

**THORNBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2022**

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

Location: Thornburg Community Center, Hamilton Park, Pace Pavilion

Attendance: Council President Sigo Falk (2025) was present. Council members Lauren Catanzarite (2025), Vinnie Coppola (2025), Mary Ditmore (2023), Zane Long (2023), Sam Runyon (2023), and Tony Szmul (2025) were present. Also present were Solicitor Emily Mueller and Secretary/Treasurer Dorothy Falk.

Regrets: Mayor Tom Mackin (2025)

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

President Falk reported that a potential expenditure related to the work being done at the Community Center has come up for Council's consideration since the agenda was posted. Mr. Runyon made a motion that the agenda be amended to include an item regarding the authorization of Gateway Engineers to conduct and prepare a soil analysis report for the Community Center. Ms. Catanzarite seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

READING OF THE MINUTES:

Mr. Runyon made a motion to dispense with reading the Minutes of August 1, 2022. Mr. Long seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Runyon made a motion to accept the Minutes of August 1, 2022 as presented. Ms. Catanzarite seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE:

Marty Powell from The Design Alliance Architects provided an update on work at the Community Center. Landau has been given a notice to proceed with the electric renovation project and contracts are being prepared. The window replacement project is on hold pending receipt of the signed grant agreement with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. The schematic design of the reconfigured lower level is being updated to consider air flow, a connector to the new bathrooms, placement of mechanicals on the roof, and a potential family bathroom at the end of the corridor with interior and exterior access. In order to determine the soil capacity for the addition, Mr. Powell recommended that Council retain Gateway Engineers to perform a soil analysis using three test borings in the location of the proposed addition at a cost of \$11,700. Mr. Runyon made a motion that Council authorize Gateway Engineers to do the soil analysis, which was seconded by Mr. Szmul. A discussion followed. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0, with Ms. Ditmore abstaining.

A question and answer session was held with residents. Further discussion was held on a family bathroom.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Audrey Rose (Hickton) Degez introduced the Slovo Theater Group, Ukranian refugees and actors who are developing performances to share Ukranian culture. The group is currently staying at the Hickton residence. She thanked Council for allowing the group to rehearse in the theater and requested additional rehearsal time, which Council approved.

Residents Vince and Mary Grogan asked Council to consider speed bumps on Tech. They are concerned about vehicles speeding and ignoring the stop sign at Tech and Eton. Karen Kashmer expressed concern for the safety of pedestrians. A discussion followed.

Residents Colleen and Zac Kamnikar, Elizabeth Wright, Kelly Chiodi, Sue Kelly, Marie Urick, Lindsey Segu, Judy Kimblin, and Kris Szmul were present to observe.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Resolution waiving certain tax collection fees: Solicitor Mueller summarized recent changes in the real estate tax collection legislation which require municipalities to waive interest, fees, and penalties for new property owners who do not receive tax bills within 12 months of purchasing a property. A discussion followed. Mr. Long made a motion that Council pass a resolution to direct the tax collector to waive interest, fees, and penalties as described. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ditmore and passed unanimously.

Senior tax discount: President Falk summarized the effect of the current 15% senior tax discount on borough revenues. He asked Council to consider increasing the discount to 25% to help offset millage increases to fund renovations to the community center and playground. A discussion followed. Solicitor Mueller was asked to prepare a draft ordinance for further discussion at the October meeting.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

President Falk reported that Mayor Mackin got an estimate of \$20,750 to pave sections of Harvard between Lehigh and Kenyon. A discussion followed. No action will be taken at this time.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Borough engineer Clint Reilly recommended approval of a pay application in the amount of \$17,455.01 from Gary Mancini Construction. This includes the balance of \$12,829 from the contracted playground installation and \$4,626.01 for additional stone. A discussion followed. This expenditure is included in the monthly disbursements list for Council approval.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

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

Disbursements: Ms. Falk presented the list of disbursements for September. Ms. Catanzarite made a motion that Council approve the disbursements as presented. Mr. Runyon seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Retirement - Minimum municipal obligation for 2023: Ms. Falk reported that the borough's Minimum Municipal Obligation for 2023 is \$6,274 based on an estimated payroll of \$103,900 and its contracted contribution of 6%.

Authorization to advertise garbage bid: Ms. Falk reported that she has prepared a garbage bid proposal to replace the current contract, which is set to expire on December 31, 2022. She requested authorization to advertise the bid proposal so that Council can consider bids and potentially award a contract at its regular October meeting. Mr. Runyon made a motion that Council authorize Ms. Falk to advertise the garbage bid proposal, which was seconded by Ms. Catanzarite. The motion passed unanimously.

ARPA grant – Ms. Falk reported that she was able to resolve the legal municipal name discrepancies, so there should be no delays in receiving the second half of the ARPA grant, expected in mid-September.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance: No report.

H/R: No report.

P/R: No report.

Roads: No report.

Sewers: Mr. Coppola reported that Clint Reilly has obtained estimates ranging from approximately \$9,700 to \$17,000 to televise the next section of sewer line. He recommended that Council accept the lowest proposal from State Pipe Services in the amount of \$9,681.50. Mr. Coppola made a motion the Council accept the proposal from State Pipe Service, which was seconded by Mr. Long. The motion passed unanimously.

Steering: No report.

Playground: President Falk reviewed the playground budget versus actual expenses.

Fundraising:

Capital Campaign pledge update – President Falk reported that 106 donors have pledged \$403,032. Cashflow was discussed.

Grants: Ms. Falk reported that she, Mayor Mackin, and Mr. Runyon attended a grant workshop hosted by Rep. Dan Deasy. Based on advice emphasizing the importance of state representatives supporting municipalities' grant applications, she recommended that Council make sure its state representatives are aware of the \$400K+ in pledges that show strong community support for the projects and the use of the facilities by the Ukrainian Slovo theater group to highlight the value of the space to the community. Ms. Ditmore discussed ways to get representatives interested in supporting borough grant applications.

OLD BUSINESS:

Lighting in parking lot: Ms. Falk reported that Duquesne Light expects to install the requested light in the Conservation Park parking lot within the next two weeks.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Runyon asked if there is a limit to the number of vehicles that a resident can park on the street. Ms. Falk will check with Harshman.

Cornell road closure signs: A discussion was held on the road closure signs on Cornell. They are not left in place when the workers leave at the end of the day. A discussion followed. The contractor will be asked to make sure the signs are blocking the road when workers leave.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Council went into executive session at 8:35pm to discuss personnel issues. Council came out of executive session at 8:50pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.