

**RIDGWAY BOROUGH MEETING**  
**Second Ward Fire Hall**  
**321 West Main Street, Ridgway, PA 15853**  
**October 16, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Ridgway Borough Council was called to order by Frank Quattrone at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, October 16, 2023, at the Second Ward Fire Hall.

PRESENT: Council members Frank Quattrone, Abbi Peters, Steve Lawrie, Steve Caggese, Ron Burkett, Brent Kemmer, and Ralph Dussia. Also in attendance were Borough Manager Mike Handley, Police Chief Shawn Geci, Environmental Manager Josh Quattrone, Fire Chief Scott Pontious, Solicitor David Pontzer, and Recording Secretary Jake Mercer.

Councilman Dussia made a motion to approve the Regular Council meeting minutes as scheduled held on September 18, 2023. Councilman Burkett seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye  
Councilman Burkett: Aye  
Councilman Quattrone: Aye  
Councilman Kemmer: Aye  
Councilwoman Peters: Aye  
Councilman Dussia: Aye  
Councilman Lawrie: Aye

**Recognition of Visitors**

Judith Manno-Stager attended the meeting to discuss a proposal made to the Planning, Grants, and Recreation Committee of the Ridgway Borough to make the Second Ward Fire Hall a senior center for the citizens of Ridgway. She noted that every community in Elk County has a senior center but Ridgway. Borough Manager Handley said a committee meeting was held a couple weeks prior regarding this and that the Planning, Grants, and Recreation Committee will have a recommendation for Manno-Stager moving forward.

Julee Marzella was in attendance on behalf of the Elk County Wilds and Tourism Association and stated that she had spoken with Borough Manager Mike Handley about some things that the ECWTA have stored in the old tannery building that they need to remove since the building has been sold. Marzella asked the borough council for permission to store these items in an empty building at the Ridgway Mills Campground. The items that Marzella requested to move into the building were six cafeteria tables and some wooden spools and chairs. Borough Manager Handley said the small warehouse they were requesting to store these items in is unsecured currently and some kind of agreement may have to be in place if anything happens to the items. Councilman Dussia made a motion to allow the ECWTA to store these items in this small warehouse at

the Ridgway Mills Campground. Councilman Burkett seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Burkett: Aye

Councilman Quattrone: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilman Dussia: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

### **Finance Department**

Councilman Dussia made a motion to pay the bills. Councilman Caggese seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Burkett: Aye

Councilman Quattrone: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilman Dussia: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

### **Mayor**

Mayor Imhof said the latest “Coffee with the Mayor” was very well-attended and many good ideas were shared amongst the group. He reminded borough council and others in attendance that business trick-or-treating will be on October 26 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and that there will be a lot of community members on the streets downtown and also trick-or-treating for Ridgway borough residents will be held on October 28 by porch light invitation only from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. He then stated that a major rebuild of the railroad right outside of the Second Ward Fire Hall will begin on November 10 and conclude on November 14 and detours will be in place while construction is ongoing due to West Main Street not being available to be accessed.

### **Police Department**

Police Chief Shawn Geci said that borough council has his monthly report. He also reiterated the time and dates for business trick-or-treating and trick-or-treating in the Ridgway Borough as previously mentioned by Mayor Imhof.

### **Fire Department**

Fire Chief Scott Pontious that borough council has his monthly report and would be happy to answer any questions if needed.

### **Environmental Manager**

Environmental Manager Josh Quattrone said that an inspection will be taking place this Wednesday on the SCADA project. He went on to say that DEP is coming to the plant and will inspect the SCADA system. If approved, the plant will be switched over from a construction permit to an operating permit.

Quattrone noted that on the wastewater side that he approved the drawings for both of the clarifiers for the clarifier replacement project and has been waiting to be notified when they would get delivery. He then received word from the company that they are getting the clarifiers from that it's unlikely that this won't be seen until November or early December.

### **Borough Manager**

Borough Manager Handley stated that leaf collection in the borough will be scheduled for October 30 through November 10. He asked borough residents to rake their leaves to the curb without putting them on the streets. He said that they are still waiting for their new leaf collection machine, and it will not be here for this leaf collection season. He said the other machine is on its "last leg" but thinks that it can get through leaf collection season as long as nothing breaks down.

Handley said that after November 10<sup>th</sup> and until December 2<sup>nd</sup>, the gate for the compost facility will be open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. The borough is still providing compostable bags free of charge at their office. If leaves fall after the first two days of December, Handley asks borough residents to bag their leaves and crews will be sent out to pick up bags at their home.

Handley stated that the last day the compost facility will be open is December 2 and will be unmanned. He asked the borough council to make a determination on whether to keep the recycling center there open throughout the winter or not. Councilwoman Peters asked if the recycling center would be open the same days as usual. If kept open through the winter, Handley stated he would keep the same days of Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday available to use the recycling center, and available hours would be modified due to daylight savings time. Councilman Caggese made a motion to keep the recycling center open throughout the winter. Councilman Dussia seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Burkett: Aye

Councilman Quattrone: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilman Dussia: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

Handley said that he was pleased to announce that the borough has received the dividend in the amount of \$15,000 in regard to workers' compensation reimbursement. He stated that the borough is in a risk pool with MRM Trust. If the borough has low claims for workers' compensation and practices good safety measures, MRM Trust will reimburse the borough as part of their premium. The borough received back 15% of that premium according to Handley, and he stated that he would like to put these monies into public works.

Handley reported that he received the figures for the second phase of the flood mitigation project. He stated that the feasibility study is approximately \$500,000 and the Army Corps of Engineers is willing to give an estimated \$300,000 and the borough would have to come up with an estimated \$200,000 and Ridgway Township could potentially be a part of this contribution. Handley stated that Ridgway

Township has said they would contribute to this for a lengthy amount of time, but nothing has been put “on the table” yet. Handley said this matter will be discussed further in budget planning.

Handley provided a grant funding update in regard to an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant which the Ridgway Borough applied for a consultant to come in and develop a master site plan. Handley said this is a very competitive grant and that 13 other states have applied for it. Handley stated that on October 19<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m., the ARC will announce recipients for the grant to get the word out on if they received funding. Councilman Kemmer asked if the Ridgway Riverfront Master Site Plan is similar to the one in Clearfield. Handley said if that is a direction that council would like to go or if the consultant develops that plan, it would be.

### **Planning, Grants, and Recreation Committee Meeting (September 28, 2023)**

Councilwoman Peters stated that the committee met on September 28 and that the main focus of the meeting was the senior center proposal. Peters said the committee reviewed the correspondence and had a lot of discussions which included different concerns and great positives. After discussion, Peters said it was the committee’s recommendation to unanimously approve the senior center steering committee request to enter a long-term lease agreement for the use of the Ridgway Second Ward Fire Station located at 321 West Main Street as a state sanctioned senior center.

Councilman Kemmer asked what the plans were after the proposal, and Borough Manager Handley said the minimum would be a two year lease agreement and went on to say the lease agreement could go from two years at a minimum to five years. Handley stated he would recommend entering a five year lease. Councilman Kemmer then asked visitor Judith Manno-Stager what the plans were for getting a building. Manno-Stager said they had investigated a number of buildings before settling on the Second Ward Fire Hall. Manno-Stager noted that the Office of Human Services does not provide funds for the purchase of buildings. Councilwoman Peters said by keeping overhead costs low, they can put more money into programming for this senior center. Councilman Kemmer commented that he’s “all for” the senior center. He asked what the liability is for this activity to be on borough property. Borough Manager Handley said he has made a request to get a determination from the insurance company and said the liability is covered as long as it is borough sanctioned.

Councilwoman Peters made a motion to have a Ridgway Second Ward Fire Station as a state sanctioned senior center. Councilman Burkett seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Burkett: Aye

Councilman Quattrone: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilman Dussia: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Personnel (October 4, 2023)**

Recommendation #1: to hire Bill Decker as a full-time police officer for the Ridgway Police Department following the resignation of a full-time police officer. Councilman Dussia made a motion to hire Bill

Decker as a full-time police officer. Councilman Lawrie seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Caggese: Aye

Councilman Burkett: Aye

Councilman Quattrone: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilman Dussia: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

### **Old Business**

There was no old business.

### **New Business**

Handley stated that the borough has a ground lease agreement and a potential revenue source for the future. Handley said the borough has an opportunity to install a solar farm on one of their properties. Handley stated that there are a lot of details that need to be reviewed before the council can make a determination. Handley recommended the council schedule a committee meeting to review information for this. Councilman Caggese asked if this is on the same property as the brownfield. Handley stated that it is and it is something they can discuss at the committee level. Handley also stated that the state is encouraging the borough to get better ways to reuse industrial sites. Councilwoman Peters asked what the timeline was to be putting a committee together on the matter. Handley suggested that a committee should not be rushed and that there are four other meetings from now until the next council meetings in regard to this.

### **Council Discussion**

Councilman Kemmer asked Chief Geci about the usage of body worn cameras at the Ridgway Borough Police Department. Mayor Imhof also inquired Chief Geci on if there was a policy in place on body cameras and car cameras. Chief Geci said the body worn camera policies are on the borough website under the police department tab.

After no further discussion, Councilman Dussia made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:26 p.m. and it was carried unanimously.