

PLYMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING-JUNE 13, 2023

Mr. Cunningham – Urged residents to use the form provided when filing a complaint. This is the official document to use. Writing letters does not make it official. The forms are kept on file for future reference and are not subject to Right to Know requests. The blank forms are in the lobby and on the borough website.

If you see something happen, please call 911. The wall outside the building was damaged and there was a witness. This witness never called 911.

A few people have asked about getting garbage cans down on Main St.

Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Dixon attended the PA State Association of Boroughs conference recently and brought back a lot of information that they will pass along to the rest of Council.

Mr. Kobusky – added that it is very important to fill out the forms so things get documented.

Mr. Hogan – No report

Mr. Morehart – The Luzerne County ARPA Grant Execution package arrived. All documents have been uploaded to the County for finalization.

He has been in contact with Jim Diehl at Pema regarding the 2.5-million-dollar grant. While he could not guarantee the funds, he did say that the decision was coming in July.

In conversation with John Blake who is the District Director of Economic Development in Congressman Cartwright's office. I asked if we would have a better chance if we scaled back our ask. Mr. Blake thought that it would not be a bad idea. Adam am now in contact with Pema on how we go about doing that.

Hometown Heroes – He has received 20 new applications so far this year. That brings us to 147 banners total, which is awesome! In the future he would like to create an interactive website for the Hometown Heroes project and encourage families to send in stories about their hero so others can read them.

The SPCA contract is active. Putting a lost animal or an animal found on Facebook is not helping the situation. The TNR program is working but it is a slow process and takes time. Contact the SPCA and then post to Facebook so that the owner knows where the animal is and will have to go and pick them up. It does not cost you anything, but it will cost them. The animal is not euthanized. Being a responsible pet owner is not that hard.

Ms. Eroh – States that after last month's council meeting, we were awarded the LSA grant for \$183,000, to be used for the purchase of a new fire engine. Ms. Eroh thanked all who helped in getting the grant.

Thanks to the DPW department for the placement of the new planters downtown and for watering them.

The Planning Agency welcomed new member Ted Reese.

The agency initiated a new project called Keep Plymouth Tidy. This project is the first step to getting garbage receptacles back on Main St.

Mr. Thomas – We will begin replacing the electrical receptacles along Main St. These receptacles will be used for the Christmas decorations. Conferred with Mr. Hogan and stated there are 25 new decorations and a Seasons Greetings banner for across Main St.

Mr. Dixon – Questioned the garbage can idea and asked who would be responsible for emptying them. We have gone through this before when we placed cans on Main St. And there were hypodermic needles and household trash in them. Needs the planning agency to research and people need to cooperate.

Ms. Eroh – The DPW would be responsible for the removal as it is in every other town.

Mr. Kobusky- Maybe looking into a new design, would help.

Mr. Thomas – When we had Phillips picking up the garbage, they emptied them.

Mr. Kobusky – We use County Waste for collection at the DPW garage and the fire departments. They are getting expensive, so if we look into getting a new hauler, we can include those cans as well.

Mr. Dixon – On June 8, 2023, we had the inspection with the DPW. They did a great job! The DEP did state there were some things we needed to do. We will work on that.

PennDot will be issuing permits for the downtown projects.

We need to place bids for an engineer for the Coal St. Project because of the grant.

Mr. Thomas – Can't we use the borough engineer?

Mr. Dixon –He can be used but we still have to go through the bidding process.

On Main St. There is a big white circle that is over a manhole on Main St. It has been filled in but be aware of it and be careful. There are many projects going on right now along Main St. And Route 11. There will be delays so if you have an appointment be mindful of that and leave a bit early.

The shred event for June 10th has been cancelled and will now be on Saturday July 22nd at 9 am until noon.

Mr. Kobusky – I am going to talk about projects and money.

The Main St. Project that Bill talked about is about \$550,000.00. PennDot has been holding it up for about 2 yrs. because of all the right of ways. We need the permits from them then we will get started.

We are close to getting the contract for the new fire engine. This is a \$900,000.00 project for which we have funding for \$700,000.00. We are short \$200,000.00.

The Coal St. Project that Adam talked will cost \$2.6 million for which we have \$2.1 million currently. We received \$2 million from the county, and we put \$100,000.00 into it from the COVID money. I suggest that with or without the money from FEMA that we go forward regardless. We won't be able to do all the work, but we can get started. It will do the walls but won't do it all. We will call it at 2.1 million and see where it takes us.

The Beade St. Project bid came in at \$450,000.00, which is nowhere near what we thought it would be. We put \$50,000.00 into it, from the COVID money. We have to find the money for this project, it is a must-go project. I have some ideas which I will talk about when I get through with this.

The emergency generator contract has been signed and the project should start next month. The generator and other things will be ready in September. The cost is \$133,000.00.

The police cruiser will cost \$50,000.00 and \$50,000.00 has been earmarked for that from the COVID money. The generator got \$50,000.00 from the COVID money.

The paving project has been taken care of with the \$450,000.00 grant from the County. We have the money for that. So, the cruiser and the paving project are okay.

What he would like to see happen, if Council agrees is this. Right now, we have \$540,000.00 in the bank of COVID money. We have paid out \$67,000.00 for bonuses to the employees who worked during COVID. Only employees received this money, no elected officials. We have \$100,000.00 for the engine, \$100,000.00 for the Coal St. Project, \$50,000.00 for the generator, \$50,000.00 Beade St. And \$50,000.00 for the police car. That leaves \$190,000.00 in COVID money. Washington is looking into where COVID money was given and if it is just sitting in bank accounts. They are now getting our money back.

Recommendations: From the \$190,000.00 we put \$83,000.00 toward the generator which will pay that project in full. We are looking for \$200,000.00 for the fire engine which isn't something for today or tomorrow. Questioned Lori on the time frame to build, and she stated it will be 888 days from when it is ordered to build.

\$50,000.00 toward the Beade St. Project once the \$83,000.00 is used for the generator. That would leave \$107,000.00 which could go to the Beade St. Project leaving us \$293,000.00 short. We need \$293,000.00 for Beade St. and \$200,000.00 towards a fire truck. Ron's recommendation to Council is to shop around for a ½ million-dollar loan that would get paid every December for 5 years.

Have the money set aside with tax money in a separate account.

When we received the \$608,000.00 from ARPA-COVID we promised the resident that we would spend it as wisely as possible. With the \$500,000.00 and the grant money we will sit with a \$5,000,000.00 budget.

Mr. Thomas – Agrees. The longer we wait the more expensive things will get.

Mr. Kobusky – The fire engine is needed; our trucks are getting old, they're 28 years old but still in decent shape. The Beade St. Project is more than just a flap gate. The gate will stop the water from coming down the street but will not stop the water from coming up through that manhole.

Mr. Thomas – States that originally, they budgeted \$90,000.00 for that project.

Mr. Kobusky – Once the assessment was done water will come up as the river rises. In 2012 when the river rose the water came up the manhole which is directly connected to a big tube on Washington Avenue and came down Beade St. and over the 4 ft wall into the pump station. If that hadn't happened, it would have come through Plymouth. We have to make a decision on this.

Mr. Dixon – This has been going on for years.

Mr. Thomas – Since 2011.

Mr. Kobusky – We need to think about this and make a decision. We have 90 days and we are in about 30 days so hopefully we can make a decision next month.

Meeting was called to order immediately following the work session. The "Pledge of Allegiance" was recited and a moment of silence followed.

Roll was called and all council members were present.

Present: Mr. Earl Cunningham, Ms. Alexis Eroh, Mr. Thomas Hogan, Mr. Adam Morehart, Mr. John Thomas, Mr. William Dixon and Mr. Ron Kobusky

There were no citizens comments regarding agenda items.

Citizens comments regarding general items:

Micki Goodrich – Manager of Behold a New Thing on E Main St. Spoke regarding the garbage can issue. The business has a can out in front. People are using it and the business takes financial responsibility for emptying it. Suggested reaching out to other businesses to see if they would put one outside their building and take responsibility for it. They have had great success with their can. She thanked Council, Police and Fire departments on the jobs they are doing for the town. It is appreciated.

Mary Ann Meeker – Commented on the nice job fixing the house on the corner of Ferry and Main Streets.

Made Council aware that the 2 cans on the dike were taken down

Mr. Kobusky – Those cans are provided by the Flood Authority, but we can make a call to see why they were.

Mary Ann Meeker – Suggested signs and cameras be added along the dike area. She asked if there was a way to advertise what residents wanted to see in town. Suggested a flower shop and ice cream shop.

Ms. Eroh – In 2018 meetings were held for just this reason. There was not a lot of participation from businesses/building owners/residents.

Mary Ann Meeker – The chiropractor on Main St. Is no longer there, something should be done there.

Mr. Dixon – A great example, suggested getting with Alexis and using the resources available to the Planning Agency.

Mary Ann Meeker – Can we get 35 mph signs between Sunoco and Washington?

Mr. Kobusky – Should be 25 mph

Mr. Morehart – Main St is a state road and PennDot is in charge, we can't put signs there.

Mr. Kobusky – All of Main St is 25 mph and we can call ask for signs.

Louise Beade St. - explained issues she sees while taking her walks. There was a plant pulled out of the container by No. 2 area. She put it back in.

Mr. Dixon – Inquired when so cameras could be looked at

Louise – gave approximate day and time. Added that the car repair shop in Main St. has trash, old cars etc. Something should be done about that.

Mr. Thomas – The Code Enforcement Office is handling the problem and it will be rectified.

Louise – Discussed more garbage issues.

Laura Keller – Library Director, Plymouth Library – The week of 5/22/23 was National Public Works week. The library had members of fire, Officer Ali Baloga from the police and 1 member from the DPW come to the library. They spoke about their jobs to the kids and educated them about each

department. Lori Bolesta and Officer Ali showed positive female presence. Laura thanked all who participated

On 6/24/23 the library will be celebrating their 83rd anniversary. She invited the public to come in and visit and have a cupcake, compliments of the library. She thanked Jarrid from DPW for helping to move shelving allowing for more room in the kids' area.

AGENDA VOTING:

Motion made to rescind the motion concerning Benjamin Keliojor concerning the Borough Council decision not to appoint him to a permanent position with the Plymouth Borough Police Department based upon his conduct and fitness during his probationary period at a special meeting held December 1, 2021.

Motion: Mr. Thomas
2nd: Mr. Cunningham
Vote: 7 yes

Motion made to accept the resignation letter from Benjamin Keliojor effective December 1, 2021.

Motion: Ms. Eroh
2nd: Mr. Thomas
Vote: 7 yes

Motion made to accept and approve the attached release of settlement agreement signed by Benjamin Keliojor and further move to authorize Ron Kobusky, President of Council, to sign the attached release and settlement agreement on behalf of the Borough and approve the Borough Secretary to attest to his signature and affix the Borough Seal thereto.

Motion: Mr. Dixon
2nd: Mr. Cunningham
Vote: 7 yes

Motion made to appoint James Coslett, who has successfully completed his probationary period, to full-time position as a Plymouth Borough Police Officer with all the rights, duties and obligations of that position including benefits, terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement that exists between the Borough and the Police Officers Association. Tis appointment is effective immediately and his salary will be \$28.04.

Motion: Mr. Morehart
2nd: Ms. Eroh
Vote: 7 yes

Motion made to accept the resignation letter from Robert Lushefski dated May 26, 2023 from part-time position as Code Enforcement Officer.

Motion: Mr. Cunningham

2nd: Mr. Dixon

Vote: 7 yes

Motion made to accept the Liquid Fuels audit for 2021 and reimbursement of \$1,335.00 back to the Borough Liquid Fuels account.

Motion: Ms. Eroh

2nd: Mr. Morehart

Vote: 7 yes

Motion to accept the Entrance letter of engagement from Zavada and Associates to begin the annual audit of the borough's financial statements and books for 2022 at a cost of \$9,250.00.

Motion: Mr. Dixon

2nd: Mr. Thomas

Vote: 7 yes

Motion made to pay invoice from Kuharchik Construction for repairs to the pedestrian signal at the corner of E Main Street and Eno Street in the amount of \$7,784.00. The sign was damaged by a Dollar General truck and the borough will seek restitution.

Motion: Mr. Morehart

2nd: Ms. Eroh

Vote: 7 yes

Motion to pay PennEastern invoice in the amount of \$3,610.00 for engineering services for the Beade Street Flood Gate project.

Motion: Mr. Dixon

2nd: Mr. Cunningham

Vote: 7 yes

Motion to accept the fire and police reports for May:

Motion: Mr. Cunningham

2nd: Mr. Morehart

Vote: 7 yes

Motion to pay the monthly bills:

GENERAL FUND: 23-378GF – 23-482GF

LIQUID FUELS: 23-077LF – 23-089LF

RECREATION FUND: 23-018RF – 23-020RF

Motion: Mr. Morehart

2nd: Mr. Cunningham

Vote: 7 yes

*On the question: Mr. Thomas voted yes to all bills except for bill #23-437GF, which he has a contractual conflict of interest.

Motion to adjourn was made at 6:55PM by Mr. Cunningham

Respectfully submitted by:



Gail Burdulis, Borough Secretary

Approved regular meeting July 6, 2023