

ASHLEY BOROUGH

Donald Sipple, Sr., Mayor

John Gibbons, Council Chair
Donald Sipple, Jr. Council Vice Chair
Frank Sorokach

Gerald Maldonado
Donna Schappert
Brian Casey

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Greg Gulick, Borough Manager

William E. Vinsko, Jr., Esquire, Solicitor

ASHLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 5, 2019

49 West Cemetery Street, Ashley, Pennsylvania

Meeting Start Time: **6:30 PM**

Meeting End Time: **7:25 PM**

Attendance:

Gerald Maldonado-	Present
Frank Sorokach-	Present
Donna Schappert-	Present
Brian Casey-	Present
Donald Sipple -	Present
John Gibbons-	Present
Mayor Donald Sipple, Sr.-	Present
Borough Manager, Greg Gulick -	Present
Police Chief David Fedorczyk-	Present
Solicitor William E. Vinsko, Jr. -	Present
Andrew Kratz, Code Officer-	Absent

Meeting was called to Order by Council President **John Gibbons**. **Attorney Vinsko** called roll call for the Council, Mayor and Borough Officials. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Mr. Gibbons called upon **Jason Fitzgerald** of Penn Strategies to provide an update on the work they are performing for the Borough. **Mr. Fitzgerald** confirmed that the Commonwealth Financing Agency (CFA) meeting was moved to March, 2019. It was supposed to be held in July, 2018. They are looking at a DEP Grant for a recycling truck, and that will be addressed shortly. There is also a grant pending for the former Ashley Borough Municipal Building. **Mr. Maldonado** asked about the PennDOT Multimodal grant as the Borough was not successful in this round of applications. **Mr. Fitzgerald** confirmed that the Borough applied, but that the application was based on the Borough's Main Street project, and not specifically related to roads or bridges. The local legislators said that most of the winning applications were based on road or bridge issues. **Mr. Maldonado** asked if the Borough could apply under a second grant round and focus on roads.

Mr. Fitzgerald confirmed that the Borough could apply as it is always open. **Mr. Gulick** acknowledged that the Borough has a pending grant application for \$1 million for various roads and has already identified those roads. **Mr. Fitzgerald** requested that he receive a copy of the proposed roads to be addressed. **Mr. Gulick** said he would provide the same. There was further discussion of grants and the course of action should the grants be awarded. **Mr. Fitzgerald** said that the CFA meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2019, but cautioned that it could be delayed as they meet quarterly. **Mr. Gibbons** asked about the LSA and CFA grant timing as they relate to the Rails-to-Trails issues since the Commonwealth is beginning their work on the I-81 bridges, which will be a necessary part of that program. **Mr. Fitzgerald** said that the Borough can apply for the grant by April 15, 2019, so long as he gets more information on the overall project.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENTATIONS:

GERALD MALDONADO –

1. **Agenda Addition for February 12** -- **Mr. Maldonado** asked to add a resolution for the February 12, 2019 meeting to have the Borough pay for a sewer line on Preston Street. There is a woman who lives there and has been paying the sewer maintenance fee, and should have that cost covered. **Mr. Sipple** stated that if the Borough does that for one person, they will have to pay for the same thing for everyone. **Ms. Schappert** agreed. **Mr. Maldonado** expressed concern that the Borough is \$95,000 in sewer fee delinquencies, while some people are properly paying their fair share. **Mr. Sorokach** stated that he believes that there is over \$131,000 in that fund. **Mr. Hess** stated that he thought it was more.
2. **Paselo / Huber Breaker** – **Mr. Maldonado** asked about whether **Mr. Kratz** was citing Paselo for removing items from the Huber Breaker Property. There is an existing Court Order preventing them from doing so, and **Mr. Maldonado** wants to see the Borough continuously fine him on a daily basis of \$1,000 per day. **Attorney Vinsko** advised that the judge has to set the fines, and also that DEP has the right to seek contempt of the Court Order. **Mr. Gibbons** confirmed that **Mr. Kratz** issued a citation today. **Mr. Maldonado** stated that the citation that was posted was ripped off the fence.
3. **Blighted Property Grant** – **Mr. Maldonado** asked if the Borough applied for the Blighted Property Grant with Luzerne County. **Mr. Gulick** responded that the application for the County grants is every three (3) years, and the Borough applied for the roads. He followed that there is no specific grant for blighted property. Instead, the Borough can apply for what is called “spot demolition.” **Mr. Gibbons** said that the money left over from the initial \$75,000 demolition grant is now gone. **Mr. Gulick** stated that the Borough did not receive anything in writing to that effect from the County. **Mr. Maldonado** asked **Mr. Gulick** to look into it.
4. **31 North Main Street Tenants** – **Mr. Maldonado** asked if the tenants moved in. **Mr. Coleman** confirmed that they did as the property was inspected and approved by Ashley Borough. **Mr. Gibbons** verified that the Borough now has control over the building at 29 North Main Street.

5. **Vine Street and Hartford Street** – This is a one-way street. **Mr. Maldonado** requested that a “one way” sign be posted as people are going up the street the wrong way.
6. **Ashley Cruiser at Wright Township** – **Mr. Maldonado** said that he received a call that the Ashley Borough cruiser has been at Wright Township. **Chief Fedorczyk** stated that it is the K9 Officer. He works part time up there and because he is the K9 Officer, he is on call and it was agreed that he could use the vehicle in this capacity.
7. **Planning and Zoning Appointments** – Next week the Borough has to name people to the Zoning Board and Planning Commission.

FRANK SOROKACH –

1. **Council of Governments (COG)** – **Mr. Sorokach** stated that the Borough was late last year with street recommendations. He would like to see if we can announce streets earlier. **Mr. Gulick** stated that there would not be a meeting until the municipalities see how much money they have to work with. **Mr. Gibbons** asked that the Street Committee meet as soon as possible and come back with a scaled-back contingency plan in case the CFA either does not award anything or if the CFA postpones their meeting again. **Mr. Wickizer** suggested that the Borough use local people, such as Commonwealth Equipment or Mr. Halliday.
2. **Workers Compensation Hearing for Mr. Smith** – **Mr. Sorokach** asked if the Borough would have a person present at the comp hearing for Mr. Smith. **Attorney Vinsko** stated that we would since the Borough has comp counsel. **Ms. Schappert** asked that the Council be updated on that issue.
3. **Sewer Fees** – **Mr. Sorokach** asked if how the Borough is collecting sewer fees. **Mr. Gulick** stated that the Borough gets paid after the houses are sold. **Mr. Sorokach** stated he was concerned that the Borough is not filing liens. **Mr. Gibbons** and **Ms. Schappert** stated that liens are being filed.
4. **Andy Reilly / Luzerne County Redevelopment Authority** – **Mr. Sorokach** asked if everything related to the transfer of land after the zoning change was completed. **Attorney Vinsko** stated that the zoning was completed and the Redevelopment Authority did not follow through with their promise to transfer the land to the Borough. **Mr. Maldonado** said the Borough was to receive 2 parcels. **Mr. Gibbons** acknowledged that he was right, but the Redevelopment Authority did not provide them and he has maps to show where the new land is being offered.

5. **Cell Tower Payment Status (\$115,000)** – **Mr. Sorokach** asked about the status. **Mr. Gulick** confirmed that all of the paperwork was submitted and the check should be here by Friday.

DONNA SCHAPPERT – Nothing for this meeting.

BRIAN CASEY – Nothing for this meeting.

DONALD SIPPLE – Nothing for this meeting.

JOHN GIBBONS –

1. **Scott Martinelli to Use Borough Land for Parking** - **Mr. Gibbons** has a proposal from Scott Martinelli, the owner of the bank building to use parking for the former Ashley Borough Building. Mr. Martinelli will obtain insurance.
2. **29 Main Street** - **Mr. Gibbons** stated that he would like 29 North Main Street to be placed out for bid.

MAYOR DONALD SIPPLE – Nothing for this meeting.

GREG GULICK, BOROUGH MANAGER – Nothing for this meeting. Has matters for executive session.

POLICE CHIEF FEDORCZYK – **Chief Fedorczyk** wanted an ad placed for an alternative crossing guard. Council agreed to immediately place the ad.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MATTERS – **Clyde Harvey** stated that the Authority met last week, but he will defer the report until after the next meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Police Committee – **Mr. Sipple** read a letter from Mr. Pavelko, who is reviewing the Police Department policies and procedures in order to make recommendations. The letter is dated February 2, 2019 and gave an overview of general issues. He is still conducting reviews and updating the Standard Operating Procedures. **Mayor Sipple** added that he is still making recommendations and working with the chief.

Meeting Ended at 7:25 PM.

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