

**THORNBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
REORGANIZATION and REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF JANUARY 2, 2024**

Meeting Time: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Location: Thornburg Community Center, Auditorium

Attendance: Council members Vinnie Coppola (2025), Mary Ditmore (2027), Sigo Falk (2025), Zane Long (2027), Lauren Catanzarite (2025), Michael Jameson (2027), and Tony Szmul (2025) were present. Mayor Tom Mackin (2025) was present. Also present were Solicitor Mandy Culhane from GRB and Secretary/Treasurer Dorothy Falk.

Mayor Mackin administered the oath of office to the newly elected and re-elected members of Council: Mary Ditmore, Zane Long, and Michael Jameson.

Mayor Mackin called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mayor Mackin asked for nominations for President of Council. Mr. Falk nominated Vinnie Coppola, which was seconded by Ms. Ditmore. A vote was taken, and Mr. Coppola was elected unanimously as President of Council. Mayor Mackin turned the gavel over to President Coppola.

President Coppola asked for nominations for Vice President of Council. Ms. Catanzarite nominated herself, which was seconded by Mr. Szmul. A vote was taken, and Ms. Catanzarite was elected unanimously as Vice President of Council.

President Coppola asked for nominations for President Pro Tem of Council. Ms. Ditmore nominated Mr. Szmul, which was seconded by Mr. Jameson. A vote was taken, and Mr. Szmul was elected unanimously as President Pro Tem of Council.

President Coppola asked for nominations for Vacancy Chair. Mr. Jameson made a motion to appoint Lorraine Runyon as Vacancy Chair, which was seconded by Mr. Falk. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution appointing Tax Collector and deputizing Jordan: Due to a vacancy in the office, Mr. Szmul a motion that council pass a resolution appointing Vera Quinn as borough tax collector and authorizing her to deputize Jordan Tax Service as the collector of borough real estate taxes. Mr. Falk seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Mayor Mackin administered the oath of office to Ms. Quinn.

Mr. Falk made a motion to appoint Jordan Tax Service as the collector of all other borough taxes (in addition to current real estate). Ms. Catanzarite seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Falk made a motion that the following appointments and reappointments be made:

- Secretary/Treasurer – Dorothy Falk
- Solicitor – Emily Mueller of Goehring, Rutter & Boehm
- Engineer – Clint Reilly of NIRA Consulting Engineers
- Building Inspector – Jarrod D’Amico, Harshman
- Zoning Officer – Harshman
- Code Enforcement – Harshman
- Auditor – Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood
- Newspaper of Record – New Pittsburgh Courier
- Planning Commission (4 years) – Vinnie Coppola
- UCC Appeals Board (3 years) – Ken Marino
- Zoning Hearing Board (3 years) – Joan Britten.

Mr. Long seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Council was asked to consider nominations for two vacancies on the UCC Appeals Board.

ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES:

Mr. Coppola made a motion that Council continue the three current committees: construction (to be chaired by President Coppola), human resources (to be chaired by Mr. Long), and traffic (to be chaired by Mayor Mackin). Ms. Catanzarite seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

READING OF THE MINUTES:

Mr. Long made a motion to dispense with reading the Minutes of December 4, 2023. Mr. Falk seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Long made a motion to accept the Minutes of December 4, 2023 as presented. Mr. Falk seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC FORUM:

None.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT:

Solicitor Mandy Culhane from Goehring, Rutter & Boehm was present on behalf of Solicitor Emily Mueller.

Resolution amending Resolution 2023-08 – Ms. Falk explained that Resolution 2023-08 referred to authorizing two contracts for the window replacement project (TEDCO and The Design Alliance). However, only one agreement was needed due to a previous agreement with The Design Alliance. Mr. Szmul made a motion that Council pass a resolution to amend Resolution 2023-08 to clarify that only one agreement with TEDCO was required. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jameson, and it passed unanimously.

Agenda ruling: Solicitor Culhane updated Council on a recent ruling by the Commonwealth restricting the addition of items to the agenda after it has been posted.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Ms. Falk reported that Borough Engineer Clint Reilly submitted the Final Progress Payment Request for the Storm Sewer Relocation project to Iron City Construction in the amount of \$4,058.62, which is the 5% retainage. A discussion followed.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Mackin presented the police report for December. There were three alarms (false), one dog issue at the conservation park, one medical call (with transport), one mental health/302 call, and one traffic issue (tractor trailer stuck on Hamilton).

Mayor Mackin will meet with Chief Sumpter to discuss enforcing the false alarm ordinance.

A discussion was held on three trees that need to be removed (Stanford/Cornell; Princeton/alley; near the public works building).

Secretary/treasurer search: Mayor Mackin reported that two residents have expressed interest in the position. A discussion was held. Mayor Mackin and President Coppola were added to the human resources committee, which will schedule and conduct interviews.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms. Falk presented Council with a list of deposits made since the December meeting as well as a balance sheet and a draft 2023 P&L report.

Disbursements: Ms. Falk presented the list of disbursements for January. She requested that Council also authorize the final retainage payment to Iron City Construction (\$4,058,62) and the monthly health insurance premium payment to MEIT (\$3,324.76). A discussion followed. Mr. Szmul made a motion to approve the disbursements as presented, including the two additional payments indicated. Ms. Catanzarite seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

2024 Retirement Contribution Resolution: A discussion was held regarding the borough's contribution rate for 2024. Mr. Long made a motion that Council pass a resolution to establish the borough contribution rate for 2024 at 10%. Mr. Szmul seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

2024 Budget: A discussion was held on the secretary/treasurer salary line item for 2024 given the anticipated transition. Council will maintain the budget as approved in December.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Construction projects: Mr. Falk reported that the three upcoming projects (community center window replacement, Hamilton Road sidewalks, and sanitary sewer repairs) will cost approximate \$750K. The borough has received \$452K in grants toward these projects. Revenues in the 2024 budget and capital reserves will support the completion of these projects.

Human resources: Covered in the Mayor's report.

Traffic Calming: No update.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chickens: The borough received a complaint from residents in Thornberry regarding large number of chickens wandering from Thornburg. A discussion was held. Mayor Mackin will look into it further.

Yale stairs: Repair of the stairs is underway.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Long made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm, which was seconded by Ms. Catanzarite. The motion was unanimously approved.