



MINUTES

Borough of Ambridge – Workshop Meeting of Borough Council

Tuesday, February 28th, 2023 – 6:30 PM

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Present: Mr. Cafarelli
Ms. DeVincent
Mr. Dunn
Ms. Gilliam
Mrs. Miller
Ms. Tessaro

Also Present: Mr. Leone, Fire Chief Larrick, Chief DeLuca

Absent: Mr. Gill, Mayor McCoy

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Presentation: Thomas Anundson, Consulting Forester

Mr. Anundson introduced his company and credentials of his company. Their loyalty is strictly to the client. They have no association with timbering companies. Mr. Anundson outlined the scope of the project and an overview of the life of a tree and forest. The goal is to thin the forest and remove as many dead, stagnant, and dying trees as they can, while promoting young trees and saplings. In the project, 229 trees have been marked for removal over approximately 30 acres (less than 8 trees per acre). The average number of trees 12 inches or larger in diameter is 41. Some areas have more per acre, and some have fewer. Areas closer to the recreational areas of the park have fewer for aesthetic reasons. No areas will be clear cut. Some of the areas where more trees are marked are part of a process called “seed tree release” or “shelter wood” to allow sunlight in where there is abundant new regeneration available. Hillsides were avoided so no slips or slides would occur, and no streams will be crossed in the process. Buffers have been established along the creeks in accordance with Pennsylvania’s best management practices and guidelines. Bids were sent to fourteen companies. Signed bids were received from four companies; with the high bid of \$60,000.00 submitted by Denoon Lumber Company. Other bids were \$48,000.00 from Lapinski Logging & Lumber, \$38,464.00 from Omega Lumber, and \$17,500.00 from Springfield Hardwoods. Mr. Anundson has worked with Denoon Lumber many times over the past 30 years, know all of their personnel and has never had an issue with them. They pay on time, their crews do excellent work in the woods, and they always meet their contractual obligations in full. The contract was prepared by Mr. Anundson between the Borough and the logging contractor in conjunction with the Borough Solicitor, who reviewed and approved it with no recommended changes. The contract is five pages and covers everything including the logging activities, trash removal, fire prevention, and final site retirement. Also includes a 25-page erosion control plan and will be submitted to the Beaver County Conservation District for approval. All local roads will be bonded for use and prior notification will be provided to the Borough before any activity begins. One log loading area will be used which is out of sight of the non-forested areas. Logging will only be allowed during stable soil and weather

conditions. We will work with the lumber contractor to install trails correctly and ensure proper erosion controls are always in place. On-site operations should only last 2-3 weeks, weather permitting, with two trucks per day hauling logs through the park. Warning signs will be posted to make park visitors aware while the loggers are on site. While the loggers work, Anundson does inspections to ensure that only those trees marked for removal are taken and that the contractor adheres to contract requirements. Once the logging is finished, all trails are to be properly retired to control erosion, the log loading area will be seeded and mulched to stabilize the soil there. Mr. Anundson stated he understands the concerns of local citizens and those who don't understand how a professionally managed timber harvest project works. Timber harvesting is just one of many tools in long-term forest management. He is available any time for any questions anyone may have; the Borough has his contact information.

Mr. Cafarelli asked if Anundson Consulting did work at the Ambridge reservoir. Mr. Anundson stated that his father was also a forester from Sheffield, PA, that was a different company (Anundson & Company), and they had a problem with a pipe that was put in, but that wasn't Anundson Consulting.

Mrs. Miller indicated that she has a multitude of questions and would like to meet with them. Mr. Anundson stated he is available.

IV. Public Comment on/off *Agenda Items* (5 minutes per speaker)

Jake Bajek – 1115 Ridge Road Ambridge (1101 Merchant Street) – Stated he is a professional civil engineer and has property at 1101 Merchant Street in Ambridge. He has a prepared presentation and sent his concerns to Council. He appreciated Mr. Anundson speaking with him prior to the meeting and Mr. Leone providing a lot of information, Ms. Tessaro and Mrs. Miller being in touch also. He provided a presentation of his concerns. He doesn't feel this should be voted on today since it is a big deal and to consider all the possible repercussions that come along with this. He doesn't feel it would be appropriate to vote on it today. Mr. Bajek provided a presentation outlining his concerns. Mr. Anundson had addressed some of his concerns during his presentation. Was the Tree Commission consulted about this project? Alternatives: Grant Funding for Parks? DCED Greenways Due April 6? Tree City USA status. Want to be good stewards of the environment. This should be considered further before being voted on tonight.

Mrs. Miller thanked Jake for putting so much effort in his presentation and assured him that Council would not make a vote on this tonight. Also, would Jake be willing to walk the areas with her and he agreed.

Mr. Leone stated Jake did a great job in his presentation. The \$60,000.00 would be designated to park improvements. Mr. Leone also expressed concern about the number of tires in the pictures. It would be a major undertaking to have those removed and the money from this project would not come close to cover those costs. He also outlined some of the grant projects currently in the works. He described how the \$60,000 could turn into \$600,000 in grants for projects in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan.

Mrs. Miller stated that it's not about the money; the parks are in need of repair.

Mr. Cafarelli immensely agrees with Mrs. Miller. Feels we should wait to see what will be done in the park; his opinion is we should only cut trees that are for a purpose for something we have to do. He had voiced his opinion at a previous meeting, and it wasn't good because the amount of acreage at Borough Park (40 acres). When he had his 40 acres logged in Economy Borough his dad said it was the biggest mistake he ever made.

Mike Mikulich – 940 Ohioview – Mr. Mikulich stated that he is on the Tree Commission and the Tree Commission was never approached. Mr. Leone acknowledged that the Tree Commission was not approached. Mr. Mikulich stated it is part of the ordinance they

must be consulted. What was shown on the screen that the Tree Commission must approve it in order for it to be addressed before it gets to Council. This process is wrong and illegal and should never have happened before all the other stuff had taken place. You can't do this, and you have been doing this for a long time. The ordinance also says that anybody who votes for this without getting DEP approval can be fined \$500.00. You have to get DEP approval because you have a watershed up there and a dump. Back in the late 80's and Mr. Cafarelli should know this, the dump was going to cost us anywhere from \$8-\$10 million to clean up. Instead, we covered it up with DEP approval. Every year, DEP comes back to that site, checks the watershed, and checks the dump to make sure nothing has been disturbed, including those tires. You have to get their (DEP) approval to get the tires out of there. Based on the yearly DEP reports, those tires are not to be disturbed up there. If you disturb that dump in any way, shape or form, this Council, this Borough will be liable to get that dump cleaned up. Because the DEP will not come back to you and allow you to fill over like we did. Mr. Mikulich's suggestion is to do your homework, you know it's not right to do it, get the Tree Commission involved like they should have from the very beginning, and you've been ignoring us on the trees (not all of them). On Park Road there is a big mound of dirt where they cut the trees down, will that be leveled out? Mr. Leone confirmed that will be taken care of. Mr. Leone also stated that there is a DEP permit that we would need to get that Mr. Anundson can speak to about the erosion control that the Beaver County Conservation District would look at for the logging program. Mr. Anundson also stated that the Beaver County Conservation District handles it for the DEP.

Dana Pazzanita – 428 Park Road – I know everyone on Council. I'm a lifelong member of Ambridge and I love Borough Park. I have taken all my daughters. I was a lifeguard there. I was told the whole property was given to Ambridge for a dollar by a gentleman was never to be developed. It could only be used for a playground, a swimming pool which was covered up probably due to some mismanagement somehow, but it was never to be wrecked with. My question when you first thought of the idea, was it just the money? Mr. Leone stated that when he served in Hopewell Township as an elected official it was done there, and Mr. Anundson was the consultant. It was then done another time during his term (it can be done every 10 years). It was done again two years ago for a third time. It was successful. The funds were used to buy an additional 40 acres across from Hopewell Park. Also, they have built an amphitheater in their park. Mr. Leone was looking at an opportunity to find monies, as Jake stated, there are grants out there, but you have to have money to match them. Ms. Pazzinata then asked if we have already spent money for the Solicitor to start writing things without us coming here today. Mr. Leone stated that the Solicitor reviewed the contract. Ms. Pazzinata is concerned that we've already spent money, but nothing has been approved. Then Ms. Pazzinata questioned about a \$30,000.00 sound system that was purchased. Ms. Tessaro advised Ms. Pazzinata not to believe everything she reads on Facebook.

Angela & Keith Myers – 3089 Woodland Road (Harmony Township) – We use this park all the time. I have no problem with logging, selective logging. I don't have a degree in forestry, but I think 229 is really high, really high. When you look at the number of trees that are there and what it will do for soil erosion for the runoff, you're taking all of that out of the air purification system...sorry I just don't think that many is a great idea; and where you're talking about, you're denuding the soil. What are your going to do...are you going to put some grass down and you're going to put some mulch down, then after that, then what? Because it doesn't have the deep root system to keep the soil in place that the trees do. Sorry...not a fan.

Cindy Horvatin – 515 Pine Street – I am glad that you're not going to vote on this tonight because I think everybody's concerns and questions need answered much, much further. I'm not going to go about that because it's been covered quite a bit. My concern tonight is the bridge. The concern is the age and that it carries our water across to us and I'm wondering what can be done to have all of the overweight semis from crossing it all the time and causing confusion in town with the traffic and not being able to make turns and things like that. Is there any study going on about this because, can something be done like I noticed up at the Ambridge Regional Distribution & Manufacturing, they have a sign up that says "no tractor/trailer access"? Could we not change that 17 ton sign on the bridge on each side and have "no tractor/trailer access" so that maybe the bridge could be saved a little longer before it falls apart and we don't have a new one to cross. Ms. Tessaro stated that our bridge is actually owned by the County, so it's not "our" bridge. As far as removing semis from it, I'm not sure how they would; it would send them across a different bridge, but I don't know if that's really saving much if it's damaging a different bridge. We have looked into this. As far as the water, that would be a Water Authority question and we don't deal with that. Mr. Cafarelli advised that Ms. Horvatin would have to go to a Commissioner's meeting at the Courthouse to ask. Ms. Tessaro advised that we aren't even permitted to salt the bridge in the winter. Mrs. Miller stated that it does need replaced and it does have our main water line; however, we can't replace it obviously. The Police officers do monitor trucks going over. It needs to be addressed and we have made the Commissioners aware of, but we can't fix it.

Bill Balkovic – 1663 Henrici Street – I have a question, when did anybody on Council approve the purchase of those trucks, the two pickup trucks? Ms. Tessaro advised that yes. Mr. Balkovic asked when? Ms. Tessaro stated it was approved months ago. Mr. Balkovic asked what are they going to use them for? Mr. Leone advised for patrol. Mr. Balkovic stated that you used grant money, but how much more did you have to pay? Mr. Leone advised that the pickup truck costs less than an Explorer; \$38,000.00. Another question (and I know the Chief isn't going to appreciate this), but I'm a crossing guard at 5th and Glenwood. Daily no matter what time I'm there, they fly through the roadway. One day I had 10 people go through that red light and I've been asking and one officer was there for one hour and he pulled over four people. The Chief will tell me he can't have someone there all day. I'm not asking for that but if they had a cop there say twice a week, the revenue they could bring in would be amazing. There was an accident up there today on 6th Street and it's going to happen on 5th either there's going to be a bad accident or a kid's going to get hurt. Now, I asked the Chief and he says he can't have someone there all day. I understand that, but safety issues are involved and somebody's going to get hurt. The Chief stated that that was a pursuit, not an accident. Harmony Township was in a pursuit today that resulted in an accident.

Mrs. Miller asked if Mr. Leone could show the slides about the new park now since so many people leave after the public comments section of the agenda. Mr. Leone provided an overview of the new Henning Street Park. Mrs. Miller advised that the property was donated to the Borough. The Recreation Committee wanted to go above and beyond and with Mr. Leone's help acquired all the funding. Some people may not like the location, but it's a place for kids to play and will be fenced in with a six-foot fence and there will be security cameras. Mr. Leone showed pictures of the proposed playground from different views. There are two playground areas (\$250,000.00). There is a conceptual view of the pavilion on the site. The splash pad (\$500,000.00 investment). There was a \$750,000.00 grant and the Borough is only having to put in \$200,000.00. If this is moved on today, we are hoping it will be built this summer.

V. New Business

1. Consider Action to award Timbering Bid to High Bidder Denoon Lumbering Co. in the amount of \$60,000.00 as recommending by Thomas Anundson, Consulting Forester. **Motion** by Mr. Cafarelli to table vote on Timbering Bid to high bidder Denoon Lumbering Co.; seconded by Mr. Dunn.

Comment by Mrs. Miller that we will not make any action on this and let the public know that we are going to explore and walk to wood together. Ms. Tessaro commented that Council doesn't make any action outside of this meeting. Our minutes are on-line and available to the public.

Council	Vote		Council	Vote
Mr. Cafarelli	Yes		Ms. Gilliam	Yes
Ms. DeVincent	Yes		Mrs. Miller	Yes
Mr. Dunn	Yes		Ms. Tessaro	Yes
Mr. Gill				
Mayor McCoy			Motion Carried	6-0

2. Consider Action to approve the recommendation from the Recreational Committee to move forward with the ordering equipment for the Splash Pad, Playground, and Shelter as presented.

Motion by Mrs. Miller to approve the recommendation from the Recreation Committee to move forward with ordering equipment for the Splash Pad, Playground, and Shelter as presented; seconded by Mr. Cafarelli.

Council	Vote		Council	Vote
Mr. Cafarelli	Yes		Ms. Gilliam	Yes
Ms. DeVincent	Yes		Mrs. Miller	Yes
Mr. Dunn	Yes		Ms. Tessaro	Yes
Mr. Gill				
Mayor McCoy			Motion Carried	6-0

3. Consider Action to above the 2023 Fee Schedule. *(Only revisions are the MDIA Building Permit/Inspection).*

Motion by Mrs. Miller to approve the 2023 Fee Schedule; seconded by Ms. Gilliam.

Comment by Mr. Leone to explain that this revision is primarily the increase in the cost from MDIA they do the building inspections, electrical, mechanical, etc. and in order to make the fee schedule enforceable, we have to update our schedule with their new fees.

Council	Vote		Council	Vote
Mr. Cafarelli	Yes		Ms. Gilliam	Yes
Ms. DeVincent	Yes		Mrs. Miller	Yes
Mr. Dunn	Yes		Ms. Tessaro	Yes
Mr. Gill				
Mayor McCoy			Motion Carried	6-0

4. Consider Action to approve the Progress Payment Request No. 2 for the Storm Sewer Improvement Project from Jet Jack Inc in the amount of \$130,141.49 as recommended by the Borough Engineer.

Motion by Mrs. Miller to approve the Progress Payment Request No. 2 for the Storm Sewer Improvement Project from Jet Jack, Inc., in the amount of \$130,141.49 as recommended by the Borough Engineer; seconded by Mr. Dunn.

Council	Vote		Council	Vote
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Mr. Cafarelli	Yes		Ms. Gilliam	Yes
Ms. DeVincent	Yes		Mrs. Miller	Yes
Mr. Dunn	Yes		Ms. Tessaro	Yes
Mr. Gill				
Mayor McCoy			Motion Carried	6-0

5. Consider Action to accept the low bid in the amount of \$78,900.00 to Avelli Construction for the construction a new Salt Storage Shed as recommend by the Borough Engineer.
Motion by Mr. Dunn to accept the low bid in the amount of \$78,900.00 to Avelli Construction for the construction of a new Salt Storage Shed as recommended by the Borough Engineer; seconded by Ms. Gilliam.
Comment by Mr. Leone to explain the bidding process and where the money is coming from.

Council	Vote		Council	Vote
Mr. Cafarelli	Yes		Ms. Gilliam	Yes
Ms. DeVincent	Yes		Mrs. Miller	Yes
Mr. Dunn	Yes		Ms. Tessaro	Yes
Mr. Gill				
Mayor McCoy			Motion Carried	6-0

6. Consider Action to authorize the Ambridge American Legion Post 341 to use P.J. Caul Park on Monday May 29th, 2023 – “Memorial Day”. Also asking for approval for Police Escort, and assistance from, Police, Fire, and Public Works Department as needed.
Motion by Mrs. Miller to authorize the Ambridge American Legion Post 341 to use P.J. Caul Park on Monday May 29th, 2023 – “Memorial Day”. Also asking for approval for Police Escort and assistance from Police, Fire, and Public Works Department as needed; seconded by Mr. Cafarelli.

Council	Vote		Council	Vote
Mr. Cafarelli	Yes		Ms. Gilliam	Yes
Ms. DeVincent	Yes		Mrs. Miller	Yes
Mr. Dunn	Yes		Ms. Tessaro	Yes
Mr. Gill				
Mayor McCoy			Motion Carried	6-0

7. Consider Action to authorize switching IT Service Maintenance Provider to MGSoft-Net and authorize upgrade to the Borough Servers and Computers as recommended (*funding will be utilized from the ARPA Grant*)
Comment by Ms. Tessaro that the current equipment is very old. Mr. Leone also advised that we are out of compliance since we are sharing one server between the Borough Operation and the Police Department and for security reasons, the Police need to be on an independent server, so this will provide a server for the Police Department and a shared server between the rest of the Municipal Offices.
Motion by Ms. DeVincent to authorize switching IT Service Maintenance Provider to MGSoft-Net and authorize upgrade to the Borough Servers and Computers as recommended (funding to be utilized from the ARPA Grant); seconded by Mr. Dunn.

Council	Vote		Council	Vote
Mr. Cafarelli	Yes		Ms. Gilliam	Yes
Ms. DeVincent	Yes		Mrs. Miller	Yes
Mr. Dunn	Yes		Ms. Tessaro	Yes
Mr. Gill				

Mayor McCoy			Motion Carried	6-0
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VI. Other Unfinished Business

1. Glenwood Avenue fire damaged properties – need to finalize legal documentation for transfer of properties. Mr. Leone has circled back with the Solicitor, and he is working it.
2. Ordinances – Street Opening, Stops Signs, Storm Water, IPMC- Ticket for Zoning/Code Violations. Mr. Leone stated that Solicitor is close to having those completed; the IPMC updated and the Stop Signs should be ready for the March meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mrs. Miller stated that on Public Safety she commended the Police Department when my family had an issue over the weekend and the Police handled it like a champ while the Chief was off and thanks to Lt. Chickos while the Chief was off.

Mr. Cafarelli asked about the Street Sweeper. Mr. Leone stated that it has been maintained and the inspection expires at the end of April. We start street sweeping in April. It will be taken in March for inspection, so it’s not tied up in April. Mr. Cafarelli also asked about the trees on Pine. Mr. Leone stated the contractor is to take care of that; supposed to be this week.

Mr. Cafarelli stated that we lost a good guy, good family man, Spike Barry. Wanted to recognize him. He was a likable guy. He worked in the Public Works Department in the Borough of Ambridge. Condolences and sympathy to the Barry family.

Ms. Tessaro asked Chief Larrick to speak about the new fire truck. Chief Larrick stated that 2002 Dodge will be used for motor vehicle accidents and rescues. It was picked up this week. The Fire Fighters are putting the brackets and shelving together and moving our equipment to it. It will be in service probably in the month of March.

Mrs. Miller asked about Public Works. Mr. Cafarelli stated that Mr. Leone is to set up a meeting. There is some question as to when we hired our last employee whether the interviews would be with all Council being present, not just the Public Works Committee. Mr. Cafarelli asked that in Mr. Gill’s absence if Mr. Dunn can sit in and Ms. DeVincent. It was left to the Public Works Committee to decide to narrow down the candidates. There are 11 candidates. Mr. Leone will circle back to try to schedule next week.

VII. Adjournment

Motion by Mrs. Miller to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Cafarelli.

NEXT MEETING OF BOROUGH COUNCIL: Regular Meeting: 3/14/2023 – 6:30PM
Workshop Meeting 3/28/2023 - 6:00PM