



BOROUGH OF YEADON
DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
BOROUGH COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 16, 2022

Meeting began

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Rohan K. Hepkins, Mayor	Present
Sharon Council-Harris, President	Present
Learin Johnson, Vice President	Present
Nicole Beaty	Absent
Carlette Brooks	Present
Tomeka (Taliah) Jones-Waters	Present
LaToya Monroe	Present
Liana Roadcloud	Present
Isaac Dotson, Manager	Present
Chris Boggs, Solicitor	Present
Yolonda Hughes, Tax Collector	Absent
Joseph Viscuso, Engineer	Present
Nafis Nichols, Finance Director	Present

III. LIBRARY DIRECTOR – Alice Pakhtigian

The Yeadon Public Library has been hard at work in increasing programming for the Yeadon Public Library. During the month of November, we have a list of various programs, past and present listed.

- Starting this past October, every Tuesday, from 10:30 am- 11:30 am - we have the Morning Stretch program over at Borough Hall.
- We continue to work with State Representative Joanna McClinton in having the Mobile Office once a month on the first Thursday of the month.
- We had a special guest for Storytime on Wednesday, November 2. It was a performer called Mr. Matt from Turtle Dance Music. We had about 13 children attend the event.
- We had an event on Saturday, November 12th on Holiday Table Settings with Terrie.
- We had the Medicare Information Session, with Winslow Mason in September, and coming up on November 18th. (+online and in person)
- Sheryl Armstrong, a Financial Professional will be coming in on Tuesday, November 15th to discuss long-term care planning (online and in person)

- Dr. Tracy Becoat will be presenting on Monday, November 21 to discuss Mental Health.
- Barbara Steele, owner of a non-profit organization called Live Hero Foundation offered her notary services free to Veterans in the library on November 9, 17, and 26.
- The Friends of the Library is having a fundraiser event called Black Saturday Extravaganza from 10:00- 4:00 pm on Saturday, November 26.
- We have a monthly Scrabble club that meets on the last Wednesday of every month. This month, it's November 30th.
- We have a monthly book club. It too meets on the last Wednesday of every month. This month's book is One Thousand White Women by Jim Fergus.
- As you may have noticed, the look of the library has changed slightly. We have a new banner outside from the Delaware County Library System. Public Works has taken the bushes down and added grass and gorgeous flowers. We also now have 2 benches in front of the library on the non-public facing side.
- Working alongside the Borough manager, borough staff, payroll manager, Board of Trustees, and the grant writer, we were able to submit for the Keystone Grant on October 14th for replacement windows and doors. We were able to get a letter of support from State Representative Joanna McClinton.
- We assisted the Friends of the Library with their annual Bingo Night on October 1st.

IV. AMENDMENT OF AGENDA

1. Motion to amend the agenda to include the consideration of promoting Ricardo Maxi to the foreman of the Public Works
 Moved By: Councilor Roadcloud
 Seconded By: Councilor Monroe
 Motion tabled

 Motion to table the amendment of the agenda to include the promotion of Ricardo Maxi
 Moved By: Councilor Brooks
 Seconded By: President Council-Harris
 Motion Passed: 4 – 2, Councilors Monroe and Roadcloud.
2. Motion to amend the agenda to include the removal of Joel Avery from the position of Public Relations Representative.
 Moved By: Councilor Roadcloud
 Seconded By: Councilor Brooks
 Motion tabled

 Motion to table the amendment of the agenda to include the removal of Joel Avery
 Moved By: Vice President Johnson
 Seconded By: President Council-Harris
 Motion Passed: 4 – 2, Councilors Roadcloud and Monroe opposed.

3. Motion to amend the agenda to include the consideration to remove Sharon Council-Harris as Yeadon Borough Council Chair.
Moved By: Councilor Roadcloud
Seconded By: Councilor Monroe
Motion Failed 2 – 4, President Council-Harris, Vice President Johnson, and Councilors Brooks and Jones-Waters opposed.

Meeting placed in recess for 10 minutes

V. CITIZEN’S FORUM (agenda items only – comments limited to 3 minutes)

1. Joe Moore- Richards asked what Attorney Samuel Stretton special counsel is for and what he is needed for. She would also like this answered in a public setting.
2. Mr. Ronald Green asked Mayor Hepkins about officers and why hasn’t there been a camera placed at the intersection of Baily and Church Lane. His main concern is for the safety of the community.
3. Ms. Angela Lee asked for Zoom access for residents who are unable to attend meetings with the ability to ask questions. She also would like to know about the meeting concerning the 1100 Block of Chester Avenue and who was included. She also had questions regarding cameras and the status of the Civil Service Committee.

Meeting place in recess for 5 minutes

4. Ms. Liz A stated that after looking over the agenda there are several items that should be added starting with the hiring of Ricardo Maxi as foreman of the Public Works Department. There is no rational reason to delay voting for Ricardo. The other item missing is the appointment of someone to the Civil Service Commision.
5. Ms. Anna stated she would like to see what proactive actions are being taken and put in place to prevent future tragedies from occurring. Elected Officials have a fiduciary responsibility to the residents and the Borough, yet the expenditures of this Borough are climbing exponentially. Lastly, she asked the Councilors to please begin spending in a fiscally responsible manner.
6. Ms. Clara Johnson stated that all Councilors need to have the information. She asked why and what the need is for a special counselor.
7. Councilor Monroe stated that as a resident that she does not like what is going on, the way tax dollars are being squandered or the way the mayor is being isolated. She stated that it is very unfortunate that we can’t get along. We are all members of this community, and we all need to take responsibility and accountability and that is not happening with the current leadership. The past 11 months have been awful for everyone, and it really needs to stop.
8. Jessie Peets addressed Councilors Jones-Waters and Brooks and stated that he’s hoping to build bridges as much as possible.
9. Ms. Marie would like to know how people are able to hang themselves in the jail cells and asked if there are cameras in the cell. She also asked if something could be done at Yeadon Ave and Rundale because people are speeding through the stop sign.

VI. REPORTS

The finance director Nafis Nichols stated that the invoice for Mostly Web Inc. has been pulled from the Accounts Payable list for management professional services.

1. Motion to approve the Accounts Payable List for November.
Moved By: Councilor Jones- Waters
Seconded By: Councilor Brooks
Motion Passed: 4 – 2, Councilors Monroe and Roadcloud opposed.

Motion to amend the Accounts Payable list to remove the payment to Joel Avery for breach of contract.

Moved By: Councilor Monroe
Seconded By: Councilor Roadcloud
Motion Failed: 2 – 4, President Council-Harris, Vice President Johnson, and Councilors Jones-Waters and Brooks opposed.

2. Motion to approve the Cash Balance report for October.
Moved By: Councilor Jones-Waters
Seconded By: Councilor Brooks
Motion Passed: 4 – 2, Councilors Beaty and Roadcloud opposed.

The cash balance as of 10/30/22 in the

WSFS general fund \$119245.09
WSFS lockbox \$22,058.43
Republic Bank general fund \$98,229.41
Republic lockbox \$420,247.94
Republic American Recovery fund \$1,209,599.16
Republic Master Escrow \$131,154.45
Refuse Fund \$358,160.21
Sewer Fund \$22,183.75
Capital Fund \$76,940.22
Motor License Fund \$196,634.50
Vehicle Replacement Fund \$103,208.08

\$2,757,849.84 in total

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Vice President Johnson reminded residents of Small Business Saturday is being held on November 26th between 10 am to 8 pm up and down Church Lane. The YEDC is asking everyone to come out and patronize these businesses.
2. Motion to remove agenda item 5a. the consideration to engage the services of Attorney Samuel Stretton as special counsel to the Borough of Yeadon.
Moved By: Vice President Johnson
Seconded By: Councilor Jones-Waters
Motion Passed: unanimous

3. Motion to approve the building development of the 1100 to 1108 block of Chester Avenue.

Moved By: President Council-Harris

Seconded By: Councilor Jones-Waters

Motion Passed: 4 – 2, Councilors Monroe and Roadcloud opposed.

Motion to amend the building development of the 1100 to 1108 block of Chester Avenue contingent upon compliance with the letter of recommendation from Pennoni Engineering dated 11/16/22 addressed to Isaac Dotson.

Moved By: Councilor Monroe

Seconded By: Councilor Roadcloud

Motion Failed: 2 – 4, President Council-Harris, Vice President Johnson and Councilor Jones-Waters, and Brooks opposed.

VIII. MINUTES

1. Motion to approve the October 3, 2022, Workshop Meeting Minutes

Motion Tabled

2. Motion to approve the October 13, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes

Motion Tabled

3. Motion to approve October 27, 2022, Legislative Meeting Minutes

Motion Tabled

Motion to table all October minutes

Moved By: Councilor Roadcloud

Seconded By: Councilor Monroe

Motion Passed: 4 – 2, President Council-Harris and Councilor Jones-Waters opposed.

IX. ENGINEER'S REPORT

1. Reviewed plans for 1100 Chester Ave and a letter was issued on 11/16/22
2. Speed hump west of the intersection on MacDade (needs PennDOT approval) – submitting plans
3. Annual contracts – storm, sanitary, and paving. Currently out to bid.

X. MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Dotson asked that his report be accepted as submitted.

XI. SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Boggs stated that he will give his report to Council at the next scheduled Executive Session.

XII. TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT

1. Please be advised that the Tax Collector's Office will be closed from November 21-November 29. It will reopen on November 30 at 10 am. I have asked this be posted on the website.
2. All unpaid taxes should be received by 12/31/22.
3. Tax Collector will extend hours in December before the end-of-the-year deadline.

4. The financial report is attached.

Please excuse my absence but as previously advised I cannot attend any meetings on Monday, Wednesday, or Friday. Enjoy your holiday!

XIII. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor's Forum: The Mayor's Citizen's Forum was held on Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 7:00 pm in person at borough hall and via zoom. Over 50 people attended in person and 10 via zoom. The next Mayor's Forum is scheduled for Thursday, December 1, 2022.

Second Hanging in Four Months: On Tuesday, November 8, 2022, a second hanging occurred in our holding cell where a 34-year-old female attempted suicide via this method. On Tuesday, July 5, 2022, we had a similar incident occur when a black male took his life by this method. I will report what has been done to date:

- **First,** the Mayor asked the District Attorney to investigate. This request was made again for the second incident. In the first incident, the DA's office, after reviewing all body cams, reports, and interviews, cleared the officers almost immediately of any wrongdoing. This does not address any negligent issues that could have been done better to prevent suicide. We are still awaiting the outcome of the second investigation.
- **Second,** Holding Cell Upgrades were requested via Lt. Burns and were not followed through due to a bureaucratic meltdown that will not be discussed here...but was reviewed considering this second incident where two attempts to forward were made. The Mayor would like for this initiative to move forward in earnest.
- **Third,** the Mayor contacted the Department of Justice on August 18, 2022, to request an investigation into the Morcho incident. The Mayor subsequently contacted DOJ after this most recent incident to apprise them of the latest incident and for them to add this to their investigation into our overall management as a leadership team. The Mayor will continue to follow up with DOJ...and the Mayor is pleased that Council President is now on board with the DOJ intervention.
- **Fourth,** A Blue-Ribbon Panel was Convened to investigate permanent reforms. The Panel is being adjusted due to Don Molineux not being able to continue due to personal reasons. Borough Council has retained the Valori Group for this research, which is also conducting the research for the next Chief of Police. The Mayor has retained the panel consisting of Michelle Conti and Dr. Rev. John Jallah and will be soon adding a replacement for Don Molineux. The advertising for finding a new Police Chief should not infer that the Police Chief reports to Borough Council. This should be corrected.
- **Fifth,** in the second incident, the officers involved were placed on desk duty and the officer in charge is facing discipline as policy and procedures were clearly violated that if followed, would have prevented this mishap. The victim should have been taken to a medical facility immediately after crying out for help, as this was the utmost priority, which did not happen.

- **Sixth**, in light of this second incident, and whatever the reason, something has happened where we can no longer guarantee the safety of prisoners in our holding cells. Therefore, after speaking with UD Mayor Barbarann Keffer, an MOU agreement has been reached with Upper Darby where they will hold any prisoner from Yeadon until we hire a new chief until we get back up to adequate staffing, and until all the impending investigations are completed.
- **Seventh**, the Mayor is requesting that his seat not be threatened or taken away as in the recent past; that his office is restored immediately; that he not be barred from speaking at Council Meetings, nor from pertinent Executive Meetings; and that we work together with Council as a priority to resolve and fix these issues on behalf of the public who elected us to serve them. It is virtually impossible and unrealistic to address these issues if the government is privatized and the Mayor is given clear signals that he is not a part of it. We cannot make progress on these issues this way.
- **Eighth**, the Mayor reached out to County Council and the District Attorney's Office for intervention in the police department, as a sense of low morale due to working short staffed, long hours, and a sense of being stressed due to these and other concerns have sapped the morale of the department. As a result, the Mayor was put in touch with the Director of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) of Delaware County, Mr. Ed Kline. We have requested a group intervention and a one-on-one intervention as needed. This process is underway...however, it cannot be forced upon the officers. The officers are already required to take yearly diversity and critical sensitivity training via the state. This intervention would serve to buttress their mental and emotional conditioning and help to alleviate stress and find coping mechanisms.

Two Deceased Bodies Found Dumped in Yeadon: On November 4 and again on November 15, A dead body was dumped in the Whitby Ave/Longacre gateway into Philadelphia on the Yeadon side. The first victim appeared to be a black male whose body was bullet-ridden. Our detectives were able to identify the youth after about a week of detective work. The second incident is still being investigated to determine the identity. He appeared murdered by a single gunshot wound to the head. This area has been proposed to be fitted with cameras and would be helpful in the prevention and interdiction of crime and dumping. There is also a concern that this is starting to resemble an alarming trend.

Low Police Staffing & Civil Service Commission: The Staffing of our Police Department remains woefully inadequate and continues to pose a public safety hazard. With 20% understaffed (5 Full-time Officers needed) along with almost no part-timers (approx. twelve part-timers are needed), we cannot continue to provide the optimum level of safety for the public.

This will only get worse as one of our Sergeants will retire in January. Three (3) other full-time officers are eligible to retire and/or, are expected to retire within the next 2 years. So, we also need to be proactive to hire full-time officers. This is beyond urgent, as there are unlimited vacancies around the country and in our area for Full-Time Officers, where there are not enough candidates available to fill these open positions. Therefore, there is a huge competition for available full-time officers. Whatever municipality is deemed as having the most stability, along with a competitive wage and benefit package, will be more prone to attract these officers. Also, the Part-Time Officer position has been posted on the website since April. We've received almost no interest...as most officers want full-time positions.

Therefore, I am also asking Council to ramp back up the Civil Service Commission as soon as possible to address our immediate and looming shortfall that will only get much worse real soon.

XIV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance

1. Motion to approve the Preliminary Budget for the Borough of Yeadon Fiscal Year 2023

Moved By: President Council-Harris

Seconded By: Councilor Jones-Waters

Motion Passed: 4 – 2, Councilors Roadcloud and Monroe opposed.

XV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Motion to amend agenda to include extending the current 2020-2022 Ordinary Street and Sewer Maintenance contracts with AF Damon Co., Inc, A. Gargiule & Sons Inc, and Ernel Co., Inc for a three-month period as provided in the contract documents.

Moved By: Councilor Brooks

Seconded By: Councilor Jones-Waters

Motion Tabled

Motion to table the extension of the maintenance contracts

Moved By: Vice President Johnson

Seconded By: Councilor Jones-Waters

Motion Passed: 5 – 1, Councilor Brooks opposed.

XVI. CITIZENS FORUM (NON-AGENDA - COMMENTS LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES)

1. Colleen Kennedy stated that there is a binder full of policies that govern the police department but it's clear that the police need to review these policies She is politely asking that Council and any other elected or appointed officials also review these policies. There still needs to be a DOJ investigation. She encouraged residents to call Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon to ask if she could make a public statement to the US Attorney asking for a Department of Justice investigation.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

1. Motion to adjourn.

Moved By: Vice President Johnson

Seconded By: Councilor Roadcloud

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted by the Borough Secretary.