

KENHORST BOROUGH COUNCIL

December 5, 2024 MEETING MINUTES

President Roger Weidenheimer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll-call. Present: Mayor Nickolas Hatzas and Council members Anthony Avilla, Jeffrey Smith, Vincent Gagliardo, Scott Stamm, and Kerry Grassley. Absent: Councilman Pete O'Brien.

Also in attendance: Cindy Castner, Borough Manager, Jim McCarthy, McCarthy Engineering, Fire Chief, Dwayne Hart, and Officer Baldwin, Reading Police Department. Absent: Jill Nagy, Solicitor

Taking minutes was Tara Mountford, Secretary/Treasurer

The following residents of the Borough were present: Patrick Kozak, Bart Dietrich, and Raymond Lasota.

President Weidenheimer asked if there were any persons wishing to be heard.

Bart Dietrich of Kenhorst Boulevard brought the following topic before Council: Mr. Dietrich recounted an incident with the City of Reading Police dispatch department on Thanksgiving night. Mr. Dietrich's daughter's car was parked outside of his home and was struck by a passing car which also pushed his daughter's car onto the sidewalk then into another one of his cars. In addition, there was an escalating situation outside surrounding the family of the individual who was responsible for hitting his daughter's car. Mr. Dietrich's daughter called 911. After 30 minutes with no response from 911, Mr. Dietrich called the non-emergency dispatch number for assistance. He stated that the operator was disrespectful during this call and that she hung up on him. He called back, got the same operator on the phone and she continued to be disrespectful. He feels that the Borough residents shouldn't have to put up with that as they are paying to have the police service. He expressed appreciation for Officer Baldwin coming on shift and to the scene, and handling everything very well. Officer Baldwin said that he will speak to his superior about the incident as it shouldn't have happened. Councilman Grassley asked for a copy of the call. President Weidenheimer stated that this isn't the first complaint received about dispatch and that the Mayor and the Borough Manager will follow up.

Raymond Lasota of Commonwealth Boulevard brought the following topic before Council: Update on the Alvernia parking situation and that he sees Alvernia's Public Safety is ticketing some cars and not others. Mr. Lasota said he emails Ms. Castner every day and Ms. Castner said that she forwards the emails with photos to Alvernia daily.

Patrick Kozak of Wingate Avenue brought the following topic before Council: Mr. Kozak apologized to the Police and Council for misspeaking at Tuesday night's Workshop meeting when he stated that the police weren't ticketing the Alvernia cars as they should. He also commended and expressed appreciation for all of Council and Borough employees for their hard work and dedication to the Borough of Kenhorst.

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

- ◆ **Approval of Minutes:** President Weidenheimer asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the November 7th council meeting. Councilman Stamm made a motion to approve the minutes, with Councilman Grassley offering a second. Motion passed unanimously.
- ◆ **Sanitation:** Councilman Smith reported that a few details are still being worked out with Whitetail Disposal. Trash, recycling, and yard waste will be collected on the same day for efficiency and that Wednesday will be the new collection day for the Borough. Whitetail collects for Mohnton on Wednesday's as well so this will be the most efficient day of the week to collect for the Borough. The trash base rate will increase \$14.00 to \$65.50 per quarter and the rate for each individual over the age of 18 will increase from \$10.00 to \$20.00. This rate will be locked in for three years. Bulk items will be \$13.00 per item and the annual bulk trash day

will take place in October. Electronics will no longer be accepted as there is a county disposal location for those. Mr. Smith referred Council to a sample Whitetail mailer that they can send out to Borough residents one time, that contains the collection calendar for the year as well as all other pertinent collection information. This mailer will be paid for by Whitetail. Councilman Gagliardo asked if the Borough can ask Whitetail for a better rate due to cooperating with them to change the weekly pickup date from its current days. President Weidenheimer stated that there will be a follow up to that request. Councilman Grassley asked about the delivery of Recycling cans and President Weidenheimer said he would like the remaining cans to now be delivered Borough-wide.

- ♦ **Sanitary Sewers & Stormwater:** Councilman Avilla reported that there will be a Sewer rate increase of \$4.00 per quarter and that will bring the quarterly sewer rates to \$170.00. This is due to the City of Reading increase and ongoing maintenance needs.

Sewer Specialty Services has been in the Borough cleaning the pipes and making repairs where needed as a matter of ongoing routine maintenance. Public Works has responded to a trouble call on Woodcrest regarding securing a storm drain and potential backups from leaves. This issue will continue to be monitored.

President Weidenheimer asked for a motion to approve amending Resolution 735 for the new Trash/Recycle and Sewer rates. Councilman Grassley made a motion and Councilman Smith offered a second. Motion passed unanimously.

- ♦ **2025 Budget:** President Weidenheimer asked for a motion to accept the Borough Budget for 2025. Councilman Stamm made a motion and Councilman Smith offered a second. Motion passed with 5 yeas and 1 nay.
- ♦ **Tax Increase:** President Weidenheimer asked for a motion to pass Resolution 734 stating there will be no tax increase for the year 2025. Councilman Stamm made a motion and Councilman Smith offered a second. Motion passed unanimously.

BOROUGH REPORTS

- ♦ **Mayor's Report:** Mayor Hatzas reported the total of the fines collected in November was \$496.52.
- ♦ **Reading Police Department Report:** No report given in Lt. Contreras' absence. Officer Baldwin reiterated their commitment to assisting with the parking situation as well as his assurance to address the dispatch situation that occurred on Thanksgiving night.
- ♦ **Kenhorst VFD Report:** Chief Hart reported a total of 43 calls for the month of November and that December 21st will be the Borough Christmas Parade and Party. The parade will start at 1:00 PM and the party will begin at 2:00 PM and be held at the ballroom.
- ♦ **Financial Report:** President Weidenheimer asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's report for November. Councilman Grassley made a motion with Councilman Avilla offering a second. Motion passed unanimously.
- ♦ **Codes & Emergency Services:** No report.
- ♦ **Personnel:** No report.
- ♦ **Property & Buildings:** No report.
- ♦ **Streets:** Councilman Grassley reported that curbs are still being painted.

MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY REPORTS

- ◆ **Parks & Playground:** Councilman Stamm reported that the sports teams have completed their usage for the season and that the pickleball court is seeing a lot of activity. There is one more rental of the Community Center left for the year. Councilman Stamm also said that at the beginning of the New Year the Parks & Playground Committee will meet to discuss the HVAC rates and the 2025 Playground season.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

- ◆ **Solicitor's Report:** No report.
- ◆ **Engineer's Report:** Engineer McCarthy referred Council to the Engineering Report that he submitted for the meeting.
- ◆ **Borough Manager's Report:** Ms. Castner referred Council to the information that she gave on Tuesday regarding Berks Nature's interest in the Reithmueller property and that they understand that before moving forward they must come before Council to discuss.

Councilman Gagliardo brought up a concern he had with communication issues that took place in August from an out-of-state zoning company.

OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- ◆ **Alvernia Update:** Ms. Castner spoke to the head of Public Safety for Alvernia, Ms. Doris Natal, regarding scheduling Ms. Natal to come to the February Council meeting. At the February meeting, Ms. Natal will be outlining for Council what they can and can't do with regard to the parking issues. She told Ms. Castner that she welcomes anyone to call Public Safety anytime that there is an issue to report. Additionally, options were discussed to possibly have Borough employees assist with ticketing cars. Solicitor Nagy asked to delay that until next month as she would like to conduct more research.
- ◆ **Parking Permit Information:** Covered in the Workshop Meeting.
- ◆ **Truck Parking:** Councilman Grassley will reach out to Marvin Ta, a certified engineer for the State, to ask him to contact Ms. Castner for recommendations pertaining to this issue.
- ◆ **War Memorial:** President Weidenheimer mentioned that the War Memorial will be spruced up and also talked about the fence that is in need of replacement. He subsequently turned that issue over to the Parks/Playground Committee for further discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

- ◆ **Meeting Schedule 2025:** President Weidenheimer asked for a motion to accept Resolution 736 confirming Council meeting dates for 2025. Councilman Grassley made a motion and Councilman Smith offered a second. Motion passed unanimously.

FINAL REMARKS AND REMINDERS

- ◆ President Weidenheimer mentioned that an Executive Session was held after Tuesday's Workshop Meeting to discuss personnel matters.
- ◆ Next Workshop Meeting – Cancelled due to New Year's Eve holiday.

- ◆ Next Council Meeting – Thursday January 2nd, 2025 at 7:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business Council adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tara K. Mountford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tara" being more prominent.

Tara K. Mountford, Secretary/Treasurer