

Borough of Munhall

Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

An executive session was held prior to the meeting to discuss personnel issues.

The March 19, 2024 meeting of the Munhall Borough Council was called to order by President Brennan at 7:22 pm in Council Chambers.

All recited the Pledge of Allegiance

Present:

Absent:

Richard Brennan, Council President
Timothy Eads, Council Member
Maureen Fry, Council Member
Kevin Ondo, Council Vice President
Bernard Shields, Council Member
Richard Votedian, Council Member
David Younkens, Council Member

Others:

Seth Abrams, Borough Manager
Robert Bicsey, Public Works
David Canon, Code Enforcement/BCO
Glenn Coles, Fire Chief
Greg Evashavik, Solicitor
Rob Falce, Mayor
Thomas Fullard, Police Chief

Reports

President's Report: President Brennan, noted current work, including the landslide on Creek Street. We are awaiting a report from the engineer before we can make long-term repairs. The Borough is awaiting the reports on the environmental study at 1900 West St. Also announced was that President Brennan and Mayor Falce met with representatives of Nippon Steel and US Steel regarding the proposed sale and ongoing community involvement that President Brennan will be following up on.

Mayor's Report: The Mayor presented a proclamation to Grant Vallus for his community service by cleaning up around the Borough. He reported that he met with the Borough Manager, Representative Gergely, Dr. Spellman and Dave Colasante to discuss improvements on Main St. There will be a meeting on March 26, 2024, at 7 pm at the Park Volunteer Fire Station #4, 3401 Main St.

Solicitor's Report: Mr. Evashavik reviewed the construction contract for the replacement of the HVAC units at fire department #5, an MOU with the Teamsters for the retirement of a long time Borough employee and easements will be drawn up for access to properties around Creek St, for geotechnical boring.

Manager's Report: Mr. Abrams discussed updates since the workshop meeting. The hillside has been stabilized at Creek St, and we are awaiting engineering drawings for the retention of the hill. Mr. Abrams announced that the 2022-23 property appeal refunds have been delivered to his office. \$128,000 is due, and of that \$117,720 is due back to Lowes Home Improvement. Even with the appeals, the overall assessments are up compared to January 1, 2024.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes: Motion to approve the February 20, 2024, minutes by Mr. Votedian. Seconded by Mr. Shields. Motion passed 7-0.

Public Comment on Items for Consideration:

Susan Ballas, Shady Ave, Munhall, spoke about the Pennsylvania Ethics Act and accusations that the Steel Valley School District has control of the Munhall Sanitary Sewer Municipal Authority made by Council Vice President Ondo and Donna Ondo.

Steven Kovacik, Business Representative to the Steel Valley Accelerator, spoke about a project to expand the Greater Allegheny Passage tourism.

Dave Younkins, Vice Chair of the Sewer Authority asked why there were not any names for the motion to appoint a person to the Sewer Authority. Mr. Abrams explained that there are two candidates for one position, and therefore the name was omitted for final approval until nominations are completed.

Public Comment:

Business Items:

1. Motion to pay the bills for the month of January in the amount of \$266,607.84. Motion made by Mr. Ondo. Seconded by Mr. Eads. Motion passed 7-0.
2. Motion to approve payroll for January in the amount of \$426,297.88. Motion by Mr. Younkins. Seconded by Mr. Shields. Motion passed 7-0.
3. Motion to approve contract between Public Partners and the Borough to conduct a recruitment process for the borough manager position at a cost not to exceed \$5,000. Motion by Mr. Younkins. Seconded by Mr. Ondo. Motion passed 7-0.
4. Motion to approve the lot consolidation plan for the Steel Valley School District, consolidating 132-M-30, 181-K-25, 181-N-100, 181-E-275, and 181-E-190 into a single parcel as approved by the Planning Commission on 12 March 2024. Motion by Mr. Younkins. Seconded by Mr. Votedian.

Mrs. Fry asked why the Borough would approve a lot consolidation if there was not going to definitely be a school. President Brennan and Mr. Shields both stated that the lot consolidation is separate from the building of the school and is an allowable activity.

Mr. Ondo asked if the Borough should have seen the plans beforehand. President Brennan stated he could not vote because he did not know what was happening. Mr. Abrams explained that the engineer had previously reported on the consolidation and had also approved it.

Mr. Eads requested a roll call vote:

Mr. Eads: Yes

Mrs. Fry: No

Mr. Ondo: No

Mr. Shields: Yes

Mr. Votedian: Yes

Mr. Younkins: Yes

Mr. Brennan: Yes

Motion passed 5-2, with councilpersons Fry and Ondo voting "No".

Note: Motion amended by Mr. Younkins and seconded by Mr. Votedian to clarify the consolidation of above properties into 2 parcels, not one.

5. Motion to approve MOU between the Borough and Teamsters 205 to allow for one-time terminal benefits for the retirement of an employee. Motion by Mr. Eads. Second by Mr. Younkins. Motion passed 6-0, with one abstention by Mr. Votedian to prevent conflict of interest.
6. Motion to approve the appointment of Bill McCarthy and Russ Firestone to the Planning Commission for terms to expire 12/31/2025. Motion by Mr. Eads. Seconded by Mr. Younkins. Motion passed 7-0.
7. Motion to appoint a resident to the Munhall Sanitary Sewer Municipal Authority for a term to end 12/31/2025. Mr. Eads nominated Joe Ballas. Mr. Ondo nominated Donna Ondo. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Eads: Mr. Ballas

Mrs. Fry: Mrs. Ondo

Mr. Ondo: Mr. Ondo

Mr. Shields: Mr. Ballas

Mr. Votedian: Mr. Ballas

Mr. Younkins: Mr. Ballas

Mr. Brennan: Mrs. Ondo

Mr. Ballas is appointed by a 4-3 vote.

Public Comment:

None.

Additional Items:

Mr. Abrams noted two requests for letters of support. The first from PRT to support the upgrades to the bus route from McKeesport to Homestead. The second request was from Three Rivers Waterkeeper to support an Army Corps of Engineers study of waterways.

Mr. Abrams requested that Council begin considering who will be heading up the projects once he leaves the Borough.

Melissa Haverty was introduced as the new administrative assistant.

Adjournment: Mr. Votedian made a motion to adjourn at 8:31 pm. Mr. Shields seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Seth Abrams
Borough Manager