



Mars Borough

Meeting Minutes

(Visitors/Speakers are asked to limit their presentations to 5 minutes during Public Meetings.)

Meeting Date: August 1, 2022

Call to Order: 7:00 PM, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ELECTED OFFICIALS / EMPLOYEE / PROVIDER ATTENDANCE					
("x" indicates present) ("tc" indicates teleconference attendance)					
x	Rob Bost	Council Vice President Administration, HR	x	Bonnie Forsythe	Secretary / Treasurer
				Amy Brown	Assistant Sec. / Treas.
x	Chris Clutter	Council Pro Tem Public Safety		Ed Dorsey	Public Works Foreman
x	Mike Fleming	Council President		Allen Russell	Code Enforcement
x	Bill Lambert	Water		Mark Lint	Police Officer in Charge
tc	John McWilliams	Streets	x	Brian Novosel	Police Sergeant
x	Brad Price	Budget, Finance			
x	Julie Schultheis	Parks & Rec, Celebrations	x	Chris Reese	Solicitor
x	Gregg Hartung	Mayor			
				Renea Pomeroy	Elected Tax Collector

VISITORS:	
Name(s) / Organization	Topic
Rachel Sedi	Rachel expressed her concern over the state of Garfield Park, specifically weeds/overgrowth. Asked if a community cleanup day where volunteers could participate would be possible. Schultheis stated she had shared emails with Rachel and stated her concerns are valid and apologized. Schultheis also stated she is getting quotes for mulch, however it is more expensive than the last time she received a quote. Rachel also brought some vandalism issues to Council as well.
Anastacia Nelson	Nelson stated she has spoken to Caitlyn Boland at the Library to discuss if Nelson and her husband could help maintain the little free library boxes.
Many residents were in attendance to discuss the Sewer Authority. Fleming stated that Borough residents would be permitted to speak first. He requested comments and questions be limited to three minutes, and no repetition of questions if they'd already been asked/answered.	
Ernie Ramella	Ramella asked if Adams went looking for someone to buy the Sewer Authority. Fleming stated Adams and Mars were approached and asked if they would be willing to allow the evaluation to occur. He also stated the confidentiality agreements expired and if it was determined to be worth looking seriously at the sale there would be ample public participation in the process. He also stated there was never any attempt to hide anything, it was simply a chance to get a free evaluation of the sewer system.
Renea Pomeroy	Pomeroy asked how much research was done before signing the confidentiality agreement. Fleming said there was only some research done, however if a sale was seriously considered there would be far more research done. Pomeroy stated she has read some articles and some of the companies who do this are unscrupulous, and historically raise rates by two or three times. Pomeroy then asked if there was anything to indicate there was some concern that the sewer authority was unstable. Fleming, Schultheis, and Bost agreed that the Sewer Authority was solvent and there were no concerns about money with the Authority. Pomeroy then indicated she felt it was necessary to maintain local control of as many resources as possible.

VISITORS (cont.):	
Name(s) / Organization	Topic
Renea Pomeroy (cont.)	<p>Fleming then made a statement that the Borough has a modest reserve fund and in the case of a catastrophic event there would not be an endless amount of cash to fix big problems. This would then lead the Borough to need to borrow money, which could require a tax increase. Fleming said that if someone were to look at the Borough's assets, they might see that the Sewer Authority has no debt and is a huge asset that could be used in a way that may mean the Borough wouldn't need to borrow money or increase taxes.</p> <p>Pomeroy stated she appreciated the answers she received but wanted to clarify that the confidentiality agreement did not look good to the public when it was made public.</p> <p>Price commented that a non-disclosure agreement was common in corporate America, particularly to keep evaluations under wraps from their competitors so that stock prices are not affected. He also stated it would only be fair to see what the evaluation says prior to any decisions being made.</p>
Eric Pomeroy	<p>Pomeroy stated his concern was that if Adams had the power to make the decision to sell and Mars could not fight it, that the residents would suffer.</p>
Allen & Harmony Hodges	<p>Harmony Hodges asked if there was a [financial] number Council was looking for as for the purchase price. Council stated there was not.</p> <p>Schultheis stated there was no requirement, as far as she knew, for a public referendum, but she hoped that both municipalities and the authority would bring everything to the public.</p> <p>Hodges then asked how Mars Borough and Adams Township were connected regarding the sewer authority. Fleming explained how the two municipalities worked together to create Breakneck Creek Regional Authority. Hodges then asked if Adams wanted to sell but Mars didn't, what would happen? Bost mentioned that at this point it is unclear as to whether Adams would have more power in the arrangement than Mars, and that it would become a legal question if it came to that point.</p>
Anna Clark	<p>In attendance to listen because she wanted to learn more about the Sewer Authority discussion.</p>
Unidentified Individual	<p>Stated she agreed and believed that keeping local control was important. She asked how the Borough could receive a surplus from the Sewer Authority. Fleming clarified that the Borough does not control the Sewer Authority rates and cannot receive funds from the Authority. Price interjected that the Authority is a completely separate entity, however the Borough and Township have all of the risk related to the Authority.</p>
Unidentified Individual	<p>Asked if the Borough had talked to anyone who had been affected by the sale of a water or sewer authority. Fleming stated that just because someone is approached doesn't mean a sale has to occur.</p> <p>She also stated she hoped that Mars and Adams would talk to the other Authorities because the employees often lose their jobs.</p> <p>Fleming stated that this was simply an opportunity to engage with Adams Township in a way to manage one of the largest assets of each municipality. He also stated that Breakneck Creek Regional Authority was a great asset for both municipalities and a successful asset.</p>
Ricky Rapp	<p>Made a statement regarding the value in having an assessment done. He asked if anyone could put a dollar value on the asset right now. Fleming stated that was what was happening right now. Rapp stated he didn't understand the animosity. He also stated you cannot stop change, but that people are doing different things to keep Mars going. Rapp re-stated that he felt it was appropriate to get information. He would like to see everyone work together to see what is appropriate for the whole, and he asked for everyone to be open and honest with each other. Rapp stated he felt the Council would do what is best for the residents.</p>

VISITORS (cont.):	
Name(s) / Organization	Topic
Unidentified Individual	Stated that a rate increase from \$20/month to \$75/month was unacceptable. Price and Fleming clarified that the Borough does not have any control over what the Authority does.

PUBLIC COMMENT TO SPEAK ABOUT STORMWATER MS4 ISSUES:	
Name(s) / Organization	Topic

MOTIONS	FIRST	SECOND	ACTION
Motion to approve Meeting Minutes from 07/05/2022 & 07/18/2022.	Bost	Clutter	Carried (Schultheis abstained)
Motion to approve July 2022 expenses in the amount of \$86,495.67.	Lambert	Clutter	Carried (Fleming abstained)
Motion to approve July 2022 Payroll Expenses in the amount of \$54,003.29.	Lambert	Bost	Carried
Motion to approve Quarter 2 Payroll Taxes in the amount of \$4,273.03.	Clutter	Price	Carried
Motion to transfer \$26,791.00 from Liquid Fuels Fund to the General Fund to reimburse the General Fund for the payment for the Hotbox purchased from SealMaster.	Lambert	Schultheis	Carried
Motion to purchase Leaf Vac Truck from Stephenson Equipment in the amount of \$197,663.60.	Price	Clutter	Carried
Motion to approve the purchase of signage for new Borough Building in the amount of \$2,190.00 from Coleman Signs.	Clutter	Bost	Carried
Motion to approve Abmech quote for asbestos and mold abatement and demolition in the church property up to the amount of \$15,000.00.	Price	Bost	Carried

OLD / ON-GOING ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:		
Item	Submitted by:	Discussion / Status
Leaf Vac Truck	Dorsey	Fleming reported that Dorsey spoke with the local bus company regarding getting CDL licenses and it will cost \$750 per person. Then there will also be the cost of physicals and a potential increase in their own costs related to their driver's license renewal. Fleming stated the Borough had been offered \$10,000 in trade for the existing leaf machine, however he felt it would be prudent to keep it for the first year or so as a backup in case of an issue with the new truck. Fleming attempted to confirmed with Dorsey that there was a three-year warranty on the truck and a one-year warranty on the equipment, and three-year on the chase.
Wireless Facilities Ordinance, Design Manual, and Fee Schedule	Clutter, Price, Schultheis	No progress. Tabled for future meeting.

OLD / ON-GOING ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION (cont.):		
Item	Submitted by:	Discussion / Status
Paving Ordinance	Dorsey	Reese stated he had talked with Forsythe regarding the use of Chapter 459 of the PA Code. Reese also stated he had changed wording to match what Price had emailed him so that the Borough would not have to follow all of the same PennDOT rules if the Borough did not want to. Forsythe and Dorsey will refine the "rules and regulations" portion for Exhibit 1/A. Fleming stated he would make every effort to be there when Dorsey and Forsythe
Signage	Forsythe	Council discussed signage options for the new Borough building at 301 Arch Street and agreed to move forward with signage on two faces of the building as well as the glass entry door and glass door in the first floor hallway.

OLD / ON-GOING ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:		
Item	Item	Item
MOLD IN CHURCH	Schultheis	Schultheis acquired three quotes for mold removal. Abmech was the only company that could do both mold and asbestos removal. Reese stated three quotes were required when it is possible to get three quotes. Fleming stated there was a challenge getting the quotes at all.

NEW ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:		
Item	Submitted by:	Discussion / Status
Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)	Forsythe	Information presented to Council for their consideration. Schultheis suggesting that Council review the information and discuss it at a future time. Further discussion tabled.

REPORTS:	
Department	Report
Mayor	Mayor reported he spoke at the Library's "libations" fundraiser to benefit library. Reported that the Mars Rumble Car Show was the previous weekend. There were two officers from Saxonburg that helped in addition to three officers from Mars. Hartung mentioned that the Rotary clock fell due to the base being eroded. No one was injured. He stated the erosion was due to excessive salting of the sidewalks. Hartung said he would reach out to the Rotary. Hartung reported that Officer Don Lutz worked his last shift over the weekend and has now retired. Officer Novosel worked with him to obtain a lot of the information Lutz had acting as Sergeant. Chatham University reached out to Hartung about a Fall class working with the Borough regarding MS4 work. Hartung said he would meet with them and see if Dorsey was also available to meet.
Police	
Secretary / Treasurer	Budget update provided to Council.
Public Works	Lambert reported that all of the taps are in on the water line installed on Anderson. Fleming stated that McWilliams brought up a section of road on West Railroad to be paved. Lambert stated he talked to McWilliams regarding Clark from Grand Avenue to West Railroad, so he had someone from the paving company come and measure a section of Clark to be included with the rest of the paving when it occurs. McWilliams clarified the section he was thinking needed paved in addition to the area Lambert talked about.

REPORTS (cont.):	
Department	Report
Code Enforcement	Code Enforcement report provided to Council. Bost requested that if anyone on Council saw things around town to please let him, Forsythe, or Russell know so attention can be given to it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:				
Requested by:	Topic(s):			
Bost	Administration Personnel			
Lambert	Borough Owned Properties			
Motion		First	Second	Action
To go into Executive Session	Time: 9:14 PM	Lambert	Schultheis	Carried
To come out of Executive Session	Time: 10:02 PM	Lambert	Bost	Carried

CLOSING ACTIONS:				
	Motion	First	Second	Action
To Adjourn	Time: 10:07 PM	Lambert	Schultheis	Carried

Submitted by: Bonnie Forsythe, Secretary/Treasurer