay the same amount that I do. That seems unfair. Please take a look at that and try to balance that out somehow.

Mr. Montgomery stated in June, hopefully, we are going to have a new contract. In the new contract, it is going to give some parity to that sort of situation. Everybody will get a 96-gallon container. You can put five bags of garbage in one 96-gallon container. The contract will require the hauler to provide that. Now for bigger families, they'll have to buy a second container. Since they have more people, they are going to be paying more for garbage containers.

Mr. Mills stated I'm not putting garbage out every week. I know a lot of older folks aren't generating a lot of garbage. I understand what you're saying. I am not generating that much garbage, but I still have to pay all this money.

Mr. Montgomery stated the way it is now, everybody puts whatever they want to put out and it's all paid the same. It's going to be a different system. Part of the thought and the specifications is to make it more fair to everyone.

Mrs. Steffey stated it's a step in the right direction. Unfortunately, we are at the mercy of these contracts for these prices as well.

Mr. Mills stated at least you are addressing it. I appreciate that.

Mrs. Steffey stated every time that these contracts expire, we shop them out for price differences. When it's a set price, that is what we have to adhere by with the contract.

Mr. Reynolds stated I do not want you to be misled. If I buy four cans, once I buy my four cans, you and I are going to pay the same amount. I think your question was whether a headcount should factor into that pricing. That's not going to rectify that, and I don't want you to be confused by that at all.

Mr. Montgomery stated that is the industry trend.

Mrs. Steffey asked Chief Dziezgowski to address Mr. Mills first concern

Chief Dziezgowski stated this is something that the Borough has been working on for several months. No one in the Borough is taking that matter lightly. This is a unique situation. First of all, it's a code enforcement situation, not a criminal matter. I have been working with our code enforcement officers to try to determine how to best handle the situation. We have asked our solicitor to do some research because the important thing here is the property owner. The actual property owner lives out of state. We

are still trying to figure out what the relationship is with the individuals there and what the agreement was allowing them to be on that property. The research is to find out what action we can do legally because whatever any one of the Borough representatives do, code enforcement or law enforcement, we have to have legal authority to take the necessary action.

Mr. Mills stated imagine if some Los Angeles illegals and others that are in that situation find this loophole in Jefferson Hills and then they start moving in by the dozens. Because that actual property covers the building and then there is 15 feet by 100 feet lot that is next door.

Mr. Stinner stated one thing that we have looked at periodically over has been the Tri-COG Land Bank, which is a new feature or new tool for local governments. One of the projects they're looking at is, is to address some of these issues you're talking about where there are these more or less shreds of parcels left over that are then sold to people. They go without being taxed for a number of years. They're actually working on a project to identify these to eliminate them in Allegheny County.

Mr. Mills stated the building is condemned because they were living inside of it. Now they moved up back to the short piece of property and put a tent up. Now, they're building shacks.

Mr. Reynolds asked are they entering the building.

Mr. Mills responded yes; they are entering the building.

Chief Dziezgowski stated we are still researching because the property owner lives out of state, and it's been difficult to contact them. One of the things that we have been investigating is the agreement between the property owner and these individuals. Our initial understanding is these individuals reached an agreement with the out-of-state property owner as a rent to own fixer upper. We're still having difficulty determining what the out-of-state property owner is doing with these individuals. I know it's taking time. I don't want this in Jefferson Hills, and neither does Council. It all comes back to the legal authority that we have to enforce certain rules. We can't just physically yank people unless the property owner says they're trespassing.

We are monitoring the situation. If there's criminal activity call our police department immediately, 911. We will respond. We will investigate. It's a unique situation. We're trying to solve it and when we solve it, we'll be better off for the next time.

Mr. Reynolds stated is there a building permit. If they're doing renovations, then they better be paying for a building permit just like anybody else.

Mrs. Bucy stated I found it on the Code Enforcement report. It says, unfit for human occupancy, 4/25/23 had a meeting with structural engineer scheduled, but had to reschedule. Code Enforcement will reinspect it in three weeks.

Mr. Mills stated I want to feel safe in my home.

Mrs. Ruscitto stated our planning commission is revamping our codes and ordinances. This something that we could address through a Borough ordinance for sure. It might take some time, but we can definitely address this in an ordinance.

Solicitor Gabriel stated there is some authority in the International Property Maintenance Code that can address it even with the authority we have now. There is also more demolition funding. We may be able to go down that route.

Chief Dziezgowski stated I don't want anybody getting hurt down there. If you see anything suspicious, call 911. We will respond. We will handle it so that everyone feels safe down there.

27. Reports

Fire Chief

Not Present

EMS

Not Present

Engineer

Nothing Further

Consulting Engineer

Nothing Further

Finance Officer/Treasurer

Nothing Further

Public Works Director

Nothing Further

Police Chief

Nothing Further

Mayor

Mayor McCaffrey congratulated the TJ Boys' Volleyball Team. They did an outstanding job. It was such a fun event to watch.

I would like to commend our police department for handling a very unfortunate situation that we had in the Borough quickly, professionally, and securely. They were incredible. Our EMS and fire departments were there to help with the quick aid. I commend all of them.

May is Motorcycle Awareness Month. The weather is going to start getting nicer and they're going to be out and about on the road, so please just be aware of your surroundings when you're driving.

Our Memorial Day service will be held at 10:00 AM at Floreffe Fire Hall. Following, we will proceed to Lobb's Cemetery, and then back to Floreffe for hotdogs and drinks.

Manager

Mr. Stinner thanked Chief Dziezgowski and other members of the JHPD who helped organize Bring your Kid to Work day last week. It was really a fantastic event that the kids all got a great deal out of. It is a wonderful new tradition in the Borough. I know my kids have already asked if they can come back next year. Thanks to all the other employees who gave up some of their time to discuss what they do for the Borough.

Chief Dziezgowski stated it was a team effort.

Solicitor

Solicitor Gabriel noted for the record Council and the Mayor did meet in an executive session prior to this agenda meeting to discuss personnel and a potential acquisition of real estate. We will also meet in executive session after this meeting to discuss an active litigation matter. We will not return to vote.

28. General Business

Mrs. Steffey asked Mr. Volpe for an update on the Beedle Park Playground equipment. I know the weather hasn't been cooperative, but I wanted to make sure it was on your list.

Mr. Volpe responded we fixed the benches, and we removed all the broken equipment.

Mrs. Steffey noted we are looking for grant opportunities to replace that entire area of old playground equipment at Beedle Park also.

Mr. Montgomery gave the SHACOG report. The finalization of the standard solid waste specifications is about done. It is a 175-page document. They going to meet with all managers on May 8th to approve the specifications and answer the vendor addendums that have been submitted.

The police chiefs met April 23rd. The active shooter training is complete. Driver training will be October 31st and November 1st. The Cooperative investigative team had no call outs. The Accident reconstruction team had two call outs. The SHACOG civil service test had 21 candidates that applied. The test will take place on May 18th.

As far as rock salt, the price on the rock salt will be \$85.65. That'll be good for six months, then the price will return to the previous contract price. Cargill has agreed to allow municipalities to store the excess salt at River Lift at no charge until the January of 2024. Then at that point, if there's still excess salt from this year's contract there will be a \$10 per ton storage fee.

For Act 152 demolition, the county was looking at starting that program this week.

CDBG 47, which is for July 2021, has five complete projects, one in progress. CDBG 48, that is from July 2022, all projects have been bid. For CDBG 49, we are waiting on the funding so that those projects can be submitted. There is more money for demolition in Act 152 than there is in CDBG. Act 152 is not income driven.

There was a concealed carry event at the Municipal Center that hit an all-time record. There were 1,119 permits issued. The previous record was 998.

I would like to congratulate the Public Works Department for taking on the pump maintenance. We will eliminate Apex from that process. Eventually we will have four pump stations. They took on the challenge and with help from Gateway Engineers, they are all certified. They are ready to go, so we do not have to spend that money anymore.

I just want to bring up a food for thought sort of a presentation. The redevelopment authorities you have all heard of were primarily based in cities and counties. The law has changed in 2020 and it includes all municipalities. This can be done to redevelop blighted areas in any community for recreation, residential, commercial, or industrial.

Mrs. Bucy stated the Cloverleaf Ecumenical Food Pantry has changed the next food distribution to Tuesday. Last Tuesday we were up to 160 families, and before that we had 120.

I would also like to give a special thank you to the Jefferson Hills residents who helped clean up this Borough. Once again there was bad weather for Earth Day. Some people still did go out on the roads. We cleaned up Elliot Road, Chamberlain Farms Road, Upper Gill Hall Road, and Worthington Avenue. The Boy Scouts were at Peter's Creek. I want to make some possible suggestions for people. The number one suggestion is please do not throw your litter out the window. I cleaned up Worthington Avenue and two days later I drove past and there was an extra-large pizza box and other litter on the ground. Please don't throw litter out your window. People that are transporting or moving furniture are not securing their loads on their trucks. Please secure your loads. That could be very dangerous for people traveling on 51 having these furniture pieces flying out on the back of somebody's truck. Recently I saw on the news that Allegheny County paid PennDOT \$500,000.00 for picking up garbage in Allegheny County. Across the state of Pennsylvania, we are up to about \$2 million for picking up garbage.

I would like to talk about the upcoming voting polls for May 16th. On these easels is an example of what is going to be at every voting poll. We have numerous people that are changing voting polls. If you did get a change in your voting poll, you should have received a notice from Allegheny County that you have a new voting precinct. Inside the notice, you will also have a certification of a voter registration change, and it will list where you are now going for your voting section. These two maps will be posted out front of the voting polls. Everybody's address is listed there by street name and house number. The reason for these changes was so every voting poll has no more than 1,200 people. On our social media page, there is a website where you can plug in your address, and it will tell you exactly where you're going to vote.

Mrs. Ruscitto thanked the residents for coming to the meeting to let Council know what's happening in their neighborhoods. Please know that you can email us or call us at any time that you need something, and we will definitely do what we can to help your situation.

I am here every third Thursday over in the community room by the library to discuss any issues, concerns, or problems that residents may have. This month it's May 18th. I only had one person this past month, and they just came to compliment us on a lot of different things. We can't do anything unless we know. Please don't underestimate being in the audience or having your voice heard.

Mrs. Budd thanked Jefferson Hills Recreation Initiative for hosting a very successful Kids Fish for Fun Day. I believe the top prize was a 20-inch rainbow trout. In total there were about 60 kids who attended. I also have to thank Jefferson Hills Police, Jeff Hills Fire Rescue, and Southeast Regional EMS for their attendance and participation. This couldn't have happened without them or especially without Jefferson Hills Public Works. I especially want to thank John Martelloni and Brian Haberstock for everything they did to ensure that this event went smoothly that day.

I also want to thank our engineers for all their diligent work on these voting district maps. It has been tedious and time consuming, but it is appreciated.

Mr. Reynolds stated in regard to the playground equipment up at Beedle Park, we still do not have any handicap accessible playground equipment. We should take a look into putting some handicap playground equipment in these parks and correct an error that has been going on for far too long.

With this new garbage agreement, maybe we should consider putting up some dumpsters. You are only allowed to get rid of a bulk item one time a month. These items are going to end up over the hillsides.

I would like to say thanks to Mr. Gulla for the passion that you show in our community. I understand your concern.

29. Adjournment

President Steffey adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m. on a motion by Mrs. Ruscitto, seconded by Mrs. Budd and carried unanimously.

John P. Stinner
Secretary/Borough Manager

Executive Session: Personnel, Lawfully Privileged/Confidential, Public Safety Preparedness, Litigation Peters Creek Sanitary Authority, et al. v. Clairton Municipal Authority, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, GD-17-017711; AUUE, Inc. v. Borough of Jefferson Hills Zoning Hearing Board, 328 WAL 2021, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County Appeal No. 871 CD 2020, SA-19-000748; PICCO Superfund site- potential litigation involving WESA and Ashland; Potential acquisition of real estate; threatened litigation from WESA, Patrick Lucas v. Jefferson Hills Borough, GD 22-004622; JHFR-162 CD 2023, 30 MN 2023; Nat. Casualty Co.-2:23-CV-429; AG v. GHVFC-No. 6007 of 2022