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Committee Meeting
January 4, 2023

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MINUTES
Committee Meeting
January 4, 2023

The video of this meeting can be viewed in its entirety on youtube.com/upperdarby.org

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America

Moment of Silence

Opening of Meeting

Roll Call

Andrew Hayman (AH), Danyelle Blackwell (DB), Brian Andruszko (BA), Sheikh M. Siddique, (SS), Lisa Faraglia (LF), Matt Silva (MS) via Zoom, Brian K. Burke (BB), Michelle Billups (MB), Meaghan Wagner (MW), Hafiz Tunis Jr., (HT), Laura Wentz (LW)

Present at the Meeting

Barbarann Keffer, Mayor
Chief Municipal Clerk, Alexis Cicchitti
Solicitor Sean Kilkenny
Solicitor Colleen Marsini
David Haman, Treasurer
Mike Galante, Township Engineer
Sergeant of Arms, Officer Bateman
Sergeant of Arms, Officer Gardner
Sergeant of Arms, Officer Friel

Rules for Meeting Decorum

“Upper Darby residents have the opportunity to speak for three (3) minutes. Residents are prohibited from making threats, using profanity, or acting in a manner that would impede or prevent the conduct of the business of the meeting.” Public Forum should not exceed thirty (30) minutes.”

Public Forum

Speakers:

Laura Anderson, spoke of the homeless issue in Upper Darby and that the new shelter, Breaking Bread, only has 17 beds.
She referred to the severe cold weather where a homeless woman named Karen died.
Bonnie Hallam, 4719 Woodland Ave, asked if there was money in the budget for the hiring of an arborist. She also asked that Council work in tandem with the Administration for solutions regarding the issue of homeless individuals
Kathy Newell, 22 2nd Street, spoke of the woman who passed away on December 26 from freezing on the street and asked everyone for caring, empathy and compassion.
Kyle McIntyre, 1040 Drexel Ave, stated that there should have been an Emergency Declaration when there was a Code Blue and that there are public buildings where something could have been done. Mr. McIntyre stated

that an issue that needs to be tackled is the UD Zoning Code as gentrification is in the near future and people will be priced out because the supply in the market is so low. He shared a handout about form-based code, inclusionary zoning and the need for a transit-oriented overlay district for downtown.

John Vizzari, 353 Kirks Lane, feels that Mayor Keffer should have taken action during Code Blue to offer shelter for the homeless. He also asked why a report does not show the ARPA funds that were allocated as being spent. Mr. Vizzari believes that HT always uses racism against 6 members of Council who were trying to do their fiduciary responsibility regarding the ARPA funds and hopes that in 2023, people will not be accused of something that they are not

Richard Blye, 7258 Lamport Road, spoke of the significance of January 1 and read the Emancipation Proclamation into the record

David Dryden, 1114 Burmont Road, asked for a moment of silence for "Miss Karen." He stated that he works for a diverse and successful company and they do not all like each other, but they have a common goal. They have learned that they can work together and asks that Council and do the same with each other & with constituents.

Brian Taylor, 7258 Lamport Road, asked what happened to the Hometown Hero Banners on Garrett Road. He also asked if there is a Code Blue policy in UDT. Mayor Keffer stated that there is not a policy in UDT. He referenced the woman who froze to death on the street.

Ed Brown, 7111 Pennsylvania Ave, stated that in his capacity as School Board Director, he would inquire as to whether it is feasible to use the schools during Code Blue. As a resident, he and other members of Men of Action/Brothers of Faith thanked Mayor Keffer, the Council, Scott Alberts, Alison Dobbins, Desiree Murphy, Vince Rongione, State Representative Gina Curry and several Council members who volunteered their time for various events.

Olivia Taylor, 204 Kent Road, stated that she asked at the December 21st meeting what was going to be done during the Code Blue. She holds the Administration responsible for the death of the homeless woman who froze to death.

Joanne Nommavong, 133 N. Pennock Avenue, referred to the rat problem in the 4100 block of Garrett Road. She also spoke of the mud and dirt in the parking lot at the PNC Bank parking lot in the Drexeline Shopping Center. She clarified statements that she previously made that were mis-stated by someone. She also spoke of the death of "Karen", who was the homeless woman who froze to death on the street.

Council President Burke stated that the Township Engineer, Mike Galante was present at the meeting and could look at the issue the next time it rains to see what could be done regarding the mud in the parking lot.

Tina Hamilton, 4715 Woodland Ave, stated that she wanted to have a meeting with the Mayor to put a plan for Code Blue in place but the Mayor refused. Ms. Hamilton stated that Community Action is the only resource that the homeless people can get any kind of aid.

The Honorable Mayor Barbarann Keffer

Good evening and Happy New Year everyone.

I am excited to announce that the all-new One Center will be opening this month, on January 18, on the ground floor of the municipal building. Just as Upper Darby is the "World In One Place," the One Center will assist with all of our constituent services as a one-stop, ADA accessible space that shows Upper Darby is a world-class provider of municipal services. I am so excited to be bringing this resource to our residents and thankful to our administrative team who have worked together to make this a reality.

By way of a friendly reminder, next week, January 9-13th, Christmas trees will be collected along with the regular recycling. Our public works staff chip the trees for mulch and they use the trees as part of an innovative

streambank restoration project near the Swedish Cabin. Recycling the trees also keeps them out of the normal trash stream, which helps our local environment as well as keeps costs down. Please consider recycling your Christmas tree next week along with your regular recycling. Do not place it in a bag and ensure all decorations are removed.

Our public works staff have also been doing great work renovating the Watkins Senior Center the past couple of weeks. The work will brighten the center for our seniors. To date, we have replaced our old ceiling tiles, repainted the walls and rewaxed our flooring. Thank you to our staff for your hard work and our residents for your patience while we make these improvements.

I hope everyone had a relaxing and joyful holiday season and I look forward to what we will accomplish in 2023.

Thank you.

President of Council, Brian K. Burke

Council President Burke thanked Council members for coming together to pass Resolution No 54-22, the 2023 Budget. He added that some Council members came to him over the past few days regarding parks and some other issues and he looks forward to working with them along with Parks and Rec Committees and others interested in working together.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Appropriations Committee

Chair: Laura A. Wentz

Members: Matt Silva, Meaghan R. Wagner, Brian Andruszko

Chair Wentz referred to the information in Council member's folders regarding the Shade Tree Commission Ordinance update, which may apply to multiple committees.

Mayor Keffer added that the Shade Tree Commission was meeting on Thursday, January 5, 2022 at 7 p.m. The meeting will also be streamed online.

Mayor Keffer stated that the Finance Department would be putting out a monthly report.

Mayor Keffer read the report, which was provided by Donna Stilwell. Topics included the year-end close, the Budget Reconciliation Ordinance, OpenGov implementation and the 2021 audit.

Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Public Safety Committee

Chair: Lisa Faraglia

Members: Andrew Hayman, Danyelle Blackwell, Meaghan R. Wagner

Chair Faraglia asked for an update on the truck parking Ordinance.

Solicitor Marsini stated that there is still discussion on the weight, width and length of trucks and a meeting would be scheduled.

Solicitor Kilkenny stated that he and Solicitor Marsini spoke earlier and put it out to the firm and received various definitions from the other lawyers whose definitions came out of the Motor Vehicle Code.

MB stated that she gathered more information following the death of the homeless woman and found that Upper Darby does have a Code Blue and when it happens, additional cots are added to the Life Center and at Breaking Bread. There is also an Outreach team from Horizon House that comes to Upper Darby. If the Life Center is full, there is funding for hotels. She further stated that additional funding for hotels was approved at their meeting in November.

Chair Faraglia stated that Ed Brown had also offered the schools. LW stated that she believed that the Watkins Center had been used for a Code Blue during the previous Administration, along with the garage in the Township building. She also stated that the County would reimburse the Township for any expenses incurred.

Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Planning, Zoning and Building Code Committee

Chair: Laura A. Wentz

Members: Lisa Faraglia, Meaghan R. Wagner, Andrew Hayman

Chair Wentz asked Township Engineer, Mike Galante, if there are any upcoming land developments. He stated that there will be one and that he will provide the information

She also asked about zoning and Airbnbs as some residents have expressed concerns about houses becoming Airbnb's without Township oversight.

HT stated that he would meet with the Solicitors and present something to the Zoning Hearing Board Committee.

Solicitor Kilkenny stated that he could provide some resources.

MW stated that she is dealing with this issue, as the house next door to her is now an Airbnb.

Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Law and Government & Rules and Procedures Committee

Chair: Matt Silva

Members: Meaghan R. Wagner, Laura A. Wentz, Michelle Billups

MB asked when the Committee could meet for a Social Media Policy. MS stated that he would send out a text to plan a meeting.

HT asked if the Community Engagement Committee could be included in the loop and Council President Burke asked MS to include HT.

Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Municipal Services, Licensing and Public Works Committee

Chair: Hafiz Tunis Jr.

Members: Michelle Billups, Andrew Hayman, Brian Andruszko

In response to HT's question about his Committee being included in the meetings about the truck Ordinance, Council President Burke stated that HT is invited to the meetings along with the Public Safety Committee and Solicitor Marsini.

SS stated that there continues to be a problem with vendors who set up on 69th Street. Council President Burke urged him to contact License and Inspections.

Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Parks and Recreation Committee

Chair: Matt Silva

Members: Lisa Faraglia, Danyelle Blackwell, Michelle Billups

DB asked if there is a schedule for the clean up of the parks and a schedule for the meetings MS stated that he would schedule a meeting where a discussion would take place.

HT stated that McKinley Park is in desperate need of a clean up.
Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Public Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair: Danyelle Blackwell

Members: Hafiz Tunis Jr., Sheikh M. Siddique, Matt Silva

Chair Blackwell stated that on January 14, 2023, she would be down at 69th Street giving out “activities”.

Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Community Engagement Committee

Chair: Hafiz Tunis Jr.

Members: Danyelle Blackwell, Laura A. Wentz, Michelle Billups

Chair Tunis stated that there would be the Black History Month Poetry Contest and Irish Heritage Month. He asked Council members to submit names for Irish Heritage Month.

MB stated that Poetry Contest submissions must be received by January 25, 2023 and gave more details as to how the process would work.

Chair Tunis stated that the Community Engagement Committee will discuss the Job Fair and what is feasible to do within the Township.

She stated that there will be an Expungement Date sometime in February and there will be more details to follow.

MB added that there would be a Mental Health Awareness Day the first Saturday in May.

LW stated that the Committee should plan another Job Fair.

DB stated that an organization previously came to a Council meeting to try to get jobs for computer training and certified nursing assistants but Council has not yet discussed this.

Solicitor Kilkenny stated that if there is not a provision that says that the Township can give to a selected non-profit, then they do not have the authority to appropriate that money.

Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Cultural Competency Committee

Chair: Michelle Billups

Members: Matt Silva, Danyelle Blackwell, Sheikh M. Siddique

Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Community Development Committee

Chair: Sheikh M. Siddique

Members: Hafiz Tunis Jr., Brian Andruszko, Laura A. Wentz

Mayor Keffer stated that there was a business opening of a new Child Learning Center on New Year’s Eve Day on Marshall Road. LW and MB added that the Learning Center teaches languages and offers high quality care. SS stated that a brand new laundromat opened on 69th Street and there was the opening of the new shelter. He requested that Mike Galante, Township Engineer, would inform the Committee of any upcoming developments.

Nothing for the January 18, 2023 Council Meeting

Solicitor

Solicitor Kilkenny spoke of the legal issues with the Community Center.

Solicitor Marsini read a statement regarding the status of outstanding parking citations.

“As a follow-up to my questions regarding the status of outstanding parking citations, I was advised by the Parking Enforcement Director that the most recent batch of outstanding parking citations were e-filed to Harrisburg by the IT Consultant the last week of December.”

Council President Burke asked if it was the normal process to e-file the tickets to Harrisburg or is it proper protocol to send tickets straight to the courts. He asked the Solicitor's office to provide Council with an answer. Solicitor Kilkenny stated that he believed that it was related to a vendor who was in Harrisburg, but he would get further clarification.

BB stated that he would like all of the information for the next meeting.

Mayor Keffer stated that this sounds like “Council overreach into the daily operations of the Township.”

BB stated that this is an Ordinance that is not being followed and it is not the first time. He stated that he asked Solicitor Kilkenny what should be done when an Ordinance is not being followed.

Mayor Keffer stated that BB is making accusations because he believes that the Ordinance is not being followed and tickets are not being processed in the way that he believes that they need to be processed.

BB stated that the tickets never made it to where they needed to make it.

The Mayor reiterated that this is “Council overreach.”

BB stated that decriminalizing parking tickets without going through an Ordinance cannot be done by law and that is what is being done. He stated that if there is proof otherwise, then it should be presented to Council.

AH stated that as this pertains to potential litigation, this should be the subject of an Executive Session. He added that BB has not presented any actual evidence making this ridiculous and illogical.

Old Business

HT stated that it has been one year since he asked President Burke regarding Committees to reflect how Council looks. He stated that the Committees have still not been changed.

Council President Burke stated that he made three movements on the Committees since HT asked him. He added that while he has always had conversation with HT and always will have conversation, he is very happy with the Committees at this present time

HT did not agree that just because Council accomplished things that needed to be done, that the Committees are fine.

AH believes that HT has been attacked routinely for discussing the importance of diversity. He stated that there is an individual who attends the Council meetings who is a member of the White Supremacist webpage GAB. He feels that this is a voice and a problem that is in the Council Chamber and in our community and is something that needs to be discussed as it is not irrelevant.

New Business

HT stated that he has been working with MW to plan a Music Bingo Night on Friday, January 13, 2023 from 7-11 p.m. at the American Legion Post 214 on Chestnut Street. Doors open at 6 p.m. He added that if people cannot make it but would like to support the event, they could Sponsor a Veteran's yearly membership for \$35. In response to DB's question, BB stated that the Post is waiting for the UHY website to go live to apply.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: MB/LF The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexis Cicchitti

Alexis Cicchitti

Chief Municipal Clerk

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