

1 **Borough of Akron Council Meeting-October 28, 2024**

2

3 **Council Members Present:** Nathan Imhoff, President; Justin Gehman, Vice President; Ryan
4 Cochran; Kleon Zimmerman; Bonnie Young; Tonya Haynes; Max Herman, Junior Council
5 Member; Alyssa Vasyanovich, Junior Council Member; Martin Sweigart, Junior Council Member
6 (Paul Swangren, Jr. not present)

7

8 **Others Present:** Mayor John McBeth; Sean Molchany, Borough Manager; Susan Davidson, Asst.
9 Borough Manager; Valerie Wagner, Director of Finance; Tom Murray, Jr., Public Works
10 Supervisor

11

12 **Visitors:**

- 13 Maria Rotella, Ephrata Rec Center
- 14 Rick Wagner, Ephrata Rec Center
- 15 Tom Burnett, 724 Fulton St Akron
- 16 Larry Alexander, Ephrata Review
- 17 Suzanne Lausch, 14 Meadowview St Akron
- 18 Dawn Stauffer, 209 S 10th St Akron
- 19 Anthony Sheaffer, 110 Main St Akron
- 20 Officer Jacob Waltz, West Earl Police

21

22

23 **Roll Call**

- 24 Kleon Zimmerman – present
- 25 Paul Swangren, Jr. – absent
- 26 Ryan Cochran – present
- 27 Bonnie Young – present
- 28 Tonya Haynes – present
- 29 Justin Gehman, Vice President – present
- 30 Nathan Imhoff, President – present
- 31 Mayor John McBeth – present
- 32 Max Herman, Junior Council Member – absent
- 33 Alyssa Vasyanovich, Junior Council Member – absent
- 34 Martin Sweigart, Junior Council Member – present

35

36 Meeting opened at 6:30pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

37

38 Max Herman, Junior Council Member and Alyssa Vasyanovich, Junior Council Member joined
39 the meeting at 6:31pm.

40

41 **Approval of Minutes**

42 Ryan Cochran made a motion to approve the Akron Borough Council meeting minutes from
43 October 14, 2024; second by Tonya Haynes. No discussion, motion carried.

44

1 **Visitors/Comments from the Public**

2 Ephrata Rec Center

3 Maria Rotella, Program Coordinator at Ephrata Rec Center brought along Rick Wagner to
4 introduce him as the new Executive Director. Ms. Rotella shared some highlights from the Rec
5 Center’s Summer Camp program which was held over eight weeks of the 2024 summer, with
6 every week having at least one class except for the week of July 4th when no classes were held.

7
8 This past summer there were 1224 registrations within Akron Borough, Clay Township, Ephrata
9 Borough and Ephrata Township. With Akron Borough’s annual donation, the summer camp
10 classes are available to Akron Borough resident children at no cost to the participant. Different
11 venues and resources from participating municipalities are used for the program when possible.
12 Broad Street Park’s street hockey rink is used for the street hockey camp, for example.

13
14 This year there were 35 youth volunteers – most were Ephrata Swim Team members who
15 helped with swimming camps. The Rec Center had eight paid instructors and many more adult
16 volunteers, many of which are coaches from throughout the Ephrata Area School District.
17 Rotella emphasized that the Center’s focus is on keeping the kids active and outside during the
18 summer and limiting the amount of screen time. She stated that it’s a great opportunity for kids
19 to try new sports without a full commitment from the athlete or the parents for a whole
20 season.

21
22 Nathan Imhoff asked about minimum age for the program, and Tonya Haynes asked if families
23 need to be a member at the Ephrata Rec Center to participate in the summer camps. Ms.
24 Rotella answered that typically registrants need to be six years old or older, and that no one
25 needs to be a member. All residents of Akron Borough, Clay Township and Ephrata Borough are
26 able to participate at no cost. Ephrata Township residents have a subsidized cost to participate.

27
28 Ryan Cochran asked if they could provide a breakdown of municipal contributions and money
29 saved to residents. Maria Rotella estimated that based on the number of Akron Borough
30 resident registrations, the cost per child was \$38.00, vs. the non-resident price of \$45.00 per
31 child. Nathan Imhoff followed by asking if the Ephrata Rec Center’s suggested 2025 donation
32 from Akron Borough is increased from the 2024 donation due to increased resident
33 participation. Rotella confirmed yes, and Executive Director Rick Wagner added that increased
34 staffing costs and the increased variety of camp classes offered also are contributing factors.
35 Nathan Imhoff asked if participants were limited to one camp per summer season or if they
36 could participate in multiple camps. Ms. Rotella shared that many children attend a class every
37 week over the summer, and there is not any cost associated with attending multiple classes,
38 except for non-resident or Ephrata Township residents.

39
40 **Bills**

41 None

42

43 **Reports/Announcements**

44

1 **Police Report**

2 Officer Waltz from West Earl Police Department shared there are no updates at this time. The
3 September 2024 Police Report from Chief Higgins has been sent to Council.

4
5 **Mayor's Report**

6 Mayor McBeth shared that he noticed the Ten Thousand Villages building is for sale and that he
7 hopes the new neighbor to Broad Street Park is just as good as Ten Thousand Villages has been.
8 He appreciates the donations they have made and the generous use of the parking lot over the
9 years.

10
11 **Managers' Report**

12 Borough Manager Sean Molchany shared that Akron Volunteer Fire Company President Dale
13 Miller spoke with him recently and shared that they have signed an agreement to purchase a
14 new fire truck, and they would like Akron Borough to submit an application for funding to the
15 Local Share Account through the Commonwealth Financing Authority on their behalf. Molchany
16 stated that he asked for a spec sheet on the new truck as well as details about the truck they
17 would be replacing with the purchase. He reminded Council that Akron Borough is also planning
18 to submit an application for Roland Park in 2025 and that having two applications submitted
19 may mean that the applications would be in competition with one another.

20
21 Alyssa Vasyanovich asked what the applications are for. Sean Molchany explained that
22 distribution of gaming revenues can be granted to municipalities and other eligible applicants
23 for the purposes of projects in the public interest. Akron Volunteer Fire Company is not one of
24 the eligible types of applicants and must have an eligible sponsor.

25
26 Nathan Imhoff agreed that he would like to see details on both the new equipment and the one
27 being replaced and said that Council can discuss it when Akron Volunteer Fire Company visits
28 and presents to Council. Sean Molchany mentioned that the truck will take about four years for
29 delivery. Ryan Cochran asked if multiple municipalities can submit a joint application. Molchany
30 answered yes, they can, depending on the scope of the project. Discussion ensued. Sean
31 Molchany will call Akron Volunteer Fire Company President Dale Miller to discuss.

32
33 Tonya Haynes asked how other fire companies are structured. Sean Molchany replied that many
34 larger fire companies are paid organizations and not volunteer based. Haynes followed up by
35 asking which areas are first due for Akron Volunteer Fire Company. Mr. Molchany stated Akron
36 Borough and small portions of Ephrata Township.

37
38 Akron Borough was notified that the application to the Local Share Account for funding for the
39 Public Works maintenance building renovations was approved in the amount of \$245,878.00.
40 Kleon Zimmerman asked if everything was approved that was listed on the application and Sean
41 Molchany replied that no cuts were made; however, staff needs to get contractors in for real
42 time costs. Nathan Imhoff inquired what will happen if costs exceed the grant funding.
43 Molchany answered that staff have a meeting planned for tomorrow to discuss.

44

1 **Finance**

2 None

3

4 **Community Relations**

5 Bonnie Young interviewed Bill Howard, the Emergency Management Coordinator recently
6 appointed by Akron Borough Council. She wrote an article and has submitted it to the
7 newspapers and will also send a copy to Council.

8

9 **Parks & Property**

10 **A. Update on Roland Park Stream Restoration Project**

11 Tonya Haynes shared that she was recently walking around through Roland Park and stopped to
12 talk to some families and a resident who uses the park every day for lunch breaks. This resident
13 shared that he has been very impressed with the project.

14

15 Nathan Imhoff invited Sean Molchany to share how the Community Planting Day went on
16 Saturday, October 26, 2024. Molchany said about 15 people were present for about an hour to
17 plant some trees and shrubs. The contractor, Aquatic Resource Restoration Company, and
18 engineer, Land Studies, Inc. were both present to answer any questions and provide insight into
19 the project. The holes were dug ahead of time for easy planting.

20

21 He then shared updates on the progress – the end of the park by Main Street is being cleaned
22 up, they are currently paving and the rain garden construction has started. The project is still on
23 target for completion in mid-November. Discussion ensued regarding the progress, and Public
24 Works Supervisor Tom Murray, Jr. was thanked for his work setting up the QR codes and signs
25 with details on the project that have been set around the park.

26

27 Kleon Zimmerman inquired about the new trees that were planted and whose responsibility it is
28 to keep them watered. Sean Molchany stated that the contractor is responsible to water and
29 cultivate the trees and plants until they have fully accepted into the new planting spot, then it
30 becomes the Borough’s responsibility to maintain.

31

32 Nathan Imhoff noted the extremely dry weather lately and asked how the wells at the park are
33 doing. Susan Davidson replied that the well levels are fine – Tom Murray, Jr. confirmed this as
34 well. Discussion ensued regarding surrounding municipalities and the drought notices some
35 have sent.

36

37 **Personnel**

38 None

39

40 **Streets**

41 **A. Street Light Request – Broad Street**

42 Sean Molchany reviewed that 10 letters were sent to property owners of the 600 block of Broad
43 Street regarding a request for a street light to be added. Six property owners responded of the
44 ten that were contacted. Of the six, four were in favor of the light and two were against. The

1 second question that was asked was if they would want the light in front of their house. One did
2 not respond to that question, two said yes, and three said no. Molchany asked Council if they
3 had any opinions on the matter. Tonya Haynes stated she believes it is a safety issue and Nathan
4 Imhoff wants to wait to make a final decision until PP&L does the evaluation of where the light
5 could/should go. Borough resident Anthony Sheaffer spoke up and asked if the letters were sent
6 to renters in the 600 block of Broad Street – Sean Molchany responded that it was the property
7 owners that were contacted, not renters.

8
9 Public Works Supervisor Tom Murray, Jr. shared that there are 118 lights in the Borough that are
10 eligible be converted to LED at no cost to the Borough, including lights in the Akron Borough
11 portion of the Warwick-Ephrata Rail Trail and the lights on Diamond Spring Circle. These are the
12 most expensive type of lights in the Borough and can now be converted to LED. Discussion
13 ensued regarding cost savings, how PP&L formats the bills, etc.

14
15 **Public Utilities**
16 None

17
18 **Junior Council Members Report**
19 Max Herman recently volunteered at the Ephrata Intermediate School field trip for sixth
20 graders. He helped facilitate an activity where students weighed corn and determined the
21 number of bushels per acre.

22
23 Alyssa Vasyanovich shared that Ephrata High School is looking to bring back a chapter of Future
24 Business Leaders of America and she has submitted an application to be the president.

25
26 Martin Sweigart spoke about the recent Senior Night at War Memorial Field and how great it
27 was even though the football team did not make it to district playoffs.

28
29 Bonnie Young asked the Junior Council Members if they would be willing to volunteer to provide
30 music for the Luminary Walk held in Roland Park on December 14, 2024.

31
32 **Public Hearings/Presentations/Appointments**
33 **Old Business**

34 **A. Discuss 2025 proposed budget**
35 Susan Davidson recapped that Council met on October 7, 2024 to discuss the proposed 2025
36 budget. Since that meeting, staff have received sewer treatment costs from Ephrata Borough.
37 She shared that there is a significant change in costs from the 2024 figures; the 2024 cost was
38 \$335,660.00 and treatment costs for 2025 are quoted at \$411,680.00. Davidson stated that she
39 needed to remove the \$77,481.00 transfer to sewer reserves and added a transfer of
40 \$18,905.00 from sewer reserves in order to balance the budget.

41
42 Nathan Imhoff asked for an explanation of the increased costs – Susan Davidson said she did not
43 have the opportunity to review the numbers thoroughly as the figures were only sent over this
44 afternoon. She will review and send out to Council tomorrow. Ms. Davidson stated that sewer

1 treatment costs are projecting to be under budget for 2024. Ryan Cochran clarified by asking if
2 2024 costs were based on 2022-2023 flows – yes, the costs are not calculated based on a
3 calendar year. Imhoff asked if the transfer to sewer reserves was added to the first draft of the
4 sewer budget in order to balance the budget or if there was another reason. Susan Davidson
5 affirmed it was to balance the budget. Light discussion ensued regarding transfers to balance
6 budgets and any credits the Borough may receive from Ephrata Borough at the beginning of the
7 year.

8
9 Borough Manager Sean Molchany moved the discussion towards the proposed 2025 capital
10 budget. He stated he would like to refine the budget at tonight’s meeting and is looking for
11 specific direction from Council. Molchany shared that the updates to the gazebo at Roland Park
12 to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements has been added. He
13 continued by adding that staff is still waiting on costs for standpipe repairs and soft start pumps
14 – other than the ADA updates to the gazebo, no new projects have been added to the proposed
15 capital budget. Currently, all proposed projects are estimated at \$605,000.00 with approx. an
16 additional \$100,000.00 in estimated costs for the standpipe and soft start pumps. Molchany
17 shared that he personally recommends not moving forward with projects like a pickleball court
18 at Broad Street Park until a decision has been reached regarding the standpipe.

19
20 Ryan Cochran stated he would like to see the pickleball court at Broad Street Park and the ADA
21 updates for the gazebo at Roland Park crossed off the 2025 capital budget. He shared that the
22 gazebo is at least 35 years old and the money would be better spent to tear down and rebuild a
23 new gazebo in compliance with ADA requirements in a different location. Council President
24 Nathan Imhoff echoed Cochran’s thoughts and agreed in both regards. Bonnie Young agreed,
25 stating that the two specific projects on the table for discussion are particularly high costs for
26 this coming year’s budget.

27
28 Ryan Cochran asked if couples that choose to get married at the gazebo stay at Roland Park for
29 the reception or any celebration afterward or go elsewhere. Mayor John McBeth shared that in
30 his experience, they typically go home afterwards or they would rent the Lodge. Cochran
31 followed up by asking if it was possible to find an area at Roland Park to set up tents that could
32 be used for weddings. Susan Davidson said it had never been allowed previously, but if Council
33 wanted to allow it, it could be done. Sean Molchany added that there are several items to take
34 into account when considering allowing tents: parking for guests, inclement weather, the
35 existing disc golf course and the golfers that use it, and ensuring the area does not have
36 underground electric that would be affected by metal stakes from the tents.

37
38 Nathan Imhoff invited Mayor McBeth to share any of his thoughts regarding the budget
39 discussion. Mayor McBeth asked if there was any way to make a few updates to the gazebo at
40 Roland Park without doing them all; he noted that a railing on the steps leading to the gazebo
41 off of Lions Lane would be helpful. He also advised Council to have discussions with residents
42 before doing anything to the Akron Pines playground at Roland Park as it was a citizen-funded
43 project and not a Borough-sponsored one. He continued by sharing history of the playground.
44 Council President Imhoff reminded the mayor that there is nothing in the proposed 2025

1 budget for any changes to the Akron Pines playground. Mayor McBeth said he heard that
2 \$2,000.00 was allocated for a company to evaluate the current playgrounds in the Borough.
3 Sean Molchany replied that there is not money set aside in the 2025 capital budget for that, it is
4 a future project.

5
6 Mayor McBeth asked about Recognition Row at Roland Park and if there is money set aside for
7 it. Sean Molchany said that the plaques are being stored safely in the basement of Borough Hall
8 and that the thought was to create a self-contained area to designate for the recognition
9 plaques that does not need to be mowed around.

10
11 Discussion moved to the garage door project for the municipal office when Mayor McBeth
12 asked for an explanation of the project. Sean Molchany explained that the plan is to open up
13 the third garage door bay at the municipal office to more efficiently park the trucks without
14 having to back in from an angle in the second bay. Opening up the third bay door will also
15 accommodate a trailer. This has been in discussion this year and last. The mayor feels it is
16 unnecessary and Public Works should use the garage bays downstairs at the back of the
17 municipal office. Molchany rebutted that only the Toolcat and the admin vehicle will fit there
18 since they are residential sized garage bays.

19
20 Mayor McBeth asked how the Lions Lane project will be funded – Sean Molchany replied that
21 staff will be submitting an application for Local Share Account funding for \$1,000,000.00.

22
23 Mayor McBeth stated that the \$50,000.00 designated for the municipal office parking lot should
24 be used elsewhere and that staff should look into using asphalt crack filler and sealcoat instead;
25 however, if Council is going to continue with paving, he would like to see a grate for drainage at
26 the driveway off of New Street.

27
28 The mayor also stated that “the worst sidewalk in the Borough” at the fire station needs to be
29 repaired and is more important than carpet in the Council room. Susan Davidson and Sean
30 Molchany clarified that the line item in the capital budget for carpet and lights in the municipal
31 office is not for the Council room. The replacement will be for the middle offices as discussed.
32 Sean Molchany asked Public Works Supervisor Tom Murray, Jr. to get costs to repair that section
33 of sidewalk and other Borough-maintained sidewalks.

34
35 Nathan Imhoff said that he was having a hard time deciding if the driveway should be done now
36 or later. Sean Molchany advised it should be done the same time as the garage bay, to which
37 Imhoff replied that the garage bay absolutely needs to be opened up. Discussion ensued about
38 sealcoating and other smaller repair options for the driveway. Imhoff asked Molchany to get an
39 estimate on a sealcoat on the driveway and decided the full paving project should be pushed to
40 2027 for discussion then.

41
42 Mayor McBeth asked how many bays are at the Public Works shop and could any of those be
43 used for Borough trucks. Sean Molchany replied that all equipment such as plows are currently
44 stored at the shop garage. Mayor McBeth asked if the equipment could be moved to the bays in

1 the municipal building basement – no, those bays are only big enough to fit the Toolcat and
2 admin vehicle.

3

4 **New Business**

5 **A. Resolutions**

6 **B. Ordinances**

7 **C. Motions and Decisions**

8 Before asking for a motion to approve to advertisement of the proposed 2025 Borough Budget,
9 Nathan Imhoff asked for clarification on which budgets are advertised. Sean Molchany replied
10 that general, water, sewer, and highway aid/liquid fuels are advertised. Mayor McBeth asked
11 why the capital projects budget will not be advertised, to which Molchany replied that the
12 proposed capital projects budget is public information and is available upon request; however, it
13 is not required to be advertised. Susan Davidson followed up with the clarification that the
14 advertisement is for the operating budget, which capital projects does not fall under. Discussion
15 ensued regarding the advertisement of the proposed budget, which is different than approving
16 the budget, and the proposed millage rate increase from 3.3mills to 3.6mills.

17 **a. Motion to approve the advertisement of the proposed 2025 Borough**
18 **Budget**

19 i. Ryan Cochran moved to authorize Borough staff to coordinate the
20 advertising of the proposed 2025 Borough budget. Second by Tonya
21 Haynes, motion carried.

22 **b. Motion to approve the advertisement of the proposed 2025 Real Estate Tax**
23 **Increase**

24 i. Tonya Haynes moved to authorize Borough staff to coordinate the
25 advertising of the proposed 2025 Real Estate Tax Increase. Second by
26 Ryan Cochran, motion carried.

27 **c. Motion to approve the purchase of doors for the Akron Water Treatment**
28 **Plant**

29 Sean Molchany offered context for the replacement of the doors: during the recent evaluation
30 done by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), it was noted that the doors were
31 rusting out indicating an urgent need to replace them. Molchany noted that there is money in
32 reserves to cover this cost; the water treatment plant is a secured building and needs to stay
33 that way.

34 i. Bonnie Young moved to approve the purchase of two doors in the
35 amount of \$5,300.00 and \$5,295.00 for the Akron Water Treatment
36 Plant. Second by Ryan Cochran. Discussion.

37

38 Kleon Zimmerman asked if the replacement doors will be galvanized. Tom Murray, Jr. replied
39 yes, they will be – full quote sheets for both doors are in Council packets. Nathan Imhoff asked if
40 multiple quotes were obtained. Sean Molchany replied that the Borough has used this vendor
41 frequently. Ryan Cochran asked for the motion to be amended to state the purchase of the
42 doors will not exceed \$10,600.00 and that two more quotes will be obtained before installation.

43

1 ii. Bonnie Young amended her motion. Second by Ryan Cochran,
2 amended motion carried.

3 **D. Acknowledgements**

4 **E. Other Business/Deliberations**

5 **F. Correspondence & Petitions**

6 a. Ephrata Public Library 3rd Quarter Report

7 **G. Executive Session**

8
9 **Adjournment**

10 Kleon Zimmerman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:57pm; second by Justin Gehman.
11 Motion carried.

12
13 Respectfully submitted,

14
15 Susan Davidson

16 Assistant Borough Manager/Secretary

17
18 SD/vw