

**BOROUGH OF GROVE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
October 17, 2022 7:00PM**

**CALL TO ORDER** by Council President, Mary Kay Mattocks 7:03 pm

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**PRAYER:** was offered by **Mr. Scott Jaillet**

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

**REQUEST FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

- Mr. Jimmy Richardson, Mercer County Grange Fair, stated that he had examined the contents of the Grove City Girl Scout Lodge that is slated for demolition and that he is requesting that the remaining items be donated to the Mercer County Grange Fair. Mr. Richardson stated that there is a stove, refrigerator, and tableware that they are interested in as well as possibly windows if they can remove them. He further explained that they would be willing to sign any liability waivers required by the Borough. Mr. Oakes stated that Global Heavy is required to demolish the Lodge as a part of their contract and that includes contents. Mr. Oakes also explained that the Girl Scouts have been there and removed all of the items that they want. Mr. Oakes stated that he would recommend that Council impose a deadline for removing the items and suggested November 30<sup>th</sup> to ensure that the items are removed before the contractor is ready to demolish the structure.
- **Mr. Jim Henry moved to approve the donation of miscellaneous items from the former Girl Scout Lodge to the Mercer County Grange Fair Association. Mr. Scott Jaillet seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**REQUEST TO ADD ITEMS TO THE AGENDA**

- Mr. Oakes informed Council that a request from George Junior Republic was received after the agenda was posted. This request is to place a Veterans’ Day display at Memorial Park from 11/7-11/21. This display would be in the front of the park where they have placed it in the past.
- **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to add George Junior Republic’s Veterans Day Display Request to the agenda and to approve it. Ms. Amy Gallagher seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF ‘BILLS PAID’ REPORT**

- **Mr. Scott Jaillet moved to approve the ‘Bills Paid’ report. Mr. Vince DiStasi seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

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

- **Mr. Vince DiStasi moved to approve the ‘Bills to be Paid’ report. Mr. William Zimmerman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** from the Regular Meeting and Work Session Meeting on September 19, 2022

- **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to approve the Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes from September 19, 2022. Ms. Amy Gallagher seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **GROVE CITY LIBRARY REPORT**

- Ms. Heather Baker reported that the Grove City Library held their annual Star Wars event this past Saturday and thanked the Borough for use of the pool house for changing. Ms. Baker reported that the Library has a Halloween Party coming up on 10/28 with crafts, costumes and snacks. The Library also has their Soup and Sandwich Fundraiser coming up on 11/10 and a concert on 12/3 with Treebeard Brown performing that benefits the Library.

#### **CONSIDER REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM THE GROVE CITY HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL BOOSTERS FOR INSTALLATION OF AN ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD**

- Ms. Angie Walsh, Grove City High School Softball Boosters, was present and described the nature of her request. Ms. Walsh stated that Diehl Automotive has donated money to assist with the purchasing of an electronic scoreboard. Ms. Walsh stated that it would be 8'x4' and its location would be between second and third base. Ms. Walsh stated that the location was flexible. Ms. Walsh asked Borough Council if the Borough would be willing to donate the electric work and materials to provide electricity to the scoreboard. Mr. Oakes stated that he would get a cost estimate from Jeff Badger and provide it to Council for consideration. Ms. Walsh asked that Borough Council grant her permission to put up the scoreboard tonight to allow them to begin prep work before the ground freezes.
- **Ms. Amy Gallagher moved to approve Grove City High School Softball's Request to install an electronic scoreboard. Mr. Shwan Morley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **CONSIDER PAYMENT #1(FINAL) TO J&T PAVING FOR THE HANGAR SITE PREP AND PARKING LOT RELOCATION PROJECT**

- Mr. Oakes explained that this was the contractor that had completed paving and stormwater work at the Airport. Mr. Oakes stated that the project came in at budget and that everything was satisfactory.
- **Mr. Jeff Hodge moved to approve Payment #1(Final) to J&T Paving for the Hangar Site Prep and Parking Lot Relocation Project. Mr. Scott Jaillet seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **CONSIDER EVENT REQUEST: TRICK OR TROT 5K TO BE HELD AT HUNTER FARM PARK ON 10/23/22 FROM 2-3:30PM**

- Mr. Oakes reported that this is the same event that has been held in the past and that insurance was pending for this event.
- **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to approve the Trick or Trot 5K. Mr. Jeff Hodge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **CONSIDER EVENT REQUEST: GROVE CITY ROTARY DISC GOLF FUNDRAISER TO BE HELD ON 4/29/23 FROM 8AM-2PM AT MEMORIAL PARK**

- Mr. Oakes reported that this is the same event that the Rotary held last year and that the Rotary uses funds from this event to invest in Memorial Park. The funds from the most recent event were used for new disc golf tees.
- **Mr. Scott Jaillet moved to approve the Disc Golf Fundraiser. Mr. Jeff Hodge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **CONSIDER 2023-2027 REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL BIDS**

- Mr. Vance Oakes detailed that Refuse and Recycling Bids had been opened last week and that Tri-County was the only bidder for the service. The amount that was bid by Tri-County reflected a doubling of the current contract price. Mr. Oakes stated that he spoke with Jerry Bowser, Tri-

County, and Mr. Bowser explained that his costs have increased significantly since 2018 when the current contract began. Mr. Oakes highlighted that Council could possibly reduce the cost by rebidding the contract with a shorter term, changing from unlimited to limited service for a savings of about \$3 a month, changing recycling pickup to once a month, or reducing the \$1.90 administrative charge that funds brush/leaf pickup. Mr. Oakes stated that Mr. Bowser was in attendance and asked the he expand upon why costs were increasing.

- Mr. Bowser highlighted the increase in labor costs, fuel costs and equipment costs. Mr. Bowser also mentioned that he suspects that many landlords are bringing trash in from outside of the Borough. Mr. Bowser mentioned that the national average for a household is 32lbs of trash a week and Grove City is around 40lbs a week. He explained that the only way to combat this would be to switch to limited service. Solicitor Bonner asked if a two-year contract would reduce the costs. Mr. Bowser stated that equipment is purchased and financed over contract terms, so he felt that it would not reduce the cost since the cost for equipment would be financed over a shorter duration. Mayor Riddle asked Mr. Bowser if Grove City's close proximity was factored into the bid price. Mr. Bowser confirmed that it was and detailed that Pine Township customers are paying \$37-38 a month without a contract and with limited service. Mr. Oakes detailed that the Borough's cost would be around \$31.45 per month per customer under the new contract using the most recent month of trash collection.
- Councilman Henry asked Mr. Bowser if people in other communities who have limited service are satisfied with it. Mr. Bowser confirmed that he believes that they are. Councilman DiStasi asked if the difference between limited and unlimited as bid was \$2 a month per customer. Mr. Oakes explained that there would be a \$2 per month reduction in the monthly collection and then whatever was saved in tonnage. Mr. Oakes reported that he reviewed this with Mr. Bowser and he believes that it would be about \$1 per month per customer.
- Mr. Oakes reported that he did some research regarding trash service in other municipalities and provided that detail to Council last week. Mr. Oakes highlighted that Hermitage pays 19.68 a month for limited service, Sharpsville pays 22 per month for unlimited service and Greenville pays 19.80 a month for limited service. Mr. Bowser explained that Greenville's costs are lower due to the requirement that all commercial customers are required to use Tri-County. Mayor Riddle asked Mr. Bowser the percentage of commercial customers that voluntarily elect to use Tri-County in the Borough. Mr. Bowser stated that about 99 percent use Tri-County. Solicitor Bonner explained that if the Borough required all commercial customers to use Tri-County that they could not break contracts that were already in place and Solicitor Bonner asked Mr. Bowser how long these contracts were typically for. Mr. Bowser stated that typically they are for 5 years.
- Councilwoman Mattocks asked if Council wanted more time to discuss these bids and suggested that a special meeting be held. Councilwoman Gallagher stated that there was only one bid, so it seemed that there weren't many other options. Councilwoman Mattocks asked if Mr. Oakes had a recommendation. Mr. Oakes stated that from an administrative standpoint that unlimited is preferred as it assists with cleanup efforts at properties that are in violation of various Borough Codes. Councilman Henry expressed his preference for unlimited service. Councilman Jaillet expressed his preference for unlimited service as well, explaining that it is particularly beneficial when properties are turned over. Councilman DiStasi stated that it doesn't sit well to double the cost and reduce the service. Councilwoman Mattocks reported that she has heard from citizens asking Council to keep the unlimited option.
- Councilman DiStasi asked if the price could be negotiated in any way. Solicitor Bonner stated that it would have to rebid with some sort of negotiation clause or option.
- Councilwoman Mattocks asked if Council needed more time to discuss the contract. Councilman Jaillet stated that he did not need anymore time. Councilman Myers stated that he thought it may be worth considering a shorter contract.
- Councilman Hodge asked if there was a way to crackdown on illegal dumping. Solicitor Bonner stated that it is a criminal offense if it can be proven. Mr. Bowser stated that a list of landlords can

be provided that they suspect of doing this. Solicitor Bonner stated that privacy rights do not extend to trash that is put at the curb. Chief Osborne stated that he does not want officers digging through the trash on a regular basis and suggested that a warning letter be sent to all landlords. Councilman Jaillet stated that he has witnessed it occur. Councilman DiStasi stated that it is a hard offense to prove. Councilwoman Mattocks stated that to move forward that she would need a motion.

- **Mr. Jim Henry moved to approve the 2023-2027 Refuse and Recycling Collection Disposal Base Bid which included unlimited service, awarding the contract to Tri-County Industries. Mr. Scott Jaillet seconded the motion and it carried by majority vote with Shawn Morley voting no and all other members present voting in favor of the motion.**

#### **CONSIDER 2023-2025 HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE AND ELECTRONIC WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL BIDS**

- Mr. Oakes reported that the Borough received two bids for Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic Waste curbside recycling. The low bidder was Noble Environmental Services. Mr. Oakes reminded Council that Noble is the company that hosts the recycling event each year for COG. Mr. Oakes detailed that the bid would amount to about \$1.15 per month per customer for quarterly pickup. Residents would be permitted two electronic waste items and 50lbs of household hazardous waste for each pickup. Councilman Henry asked if there was a need for this service. Councilman DiStasi asked Mr. Bowser the cost to recycle a tv at Tri-County and Mr. Bowser stated that it was \$35 for smaller TVs and increased for larger TVs. Mr. Bowser stated that even though Tri-County was not the low-bidder that he saw a need for this service. Councilwoman Gallagher asked if there was a size limit for TVs. Mr. Oakes stated that there was not, just a limit of two per collection. Councilman DiStasi expressed that without the service residents were still paying to have these items recycled and at a cost that exceeded the bided price. Councilman Myers asked if you would have to call in advance to have your items picked up. Mr. Oakes confirmed that you would and that the contractor would send you any required bags or stickers. Councilwoman Gallagher asked if the dates would be posted. Mr. Oakes stated that they would and a calendar would be distributed if Council approves the bid. Councilman Myers asked if the COG recycling event would still occur. Mr. Oakes stated that it might, but it would be up to COG as Borough residents would likely not need it if curbside service is started.
- **Mr. Vince DiStasi moved to approve the 2023-2025 Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic Waste Collection and Disposal Bids, awarding the contract to Noble Environmental Services. Mr. Jeff Hodge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **CONSIDER PINE TOWNSHIP'S REQUEST FOR SANITARY SEWER SERVICE EXTENSION AT 850 BARKEYVILLE ROAD, GROVE CITY, PA, OWNED BY SARAH ANDERSON**

- Mr. Goncz confirmed that capacity existed for this request.
- **Mr. Shawn Myers moved to approve Pine Township's Request for sanitary sewer service extension. Ms. Amy Gallagher seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **ENGINEERS REPORT, presented by Daniel Goncz**

- Mr. Goncz reported that bids for the water treatment plant are allowed to be held until after the November Council meeting. The Borough is still waiting for a reply regarding their LSA Grant Application. The Borough expects to hear the result of their application by November 15<sup>th</sup>, in time for their November Council meeting. Mr. Goncz explained that shop drawings are being exchanged with the contractors in preparation.
- Mr. Goncz reported to Council that the NPDES Permit Application for the Sewage Treatment Plant has been submitted to DEP. Furthermore, Mr. Goncz met with operation staff regarding the pond liners and belt filter press projects.

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

- Mr. Oakes reported that he attended a meeting hosted by the Mercer County Department of Public Safety regarding the drafting of an all-hazards plan for all municipalities within the County. Mr. Oakes stated that the County has hired professional consultants to assist with this process. Mr. Oakes explained that this fits in well with the electrical outage plan that the Borough Safety Committee has been working on. Questionnaires were distributed at the meeting and Mr. Oakes will complete these to start the process.
- Mr. Oakes reported that the Borough has received their 2021 CDBG funds which have been earmarked for ADA curb ramps at the intersections of Columbia Ave and Stockton Ave and Harvard Ave and Park Street. Lennon Smith Souleret Engineering has begun working on this project.
- Mr. Oakes reported on a complaint from George Rodgers, owner of Agway, regarding an issue with the Borough Tax Collector, Mathew Fischer. Mr. Rodgers paid his property taxes with a check on 9/23/22, but he slightly overpaid them due a clerical error. This payment was returned by Mr. Fischer after the September 30<sup>th</sup> discount period ended. Mr. Oakes reported that since the payment was for school taxes that Mr. Rodgers should ask the Grove City School Board to accept the discounted rate, the Borough Council has no authority to offer a discount on school real estate taxes.
- Mr. Oakes shared with Council a letter that he received from Superior Ambulance Service requesting a ½ mil Borough real estate tax be imposed for EMS service. The letter references that without the tax that Superior Ambulance will be forced to make service changes in 2023. Councilman Henry asked if there have been further discussions regarding membership drives. Mr. Oakes stated that he has not personally discussed this with Mr. Dick, but Mr. Dick mentioned at the Public Hearing on 10/11 that they have not been cost effective. Solicitor Bonner mentioned that Dr. Rome mentioned at the Public Hearing that membership drives were not cost effective in his experience. Councilman Bigley mentioned that he has spoken with people who would be interested in joining if Mr. Dick conducted a membership drive. Councilwoman Mattocks asked Solicitor Bonner how much it cost him to do a mailing. Solicitor Bonner stated that for his district that it cost about \$7500 to send it to a selected pool of likely voters. Councilwoman Mattocks mentioned that Liberty Township is currently the only municipality within the Superior Ambulance service area that has imposed a ½ mill tax for EMS services. Councilman Jaillet questioned what has changed to bring about this crisis. Solicitor Bonner explained that personnel issues due to low pay have caused many to leave the industry and the lack of payment if transportation is not provided. Solicitor Bonner mentioned that conditions could be put in place if a ½ mil tax is imposed to support EMS services, it wouldn't be a blank check. Councilman Jaillet questioned if the reimbursement arrangements had changed. Solicitor Bonner answered that they hadn't, but Superior Ambulance has over a million dollars in uncollectable charges due to these issues. Solicitor Bonner mentioned the Borough has a duty to provide police, fire and EMS services. Councilman Jaillet asked if this will continue to escalate and will ½ of a mil be enough. Solicitor Bonner mentioned that all municipalities could band together to institute a ½ mill tax with Grove City Borough taking the lead. Councilman Bigley stated that you don't know what you have until it is gone and worries that EMS services could be reduced or eliminated. Mr. Oakes mentioned that out of 22 municipalities only 11 attended the EMS Taskforce meetings. Solicitor Bonner reported that Liberty has approved a ½ mill and Pine is considering it, but felt that if Grove City took the lead others would follow. Councilman DiStasi stated that he couldn't imagine what would happen if the service was eliminated. Councilman Bigley stated that Grove City does not want to go back to how it was prior to reliable EMS services. Solicitor Bonner explained that it costs about seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars to run a single ambulance on a yearly basis. Councilman Jaillet questioned the status of state support following the hearing. Solicitor Bonner explained that state law was changed to allocate money from the fireworks tax to EMS services. Councilman Hodge asked if Superior was claiming that they don't get paid for non-transport. Solicitor Bonner confirmed that was the case. Councilman Hodge stated that his mother had received a bill for \$75 when an ambulance was called and she wasn't transported. Solicitor Bonner asked Councilman Hodge to provide this information. Solicitor Bonner explained that Medicare and Medicaid set the rates and all insurance carriers follow. He

explained that it is up to Council what they would like to do regarding a ½ mil tax, but he feels that Superior is not just looking for funding, but a sense of appreciation from the communities that it serves. He further highlighted that Grove City is a leader in the area and others will look to what Grove City does. Councilman Hodge asked if the local hospitals had any interest in ambulance service. Solicitor Bonner mentioned that they do not have any interest due to the rural nature of the area and they only operate them on a limited basis in more urban environments.

#### **JUNIOR COUNCIL REPORT – Junior Council Member, Emmy Riddle**

- Ms. Riddle reported that she attended the Third Grade Field Trip to Council Chambers that Mayor Riddle hosted earlier this month and enjoyed teaching the students about local government.
- Ms. Riddle reported that in October Student Council hosted senior nights for fall sports and they were a success.
- Mr. Mac Messer reported that last month a snow shoveling program for seniors was discussed and Mr. Messer has made tentative plans to coordinate this service with the High School Service Club.

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

- Mayor Riddle reported that he attended the following events over the last month:
  - 9/21- COG Meeting
  - 9/22- Mercer County Boroughs Association Dinner
  - 9/23- High School Homecoming Parade
  - 9/28- Concealed Carry Event hosted by Representative Bonner
  - 10/1- Grove City College Homecoming
  - 10/6-10/7- Third Grade Field Trip to the Borough Building
  - 10/11- EMS Hearing hosted by Representative Bonner
  - 10/12- Grove City Airport Hangar Ribbon Cutting
  - 10/14-10/16- PSAB Fall Conference
- Mayor Riddle reported that he has the following events upcoming:
  - 11/5- Eagle Scout Ceremony
  - 11/16- COG Meeting
- Mayor Riddle shared that Chief Osborne reported that he has a trial coming up next week that includes drug possession with the intent to deliver. Mayor Riddle also reported that Chief Osborne shared that he is experiencing man power shortages due to Officer Ondo's departure and has requested that the remaining regular pay within the Budget that would have gone to Officer Ondo be transferred to the overtime budget. Chief Osborne has also shared that the application deadline for the hiring of a new police officer has been extended due to a lack of applicants. Finally, on 10/19, the Police Department will be participating in Operation Safe Stop, which will entail police officers riding on school buses and providing information regarding safe school bus stop requirements.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Councilwoman Mattocks shared that there would not be a Halloween Parade or Merchant Trick or Treat and that Borough-wide Trick or Treat would be on 10/29 from 4-6PM.
- Councilman Jaillet shared that the Best Robotics Competition is this coming weekend at Grove City College and that they are still looking for volunteers to judge. Councilman Jaillet shared pictures with Council of the students practicing at Ross Park Mall.

#### **NEWS MEDIA**

- No members of the news media were present.

**Councilwoman Mattocks announced that following adjournment Council would enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully,

Taylor G. Pokrant  
Borough Secretary