

Meeting Minutes

May 16, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. In attendance was Samantha Bartko, James Zieglemeier, Caryoln Romesberg, Mike Hutchison, Ken Milcarzyk, Nancy Sleasman, Melissa Cramer, Chief Robert Clark, Kevin Yoder, Attorney Ben Carroll. Guests in attendance were Jessica Hollada, John Baluch, and Larry Mazer.

Absent was Amy Jo Stout.

Jessica Hollada was there to show the Borough Council pictures she had taken of all the items the neighbors (Michael and Peggy Wright) have been doing to the alley way the Borough owns. She had taken pictures of the alley from several angles which showed the Wright's having a BBQ at the side of the house that her mother owns. They paved the alley which showed it has a lip on it and is unsafe because it causes a trip hazard. She pointed out where her mom parks her car and said it is on her mother's property and not in the alley and she was told if she stays behind the pins that mark the property line that her mother can park there. Larry Mazer was there to give updates on the Community Action Group. Grovesfest is on July 15th and so far, they have 5 bands and 4 food trucks plus the fireman will have a place there too. It is scheduled to start at 4 pm and will run until 10 pm. The trail that was mentioned last month is almost completed. Larry Mazer and Samantha Bartko attended a recognition celebration at Veteran's and Memorial Park earlier in the day. The recognition was for a \$5,000.00 grant from the Community Foundation that the Park Committee was awarded.

Kevin Yoder gave the engineers' report. The NPDES permit had to have 2 documents revised. He also gave a copy to the Borough Secretary. The other item is a quarterly testing discharge for DEP. He is moving forward on the grove project. There will have to be a title search done next which Attorney Carroll will do. The streetscape project is also going to the next step which is a safety review which will happen in the next 2-3 weeks.

Samantha Bartko gave the police report which was short. She stated that the police department handled about 20 calls last month.

Ken Milcarzyk gave the maintenance report. The Department of Corrections had inmates in Rockwood this week working on flood control weed eating and cleaning the catch basins in town. He stated that he has heard nothing yet about the pumps or the muffin monster.

Attorney Carroll clarified the separation of items for the grove project.

Samantha Bartko made a motion to pay the monthly bills and Nancy Sleasman seconded the motion. All were in favor. Sam made a motion to retroactively hire Glenn Romesberg on May the 15th at a rate of \$16.00 per hour with a 90 probationary period. Mike Hutchison seconded the motion. All were in favor. The finances were reviewed and Caryoln Romesberg was instructed to call the banks and find out terms and conditions regarding the accounts that we have with FNB and Somerset Trust.

The Council went to executive session at 7:55 pm. They returned to the regular meeting at 8:52 when the Wrights came into the meeting. Michael and Peggy Wright addressed the council about the neighbors' cussing. Peggy Wright argued with Samantha Bartko the cussing is an ordinance in the borough. Samantha Bartko said she can't do anything about the cussing because it is a First Amendment

right. Peggy Wright got so infuriated with Samantha Bartko. The Chief had to threaten to arrest her for disorderly conduct if she didn't shut up. The Chief made it clear that he was talking to her husband not her when he asked if he paved over the marking pins. The Chief then proceeded to ask Mr. Wright if he paved over the surveying pins in the alley. He answered yes, he paved over the pins. Chief Clark informed Mr. Wright that it is a summary offense to do that. Chief Clark said to him, "you admit to breaking the law." He admitted to the council that he did indeed pave over them. Attorney Carroll then proceeded to explain how the Borough Council functions at these meetings. He asked them what they were at the meeting for. Mr. Wright said they were there about getting the alley vacated. Attorney Carroll explained the Borough Code to them about the majority of the homeowners needs to agree and he said at one point the other party might have agreed but with everything you have put them through it was highly unlikely they would agree now. He then asked them if Attorney Leake was still representing them to which they answered yes. Attorney Carroll then proceeded to explain why Samantha Bartko said no that the alley would not be vacated. They (the Wright's) wanted to build a fence and it would block the way for anyone to access the sewer lines that run in an alley that joins up to this alley in question. Samantha Bartko then went on to let the Wright's know that she has spoken with the state police, and she knows what happened in Judge Stevans' office last Thursday and she is aware of everything that both parties were told. You were told by Judge Stevanus that you were only to utilize the State Police and the Local Police department only in the case of an emergency. Samantha also said that they are not to be calling the Chief 100's of times a week and her own PERSONAL cell phone that the Borough does not pay for. She then told the Wright's that this is not a paid job for her. She has a full-time job and serves the Borough out of the goodness of her heart. Peggy Wright then said who are we to call about ordinances being broken. Once again between the Chief and the Borough Solicitor they had to explain how the ordinances and state laws work. Mr. Wright asked once again for the council to vacate the alley. He stated that they have done everything they were asked to do. Once again Samantha Bartko said she wasn't going to sit here and debate with them and none of her fellow council members were either. The Wright's left the meeting at 9:07 at which time the Council went back into executive session. The council returned from executive session at 9:12 at which time the Solicitor instructed that a cautionary sign should be put in the alley where the uneven pavement is for public safety. Samantha Bartko made a motion to place the sign in the alley between 374 and 382 Broadway. Mike Hutchison seconded the motion. All were in favor. Mike Hutchison then made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 and Samantha Bartko seconded the motion. All were in favor.