

**BOROUGH OF GROVE CITY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
September 19, 2022**

**Work Session - 6:00PM**

**CALL TO ORDER by Council Vice-Present, Joel Bigley at 6:08PM**

**MEETING ATTENDANCE / ROLL CALL**

<b>X if present</b>	<b>Council Member Name</b>	<b>X if present</b>	<b>Council Member Name</b>	<b>X if present</b>	<b>Other Name</b>
Absent	Mattocks, Mary Kay	X	Bonner, Timothy (Solicitor)	X	Oakes, Vance (Boro Manager)
Absent	Morley, Shawn	X	DiStasi, Vincent	X	Pokrant, Taylor (Boro Sec.)
X	Myers, Shawn	X	Riddle, Randy (Mayor)	Absent	Goncz, Dan (Engineer)
X	Henry, James	X	Bigley, Joel (Vice-Pres)		
X	Hodge, Jeffrey	X	Zimmerman, William		
X	Gallagher, Amy	Absent	Messer, Mac (Jr. Council)		
X	Jaillet, Scott	Absent	Riddle, Emmy		

**Discuss EMS Support Proposal**

- Mr. Vance Oakes, Borough Manager explained that an EMS Task Force was formed after Mr. Doug Dick, Superior Ambulance Service, highlighted the struggles that his business was facing. This task force invited all 23 municipalities that Mr. Dick services with about half of the municipalities attending the three meetings. Mr. Oakes explained that Mr. Dick is facing a number of challenges including rising costs and failure to be paid for many calls that he goes out on because if the person is not transported, he does not get paid. Mayor Riddle mentioned that membership programs were discussed at these Task Force meetings with rates being reasonable for individual and family plans. Mr. Oakes detailed that Mr. Dick has requested a one mil tax from all municipalities that he serves, however Borough Code limits this support to a maximum of ½ of a mil. Mr. Oakes reported that Liberty Township provides a ½ mil of support to EMS services currently. Mayor Riddle questioned whether tax dollars should be given to a private business. Councilman Jaillet suggested that this issue be brought up at the Mercer County Boroughs Association dinner that is coming up on Thursday.
- Councilman Bigley questioned why Mr. Dick has not ramped up his efforts to solicit membership before asking for tax dollars. Solicitor Bonner mentioned that Mr. Dick explained that memberships have been declining and the cost for advertising has exceeded the revenue generated by memberships. Mayor Riddle mentioned that he has not seen any membership solicitations from Superior Ambulance service. Mr. Oakes stated that the Borough could include a membership flyer in with Borough utility bills. Individual membership cost is \$20, couple memberships cost is \$30 and family membership cost is \$40.
- Councilman Bigley questioned if the Borough had an emergency services tax. Mr. Oakes explained that the LST Tax currently is allocated to the Police Department. Solicitor Bonner highlighted that under the Borough Code, the Borough has a duty to provide EMS, fire and police services. Solicitor Bonner also stated that there is a state bill under consideration to allow municipalities to impose a tax of up to 1 and ½ mills to support EMS services as this issue is prevalent throughout the state.
- Solicitor Bonner reported on some of the issues that Mr. Dick is facing. He detailed that in 2020, Superior Ambulance answered 9,462 calls across 4 counties. He explained that Mr. Dick currently offers his employees relatively low wages but if taxes are passed to support him part of the money will be used to increase wages to assist with employee retention. Solicitor Bonner explained that in 2021, Superior Ambulance had 1,186 calls that they did not get paid for due to refusal/standby/ treat and release since they did not provide transportation.

- Councilman Jaillet asked short of federal/state rule changes, how much can be done to alleviate unpaid calls. Solicitor Bonner responded by explaining that local taxes can be used to provide assistance.
- Councilman DiStasi asked if the Borough were to provide a ½ mil tax to support Superior, would this provide additional services or just subsidize the entire area. Solicitor Bonner answered by explaining that similar statements could be made by all municipalities within the service area and that's why the task force has been working on a unified response. Solicitor Bonner further explained that if Superior Ambulance no longer served the area that the cost to start a public ambulance service would far exceed a ½ mil tax.
- Solicitor Bonner reported that due to this being a statewide issue and area of concern the Pennsylvania House Majority Policy Committee would be coming to the Borough for a hearing on 10/11/22 to hear testimony regarding the issue. Solicitor Bonner mentioned that this is the only region that has established a task force to address this issue.
- Solicitor Bonner reported that Mr. Dick had provided a copy of his tax returns and the estimated cost to operate his business is 2.2 million Dollars and a ½ mil of tax across all municipalities would generate about 230 thousand dollars. Councilman Jaillet questioned the odds that every municipality would participate. Mr. Oakes stated that only about half have attended the task force meetings. Councilman Myers questioned the impact of a property tax because only about 42 percent of the Borough pays property taxes with the rest being tax exempt. Councilman Myers also questioned if Mr. Dick was really losing money at standby calls because they often sit at other locations and wait for a call. Councilman Myers questioned whether a fee could be imposed that would also charge tax-exempt properties and Mr. Oakes answered that the Borough does not have the authority to impose that.
- Councilman Henry stated that if a ½ mill will generate about 24 thousand dollars in the Borough of Grove City, wouldn't a strong membership drive also generated that same amount of income. Councilman Henry suggested that the Borough assist with membership efforts and only if those fail consider a ½ mil tax.
- Councilman Bigley suggested that another task force meeting be held to see where other municipalities are at regarding this support request. Solicitor Bonner suggested that all task force members be invited to the hearing on 10/11/22. He explained that the plans to ask one task force member to speak at the hearing. Solicitor Bonner stated that Borough Council should not feel pressure to impose a tax this year, but to continue to be open to solutions to support EMS services. Solicitor Bonner highlighted the cooperation that has been achieved by working on this issue as a region.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 6:57PM.

**REGULAR MEETING - 7:00PM**

**CALL TO ORDER** by Council Vice-President, Joel Bigley at 7:09 pm

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**PRAYER:** was offered by **Amy Gallagher**

**MEETING ATTENDANCE / ROLL CALL**

<b>X if present</b>	<b>Council Member Name</b>	<b>X if present</b>	<b>Council Member Name</b>	<b>X if present</b>	<b>Other Name</b>
Absent	Mattocks, Mary Kay	X	Bonner, Timothy (Solicitor)	X	Oakes, Vance (Boro Manager)
X	Morley, Shawn	X	DiStasi, Vincent	X	Pokrant, Taylor (Boro Sec.)

X	Myers, Shawn	X	Riddle, Randy (Mayor)	Absent	Goncz, Dan (Engineer)
X	Henry, James	X	Bigley, Joel (Vice-Pres)		
X	Hodge, Jeffrey	X	Zimmerman, William		
X	Gallagher, Amy	X	Messer, Mac (Jr. Council)		
X	Jaillet, Scott	X	Riddle, Emmy		

**REQUEST FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

- Mr. Alex Holmes, Grove City Boy Scouts, reported to Council that his Eagle Scout project to install horseshoe pits in Memorial Park was complete. Mr. Holmes thanked Mayor Riddle for his assistance with the project. Councilman Jaillet thanked Mr. Holmes and reported that he has used the pits since they have been completed. Mayor Riddle asked Mr. Holmes to get in touch with him to have his picture taken for an Allied News article. Councilman Bigley thanked him as well.

**CONSIDERATION OF ANY REQUESTS TO ADD ITEMS TO TONIGHT'S AGENDA**

- None

**CONSIDER BOROUGH OF GROVE CITY DEBT ORDINANCE 1486**

- Mr. Michael McCaig, RBC Capital, and Mr. Anthony Ditka, Dinsmore & Shohl, were present and described Ordinance 1486. Mr. McCaig distributed the Borough’s credit rating profile that was completed for the borrowing. Mr. McCaig explained that the Borough had received an A1 Rating. Mr. McCaig detailed that the borrowing would have a fixed interest rate of 4.5% and would be for 30 years. The costs to the Borough would be about 375 thousand each year over the 30-year term. Mr. Ditka explained that the only thing that had changed from the prior draft was the not to exceed schedule had been updated to represent a maximum allocation sufficient enough to provide the Borough with \$5,889,000 in project funds. Mr. Ditka detailed that they would take care of all closing and filing with the bond expected to close in October. Mr. Ditka confirmed that Solicitor Bonner had reviewed all documentation and had confirmed that everything was in order.

➤ **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to adopt Ordinance 1486. Mr. Vince DiStasi seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**CONSIDER OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICE FOR THE GROVE CITY READINESS PROJECT**

- Mr. Taylor Pokrant, Borough Secretary/Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer, reported to Council that the agreement was for the National Guard Armory located at 160 George Junior Road. Mr. Pokrant explained that this agreement would hold the National Guard responsible for all stormwater infrastructure improvements that were included as a part of their land development plan that had been approved by Borough Planning Commission. Mr. Mike Thomas, Pennsylvania National Guard, was present and explained that the project would allow for continued expansion at the site. He explained that the unit at the Grove City site was a field artillery unit and had been involved in recent deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. He further reported that the current improvements are part of a long-term plan to add on to the site to increase the capacity. Council thanked Mr. Thomas for his service.

➤ **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to approve the Operation and Maintenance Agreement. Mr. Vince DiStasi seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF ‘BILLS PAID’ REPORT**

➤ **Mr. Vince DiStasi moved to approve the ‘Bills Paid’ report. Mr. Shawn Myers seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF ‘BILLS-TO-BE-PAID’ REPORT**

➤ **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to approve the ‘Bills to be Paid’ report. Mr. William Zimmerman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING ON AUGUST 15, 2022, SPECIAL MEETING ON AUGUST 25, 2022 AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 13, 2022**

➤ **Ms. Amy Gallagher moved to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting and Public Hearing on August 15, 2022, Special Meeting on August 25, 2022 and Infrastructure Committee Meeting on September 13, 2022. Mr. Scott Jaillet seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**GROVE CITY LIBRARY REPORT**

- Ms. Amy Gallagher presented the Library Report. Ms. Gallagher reported that the Library held their most successful Book Sale to date this past Saturday. They raised over 5 thousand dollars and will continue to offer raffle baskets to raise additional funds from now until December.

**CONSIDER BOROUGH OF GROVE CITY ORDINANCE 1487**

- Mr. Vance Oakes described that this Ordinance was discussed last month and that it would separate the Borough’s readiness to serve charge and include a debt service charge. The actual monthly cost to Borough customers is not changing, but will allow the Borough to require that Pine and Liberty Township charge their customers the debt service charge to pay for the borrowing for the new water treatment plant.
- **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to adopt Ordinance 1487. Mr. Vince DiStasi seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**CONSIDER 2022 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ITEMS:**

- **CONSIDER DCED LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN CERTIFICATION**
- **CONSIDER 2022 CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**
- **CONSIDER RESOLUTION 2022-15 AUTHORIZING CDBG APPLICATION**
- **CONSIDER MODEL “B” AGREEMENT- COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH MERCER COUNTY FOR PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**
- Mr. Oakes explained that all of the agreements/plans were standard for the CDBG Application. He further reported that the Borough would be using their funds for sidewalk and home rehabilitation.
- **Mr. Scott Jaillet moved to approve all CDBG items as detailed. Mr. William Zimmerman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**CONSIDER 2023 GASOLINE AND FUEL OIL PRODUCTS BIDS**

- Mr. Pokrant explained that the Borough only received one bid from Reed Oil, the current supplier and that the bid represented a slight increase from last year.
- **Mr. Jeff Hodge moved to approve the Gasoline and Fuel Oil Products Bids. Mr. Shawn Morley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**CONSIDER 2023 Water Treatment Plant Chemical Bids**

- Mr. Vance Oakes reported that the Water Treatment Chemical costs as represented within the bids are much higher than this year, but they are needed supplies. Mr. Oakes explained that they would discuss these costs in greater detail at the upcoming budget meeting.
- **Mr. Vince DiStasi moved to approve the 2023 Water Treatment Chemical Bids. Mr. Shawn Myers seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**CONSIDER 2023-2027 SLUDGE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES BIDS**

- Mr. Oakes explained that this bid from Tri-County Industries also represented a cost increase of about 10 thousand dollars each year, but it was a needed service to dispose of waste from the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

➤ **Mr. Scott Jaillet moved to approve the 2023-2027 Sludge Transportation Services bid. Mr. William Zimmerman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**CONSIDER EVENT REQUEST: GROVE CITY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK TO BE HELD IN MEMORIAL PARK FROM 11/25/22-1/2/23**

➤ **Mr. William Zimmerman moved to approve the Event Request. Mr. Jeff Hodge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**CONSIDER EVENT REQUEST: HOPEFIELD'S HUNT THROUGH OLDE TOWN TO BE HELD ON 10/22/22 FROM 10AM-12PM**

➤ **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to approve the Event Request. Mr. William Zimmerman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**CONSIDER LIBERTY TOWNSHIP'S REQUEST FOR SEWER SERVICE EXTENSION AT 89 CENTER CHURCH ROAD, GROVE CITY OWNED BY LORI AND SHAWN MCNABB**

➤ **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to approve Liberty Township's Sewer Service Extension Request. Mr. Vince DiStasi seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**CONSIDER PINE TOWNSHIP'S REQUEST FOR WATER AND SANITARY SEWER SERVICE EXTENSION AT CENTER CHURCH ROAD, GROVE CITY, PA (TAX PARCEL # 22-218-014-003) OWNED BY WILLIAM AND SHARIN NORRIS**

➤ **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to approve Pine Township's Water and Sewer Service Extension Requests. Mr. Jim Henry seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **ENGINEER'S REPORT, by Mr. Vance Oakes**

- Mr. Oakes presented the Engineer's report due to Mr. Goncz's absence. Mr. Oakes reported that Groundwater Resources will have the well house buildings completed later this month. Mr. Oakes also reported that shop drawings for the water treatment plant are being prepared by the contractors. Mr. Oakes explained that due to Groundwater Resources completing the well house work, the invoice for payment has been included on the agenda. Mr. Oakes confirmed that the item fell within the budgeted amount.

➤ **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to approve Invoice #091122 from Groundwater Resources in the amount of \$93,270.00 for Wells 8, 9 and 10. Mr. Scott Jaillet seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT presented by Borough Manager, Vance Oakes**

- Mr. Oakes updated Borough Council with the borrowing approved and the bids in hand for the Water Treatment Plant, the only remaining item is to hear from DCED regarding the Borough's grant application. Mr. Oakes explained that the Borough is allowed to hold bids until 11/21/22 and he is working with Representative Bonner to get an answer regarding the grant application before that date.
- Mr. Oakes reported to Council that the Leaf Collection Schedule had been attached to their Board Packet. Mr. Oakes detailed that the last lawn debris pickup is scheduled for 10/10/22.
- Mr. Oakes expressed his gratitude to Mortimer Excavating as they donated their time and equipment to assist with the installation of utility lines for the Grove City Soccer Association Concession Stand Project.
- Mr. Oakes expressed his gratitude to the Grove City Rotary Club for installing cement pads at the disc golf tees at Memorial Park.
- Mr. Oakes informed Council that the Borough's E-Waste and HHW Collection was held on 9/10/22 and about 90 cars had come through the line at the event. Mr. Oakes thanked Councilman Jaillet for his help at the event and Councilman Jaillet thanked Mr. Oakes for his work as well.
- Mr. Oakes updated Council that the Electrical Outage Emergency Operations Planning was coming to an end and each Department has been asked to draft a department specific report that Mr. Oakes will compile into one report.
- Mr. Oakes congratulated Junior Councilman Mac Messer on being named to Homecoming Court.

#### **JUNIOR COUNCIL REPORT by Mac Messer**

- Mr. Messer reported that following graduation he will be attending college in Chattanooga, Tennessee.
- Mr. Messer reported that school is back in full swing, with this being the first year in many that COVID precautions/closures are not affecting school life.
- Mr. Messer detailed that the Independent Learning Program is flourishing and has allowed many students the opportunity to explore enrichment in various activities outside of the traditional classroom.
- Mr. Messer updated Council regarding Junior Council's planned project as they have decided to start a snow shoveling program for elderly residents. They plan to partner with the High School's Impact Club.
- Mr. Messer reported that Homecoming is scheduled for this coming weekend and it will be the first Homecoming that is hosted at the school since before COVID.

#### **MAYORS REPORT presented by Mayor Randy Riddle**

- Mayor Riddle detailed that over the past month he attended the following events/completed the following activities:
  - 8/20- attended a special Saturday Science session with Homer Christy and presented him a proclamation for his numerous years as a Saturday Science instructor.
  - 9/1 – presented Ruthella Jaskol a proclamation on her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.
  - 9/8- contacted Canadian National Railways regarding the importance of weed maintenance adjacent to the downtown parking areas.
  - 9/13- attended the United Way Community Dinner and presented proclamations to Dave and Kathleen Cashdollar and the Grove City Area School District.
- Mayor Riddle detailed that he has the following events upcoming:
  - 9/21- COG Meeting
  - 9/22- Mercer County Boroughs Association Dinner
  - 10/11-10/12- Third Grade Local Government Field Trip, which he plans to change due to the State Hearing that is scheduled for the 11<sup>th</sup>.
  - 10/14- PSAB Fall Conference
- Mayor Riddle reported that the Police Department held a DUI Checkpoint on 9/2/22 that yielded 2 DUI arrests, 1 arrest for driving with a suspended license and multiple traffic violations. Mayor Riddle explained that the Police Department is still looking for substitute crossing guards. Finally, Mayor Riddle reported that the hiring process to replace Officer Ondo has begun and the Police Department is accepting applications until 9/29.

#### **REPORT FROM INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING, BY MR. JOEL BIGLEY**

- Mr. Bigley reported that the Infrastructure Committee had met and reviewed options for the Edgewood Ave/Black Run Lift Station project. The Committee had ultimately decided to move forward with option 1B, which included the installation of a new forced sewer main and rehabilitation at the existing Black Run Lift Station. Mr. Oakes explained that the process to begin this works starts with the advertising of a special study plan under Act 537 to provide the public a chance to provide comment. Mr. Oakes also explained that within this advertisement that a public meeting date would be advertised and suggested 10/24/22 at 6PM. Council affirmed that date was acceptable.
- **Mr. Joel Bigley moved to authorize the Borough Manager to advertise the Edgewood Avenue/Black Run Lift Station Act 537 Plan Special Study for the 30-day review and comment period. Mr. Vince DiStasi seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Mr. Joel Bigley explained that a stop sign request had been submitted for the intersection of Oakland Ave and Madison Ave due to excessive speed. The intersection is currently a two-way stop and the resident is requesting that it become a 4-way stop. Mr. Dean Osborne, Police Chief was present and explained that he reviewed records for that intersection and does not have a crash report for the last 20 years or a traffic complaint within the last three. Chief Osborne reminded

Council that stop signs should not be used as speed control devices. Councilman Bigley referred the matter to the Infrastructure Committee for further discussion.

- Mr. Scott Jaillet reported that Grove City College will be hosting the Best Robotics competition on 10/21/22 and 10/22/22 and is looking for volunteers to assist with judging.

**NEWS MEDIA**

- Council was available to answer questions from the media.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:27PM.

Respectfully,

Taylor G. Pokrant  
Borough Secretary/Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer