

**BOROUGH OF GROVE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
November 18, 2024 at 7PM**

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING by Council President, Mary K. Mattocks at 7:05 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRAYER: was offered by **Mr. Randy Riddle**

MEETING ATTENDANCE / ROLL CALL

X if present	Council Member Name	X if present	Council Member Name	X if present	Other Name
X	Mattocks, Mary Kay	X	Bonner, Timothy (Solicitor)	X	Oakes, Vance (Boro Manager)
X	Morley, Shawn	X	DiStasi, Vincent	X	Pokrant, Taylor (Secretary)
X	Eakin, Patrick	X	Riddle, Randy (Mayor)	X	Graham, William (LSSE)
X	Henry, James	X	Bigley, Joel (Vice-Pres)		
X	Hodge, Jeffrey	X	Zimmerman, William		
X	Hoffman, Jared	X	Myford, Elle (Jr. Council)		
X	Jaillet, Scott	X	Smith, Alex (Jr. Council)		

ANNOUNCEMENT THAT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION WAS HELD

- Ms. Mary K. Mattocks announced that an executive session was held prior to the regular meeting to discuss a personnel matter.

REQUEST FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

- Ms. Lee Myford, 504 Woodland Ave, discussed her concern with the Grove City College Crosswalk on Madison Ave. Ms. Myford presented a picture of a crosswalk with flashing lights and suggested that the Borough and College explore the installation of one. Ms. Myford stated that she has taken her daughter on many college visits and has seen them at other colleges.

REQUEST TO ADD ITEMS TO THE AGENDA

- None

APPROVAL OF 'BILLS PAID' REPORT

- **Mr. Jared Hoffman moved to approve the 'Bills Paid' report. Mr. Scott Jaillet 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. Patrick Eakin seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING ON OCTOBER 21, 2024 AND, FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON OCTOBER 28, 2024

- **Mr. Scott Jaillet moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Jeff Hodge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

GROVE CITY LIBRARY REPORT

- Mr. Scott Amon presented the library report. Mr. Amon detailed that the Library held a soup fundraiser on November 8th and a bingo fundraiser on November 9th and both were successful. Mr. Amon reported that the Library has a cookie walk fundraiser coming up on December 7th at the Grove City Masonic Hall. Mr.

Amon also reported that the donor letter that was sent out about a month ago has generated about twenty thousand in donations. Mayor Riddle asked Mr. Amon where things stood with the theft case with the former director. Mr. Amon stated that the insurance company has paid out a claim to reimburse the Library for the lost funds and that they have not heard anything else from the Court of Common Pleas. Mayor Riddle asked Solicitor Bonner if it was common for a case to take this long to adjudicate. Solicitor Bonner stated that it was not common, but there could be a number of reasons and stated that he would look into it.

CONSIDER EVENT REQUEST: GROVE CITY DOWNTOWN EVENTS COMMITTEE LIGHT UP NIGHT WITH SANTA TO BE HELD ON DECEMBER 6, 2024 FROM 5-8PM IN DOWNTOWN GROVE CITY

- Ms. Heather Blanchard, Grove City Downtown Events Committee, was present and discussed her event. Ms. Blanchard explained that Santa will arrive on a fire truck and visit with children at Saxony House. There will also be a tree decorating contest and a Christmas scavenger hunt. Ms. Blanchard explained that the downtown events have really helped the downtown businesses. Ms. Blanchard stated that she believed that lifting the open container ordinance for approved events may also help and that she would like to revisit that at some time. Ms. Blanchard thanked Council for their support of this event and her Octoberfest event.
- **Mr. Jared Hoffman moved to approve the event request. Mr. Shawn Morley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

CONSIDER 2025 BUDGET

- Mr. Oakes reported that the 2025 Budget contained no tax increase, sewer rate increase or water rate increase. Mr. Oakes detailed that the budget does contain an electrical rate increase of 1.58 cents per KWH. Mr. Oakes explained that the rising costs of capacity have required this rate increase. Mr. Oakes explained that this increase not only impacts the Borough, but impacts Penn Power customers as well, with Penn Power set for a rate increase at the beginning of the year and additional rate increases later in 2025. Mr. Oakes explained that the average borough resident customer will see an increase of \$9.69 per month.
- Mr. Oakes reported that the 2025 Budget includes several capital projects including paving the Borough parking lot, new MDT computers for the police cars, new radios for the Fire Department, a new storage building at the Airport with the assistance of a 95% state grant, a new dump truck for the Public Works Department, construction of Phase 1 of the Ward 4 Stormwater project, a new overhead door at the Electric Department and a new pickup truck for the Electric Department. Mr. Oakes also explained that the new Water Treatment Plant is expected to be online in the first quarter of 2025 and the Park Street plant will be decommissioned and the equipment will be removed. Mr. Oakes further detailed that the budget contains a twenty-four thousand dollar payment to Superior Ambulance, which guarantees EMS service for the Borough and provides residents with a fifty percent reduction in their copay for this service.
- Mr. Jeff Hodge thanked Mr. Oakes and Mr. Pokrant for their work on the budget. Mr. Jaillet thanked the Department Heads for their submission of long-term capital plans this year.
- **Mr. Scott Jaillet moved to approve the 2025 Budget. Mr. Jim Henry seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

CONSIDER 2024-07 SETTING THE TAX RATE

- Mr. Oakes reiterated that the tax rate would be unchanged at 4.5 mills and that this resolution would confirm this.
- **Mr. Patrick Eakin moved to approve the resolution. Mr. Vince DiStasi seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

CONSIDER INTENT TO ADOPT AND ADVERTISE ORDINANCE 1502 ELECTRIC RATE INCREASE

- Mr. Oakes explained that this increase would be 1.58 cents per KWH and is necessary due to the increased capacity costs that the Borough is facing. Mr. Oakes explained that these capacity costs are auctioned and that the most recent auction saw a substantial increase and that all electric customers in the region will be

impacted by this increased cost. Mr. Oakes highlighted that even with this increase that the Borough rates will still be below those of Penn Power.

- **Mr. Jared Hoffman moved to approve the advertisement of Ordinance 1502 . Mr. Patrick Eakin seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

CONSIDER CHANGE ORDER WITH HECKMAN DIVERSIFIED FOR REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING SEWER INTERCEPTOR

- Mr. William Graham, LSSE, was present and reported that Heckman Diversified is currently working on the force main project and as a part of this project is connecting to the existing sewer interceptor along Wolf Creek. Mr. Graham explained that when Heckman excavated to connect to this interceptor, they discovered that the existing interceptor is in poor condition. Mr. Graham displayed a photo showing that the top of the interceptor has eroded. Mr. Graham reported that it is estimated that the pipe has about two years of useful life remaining. Mr. Graham stated that Heckman is present and has submitted a quote to replace approximately two hundred fifty feet of the faulty pipe. Mr. Graham recommended that Council consider this proposal due to the fact that if they are to wait they would have to pay a contractor to mobilize. Mr. Chad Patterson, Public Works Director, explained that this job was not one that his crew could perform due to the pipe depth. Mr. Oakes stated that the Borough has money saved in their sewer rainy day fund and that this would be a good use of this money to avoid spending more in the future for the same work. Mr. Graham explained that he is also in the process of obtaining quotes to line the pipe and should have those soon. Mr. Oakes recommended that Council approve the expenditure of funds not to exceed the change order by Heckman Diversified at the Engineer's approval. Mr. Jaillet asked about the condition of the interceptor past this section and Mr. Patterson explained that it is in better condition.
- **Mr. Jared Hoffman moved to approve the expenditure of funds not to exceed the change order amount as submitted by Heckman Diversified to replace the Sewer Interceptor, subject to approval by the Borough Engineer. Mr. Vince DiStasi seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

CONSIDER HECKMAN DIVERSIFIED PAYMENT REQUEST NUMBER 2 FOR THE FORCEMAIN CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT

- Mr. Graham stated that this is for work that has been completed from State Street to McConnell Street and that the pay request has been reviewed and that he recommends its approval.
- **Mr. Patrick Eakin moved to approve the payment request. Mr. Scott Jaillet seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

CONSIDER 2024 LSA APPLICATION

- Mr. Oakes detailed that the Borough had been provided five hundred thousand dollars in grant funding from their 2023 LSA application and thanked Mr. Bonner for his assistance with this award. This grant funding will be for Phase one of the Ward 4 Stormwater project and Mr. Oakes suggested that the Borough apply for Phase two with this new application. Mr. Oakes asked Mr. Graham to explain this project. Mr. Graham detailed that the Phase two cost is approximately two million dollars and that the maximum award for an LSA Grant is one million dollars, therefore the Borough will have to come up with one million dollars in local match. Mr. Oakes also reminded Council that the Borough may or may not be awarded the full amount as they applied for one million dollars this year and were awarded half of that. Mr. Oakes stated that by applying for the 2024 round, the Borough will be committing itself to the local match award should they be selected, unless they turn the grant award down. Mr. Graham explained that the project could be broken up into two smaller subphases if necessary. Mr. DiStasi stated the he thought the borough should apply for the entire project and provide the fund commitment.
- **Mr. Vince DiStasi moved to apply for the 2024 LSA Grant Program and commit the required local match. Mr. Jim Henry seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

DISCUSS RESTRICTIONS ON TEMPORARY COMMERCIAL SIGNAGE

- Mr. Oakes explained that this was brought up at a committee meeting due to various yard signs appearing around town. Mr. Oakes stated that PennDOT does have the Highway Beautification Act of 1971 that prohibits these signs in state right of ways. Mr. Oakes stated that the Borough could ask PennDOT to enforce these restrictions. Mr. Jaillet stated that he saw that PennDOT plans to begin greater enforcement. Mr. Hodge stated that he is especially concerned with these signs downtown due to the recent beautification efforts. Mr. Pokrant stated that the Borough generally allows temporary commercial signage on a temporary basis, but the Borough could explore additional restrictions. Ms. Mattocks suggested that this be discussed further at an Infrastructure Committee meeting.

CONSIDER 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

- Mr. Oakes explained that the proposed schedule would be the third Monday at 7PM with the exception of the January meeting, which will be on January 22nd due to the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.
- **Mr. Vince DiStasi moved to approve the meeting schedule. Mr. Jared Hoffman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

CONSIDER PINE TOWNSHIP'S REQUESTS FOR UTILITY SERVICE EXTENSIONS AS FOLLOWS:

1. *Water and Sewer Service Extension to Village Park (38 units), Owned by VIPA Land Development*
 2. *Sewer Service Extension to 12 Indian Path, Grove City, PA, Owned by Michael McDonald*
- Mr. Oakes stated that capacity exists for these requests.
 - **Mr. Jim Henry moved to approve the utility service extensions. Mr. Scott Jaillet seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

ENGINEER'S REPORT, PRESENTED BY VANCE OAKES

- Mr. Oakes presented the report on behalf of Mr. Goncz. Mr. Oakes detailed that work continues on Water Treatment Plant with an expected completion date of January 2025. Mr. Oakes explained that the attached change order is for a disconnect switch for the Water Treatment Plant expansion. Mr. Oakes stated that Mr. Goncz recommended the approval of all payment requests.
- **Mr. Patrick Eakin moved to approve the change order with McCurly Houston Electric in the amount of \$3,950 for the installation of a disconnect switch and payment requests from Gannet Fleming for construction observation, management and design work in the amounts of \$7,935, \$9,772.50 and \$6,940, from Global Heavy Corporation in the amount of \$102,220, from McCurley-Houston in the amount of \$198,288.73 and from Renick Brothers in the amount of \$74,396.40. Mr. Shawn Morley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT PRESENTED BY BOROUGH MANAGER, VANCE OAKES

- Mr. Oakes shared with Council that the Borough has been awarded a DEP recycling grant in the amount of ninety-five thousand dollars for the replacement of the woodchipper.
- Mr. Oakes reported that the curbside leaf collection schedule will be finished this week and that the Public Works Department will start going around Borough-wide the first week of December.

JR. COUNCIL REPORT PRESENTED BY JUNIOR COUNCILPERSON, ELLE MYFORD

- Ms. Myford reported that the PTO recently hosted a light-up run event and a trout exploration event.
- Ms. Myford reported that the Grove City High School Boys Cross Country Team are the PIAA State Champions.
- Ms. Myford reported that a benefit concert for the Grove City Food Pantry will be held on December 13th at the High School.
- Ms. Myford shared that the renovation work at the High School continues, with a new scoreboard being installed in the gym.
- Ms. Myford detailed that the Grove City Rotary Club will be installing a peace pole in the park this coming Saturday.

- Ms. Myford shared that she and Mr. Smith both received the Frank Jiggs Wolford in Girls Golf and Boys Soccer respectively.

MAYORS REPORT PRESENTED BY MAYOR RANDY RIDDLE

- Mayor Riddle shared that over the last month he attended the following events:
 - 10/28- Finance Committee Meeting
 - 11/1- Wolf Creek Floral Ribbon Cutting
 - 11/8- Conference Call with PSAB
 - 11/9- Veterans Day Parade- Mayor Riddle thanked all involved and thanked the Mercer County Fire Police for their assistance with traffic.
 - 9/26- PSAB Trustees Call
 - 11/12- High School Boys Cross Country Banquet, where he presented proclamations to the team for their state title.
- Mayor Riddle reported that he has the following events upcoming:
 - 11/20- COG Meeting
 - 11/23- Peace Pole Installation Event at Memorial Park
 - 12/14- Wreaths Across America Event
- Mayor Riddle shared that Chief Allias reported that the Police Department is working on getting their Live Scan machine up and running.
- Mayor Riddle reported that the Police Department will be conducting roving DUI patrols over the next month.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Ms. Mattocks thanked the Grove City Police and Grove City Volunteer Fire Department for the escort that they provided to Grove City College following their Region Title.
- Mr. Jim Henry reported that he received a compliment from Jill Shimek for how professional and easy to work with Mr. Patterson and the Public Works Department was during the Downtown Beautification Project.
- Mr. Hodge asked Mr. Patterson about water service line letters that are being sent to residents. Mr. Patterson explained that these are required by DEP and that some residents were mistakenly sent the wrong letter. Mr. Patterson asked that if Council members receive any questions to direct them to him.

NEWS MEDIA

- Borough Council was available for questions.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35PM.

Respectfully,

Taylor G. Pokrant, Assistant Borough Manager