

*Minutes of the Milesburg Borough Council Meeting held on
May 13, 2024*

Council Members Present: Fred Kellerman, Plummer Davidson, Ethel Kellerman, Barry Campbell, Jr., Kirsty Lloyd, Shirley Martin, and Lauren Davidson-Haupt.

The Borough Solicitor, Tracey Benson, Esquire, and Mayor Clair Martin were also present.

The Code Enforcement Officer, Keith Rupert, was not present.

President Fred Kellerman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Visitor comments – The matter of attendees facing difficulties in hearing the council during meetings has been a topic of discussion on numerous occasions in past sessions. A suggestion was put forth to provide a sound system for the borough in order to guarantee that all individuals can clearly hear the proceedings. President Kellerman acknowledged the concern and stated that the Council will explore the possibility of purchasing a new system or repairing the existing one.

Approve Minute & Pay Bills

Moved by Ethel Kellerman and seconded by Shirley Martin to approve meeting minutes from April 18, 2024, and April 29, 2024, and to pay the outstanding bills. Approved unanimously.

Code Enforcement Officer

Keith Rupert – was not present; no report was made.

Solicitor

Tracey Benson

Right to Know Officer – Benson emphasized the importance of complying with the Right to Know Law by recommending the council appoint an Open Records Officer to manage such requests. He assured the council that he would remain accessible for any needed support. Furthermore, once an Open Records Officer is appointed, their contact details should be included on the Milesburg Borough's website, along with the necessary form for submitting Right to Know Law requests. It was decided that the Open Records Officer position will be postponed until the Personnel Committee reviews the hiring policies.

Unemployment compensation – Benson stated that, based on his understanding, Keith Russell applied for unemployment benefits through the private plan provided by the Pennsylvania Borough Association. He indicated that it is likely they will reach out to the Milesburg Borough

to gather information relating to Mr. Russell's employment status and voluntary resignation before reaching a decision on that claim.

Job Applicants – Benson mentioned that a personnel record was found in a desk drawer at the Milesburg Borough building, pertaining to an individual who had never been employed by the borough. The document contained a significant amount of personal information, and it should either be destroyed or returned to the rightful owner. It is believed to have originated from Wizzards Janitorial Systems located in Milesburg, Pa that is owned by Peter DeLosa. Benson recommended that the Assistant Secretary-Treasurer reach out to this individual to inquire whether they prefer to retrieve the employment file or have it destroyed. He emphasized the importance of making sure that all actions are accurately recorded.

Mayor's report

Clair Martin - had nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Milesburg Community Park

Ricky Keith, Milesburg Borough Park Manager is responsible for locking up the park every evening, maintaining cleanliness by disposing of trash and keeping the bathrooms clean. He also reports any acts of vandalism and manages the reservation signs for pavilion rentals. In light of recent events and the shortage of staff, the President proposed that Ricky Keith should also handle the task of opening the park and bathrooms, with a raise in pay of \$50 more a month, bringing his salary from \$650 to \$700 per month. Since all employees fall under the Personnel Committee's responsibility, it was decided that this matter should be postponed until the committee evaluates and formulates new job descriptions and a pay scale for the borough employees. Lloyd stated that the Personnel Committee has a meeting scheduled for May 21, 2024, to assess the current job descriptions, including the two existing positions in the borough: Park Manager and Code Enforcement Officer.

Freedom Life Church – Rev Josh from the Freedom Life Church reached out to Davidson-Haupt to discuss choosing the Milesburg Community Park for their upcoming local community project day. This event aims to gather volunteers who will dedicate their time and resources to improving the park. Davidson-Haupt organized a meeting with Pastor Steven Jabco to inspect the park and evaluate their plans, considering the volunteers' abilities and the number of participants needed. During the examination, it was discovered that the playground requires more mulch. According to the rules, the playground area in a community park should have a recommended mulch depth of 4 inches, resulting in about 130,000 cubic feet of mulch needed.

Pastor Jabco estimated that the mulch would cost around \$4,500, but he is willing to negotiate with his vendor to lower the price using his company's discount. The Freedom Life Church intends to assist with certain costs to enhance the park, while the borough may need to cover the remaining expenses. In addition to replacing the mulch, the volunteers will also remove weeds, tidy up the edges, fix the benches, and possibly give them a fresh coat of paint. They will also repair the falling signs and mend the wire netting over the pavilions to shield them from the elements and birds.

The church first selected June 15th as their local community day to volunteer at the Milesburg Community Park; however, the date may need to be changed because the date falls on Father's Day and the Bellefonte Cruise. The liability of park volunteers was a topic of discussion and concern. Benson reassured everyone that the Milesburg Borough has liability insurance to protect against any unexpected situations. However, the volunteers are seen as distinct individuals, and the church could potentially extend their insurance coverage to include these volunteers, if they choose to do so.

President Kellerman mentioned that there is a specific allocation in the budget to fund projects like this. To avoid any delays, as the deadline is approaching rapidly, he requested a motion to authorize and schedule the Freedom Life Church's local community day with a maximum budget of \$4,000.

Moved by Ethel Kellerman and seconded by Kirsty Lloyd to move forward with the Freedom Life Church's local community day project and to approve a maximum budget of \$4,000. Approved unanimously.

The Park Committee intends to initiate further discussions with the Freedom Life Church to finalize a suitable date and determine the necessary tasks and associated costs for the park.

Tree Trimming in the park – President Kellerman announced that he received two quotes for the pruning and/or removal of the deceased trees in the Milesburg Community Park. Cleaver Tree Service provided an estimate of \$8,750, while Hall Tree Service offered a slightly lower quote of \$8,325. The Park Committee will review the quotes and assess specific tree trimming and removal needs in the park. The evaluation will be returned to the companies with a request for detailed bids.

The matter was postponed until the meeting on June 3, 2024, where a decision will be made about which company to move forward with.

Personnel Committee - Lloyd said the committee had already given their update during an earlier meeting discussion.

Fire & Police

Oversight Committee report – Campbell, Jr. shared that he recently attended his first meeting and learned a lot about what the committee does. He noted that the committee's finances seemed good, and he was overall impressed with the meeting.

Adding a new member to the drivers list approval – President Kellerman requested a vote to authorize a new driver for the Citizens Hook & Ladder Company No. 1, namely Thomas Walk, with a license expiration date of 05/01/2028.

Moved by Barry Campbell, Jr. and seconded by Kirsty Lloyd to approve Thomas Walk as a new driver for the Citizens Hook & Ladder Company No. 1. Approved unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS

Pro Temp – Council member, Lauren Davidson-Haupt was appointed as the Pro Tempore to oversee the proceedings of the Milesburg Borough Council in the event of the vice president and/or president's absence.

Moved by Kirsty Lloyd and seconded by Plummer Davidson to approve Lauren Davidson-Haupt as the Pro Tempore. Approved unanimously.

Water Authority – John McClure was selected to take over Chuck Weidow's position as a member of the Milesburg Water Authority Board. McClure will fulfill the remainder of Chuck's term until the end of the current calendar year. Although board members typically serve a 5-year term, Weidow's term only had 7 months remaining. Due to Weidow missing three meetings, as outlined in the Milesburg Water Authority's regulations, he was automatically removed without the need for a formal motion.

Moved by Kirsty Lloyd and seconded by Barry Campbell, Jr. to approve John McClure to serve out the rest of Chuck Weidow's term as a member of the Milesburg Water Authority Board. Approved unanimously.

Sewer Authority, Zoning & Hearing Board, and Emergency Management - The Council asked the attendees if anyone would like to volunteer for any of these committees, no one responded.

Website

Kessler Freedman, Inc.

Lloyd said that Kessler Freedman, Inc., the current company in charge of overseeing the Milesburg Borough's website, contract expires on September 30, 2024. The borough pays an annual fee of \$780 to this company. Lloyd contacted The Pennsylvania Association of Boroughs

to inquire about discounted government website options and received a price estimate from CourseVector. In the first year, the cost to develop the website, offer one year of support, and train employees would amount to \$1,809. To continue hosting the website and maintaining the domain on their server after the first year, the cost would be reduced to \$619, which is less than what the borough currently spends. CourseVector also offers training to employees and keeps a record of these trainings for future reference.

The matter is temporarily postponed due to more pressing issues, but it will be addressed in a future meeting.

The visitors adjourned at 7:50 p.m. due to the upcoming Executive Session.

The Executive Session commenced at 7:51 p.m. to deliberate on pending legal matters with the Milesburg Borough Solicitor. It concluded at 8:17 p.m.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn was made by Plummer Davidson and seconded by Ethel Kellerman. Approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:18 p.m.

Submitted by:

Robyn D. Dyke
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer