

October 5, 2020

The regular meeting of the Marcus Hook Borough Council was held on Monday evening October 5, 2020, 7:00 PM, in Council Chambers.

CALL TO ORDER

Josephine Laird, Council President, called the meeting to order. A moment of silence was requested for former Marcus Hook Borough Employee, George Huey, who passed away earlier today.

ROLL CALL

Present were Councilors William Cox, Cheryl Evernham, Paula Ewing, Joseph Flynn, Josephine Laird, Michael Manerchia, and Brian Mercadante. Also present were Mayor Gene Taylor and Borough Manager Andrew Weldon.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by W. Cox second by M. Manerchia to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and that they stand as written. All in favor.

APPROVAL OF RECEIPT VOUCHER

Manager advised that the receipt voucher for the month of September totaled \$202,345.87. Motion by W. Cox second by C. Evernham to receive and deposit. All in favor.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Borough Council was advised prior to the last business day of September the expected municipal financial obligation for the uniformed and non-uniformed pension plans in 2021, as required by Act 205 of 1984. The Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the uniformed pension plan is \$348,930 (343,712 for 2020) and for the non-uniformed plan the figure is \$27,868 (45,419 for 2020). Motion by W. Cox second by B. Mercadante to receive and file. All in favor.

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and October 16th is National Mammography Day. Breast Cancer is the most common cancer among women except for non-melanoma skin cancers, it's also the second leading cause of cancer death in women, exceeded only by lung cancer. According to the CDC, approximately 250,000 new cases of female invasive Breast Cancer and 2,300 cases of male invasive Breast Cancer are diagnosed each year. Death rates from Breast Cancer have been declining, and this change is believed to be the result of treatment advances, earlier detection, and increased awareness. A Mammography, or an "x-ray of the breast", is recognized as the single most effective method of detecting breast changes that may be cancer long before physical symptoms can be seen or felt. The Borough will hold a drive where we will be selling breast cancer awareness wristbands and pins for \$5 and Councilor J. Flynn donated pink and white, hand-crafted stuffed bears, we will be selling for \$10 a piece at the Municipal Building and Mary M. Campbell Library during the month of October, with all proceeds received to be donated to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. Motion by W. Cox second by J. Flynn to adopt Borough Resolution No. R-20-10, proclaiming October, 2020 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month and October 16th, 2020 as Mammography Day in the Borough of Marcus Hook, as well as resolving to donate all proceeds from our breast cancer awareness drive to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. All in favor.

Manager presented the Monthly Code Enforcement Report for the month of September, 2020. Motion by W. Cox second by B. Mercadante to receive and file the Monthly Code Enforcement Report. All in favor.

Manager noted folio number 24-00-00935-00 is included on the County's 2020 Judicial Tax Sale listing. This folio is an alley that connects Maiden Lane between 10th and 11th Streets to Washington Street. Manager is requesting Council's authorization to purchase this folio at the next Judicial Tax Sale. Motion by P. Ewing second by B. Mercadante to approve and authorize Manager Andrew Weldon to attend the next Judicial Tax Sale and bid on folio number 24-00-00935-00 in an amount up to \$5,000. All in favor.

Manager introduced for first reading Borough Ordinance No. O-20-4, to amend the Code of the Borough of Marcus Hook, Chapter 31, Article II, Employee Membership in the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS), to amend its Municipal Pension Plan administered by the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System pursuant to Article IV of the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Law; agreeing to be bound by all provisions of the of the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Law as amended and as applicable to member municipalities; agreeing that the System shall administer and provide the benefits set forth in the amended Municipal Pension Plan Contract entered into between the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Board and Marcus Hook Borough effective September 1, 2020; and, repealing Ordinance Number O-13-3. Motion by W. Cox second by B. Mercadante to authorize the advertisement of Ordinance No. O-20-4. All in favor.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mayor Taylor presented the Police Report and related statistics for the month of September, 2020. Motion by P. Ewing second by W. Cox to receive and file the Mayor's Public Safety Report. All in favor.

Jeremy Baker was sworn-in as a part-time police officer. Motion by W. Cox second by M. Manerchia to record and file. All in favor.

Manager reported that the Borough advertised a 2010 Dodge Charger as surplus property for sale in September, 2020 on the online municipal auction website municibid.com. The winning bid for the 2010 Dodge Charger was in the amount of \$4,900 from Jessie Schiess of Brick, NJ. Motion by W. Cox second by P. Ewing to approve the execution of a sales agreement with Jessie Schiess in the amount of \$4,900 for the sale of the 2010 Dodge Charger. All in favor.

Chief Ireland requested authorization to submit two applications for funding to purchase bulletproof vests for two officers. The first application will be submitted to Vest-A-Cop, which is a foundation started to assist in providing resources to local first responders in order to procure lifesaving equipment. This grant will fund up to 90% of the purchase of a bulletproof vest. The second application will be submitted to the US Department of Justice, which administers the Bulletproof Vest Partnership, a program designed to provide federal funds to state and local police departments for the purchase of bulletproof vests. This grant will fund up to 50% of the purchase of a bulletproof vest. The remaining costs to purchase two bulletproof vests, not covered by these two grants, will be paid from the police uniform operating budget. Motion by W. Cox second by M. Manerchia to approve the filing of two grant applications for purchase of bulletproof vests, one to Vest-A-Cop and one to the Bulletproof Vest Partnership. All in favor.

Chief Ireland requested authorization to submit a grant application to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Office of Justice Programs of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. The grant application is for the purpose of helping offset the cost of procuring Body-Worn Cameras for the Marcus Hook Police Department. This grant will fund up to 50% of the cost of the purchase, deployment, and maintenance of camera systems and equipment. The remaining costs of purchasing and deployment of these Body-Worn Cameras, not paid for by this grant, will be paid for out of 2021 Capital Budget dollars, which is still subject to final approval by Borough Council. Motion by W. Cox second by J. Flynn to approve the filing of a grant to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Office of Justice Programs of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency for the purchase of Body-Worn Cameras for the Marcus Hook Police Department. All in favor.

PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

Manager presented for the second reading and adoption Borough Ordinance No. O-20-3 amending the Code of the Borough of Marcus Hook, Chapter 191, Vehicles and Traffic, Section 74 Stop Intersections, adding a STOP sign on Green Street, North & South, at Third Street. Additionally, amending the Code of the Borough of Marcus Hook, Chapter 191, Vehicles and Traffic, Section 80, Parking Prohibited at All Times, prohibiting parking at any time on the South side of East Eighth Street. This ordinance was duly advertised on September 17, 2020. Motion by P. Ewing second by M. Manerchia to adopt Ordinance No. O-20-3. All in favor.

PARKS, RECREATION and SHADE TREES

Manager requested authorization to submit a Coastal Zone Management grant application to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection for the Market Square Memorial Park Delaware River Pier Removal and Reconstruction Master Plan. The purpose of this study is to perform an analysis of the feasibility, physically and economically, to replace the existing pier with a new and improved pier at MSMP. Matching funds are required on a one to one basis. Motion by W. Cox second by J. Flynn to approve the filing of an application for a coastal zone management grant for the MSMP Pier Removal and Reconstruction Master Plan. All in favor.

PLANNING AND ZONING

On September 1, 2020, the Marcus Hook Zoning Officer issued a Stop Use Order to TVM Investments, for property located at 18 East 10th Street, as the placement of storage boxes on the property does not comply with the permitted uses provided in the Central Retail District of the Marcus Hook Zoning Ordinance. The property owner applied for a variance to the Zoning Hearing Board. Motion by W. Cox second by B. Mercadante to oppose the petition of TVM Investments and submit written and/or oral testimony at the Zoning Hearing Board hearing noting objection to the proposed use. All in favor.

Letter was received from Thomas McLaughlin, III, 1023 Market Street, noting his interest to serve on the Planning Commission. Motion by J. Flynn second by M. Manerchia to appoint Thomas McLaughlin, III to the Planning Commission, term to expire on December 31, 2023. All in favor.

HISTORY

The Marcus Hook Preservation Society was positively acknowledged for coordinating the Pirate Festival held on September 19th, 2020 at Market Square Memorial Park. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was well attended and CDC guidelines were followed by guests. Motion by W. Cox second by J. Flynn to record and file. All in favor.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor M. Manerchia requested Manager Weldon get pricing on a PA/microphone system for Council Chambers.

Councilor W. Cox offered condolences to George Huey's family. George did a lot for the community and served the Borough in different capacities for many years.

Councilor B. Mercadante wanted to thank Random Productions, LLC for doing a great job with the most recent round of filming in the Borough. Councilor B. Mercadante informed residents that they would be out of town for a few weeks then want to come back to film at New English and the Pharmacy.

Mayor G. Taylor questioned what Council had decided with respect to Halloween and whether the Borough was hosting a trunk or treat, or not.

Councilor C. Evernham explained to residents that after careful deliberation by Council, they felt that having a trunk or treat was not the best idea, but would instead support the Rec Board putting together pumpkins with candy inside for each child who signed up for one in the Borough. They would then be picked up in a drive-by of sorts at the Marcus Hook Community Center.

This was met with some mixed reactions from residents, including Marie Swanson, Chair of the Recreation and Park Board who questioned why the Pirate Festival was allowed to happen and not trunk or treat. Marie noted that she looked at the guidance and she didn't see anything that would prevent a trunk or treat.

Councilor J. Laird explained to Marie that the Borough did not host the Pirate Festival, the Preservation Society did, and Council is merely following the recommendations from the CDC with respect to safe Halloween activities, as they have classified door to door trick or treating and trunk or treat as "high risk" activities for COVID transmission. This is new territory for everyone and Council is doing the best job they can, with the information they're presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Andrea Currey, 15 E. 9th Street, noted that there are problems at the parks in the Borough. She questioned whether the Marcus Hook Police can increase their patrol frequency of the parks. She further noted that there are no cameras in the park, and just today that a young girl almost got beat up and was chased home.

John Ireland, Chief of Police, indicated that he is aware of some incidents that recently occurred in Borough parks, but that these are public parks and it's both kids from the Borough as well as out of town kids, most recently involved in a fight and an assault. Chief indicated that the ages of children we're referring to here is between ages 7 and 12 years old. Parents should be supervising their children. If parents were supervising these children then this probably wouldn't have happened. Chief indicated that the Marcus Hook Police Department patrol the parks, and we can increase those patrols, but in the same breath these children's parents need to supervise their children. If there is a crime taking place, then residents should dial 911.

Shannon Harasymiw, 908 Church Street, indicated that her child can't even go to the park because if she does she could get cursed at, and the kids who are there unsupervised will start cursing at her as a mother.

John Ireland commented that there is nothing the police can do if kids are cussing, there is no law that's being broken, and ultimately it comes down to parents supervising their children.

Andrea Currey commented that she wants the parks shut down.

Manager Weldon commented that shutting down the parks was not a valid response to the topics brought up tonight. Further, if Council was going to entertain this as an option, they should survey a much larger portion of the population.

Councilor M. Manerchia explained that this was similar to the basketball courts that the Borough had open at a point in time and spend \$15,000 on to open up. Councilor M. Manerchia's thoughts on this are that it comes down to parents supervising their children.

Lorraine Daliessio, 1050 Yates Avenue, questioned families who don't have the availability to drive by for the Halloween event, could they walk by to get their pumpkin. This was confirmed by Manager Weldon that kids could walk by to get their pumpkins.

Manager Weldon reminded residents that the Borough of Marcus Hook would be hosting a Veteran's Day Parade on Saturday, November 7th, 2020 beginning at 12:00PM.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BOROUGH BILLS

Manager advised that the payment voucher for the time period from September 9, 2020 through October 5, 2020 totaled \$339,304.76. Motion by W. Cox second by C. Evernham to approve payment of Borough bills. All in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by W. Cox second by M. Manerchia to adjourn. All in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Andrew Weldon
Borough Secretary