

**BOROUGH OF EDGEWOOD  
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**BOROUGH OF EDGEWOOD**  
**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD JUNE 21, 2021**

President Wainright called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon roll call, the following responded: Mr. Fuller, Mr. Love, Mr. O'Donnell, Ms. Yaney, and Mr. Wainright. Also present were Solicitor Tim Barry and Borough Manager Rob Zahorchak. Mayor Wilson, Mrs. Gleba, Dr. Petrolla and Junior Councilperson Ben Bermann were absent.

**PLEDGE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mr. Wainright noted that Dr. Petrolla joined the meeting.

**ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR:** The following public comment was made by Beth Battaline, 15 Washington St: Ms. Battaline stated that she had an update regarding Koenig Field, from a group of citizens who would like to see improvements made. Mr. O'Donnell asked for clarification as to whether this was about the tennis courts. Ms. Battaline responded that the initial concern was around the tennis courts, but they had other improvement that they would like to see made in addition to that. She noted that they put together a survey, and had approximately 75 responses. She stated that from the survey, 93% of respondents believed that improvements would help the community and increase home values, and it would encourage them to use the space more. Ms. Battaline noted that some residents will not use the tennis courts with cracks. She further discussed that a Facebook page was just recently started to try to reach more residents concerning the field, and thus far the citizens group has been advertised by word of mouth, mostly to friends. Signs have also been posted at the field.

Ms. Battaline noted additional results from the survey. She stated that of those who responded, 97% would like to see the tennis courts be repaired, 94% would like to see pickleball added, and 74% would like to see the addition of a bocce court. She added that other items of interest included a playground for younger kids, sewer issues, and the state of the stairs from Garland Street. She noted an altercation in the past that led to the removal of basketball courts, in regards to the possibility of adding those as well. Bathrooms were also discussed. Some group members would like to see public funds be used to make these improvements, and some are open to community fundraising.

Ms. Battaline stated that the group would like to see what the Borough is able to do. Mr. Zahorchak responded that one possible option is for the group to provide us with their survey so we can consider publishing it on our own social media, in order to reach a wider audience. Mr. Wainright noted that the borough would first review the survey, prior to publishing. Mr. Zahorchak added that he appreciates the resident driven nature of the project, and noted that the officials elected to represent the Borough should have the chance to weigh in on what is being communicated to the neighborhood. Solicitor Barry added that there needs to be clarity over what is being published on social media in terms of what is a Borough communication, versus something that is being shared from another group. He further noted that such an initiative has direct impact on budget considerations and planning. Members of Council expressed concern that there could be confusion in the nature of this project that might lead members of the community to believe that there is already a budget in place for such an initiative, as well as confusion around the number of

specific improvements that could be completed. Communications from the Borough need to be framed carefully to provide realistic expectations and understanding of how this initiative would be undertaken, especially being sensitive to how it might pull funds from other Borough improvements, such as road work, noting that there could be residents who prefer to prioritize the use of public funds towards infrastructure improvements first.

Ms. Battaline stated that she believed some members of the community group were under the understanding that there was an estimate of \$75,000 to make improvements. Mr. Zahorchak responded that the number came from an old cost estimate from our engineer. This was following a question he received from a resident about a specific improvement. He added that with the current arrangement of the space, improvements could be considered, but attempting to move forward on a large list of requests would come at a significant financial cost. The scope of improvements needs to be more defined, with a realistic end-goal, based on community input and budget/ funding. A community survey is good place to start, with guidance from Council on what is included in that survey, and what message is conveyed to the neighborhood.

Mr. Fuller noted that the statement that the basketball court was removed due to altercations is a rumor, and is false. He clarified that it was removed to make space for the new playground feature. The previous playground was behind the parking lot, in a space that is prone to sewage overflow when there are heavy rains. It was decided to build the new playground closer to the main field space.

Mr. Wainright expressed concern over moving forward with anything until the matter can be discussed by Council during budget season, in October and November. He encouraged Ms. Battaline to prioritize attendance at the November budget meeting. With elections and changes to Council, he noted that it would not be prudent to start such a project without the new Council being able to weigh in. He supports the idea of a collaboration with the community, but would like to ensure the budget has been discussed first, to be sure that funds for necessary infrastructure improvements are allocated before money is set aside for recreational spending. He noted that it could take years to see these projects completed. Discussion continued around park funding and projects, including previous projects started at Dickson Park, and the recent attempts to receive grant funding for the Laurel Street tot-lot.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M-1 Mr. O'Donnell moved to approve the May 17, 2021 regular meeting minutes. Second by Mr. Fuller.

The Aye vote on the motion was unanimous. **Motion carried.**

M-2 Mr. O'Donnell moved to approve the June 7, 2021 regular meeting minutes. Second Mr. Love.

The Aye vote on the motion was unanimous. **Motion carried.**

### AUTHORIZATION TO PAY BILLS

M-3 Mr. O'Donnell moved to authorize the payment of bills, for goods and services received by the Borough, having been reviewed and approved by the General Government Committee, from the General Fund in the amount of \$71,073.12 and from the sewer fund in the amount of \$184,578.75 for a total of \$255,651.87. Second by Mr. Fuller.

DISCUSSION: Mr. O'Donnell stated that the large numbers in the General Fund are related to IT expenses, \$21,000 to life insurance payments, and a large bill to Duquesne Light, for \$4,500. From the Sewage Fund, there was a large but routine payment to ALCOSAN for \$184,578.

Mr. O'Donnell noted that he would like to thank Jan, the Finance Administrator, for providing an itemized list of online payments with this week's packet.

Upon roll call vote the following responded yes: Mr. Fuller, Mr. Love, Mr. O'Donnell, Dr. Petrolla, Ms. Yaney, and Mr. Wainright. **Motion carried.**

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**GENERAL GOVERNMENT:** Mr. O'Donnell noted that virtual participation in Council meetings has been positive. He noted that members of Council are here in good faith, and would like to utilize technological tools productively. He noted that he would like to get an idea if Council as a whole would be interested in asking Borough Manager Zahorchak to look into the possibility of continuing the option of virtual participation even after the Covid Pandemic ends.

Mr. Wainright stated that except in extenuating circumstances, he feels that members of Council should be expected to meet in-person. He added that he believes meetings can be more productive when conducted in-person. Mr. O'Donnell noted that the virtual option can add more flexibility for members of Council and allow them to attend when they may not otherwise be able to. He provided an example of a time that Mr. Fuller attended a meeting virtually while he was on vacation. Mr. Wainright responded that he is not opposed to the option but would prefer it to be reserved under specific circumstances.

Mr. Barry noted that prior to the pandemic, members of council were not allowed to participate in meetings remotely. The authorizing legislation that has allowed that to happen was related to the pandemic. In that case, there is a legal issue related to changing the policy. Mr. O'Donnell stated that he was under the understanding that it was decided by Council to not allow remote participation as a matter of custom, and was not actually barred legally. Mr. Fuller stated that the issue had come up a number of years ago, and that the conclusion was that a resolution would have to be enacted to create a formal policy. Mr. Barry responded that he would research further into borough legislation. Mr. Zahorchak noted that the Borough code states under '*Physical Absence of Council Member*,' that "Council may only authorize remote participation by telecommunication device for one or more of the following reasons: illness or disability of the member of council; care for the ill or newborn in the member's immediate family; emergency; and family business or travel." It was decided to research the issue further at a later date.

**POLICE:** Mr. Zahorchak reported that the police are still waiting for their car. Mr. Wainright inquired about the body cameras. Mr. Zahorchak responded that the cameras should be ready, however he has not heard back from the union regarding the use policy. He stated that he will follow up with the police department and provide a further update.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** Mr. Fuller reported that Public Safety did not meet.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Ms. Yaney reported that Community Development did not meet.

**PUBLIC WORKS:** Mr. Love reported that Public Works did not meet.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE:** Ms. Yaney reported that Community Service did not meet, however they have been discussing Community Day. She noted that there is a preliminary plan that was presented by Mr. Zahorchak, and that the committee feels favorably towards it. Mr. Zahorchak stated that the "rough draft" at this point is as follows. The symphony will not be available as a full ensemble to perform, however in their place they have a 12-piece brass band that can perform, with a shortened performance time. A vocal performance is in the works as well. The other big change this year is the start time. Normally the day starts at 12 pm. Kick off for live entertainment will start at 3pm. Partially this is due to Run Around the Square taking place on the same day. This also makes it easier to focus on the addition of a vendor fair. This will replace the advertiser tents, and will allow space for artists/crafters/makers to sell goods, similar to a farmers market. In addition, we are planning for a community yard sale earlier in the day. Vendors can be set up prior to the entertainment kick-off, starting around 2pm.

We are planning to have more games available for adults, in addition to games for kids. Mr. Zahorchak noted that he is waiting for confirmation from the Fire Department in terms of how they will be participating. He did note that they will most likely not be doing the chicken and rib dinners this year. We will have a variety of food trucks though. There are plans to have strolling entertainers, such as a pierogi mascot, face painters, etc. The Police Department can demonstrate their body cameras, and the fireworks are confirmed. The committee is still in discussion around how the beer garden will work. Rather than a defined space, attendees could purchase drinks and carry them around the field, by obtaining a wristband first, if Council is amenable to that. Council inquired whether there would be an animal show. Mr. Zahorchak responded that he is looking into possibly doing pony rides either in place of, or in addition to the animal show. He confirmed that the Foundation will be participating as well.

Members of Council noted that we could take advantage of Run Around the Square by advertising our event using signs that would be visible along the course, and possibly offer space for them to set up a booth for their survey.

**PERSONNEL:** Dr. Petrolla reported that Personnel did not meet.

**PENSION:** Mr. Fuller reported that Pension did not meet.

**CONNECT:** Mr. O'Donnell reported that he attended the Pre-arrest Diversion Summit. Allegheny County is working on a program called LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion), where they are attempting to use case management connected with police departments and integrated with multi-government programs. The program is for someone who is in a pre-arrest phase, whereby they can be placed into an appropriate government service. The program looks promising, with wide support amongst government representatives.

Ms. Yaney noted that there is a survey that CONNECT would like to send to the general population in regards to climate action. This can be sent to Council first to review it.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT:** Mr. Barry reported that included in the agenda is a motion for a resolution for a Full Service Network phone service agreement. He noted that he and Borough Manager Zahorchak have not discussed this previously. He stated that the approximate cost is \$29,000, but based on the 5 year term included it would be subject to be bid on. Mr. Zahorchak noted that he believed it would be similar to our agreement with Comcast, which was in place prior to Mr. Zahorchak being hired here. Mr. Barry stated that he did not believe we were in a long term contract with Comcast, and would like to opportunity for more discussion, especially as it can affect future councils. Mr. Wainright removed the item from the agenda. Mr. Barry stated that we should have until September to move on this item.

Mr. Barry stated that he intends to resign his position as Borough Solicitor, effective September 30. He wished to provide ample notice for council to decide what to do upon his resignation. Mr. Barry noted that he is picking up his arbitration business, leaving less time to commit as our solicitor. He believed that the timing would work to leave before a new council is in place. Congratulations to Mr. Barry, as well as discussion about timing and the replacement process ensued, to be continued further later.

Mr. Barry stated that we are still waiting on our consent order.

**BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:** Mr. Zahorchak reported that there will not be a financial statement included in the packets for the July 6 meeting. The second meeting in July will have more information included. The Maple Ave tree pit project is nearly complete. The heavy construction is finished, there is just landscaping to be completed.

There was a storm-line collapse on Allenby Ave. Repairs have been made and the street will be re-surfaced within the next few weeks. There will be a ceremony on Friday, July 9 at 10am to dedicate the new gazebo at Memorial Park. Mr. Zahorchak thanked the Shade Tree Committee and others who helped with weeding and mulching over the weekend. This completes the Eagle Scout project.

**NEW BUSINESS:** No new business was reported.

#### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

**M-4** Dr. Petrolla moved to hire Eben Covarrubius as a summer help laborer at a rate of \$11.00 per hour effective immediately. Second by Ms. Yaney.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Zahorchak stated Eben he was referred by Mayor Wilson. His father is a contractor, so he does have a background with some understanding of building and lawn maintenance. He will be able to help cut grass, etc. This is especially helpful as one of the regular workers will be out for several weeks for shoulder surgery.

Upon roll call vote the following responded yes: Mr. Fuller, Mr. Love, Mr. O'Donnell, Dr. Petrolla, Ms. Yaney, and Mr. Wainright. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Wainright noted that the Full Service Network motion was removed.

- M-5** Mr. Love read Amended Resolution 2021-13 Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement. Second by Mr. O'Donnell.

**BOROUGH OF EDGEWOOD  
ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
RESOLUTION 2021-13**

**Be it RESOLVED**, that the Borough of Edgewood be authorized and directed to submit the attached Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement, to submit future modifications to the attached Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement, and to submit future Applications for Traffic Signal Approval either in writing or via electronic signature, to the Department of Transportation and to sign this Agreement on behalf of Borough of Edgewood.

DISCUSSION: None.

Upon roll call vote the following responded yes: Mr. Fuller, Mr. Love, Mr. O'Donnell, Dr. Petrolla, Ms. Yaney, and Mr. Wainright. **Motion carried.**

- M-6** Mr. Fuller motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. Second by Mr. O'Donnell. The Aye vote on the motion was unanimous. **Motion carried.**



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Rob Zahorchak, Borough Manager