

Point Marion Borough Council Meeting
Minutes
September 23, 2024

Council meeting was opened with a moment of silence and Pledge of Allegiance by Vice President Mitch Cottrell.

Members present: Doug Sholtis, Jack Stewart, Mitch Cottrell, Carl Ables, and Anthony Jordan. Joseph Corcoran attended via conference call due to illness.

Absent: Billie Jo Nicklow, Bob Goodwin, and Jim Cottrell

Others present: Peter Buss, Christine Cottrell, Rhonda Daniels

Roll call was taken by the Secretary and a quorum was established.

Minutes of the September 9, 2024 meeting were presented and a motion was made by Anthony Jordan, seconded by Jack Stewart to accept as presented. Motion carried.

Engineers Report:

Peter Buss updated council with a letter of recommendation to award the borough \$126,800.00. \$3,900.00 was signed last week. JP Environmental, LLC had the lowest contract bid. Kukurin Contracting should receive a letter with the return of the bid bond. He will write the letter. A motion to approve the lowest responsible bidder to conduct the water treatment plant improvement project and to return all bid bonds for other parties was made by Mitch Cottrell, seconded by Joseph Corcoran. Motion carried. Second job, 4th Street Project came in at \$211, 112.00, \$80K more than we have the funds for. Peter suggested that we do nothing with this bid. The 'band-aid' fix that Peter suggested will carry us through for a while as we build the Capital Improvement Fund. He suggested that we check with our local electrician to do some of the work. Mitch said that he really wanted to move forward with the pump. There are more things that need done at the sub station and the water plant. Peter suggested looking into PenVest for a grant. We already have all the permits necessary to do the work. We will not make the deadline to submit now for a grant, but we can try for the January cutoff. Peter will set all of this up for the borough. He will tell Kukurin we are holding their bid for now. He believes we have 60 days before they can back out.

Peter handed out the invoices and apologized for holding invoices for over a year and then billing them all at once, with a due date of 30 days. He wants to come up with a plan regarding billing monthly. He is going to sit on one of the bills until he can work with us on how to pay it. We are to work through Peter and he will work through the billing department.

He would like to have Mid Atlantic come in to patch permanently the 3 holes in the large water tank. He will have JP come to look at the site first before calling Mid Atlantic. He is going to have someone come and video tape the road leading to the water tanks in case something happens.

Peter announced that they just became Albert Gallatin's engineer. One project is interconnecting with Albert Gallatin with Southwest.

If we have consecutive systems, we would buy water from Southwest and pay a small fee tapping into Albert Gallatin's water. Albert Gallatin Water Authority is looking to buy all their water from Southwest. An interconnect would give us another water source in an emergency. If you buy your water from Southwest, you get rid of CWM.

Public Comment:

Rhonda Daniels: She would like to know how close we are to addressing the issues of the homes around her property. Someone has to be responsible for these homes (617 Morgantown Street). She has already talked to Nick a few times and he is aware of the issue. People are stealing items, windows are broken and the smells coming from the homes are horrible. The grass has not been cut all summer. Up by her garage, the house on the corner, has never cut their grass all summer either. They haven't been there long, (the old Yednok home) but she doesn't know who it is. The fleas are horrible. Anthony Jordan: Can

we lien the property, cut the grass and then figure out the cost and charge them? Doug said yes, we can cut the grass and lien the property. Jack plans to look into the property. Anthony Jordan: Can we get a grant to take ownership and demolish some of these old buildings? Doug said yes.

Christine Cottrell: What exactly is the Rental Registration for? Doug explained the reasons why it is in place. Christine said that the registrations must be used for properties. What is the money being used for? Jack – the borough code is for determining how many adults that are renting/owning per capita tax, earned income tax for residency, etc. It used to be a Registration and Inspection process at one time. It has been in place for many years. Doug explained that there is no earmark for what the money must be used for. She was told that the registration must benefit the owner of the apartments.

Mayor's Report:

None

Secretary's Report:

Approval of USDA balloon loan payment was discussed. Anthony Jordan made the motion to pay the bill, Mitch seconded. Motion carried.

Linda spoke with Ed Schmidt regarding the bonding application. She should be hearing from him by end of week.

The Capital Improvement Loan is \$44,000.00 give or take. Online water payments are transferred directly into this account daily.

Solicitor's Report:

Doug responded to CJ's request regarding the new loan at United. To date, he has heard nothing from the woman in Aliquippa who crashed into the park fence. The cost is \$3,400.00 to reimburse the borough for the repair of the fence. Doug will contact her and make a decision next meeting.

Doug, Joe and Jim were at the compensation hearing. He made a motion to remove 3 properties from the tax sale (Blosser house and Big K Building). There has been no objection. Doug went to sale this morning and both the Blosser house and Big K have been removed from the sale. There were other properties at the sale as well (Foodland and the Foodland parking lot went up for sale).

Code Officer's Report:

Jack submitted a report last meeting, and gave updates on progress. Property searches for owners continue. Citations for a couple buildings in town, to include the Butcher Building, along with citations for grass cutting continue to be written.

Committee Reports

Public Safety:

Panhandling: Carl reported that people are complaining to him about a gentleman who is holding a sign and sitting throughout areas of Point Marion. Ordinances are in place, but may need to be revised to keep it under control. Doug: being homeless is not a crime, so you have to be very careful when writing these ordinances. It's a safety issue. The problem is we have an ordinance, but we don't have the man power to enforce it. Anthony – we also need camera systems throughout town.

Infrastructure:

Mitch updated on daily operations of the borough. All water leaks were repaired. Sewage lines were repaired in town. Dave needs storage bins for the water beads. Water pump needs looked at – being looked at by our bidders. .12 cents a gallon to get rid of some of the slurry per DEP – a requirement.

Administrative

None

Park

OctoberFest is coming up on October 12th. A tree is down and will need cleaned off the property. They are down by the boat dock.

Unfinished Business:

Rental Registration: Code Enforcement is looking into inspection of rental homes. Doug said it's unconstitutional. Anthony disagreed. He stated it is unconstitutional if someone is living there but if it's empty, they want to be able to go into the empty properties for safety purposes. Doug said he will not draw up an ordinance. The discussion was tabled.

Peoples Natural Gas Line Repair Bill:

Update on evidence – Doug asked Nick to take the evidence in to the DA.

Finances:

Anthony Jordan: The finances in so many different accounts are a mess. He feels we should start the process to move all the accounts into one (except Liquid Fuels). From this account, money will be transferred into two accounts: Improvement Fund and the Payroll account. The payroll account handles everything with payroll including taxes. Improvement Fund works on its own. Reconciling will be so much easier, and it will be less money at the end of the year for the CPA. He went over all the loans that the borough has. Not sure what loans are for but we have them at a yearly cost of \$35,962.00. Carl explained that the two bigger ones were to repair the tank because we didn't have the money. Anthony wants to figure out where all money is coming from.

A motion was made by Jack Stewart and seconded by Anthony Jordan to enter into executive session at 8:11pm. Motion carried.

New Business:

A motion to accept the resignation of Harold Whyel was made by Joe Corcoran and seconded by Mitch Cottrell. Motion carried.

Request from Vice President to have all passwords changed by Dan Hoff – all agreed.

A motion was made by Mitch Cottrell and seconded by Joe Corcoran for the removal of Harold Whyel from all borough bank accounts. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Jack Stewart and seconded by Jim Cottrell to put Mitch Cottrell on all bank accounts as a signee. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Jack Stewart and seconded by Anthony Jordan to move from Executive Session to regular meeting. Motion carried.

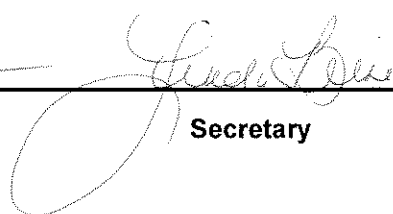
A motion was made by Mitch Cottrell and seconded by Jack Stewart to promote Linda Bise from Utilities Manager to Secretary/Treasurer. Motion carried.

New water plant operator position resumes – ongoing.

Account Configuration – discussed with no decision

Increasing borough boundaries: Anthony Jordan – complaints from public regarding cost of water, sewage, trash, etc. Can we go to Springhill Township and ask for voluntary surrender on homes? Doug: Springhill would have to approve and agree to becoming part of Point Marion. Anthony wants to add the homes in Springhill Township that are paying for Point Marion Borough water. Doug is not sure how to make this happen.

A motion was made by Joe Corcoran and seconded by Anthony Jordan to adjourn the meeting at 9:05pm. Motion carried.



10-3-24

President
Secretary
Date