

November 20, 2023
7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of Doylestown Borough Council was held on the above date and time in Council Chambers, with the following members present: Council President Jack O'Brien, Vice President Wendy Margolis, and Council Members Ben Bell, Larry Browne, Joe Frederick, Jennifer Jarret, Dennis Livrone, and Amy Popkin. Also present were Junior Councilperson Jack Swartley, Borough Solicitor Ernest Closser, Borough Engineer Jim Dougherty, Central Bucks Regional Police Department Police Chief Karl Knott, Borough Manager John Davis, Building and Zoning Director Karyn Hyland, Finance Director Caroline Brinker, and Planning/Public Works Director/Deputy Borough Manager Phil Ehlinger. Councilperson Curtis Cowgill, and Mayor Noni West were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. O'Brien called for a motion to approve the **October 16, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes**. (Margolis-Browne) The vote was called and the minutes were unanimously approved.

MAYOR'S REPORT: No report.

PUBLIC SAFETY - Mr. Frederick

1. **Harvey Avenue and Hamilton Street Residential Permit Parking Zones.** Mr. Frederick said that the residential permit parking zones on Harvey Avenue from Court to Union and Hamilton Street from Wood to Decatur permit non-resident two-hour parking on weekdays and unlimited non-resident parking evenings and weekends. Residents of those streets are requesting that those streets instead be resident parking only at all times.

Following the recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, a motion was made to authorize the drafting and advertising of an ordinance restricting parking on the indicated blocks to residents at all times. (Frederick-Browne) With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. With one abstention (Livrone) the motion passed.

2. Mr. Frederick said the **Doylestown Fire Company monthly report** was provided in Council's packet and is available to the public by following the packet link noted on this meeting's Agenda.

PUBLIC WORKS AND ADMINISTRATION - Mr. Browne

Mr. Browne reported that the Committee did not meet, but he wanted to comment on how well the Public Works Department did with assisting with the decorations delivery and the Christmas tree, and also their dynamic leaf collecting. He then asked Mr. Ehlinger for any

comments he had. Mr. Ehlinger reported they just started round two of leaf collecting and barring any unforeseen events, they should be finished by December 18.

COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS - Mr. Bell

1. **Resolution No. 2023-9, 2023 Local State Account Statewide Grant Program - Mercer Museum.** Mr. Bell said that this resolution authorizes the submission of a Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant application on behalf of the Bucks County Historical Society (BCHS) for the Mercer Museum. Grant proceeds will be used to modernize the Museum's elevator at a maximum cost of \$409,026.00.

Mr. Bell said that the grant program requires a municipal applicant, but the BCHS will be responsible for all project costs with the Borough to be reimbursed for any administrative costs. As confirmed by the Borough Solicitor, a separate agreement between the Borough and BCHS confirming this would be executed as part of the program should the application be successful.

Following the recommendation of the Community and Governmental Affairs Committee, a motion was made to approve Resolution No. 2023-9. (Bell-Jarrett)

Mr. O'Brien recognized that Kyle McCoy, President and CEO, and Cory Amsler, Vice President of BCHS were present. Ms. McCoy thanked Council for considering sponsorship of the grant application and provided some information regarding the elevator that needs to be replaced.

With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

ZONING AND PLANNING - Ms. Jarret

1. **Consideration of Ordinance 2023-12 Amending Landscape Requirements of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.** Ms. Jarret said that this ordinance amends the existing landscape requirements of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance by adding Red Maples to the list of approved plantings. The ordinance was properly advertised and reviewed in accordance with the Municipalities Planning Code. Motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-12 (Jarret-Margolis). With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

2. **Historic & Architectural Review Board (HARB) Recommendations.** Ms. Jarret said that at its regular monthly meeting, the HARB recommended the following for approval as submitted: **Sign Application:** 22 North Main Street, Miles City WSD LLC; and **Building Applications:** 317 Maple Avenue, Bob and Patti Carrier, for a garage - approval with a siding condition, and 169 Mechanics Street, Rudloff Custom Builders, for windows.

Ms. Jarret said that the HARB recommended that Council approve the applications in accordance with HARB's recommendations, and if Council wished to follow the Committee's recommendation, it could do so by motion. (Jarret-Livrone) With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

3. **Zoning Hearing Board Report.** Ms. Jarret asked Ms. Hyland for this report, who said that the Doylestown Borough Zoning Hearing Board held a Public Meeting on November 16, 2023 to hear the following applications: 24 North Main Street, Mars Investment Properties, LLC, which application was remanded back to the Zoning Hearing Board by a court order for the second time. She said the scope of the application was to allow the applicant to put in two apartments in the attic of the Hart Building, and the request was to reverse a 1974 Zoning Hearing Board decision and also to request relief from the parking requirements. Ms. Hyland said the application was approved, although there is no written decision yet. She expects more discussion on this matter next month; 75 West Ashland Street, Craig Sweeney, who requests a special exception change one non-conforming use to another, as well as dimensional variances to permit the conversion of the main building to add a three-bedroom dwelling unit; and, 77 West Ashland Street, Craig Sweeney, to modify a prior decision of the Zoning Hearing Board to enable him to expand internally into the lower level of an existing garage. The second two applications are being continued to next month so that the applicant can gather information and be better prepared.

Mr. Davis reminded Council that it authorized the Borough Solicitor to oppose the variance for 24 North Main Street, so this will likely be discussed in an Executive Session with the Solicitor to discuss the Borough's way forward once the written decision is received.

4. **Code Enforcement Monthly Activity Report** and 5. **Building Inspection Monthly Report.** Ms. Jarrett stated that these reports were provided in Council's packet and they are available to the public by following the packet link noted on this meeting's Agenda.

ENVIRONMENT AND RECREATION - Ms. Margolis

Ms. Margolis reported that the Committee did meet and that Ms. Jarrett covered the business in her report.

WATER UTILITY - Mr. Livrone

Mr. Livrone reported that the Committee did not meet and there was no report.

FINANCE/PENSION - Ms. Popkin

1. **Consideration of the 2024 Central Bucks Regional Police Department (CBRPD) Budget.** Ms. Popkin said that the revised 2024 Central Bucks Regional Police Department Budget was approved and submitted for consideration by the Central Bucks Regional Police Commission. She said that during the November 9, 2023 joint Council/Finance Budget Work Session, it was recommended that Council approve the 2024 CBRPD Budget, as submitted. A motion was so made (Popkin-Margolis). With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Davis commented that Chalfont and New Britain Boroughs already approved this in their final budget and this is now incorporated into our Preliminary Budget.

2. **Adoption of 2024 Preliminary Budget.** Ms. Popkin said that the 2024 Preliminary Budget is to be advertised and will be made available for public inspection for a minimum of 10 days prior to the Final Budget adoption. She said that changes can be made until the Final Budget adoption which is scheduled for the December 18, 2023 Council Meeting. A Budget Message, along with a copy of the Budget Summary, has been prepared for the public and the press.

Ms. Popkin said that once the Preliminary Budget is adopted and all changes are finalized, the 2024 Budget Books, with the schedules, will be prepared and presented to Council for its December meeting.

Motion to adopt and authorize the advertisement of the proposed 2024 Preliminary Budget (Popkin-Frederick). With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. The motion passed by eight votes to one (Ms. Margolis).

3. **Authorization to Advertise Ordinance Setting the 2024 Real Estate Tax Rate.** Ms. Popkin said that in conjunction with the adoption of the 2024 Preliminary Budget is the ordinance setting the 2024 real estate tax rate as follows: General Purpose Tax is 13.915 mills, Fire Protection Tax is 1.70 mills, Special Road Fund Tax is 1.50 mills, Ambulance and Rescue Squad Tax is 0.50 mills, and the Debt Service Tax is 3.725 mills, for a total millage of 21.34 mills. Motion to authorize the advertisement of the proposed ordinance (Popkin-Margolis). With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

4. **Authorization to Advertise Ordinance Setting the 2024 Water Rates.** Ms. Popkin said that also in conjunction with the adoption of the 2024 Preliminary Budget is an ordinance setting the water rates for 2024. Motion to authorize the advertisement of the proposed ordinance (Popkin-Livrone). With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

5. **01/01/2023 Act 205 Actuarial Valuation Report.** Ms. Popkin reported that the January 1, 2023 Act 205 Actuarial Valuation Report for the non-uniformed pension plan was filed with and approved by the Office of the Auditor General prior to the March 31, 2024 deadline. She said that for this filing, the mortality tables were updated to MP-2021 Public General, the assumed rate of return was reduced from 7.0% to 6.75%, and five-year asset smoothing was implemented. No action by Council was required.

6. **Finance Report.** Ms. Popkin then called upon Finance Director for the **Finance Report**. Ms. Brinker reported that Council was provided with a list of prepaid bills and a list of bills to be paid this evening. She said the total of all funds expended was \$841,648.52. Motion to approve the report was made (Popkin-Jarrett). With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously

PERSONNEL - Mr. O'Brien: No report.

PROFESSIONALS' REPORTS

Engineer's Report - Mr. Dougherty: No report.

Solicitor's Report - Mr. Closser: No report.

Central Bucks Regional Police Department (CBRPD) Activities Report. Chief Knott said the report was provided. The monthly activity report showed there were 847 incidents in the Borough in October and year-to-date, the Department spent \$5,630,933.94, and were at 82.46% of their yearly budget.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Browne congratulated CB West Football on a 13-1 season, and reported that their field hockey and boys' soccer teams were both second in their conferences. He also noted that Spooktacular and the Witches Ride through town were very successful again this year. Mr. O'Brien commented that credit should be given to Liz Wyckoff, the organizer of the witches ride, who was in the audience.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Donna Shannon, Steeplechase Drive, commented about the Central Bucks School District's recent restrictions on the public use of War Memorial field.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:30 p.m., President O'Brien entertained a motion to adjourn in memory of Rosalynn Carter (Margolis-Popkin). The vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

John H. Davis
Borough Manager

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