

**Borough of Edinboro
Council Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER:

Monday, April 13, 2020 the regularly scheduled meeting was called to order by Mayor Aaron Gast at 6:35 PM. The meeting was held via Zoom videoconference, due to COVID-19.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL:

Council members present were Jim Kiley, Mary Ann Horne, Aaron Gast, Mark Eisert, Fred Langill, Pat Davis, and Alyssa Dobson.

Other officials present were Borough Manager Kevin Oppe, Solicitor Tim Wachter, and Finance Director Jason Spangenberg. Citizens present via telephone were Donna Edmonds and a representative from the West County News Journal.

MINUTES:

Mayor Gast moved to approve the March 9, 2020 regular meeting minutes as presented. Mary Ann Horne seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

No speakers were present.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee:

Mary Ann Horne moved to approve bills paid March 23 totaling \$87,983.19; and paid April 13 totaling \$116,440.15. Alyssa Dobson seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.

Mary Ann Horne moved to approve payroll paid March 13 totaling \$81,264.57; paid March 27 totaling \$74,421.33; and paid April 10 totaling \$75,763.91. Jim Kiley seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.

Recreation Committee:

Council briefly discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the boat dock installation. The dock installer is unable to perform the installation currently due to the stay-at-home restrictions. As soon as the installer is able to perform the work, they will be installed. Manager Oppe

mentioned that we would evaluate the need to issue refunds if a significant portion of the season is missed due to the docks not being installed.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Wachter stated that he is in the process of reviewing the proposed water service agreement with Washington Township.

MANAGEMENT REPORTS:

Manager Oppe presented his monthly report. Regarding the 2020 Census, Edinboro is only around 50% reported so far. The ECED were awarded a little more than \$4,200 from the PA DCED, but planned Census 2020 events are postponed until a time that social gathering is considered safe. Manager Oppe spoke with The Spectator and gave information on how students in the dorms and in town should fill out the census. He discussed the way students are supposed to handle completion of the Census.

President Huang's Inauguration has been postponed until September.

The Edinboro Triathlon has cancelled their event scheduled for 6 June. They plan to give a credit for registrants for next year's event - to take place tentatively June 5, 2021.

Manager Oppe forwarded an email from ECGRA to local social organizations for input on projects that ECGRA can help fund during the COVID-19 emergency. The Food Bank reported that they have received higher than normal cash donations and are currently in good shape. One church is going through their normal funding quicker than usual. He offered to help them write the grant proposal if they can provide the required information.

The Fireworks Committee has announced the postponement of this year's event until 2021, since all University summer events have been cancelled by the PASSHE Chancellor. Sponsor businesses would have had difficulty to donate this year due to the current business closures. The outdoor movie series on campus also cannot take place as planned, but the movies will plan to go ahead instead at Goodell Gardens. The university will provide the inflatable screen and Millennium Sound the AV equipment.

As mentioned earlier, Solicitor Wachter has the proposed Township Water Service Agreement and is reviewing it now. He is simplifying the agreement with the focus of selling a set amount of bulk treated water to the Township. We only have a certain amount of water that we can give as limited by our aquifer. Jim Kiley asked who would be responsible for water line repairs. Manager Oppe explained that we would be responsible for lines to the Borough border, and the lines would be the Township's responsibility past that point. The proposal will be presented as soon as it is ready. Council discussed the potential negotiation process, and it was agreed that the department superintendents should be the ones to determine the agreement details.

When a property sells, we need to do an inspection of the sewer connection to ensure it is in compliance and in good working order. This type of inspection falls into the category of non-emergency, so we are not willing to increase exposure of employees to conduct these inspections currently. In order to allow for the sale to go through, \$1,000 will be placed in escrow, so that when we are able to inspect there is sufficient money available for repairs, if needed. This is fairly common in commercial sales, and most times the full escrow amount is returned to the seller.

Playground equipment remains closed. We have closed the opening of the basketball hoops with stakes to dis-incentivize their use for basketball games. We still haven't seen the problems with people congregating that the police in Erie were reporting, so the best course is to continue to let people use the parks for walking and exercise. With the onset of warmer weather Streets Department soon will begin cutting grass in the parks & public areas and sweeping the streets. The employees will be working singly to minimize contact with one another. Docks installation is currently unknown.

Police Chief Donahue has reported that his officers have had minimal issues with non-compliance from people congregating. This may change as snowbirds return from places with less stringent rules, but hopefully our community continues to make good decisions. There have been concerns raised on Facebook pages about Dairy Supreme opening and the potential impact that will have on social distancing measures. DS is classified as takeaway food, which is allowed, and if they have concerns about any business following county guidance, they should call the Erie County Health Department, who are the responsible agency. We have had a few contractors asking for a waiver to do work for emergency purposes (which is allowed under the guidance). We have been in contact with Erie County Health and understand their view on what work is allowed. We have approved those repairs.

Chris Motter and Manager Oppe interviewed three PennDOT-approved companies who will assess property value of the land where the Rt. 99 sidewalk will go and negotiate with the owners.

Regarding the proposed reduction in utility bill charges to help residents in this time of need, we received official consent from PennVest to have a water rate that is not sufficient to pay the expenditures by using reserves. When we received the loan for the new water plant and tower, we agreed to ensure the rate would be sufficient. They were pleased that we had contacted them and requested the consent using correct procedure and gave approval within two days. Council will vote on this at this meeting.

For the Hornblower Renown Subdivision, the surface water plan was reviewed by Steve Halmi and the subdivision plan has been recommended for approval by both Washington Township and the Borough Planning Commissions. This is the same subdivision that we have

discussed in the past, although they now plan to develop two lots in the Borough due to stormwater plan changes.

Fred Langill stated his appreciation for the Borough staff and management for their work in dealing with the current pandemic crisis.

Finance:

Mayor Gast moved to approve Resolution 7-2020 for the implementation of water and sewer utility bill relief:

***BOROUGH OF EDINBORO
RESOLUTION 7-2020***

A RESOLUTION, of the Home Rule Borough of Edinboro, Erie County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the outbreak of the Coronavirus COVID-19 has led to lost income for many Borough residents and businesses; and,

WHEREAS, the well-being of Borough residents and businesses is of the greatest importance to Borough Council and staff; and,

WHEREAS, Borough Council intends to help those in financial need by implementing the following measures:

- 1. For the April 2020 utility billing period, water and sewer charges for all utility customers will be reduced by 25%,*
- 2. Late fees will not be assessed in April or June 2020,*
- 3. Service termination for non-payment will not take place through June 2020 at a minimum; and,*

WHEREAS, Borough Council acknowledges that these measures will cause the Borough to operate at a financial loss during the effective time period, with the shortfall being covered by reserve funds.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Home Rule Borough of Edinboro that the above utility measures be implemented effective immediately, and rates will return to the normal level from the June billing period forward, unless this rate reduction is extended by Borough Council.

RESOLVED this 13th day of April, 2020.

Jim Kiley seconded the motion. Council discussed the need for these emergency measures as a way to help residents and businesses. The motion passed by 7-0 roll call vote: Mark Eisert, yes; Alyssa Dobson, yes; Jim Kiley, yes; Mary Ann Horne, yes; Pat Davis, yes; Fred Langill, yes; and Aaron Gast, yes.


Planning & Zoning:

Jim Kiley moved to approve the Hornblower Renown subdivision application, as recommended by the Planning Commission and discussed earlier in the meeting. Pat Davis seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.


ADJOURNMENT:

Mary Ann Horne moved for adjournment, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.

ATTEST:



Manager Kevin Oppe



Mayor Aaron Gast