

Borough of Munhall
Virtual - Regular Council Meeting Agenda Minutes
Wednesday, January 20, 2021 7:00 P.M.
Meeting ID: 88260562408 Password: 805947

I. Call to Order – Based on Governor Wolfe’s Disaster Proclamation, this meeting will be conducted via Zoom Cloud Meeting. – President Inglis called the meeting to order.

President Inglis asked for a moment of silence for Mark Bodnar.

**Roll Call: Councilman Falce; Councilman Fallon; Councilman Ondo;
Councilman Petruzzi; Councilman Stein; Vice President Votedian;
President Inglis – All Present**

II. Public Comments on Items for Consideration – Questions were submitted prior to the meeting via email to info@munhallpa.us, regular mail or fax 412-464-0462. President Inglis will address, or appoint someone else to address, any questions submitted.

Maureen Fry – 124 West Virginia Ave – Mrs. Fry asked what has been accomplished at 1860 West Street since December 16, 2020. Borough Engineer, Colin Lampark advised all the interior framing has been completed and the dry wall will begin soon. He noted that all the interior and exterior dry wall will be done and that all the insulation has been completed. He said the rooftop units were set and all underground utilities are in. He commended the architect and contractor and stated that overall, 40 percent of the project is complete. Mrs. Fry then asked how much money has been spent on 1860 West Street since December 16, 2021. Borough Manager, Joe Varhola advised \$436,563.00. Mrs. Fry asked what the issue was that was proposed for the Propel project. She also asked if the residents in the area have been informed and if not, when would they be informed. Borough Solicitor, Greg Evashavik advised it was an appeal filed by Propel School because of a denial for a variance previously requested. He advised the appeal is now in the court of common pleas before Judge James. He advised they are in discussions with the attorney for Propel about a possible resolution. He advised it has not been discussed publicly because it is in litigation. He stated he can discuss a possible solution may be that Propel creates parking on a piece of vacant land they own. Mr. Evashavik advise there will be no other hearings and that the case will be decided by an agreement between Munhall Council and Propel or Judge James. He stated there will be an announcement either way. Mrs. Fry then asked what the status of the grant writer. She is asking if he/she has gotten any grants for projects. Manager Varhola advised they have gotten ten grants totaling approximately two million dollars. She then asked for the amount in the General Fund as of January 20,2021. Manager Varhola advised \$760,818.88. Mrs. Fry asked about new business being contemplated and made aware to residents for discussion by Council. President Inglis advised this information will be included in the Borough Managers report. President Inglis asked Manager Varhola to give his report. Manager Varhola advised the information being asked can be gathered

from his office rather than a request to comment form. Mr. Varhola said he is working on the Tax Collectors compensation package to be presented via resolution. He advised he addressed complaints about West Run Road with the Director of Allegheny County. He stated the Tax Anticipation note process went smoothly and has been deposited into the General and Payroll account. Mr. Varhola said he has been in contact, and has had a few meetings, with PA American water to discuss the sewers of Munhall to see if they might be interested in buying them. He states they just bought Brentwood's for nineteen million. He said it is just an evaluation of the pipes in the ground and what they might be worth to someone else. He invited all to contact his office with questions. He then commended the grant writers for the work they are doing and have done for the Borough. Mr. Varhola then stated he has been working with Legal Tax and Mrs. Evashavik regarding reassessments within the Borough. He explained the process for the appeals. He is also working with Dave Cannon on possible sheriff sale properties. Joe advised he and Becki are working on year end reports which are time consuming such as Liquid Fuels and Workman's Comp audits. Mrs. Fry asked what account the one million dollars from the State of Pennsylvania, via Austin Davis, been deposited. Manager Varhola stated he answered previously. It went into the General and Payroll accounts. President Inglis commended Joe Varhola for his work with Jay Costa and Austin Davis to secure the million-dollar grant for Munhall Borough.

Reports:

Mayor – Mayor Brennan asked everyone to take a moment to look at themselves as elected officials and the need to come together and work together. He stated Joe Varhola, Greg Evashavik nor Bob Biscey are not elected officials and that they work for the Borough. He stated the elected officials can not say "I sent you an email" but should talk to one another. He said they can no longer say "Why didn't you call me?" or "I don't have email." He said there is no excuse, and they need to work together, or they will not work together at all. He said he is a phone call away and does check his email. He advised he does check Joe Varhola's weekly report. He mentioned Presidents Inglis wanting to have an Executive Session next week to discuss the Tax Collector, but he feels this should have been talked about prior to Motion 1 below. He feels there should have been an Executive Session to discuss the items in the motion. He states he did not get an email from Councilman Stein regarding the motion. He again stated he does read the emails he receives. He advised he has a responsibility as the Mayor and as an elected official to represent the people of Munhall. And as such he can have input and discussion with Councilmen. He asked how he can represent the residents if he does not have the information. If he is not informed. President Inglis stated he understands. Mayor Brennan said the State of Pennsylvania says he is supposed to be involved in all the conversations and so are the residents. He said the conversations need to happen for input. Not just four people deciding they have enough votes and saying, "I don't need to talk to the Mayor." Or "I don't need to have the input of the other Councilmen." He feels this is an injustice to the residents and a major disfunction of the town. He mentioned the million-dollar grant and what is being done with it. Mayor Brennan said as far as the Propel project, it may be legal to

proceed without discussing it with the residents but it “stinks” to him. He then stated that he feels the Borough needs to encourage all workers to get the COVID-19 shot. President Inglis reminded Mayor Brennan that he would need to address the shots with the Police Department. Mayor Brennan advised he knows he can not force them to do so but he will encourage them. Chief Pat Campbell stated he would check but that Karen Beck, Optimus Risk, the Borough Safety Committee representative said the workers can be required to get the vaccine. Mayor Brennan advise he asked the representative from Hilltop Pharmacy that question, and she said no. There will be follow up on this question. He then asked about Motion 1 and the missing dispatcher. He said they will follow up on this later. He then said he wishes 2021 is much better than 2020. He does not like the Zoom meetings and feels they do not represent the residents. President Inglis said he does not like the Zoom meetings either but that the surrounding Boroughs are holding them as well. There was a discussion about the surrounding areas and their meetings. Councilman Falce advised he would not be comfortable meeting in person until the vaccines are given out. Everyone agreed.

Manager - See previous notes

Solicitor – Greg Evashavik states he has modified, and updated, the agreement with Sable Kennels. He has an addendum and if they are willing to sign with the addendum, the agreement is good to go. Mr. Varhola advised he sent the addendum to Sable Kennels and they do not think it will be an issue. Mr. Evashavik asked Becki Wirth to be sure to add “including addendum” to Motion 4. Becki verified what she should read, and Greg confirmed.

Engineer – Engineer Lampark mentioned Motion 3 and advised they will be working with Public Works to determine what paving will be done within the Borough this year. He asked Council to consider the \$125,000 grant from the Gaming Funds. He states the intention was to use it for new utility connections at 1860 West Street. Colin said the next step is to submit a budget, begin engineering work and ultimately get the project out to bid. He is asking Council to consider approval for him to begin working, on the budget and engineering work, with the County. Mayor Brennan asked if the utilities were in the original bid. Colin advised it was not part of the contract scope. Mayor Brennan mentioned the sewer line, inside the building that was previously found to be bad and confirmed that the money would now be used for the outside connection. Mr. Lampark stated they found a solution to the issue that was found inside by reconfiguring a couple other items. He then described the outside work that will be done. Mayor Brennan asked for an estimate on that project and Colin advised they are still working on it but feels that it may be a little more than the grant amount. Mayor Brennan then asked about the process to remove and replace the War Memorial on West Street. Mr. Lampark states they have discussed it at the weekly meetings and that it will most likely be disturbed. President Inglis confirmed with Councilman Ondo that he is aware of the disturbance and possible replacements. He stated he is aware and has had conversations with Councilman Fallon and Manager Varhola. Mr.

Lampark said he would be willing to donate time and services from Hatch to help redesign the monument.

Public Works Supervisor – Report submitted to Council.

Police Chief – Report submitted to Council.

Fire Chief – Chief Ed Pletsch read his monthly report. He discussed the Fire Department COVID-19 vaccines. He remembered Mark Bodnar. Chief Pletsch stated that the fire department is happy to install smoke detectors for residents that can not afford them. He advised to reach out to Becki Wirth, and she will forward the request to him. He thanked Don Lesser and the volunteers who put up the decorations on Main Street. Councilman Ondo thanked him for his work with the smoke detectors.

Code Enforcement – Report submitted to Council.

Finance Chair - Councilman Stein stated the cash inflows were approximately \$360,000.00 and the outflows, approximately \$563,000.00 leaving \$200,000.00 in the red but this is not a surprise as it is year-end as there isn't all of revenue at this time and there are year-end bills such as Longevity and Holiday pays as well as lease payments due. He states we are approximately \$304,000.00 behind where we were this time last year. He discussed the approximate 3.5 million left in the Municipal Building Capital Fund account and the Engineers report which shows a \$9000.00 credit from the contractor for changes that were made, to the building, in the Boroughs favor. This has kept the cost just below the bid pricing and feels it is because of the relationships between the architect, the contractor, the engineer and the Borough and the regular project meetings that take place. He commended Colin Lampark and Hatch for keeping things in line and spotting the fiscal oversight. Mayor Brennan asked how we received the \$9000.00 credit. He asked about the changes to the bid. He asked if the million-dollar grant will be used for the new building. He asked about the process to draw from the million dollars. Manager Varhola advised we will submit receipts and will be reimbursed for those. He then stated that they submitted the original bond for 5 million and the bid came in at 5.3 million, so he reached out to his contacts for help. He feels that if there is money left over after the building construction, there are always projects such as Vine Street playground, that requires matching funds, that the extra money can be used for. Mayor Brennan asked about the bond being 6.5 million and Mr. Varhola said 6.3 million but advised that approximately 1.25 million was used for the demolition of the inside and abatement. Mayor Brennan asked about the parking lot where the water tower is. Manager Varhola advised only if parking is needed.

III. Items for consideration:

1. Motion to ratify administration pay increases as follows:

Joe Varhola - \$3444.48

Bob Bickey - \$2172.14

Becki Wirth - \$6032.00 + a bonus of \$3000.00

Dave Cannon - \$1832.69

Mark Majersky - \$1047.07

Roseann Needham - \$794.35

Motion: Councilman Stein; Second: Councilman Petruzzi;

Question on Motion: Vice President Votedian advised he does not like the way the meetings are happening and agrees with Mayor Brennan on the "bickering". He said he does not feel we are taking the pandemic as seriously as we should and wants to know if he votes on this motion now, can some things be changed later such as what Rick did on Roseann? If she deserves more. He said he met with Joe Varhola and Becki Wirth regarding this motion and Joe justified and explained everything to him. He explained that he will ask a question if he does not understand something and others should be doing the same. He stated there is no sense bickering over something that can be settled in Joe's office. He suggested everyone make 2021 a better year and everyone try to get along with one another.

Comment on Motion: Councilman Ondo does not feel motion 1 was handled properly and feels it should be tabled until there is an Executive Session where things can be discussed.

Comment on Motion: Mayor Brennan agrees and feels the process was not held properly. He feels the motion should wait until after that session.

Comment on Motion: Councilman Stein stated that there have been no Executive Sessions regarding raises in the past. Mayor Brennan said that he does not feel this is okay. Councilman Stein said everyone was included. Mayor Brennan said he checked his emails, and he was not included. Councilman Stein said he would have been included as a courtesy. Mayor Brennan said he should have been included as the Mayor and that Councilman Stein does not know the law. Mayor Brennan said he is included in all votes; all conversations and he is the Mayor and an elected official "just like you are son" to which Councilman Stein said "son?" Mayor Brennan said "Yeah." and Councilman Stein said "classy". President Inglis called for a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilman Falce – Yes

Councilman Fallon – No

Councilman Ondo – No

Councilman Petruzzi – Yes

Councilman Stein – Yes

Vice President Votedian – Yes

President Inglis – Yes

Councilman Ondo asked for clarification on what was voted on. Becki Wirth advised to ratify the pay increases. He then asked the Solicitor about Mr. Petruzzi, who is a Councilman and Borough paid employees. He asked if he would get to vote on his own raise as a crossing guard. He feels that Councilman Petruzzi should have abstained from this vote. Solicitor Evashavik said he would have advised Councilman Petruzzi if he felt there was a conflict of interest and he should not or could not vote.

2. Motion to advertise for committees that have expiring terms.
Motion: Councilman Falce; Second: Councilman Votedian; Vote: Unanimous

3. Motion to authorize the Borough Engineer to begin working on the 2021 paving projects.
Motion: Councilman Stein; Second: Councilman Ondo;
Question on the Motion: Councilman Fallon asked how much work will be done for \$150,000.00. Manager Varhola explained the process for putting the list together and Council can make the decision on the data it receives. Councilman Fallon pointed out the paving budget in 2019 was \$750,000.00 (5 times). Councilman Stein said he understands and wishes there were more money. Councilman Falce advise the budget as it stands is in lieu of raising taxes. He said if extra money comes up along the way we can do more but for now, this is where things are. He advised no one wanted to raise taxes and that is where the budget difference is.
Vote: Unanimous

4. Motion to approve the contract, (added) including addendum, with Sable Kennels (animal control) with no changes to monthly fee of \$225.00.
Motion: Councilman Votedian; Second: Councilman Petruzzi; Vote: Unanimous

5. Motion to approve the minutes for the December 16th, 2020 meeting.
Motion: Councilman Stein; Second: Councilman Votedian; Vote: Unanimous

6. Motion to pay bills for the period December 9th, 2020 through January 12th, 2021 summarized as follows:

Administration	\$ 30,753.09
Police:	\$ 103,151.33
Fire:	\$ 46,032.19
Health & Sanitation:	\$ 50,986.82
Public Works:	\$ 66,579.99
Recreation:	\$ 2,853.63
Debit Services:	\$ 1,642.42
Miscellaneous:	<u>\$ 561,675.00**</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 863,674.47

**** Includes Franjo Construction payment of \$436,563.00**

Motion: Councilman Stein; Second: Councilman Votedian; Vote: Unanimous

7. Motion to approve Payroll for the period of December 24th, 2020 and January 7th, 2021.

2020: December 24 th	\$ 141,876.26
2021: January 7 th	<u>\$ 140,979.89</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 282,856.15

Motion: Councilman Falce; Second: Vice President Votedian; Vote: 6 Yes and 1 opposed (Councilman Fallon).

President Inglis asked Council, the Mayor, and the Borough Manager if they would be able to meet for an Executive Session on Wednesday, January 27, 2021, at 6 pm in person as they would be able to social distance. Councilman Petruzzi advised he would not attend in person.

Mayor Brennan addressed Council and stated as the elected official of the residents of the Borough of Munhall, in the position of the Mayor, to not be included in emails and conversations is not right. He asked Mr. Varhola to provide to him, in writing, who voted on Motion 1 and how the votes were. He wants to know who took the votes. He addressed Councilman Stein and advised it is wrong if he is calling around getting the votes as he is not the President of Council and not the vote taker. He said he could be wrong, but he would find out. He said he wants to see the emails that were sent to him, because they are not in his phone. He stated he reads all his emails. He is upset with Councilman Stein because he said that it is a common courtesy to be included in conversations. He advised Manager Varhola that he would be in his office in the morning for the information. Mayor Brennan asked for a copy of the vote for this meeting as well. He said he is highly upset with this meeting and that it is not a sign of working together. Councilman Stein asked, "by

calling people a name?". Mayor Brennan said, "I didn't call anyone a name." Councilman Stein laughed and said, "We all heard it." Mayor Brennan said "I was upset when I called you son because you don't have any respect for me and the office of Mayor. I was wrong in saying that. I was mad. What you did was ignore the office and told me I'm just a privileged person. 'If I give you an email and talk about this it's a privilege for you to have.'" Councilman Stein said "No. When we got done with our discussion, you should have been informed of it." Mayor Brennan said "No, I should have been informed at the time you were discussing things. Not after the decision is made. That's not right." He said, "You need to talk to your Solicitor about the rules of meetings and talking to people" Councilman Stein replied "Okay.". Mayor Brennan said "You need to have a conversation with him cause I'm gonna find out what's going on. I want the rules. I want the vote. I want to know when it happened and I'm gonna protest this. I'm not happy about what you did and what you said tonight. Cause what you said is wrong." Councilman Stein replied "Okay." Mayor Brennan addressed Solicitor Evashavik saying he would be contacting him for legal advice as well. Solicitor Evashavik welcomed the call saying, "I'm ready anytime Mayor." Mayor Brennan said, "I hope you're not in court tomorrow" Solicitor Evashavik advised he had a meeting at 8:30 am but would be available after. Mayor Brennan said, "Thank you." President Inglis said "Why don't you get along." Mayor Brennan replied "I tried but when I am told that, that's just it. Its over. We have a long way to work together and this is not going to end well." Vice President Votedian stated "We have to try Mayor." Mayor Brennan replied "I'm trying. I tried. You guys just don't want to include me in things. I don't get it. I just don't understand it. There's no other way about it." He then advised Becki Wirth that he wants a copy of the Zoom meeting as soon as it is available. He advised he wants a copy of the meeting and the minutes as well because he wants "hear him say it again". Becki explained the video copy would be available in the morning, but she would have to type the minutes. Mayor Brennan said he didn't care about the minutes but wants the video as soon as it is available. President Inglis asked to "hear what?" and Mayor Brennan replied "he said it is a courtesy for me to be involved in the meeting. And you guys already had a meeting." President Inglis said he wasn't at a meeting. Councilman Stein said, "It wasn't a meeting." Councilman Ondo said "we didn't have a meeting. That's the whole problem. We didn't have a meeting." He then asked, "Was it over the phone or an email vote?" Councilman Stein said "Right, which is legal." Mayor Brennan said goodnight. President Inglis called for a motion to adjourn.

IV. Adjournment:

Motion: Councilman Stein; Second: Councilman Petruzzi; Vote: Unanimous



Harvey Inglis – President of Council