

October 7, 2020

ANNOUNCEMENT

Borough Manager Keller explained the format for this evening's meeting, advising that the meeting is a GoTo Meeting and available on-line. Public comments are being accepted through email and chat prior to 7:00 p.m. and will be announced to all. Comments are limited to 300 words to be in compliance with Council's three-minute rule and participants shall be identified accordingly.

Conditional Use Hearing – Melinda Hoagey, 356 North Charlotte Street

Solicitor Hovey opened a Conditional Use Hearing on the application of Melinda Hoagey requesting to establish an eat in/take out restaurant at 356 North Charlotte Street.

Ms. Hoagey testified that her café was originally located in the High Street Terminal with hours of operation to be 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., 6 or 7 days a week. She also agreed to comply with all zoning, traffic and ordinances as required.

Melanie McKnight also testified on the operations of the non-alcoholic café and outlined the renovations for the site.

The hearing closed at 6:57 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

The October 7, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Weand.

ATTENDANCE

Councilors present were Ryan Procsal, Lisa Vanni, Donald Lebedynsky, Trenita Lindsay, Dan Weand, Michael Paules and Joseph Kirkland. Also present were Borough Manager Justin Keller, Mayor Stephanie Henrick, Assistant Solicitor Matthew Hovey and Borough Secretary Virginia Takach.

INVOCATION

President Weand requested a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATION – RECOGNITION JOHN A KOURY, JR., ESQ.

President Weand read and presented a resolution to Attorney John A. Koury, Jr. for his service and accomplishments while serving as Solicitor and member of the Pottstown Area Industrial Development.

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RESOLUTION NO. 20220-27

JOHN A. KOURY, JR., ESQ. O'DONNELL, WEISS AND MATTEI STEPS DOWN FROM THE POTTSTOWN AREA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT SOLICITOR POSITION

WHEREAS, John A. "Jack" Koury, Jr., Attorney at Law, O'Donnell, Weiss & Mattei, P.C., Law Firm, has dedicated his services as President, Board Member and Solicitor to the Pottstown Area Industrial Development for over 45 years; and

WHEREAS, Douglas Adams said "To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity." John (Jack) Koury has served Pottstown Area Industrial Development, Inc. and the Pottstown Community with both for decades; and

WHEREAS, Jack has volunteered his time and provided exemplary counsel in an effort to further PAID's mission of developing, coordinating and implementing an overall economic development strategy for the Borough of Pottstown; and

WHEREAS, PAID has gone through a series of transitions of the structure since its inception in 1965 and was guided by Jack with his ever-steady hand while serving in multiple roles as President, Board Member and Solicitor of PAID's Board; and

WHEREAS, Jack has been an invaluable resource to PAID in writing the covenants for and instrumental in the development and sale of the Pottstown Airport Campus now known as the Circle of Progress, along with the execution of the Memorandum of Understanding that laid the groundwork for PAID's current organization. ; and

WHEREAS, in addition Jack has also served the greater Pottstown Area and Counties of Montgomery and Chester by contributing countless hours to the boards of many civic groups, local organizations and county commissions, and as a student in the Pottstown Schools, The Hill School and Past Solicitor to the Borough of Pottstown; and

WHEREAS, Jack's presence with the Pottstown Area Industrial Development will be truly missed by the hundreds of people that have worked with him and by thousands of people in the community where he has lived and served with uncommon respect, integrity and admiration; and WHEREAS, in addition, Jack is being honored with citations by the Pennsylvania State Senate sponsored by Senator Katie Muth and Senator Bob Mensch and the Pennsylvania House of Representatives sponsored by Representative Tim Hennessey and Representative Joe Ciresi, for his outstanding service.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Mayor and Town Council that John A. Koury, Jr., Esq. is officially recognized for the outstanding service he has provided the Borough of Pottstown and as the official Solicitor of PAID. The Board of Directors and the Executive Director owe him a debt of gratitude for serving selflessly with sincerity and integrity.

Councilor Procsal moved to adopt the Resolution as presented. Councilor Lebedynsky seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Adopted at Pottstown Borough Hall, 100 East High Street, this 7th day of October 2020.

Attorney Koury was present to accept the resolution and commented that he was humbled by the presentation.

Mr. Keller and Ms. Lee-Clark, on behalf of the PAID Board members, thanked Mr. Koury for his guidance and assistance.

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SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Infrastructure – The report was included in the packet.
- b. Economic Development – Ms. Lee-Clark reported that several new businesses will be opening in the downtown, including the Lady Liberty Salon and the toy store at High and Hanover Street. She also noted that Deliah & Dea grocery store will be featured by Valley Forge Tourism. Ms. Lee-Clark added that she is awaiting survey results from the local businesses.
- c. Transportation – There was no meeting.
- d. Ordinance Review Committee – Councilor Procsal noted that there was no official meeting but will be meeting this month.
- e. Efficient Methods – Councilor Lebedynsky commended staff for their efforts on the 2021 budget to be presented this evening.

BOARDS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Emergency Services Report – Chief Hand reported that there were 91 fire responses in the last month. He also provided the emergency response statistics. Chief Hand advised that the Department will be making presentations throughout the schools in the month of October. He also provided information for anyone in need of a smoke detector.
- b. Human Relations Commission – The report was in the packet.
- c. Land Bank – There was no report.
- d. Library – There was no report
- d. Ricketts Community Center – The report was distributed in the packets.
- f. Pottstown School District – Councilor Lindsay will provide the report at the regular Council meeting.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Henrick referred to the Ricketts Center Report and food distribution statistics by various organizations. She also commended Lt. Michael Long for his recent presentation to the Rotary on community policing, along with the volunteers for the Edgewood Cemetery Clean-up event. She also reported that she swore in Officer Montana McDermott to the Pottstown Police Department.

Mayor Henrick advised that a new Assistant District Attorney, Lauren Marple, will be replacing ADA Richard Bradbury for assistance in the Pottstown Police Department. She also outlined several upcoming events and announced that Trick or Treating is set for October 31st, 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m.

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MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Keller reported that the Comedy Show on September 30th was a successful event and commended the Parks & Recreation Department for its efforts. He also provided an update on the approved projects of last month, including the paving project. Mr. Keller advised that the King Street Bridge will be closed on October 13th and remain closed through April 2022. He updated Council on PECO's tree-trimming project, while trying to limit the number of trees to be removed. Mr. Keller announced that Pottstown will be featured by Business Insider Magazine and is working with PAID to enhance the Borough during this project.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mr. Keller and Finance Director Ann Maletsky presented the draft 2021 budget to Council. Mr. Keller advised that they have been meeting with Department Heads since July on their budget and capital project needs. He highlighted that the residential tax bill for the Borough represents only 20% to the Borough, 7% to the County and 73% to the School District. He also reviewed the assessment analysis from 2006 to 2020, noting that the loss is over \$4 million.

Ms. Maletsky reviewed the tax-exempt properties, the OPEB and MMO obligations and noted that the Health Care cost is estimated to be a 2% increase but still under negotiations.

Mr. Keller reviewed the initial General Fund budget, noting the \$476,172 deficit. He advised that he is projecting a 5% increase in management salaries, due to the increases to AFSCME, resulting in members being paid more than their supervisors.

Ms. Maletsky provided an overview of the 5-year General Fund Capital Plan, with an estimated \$100,000 contribution in 2021, to assist in building upgrades, police cars and arch repairs.

Mr. Keller's recommendation is a transfer of \$239,000 from reserves and a 3.5% tax increase to close the deficit. He provided an outline of the efficient cost saving measures being implemented throughout the departments. Mr. Keller also explained the deficit in the trash fund due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Maletsky advised that Sigma Training events will be scheduled for elected officials and staff in order to review efficient improvement methods.

Mr. Keller also reviewed the budgets of the remaining funds with a deficit of \$506,000 in the trash fund, resulting in a total deficit of \$745,701. He explained the proposal to the fire companies to include one group insurance plan. The tax increase of 3.5% would equate to an increase of \$28.12 for a property assessed at \$85,000. He added that staff continues to work to reduce the deficit and will provide updates to Council at the November meeting.

UPPER POTTSBORO TOWNSHIP – PURCHASE OF ADDITIONAL CAPACITY

Mr. Keller reminded all that Council authorized Solicitor Pompo to represent the Borough in the matter of additional sewer capacity request of Upper Pottsgrove for the Kummerer tract development.

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CONDITIONAL OFFER OF EMPLOYEMENT – 2 POLICE OFFICERS

Chief Markovich requested Council's approval in offering employment to the next two candidates on the Civil Service List and to be funded through the Department of Justice grant.

NORTH END PICKUP TRUCK

Mr. Keller explained the request to transfer an older Borough pick-up truck to the North End Fire Company with stipulations to plow snow to all other fire departments. He advised that the value is approximately \$3,500-\$5,000 and requested a resolution be adopted.

PECO – GREEN REGION 2020 – SPRUCE STREET PARK

Mr. Keller requested adoption of a resolution to authorize submission of a grant to the PECO Green Region Grant to enhance the basketball courts at the Spruce Street Park.

RESOLUTION – TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF CURRENT RENTAL INSPECTION CYCLE

Mr. Keller explained that due to the COVID crisis, rental inspections were unable to take place within the two-year requirement period. This resolution would extend the inspection by a one-year period to 2022 and then restart in 2023.

TIBURON 5K

Mr. Keller referred to the application of the Tiburon Committee to reschedule its 5K race in conjunction with Sly Fox on May 15, 2021, resulting in the closing of several Borough road ways.

BOARD VACANCIES

President Weand advised that one 4-year term exists on the Human Relations Commission. Councilor Vanni has requested to be reappointed, with no other applicants at this time.

President Weand noted that the above listed matters will be listed for consideration on Tuesday's agenda.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS PRESENT

Tom Winterbottom, 262 King Street – questioned if the Library fund would be increased in the 2021 budget.

Mr. Keller noted that no request was received from the Library.

COUNCILORS' GENERAL DISCUSSION

Councilor Lindsay commented that people can address Harrisburg regarding the school taxes and can also send comments to her at tlindsay@pottstown.org.

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Councilor Lebedynsky again commended Staff on the budget presentation. He added that it would be difficult to consider a 0% increase.

Councilor Vanni commented on the increase of broken windows, some as long as one year, throughout the downtown businesses.

Mr. Keller advised that this matter is being addressed.

Mayor Henrick also commended the budget presentation.

President Weand also expressed appreciation on the budget process.

ADJOURNMENT

President Weand adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.