

# ETNA BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

## MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 7:30 P.M.  
For approval on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The regular meeting of the Etna Borough Council was held on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Chairman Becki presided and called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Roll was called, and members present were Ms. Semler Ms. Schaefer, Mrs. Tuñón, Chairman Becki, Mrs. Gabriel, Mr. Trader, Mrs. Rothmeyer-McElhane, Mr. Iannuzzi, Mr. Burke was out of town and Ms. Semler was on Zoom. Also present were Mayor Tuñón, Manager Ramage, Police Chief Rodman was attending via Zoom, Administrative Assistant Birks, Public Works Director Joe Balistriero, Assistant Fire Todd Lunn, Shaler Hampton EMS Executive Director Eric Schmidt, and Solicitor Rushford.

Mayor Tuñón led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Becki stated that Solicitor Rushford wanted to address the meeting and then stated that the council and the mayor had a brief executive session before the meeting to discuss contract negotiations.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Gabriel and seconded by Councilman Trader to accept the June and July Minutes as written. All Aye, Motion Carried.

President Becki stated that Council received a copy of the Treasurer's Report and asked if there were any questions. There being none, the accounts are reported as follows:

Fund 01 General Account	\$ 1,331,536.81
Fund 05 Education Account	\$ 906.44
Fund 03 Payroll Account	\$ 276.48
Fund 04 Police Fund	\$ 20,561.91
Fund 21 Hockey	\$ 4,019.26
Fund 30 Capital Improvement	\$ _____
Fund 33 Christmas	\$ 5,938.61
Fund 34 Etna Senior Center Fund	\$ 5,581.78
Fund 35 Liquid Fuels Account	\$ 69,913.35
Fund 36 War Memorial Fund	\$ 5,381.77
Fund 38 Sanitary Trunk Line Account	\$ 163,897.23
Fund 39 Middle Street Escrow Account	\$ 6,663.51
Fund 42 Capital Reserve	\$ 336,815.33
Fund 44 Sewer Account	\$ 88,350.21
Fund 45 Project Escrow Account	\$ <b>CLOSED</b>
Fund 46 Riverfront Park & Trail	\$ 487.37
Fund 48 Etna Green Streetscape	\$ 22.02
Fund 50 GI Account	\$ 1,200.58
Fund 51 Fire Escrow Account	\$ 37,403.56
Fund 52 Infrastructure Account	\$ 98.09
Fund 53 Youth & Recreation Fund	\$ 4,506.02
Fund 54 American Rescue	\$ 349,669.83

A motion to accept and file the Treasurer's Report was made by Councilwoman Gabriel and seconded by Councilman Trader. All Aye, Motion Carried.

A check register by fund (bills already paid) as well as outstanding accounts payable (bills due) were given to each member of Council.

Total Owed	\$ 178,440.25
Total Bills Paid	\$ 166,652.39
Total Balance Due	\$ 345,092.64

A motion to pay the bills was made by Councilman Trader and seconded by Councilwoman Tuñón. All Aye, Motion Carried.



### **Police Chief's Report**

Police Chief Rodman provided his monthly report which included: Police stats, Police meeting was held on November 6<sup>th</sup>, hiring process of 2 applicants, Fall Gun qualification is scheduled, increase thefts at 7-11, LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) Program currently has 27 Referrals and 9 Active Participants, and Hampton Township is offering a presentation on a Police Social Worker on November 13, 2024. Nothing to report.

### **Engineer's Report**

Engineer provided a report regarding: Source Flow Reduction Consent Order Compliance, Year 50 Paving Contract Administration/Inspections, Dewey & Spring Street Sewer Separation Project, Streetscape Phase 4, Streetscape Phase 5.1, Streetscape Phase 5.2, Act 152 County Demolition Grant, and Etna 2024 MS4 Program.

### **Public Works Report**

Public Works Director Joe Balistrieri submitted a report regarding: Grass Cutting (Playground, Ballfield, Riverfront, Nature Trail, All Corridors and All Borough Properties), Tree Trimming, Street Sweeping, Garbage Collection, Repaired and Replaced Parking Meters, Cleared off Obstructed Road Signs, Add Mirrors in Several Blind Spot Locations, Added Large Stones on Nature Trail to Help Prevent Flooding, Pothole Repair, Cleared all Runs with Rented Excavator, Cleared garbage, Debris and Tires from Parker Street Runs and Catch Basins, Repaired Damaged Sewer Riser on Snyder Street, Installed Emergency Warning Signs Throughout the Borough, Prepared the Winterizing on all Closed Borough Facilities, Answered Emergency Calls, Prepared Winter Maintenance Equipment, Prepared Leaf Catcher for Upcoming Leaf Pick-up, Truck Maintenance, Inspections, and Repairs, Painted Decorative Street Signs and Poles on Butler Street, and Line Painting as Needed Throughout the Borough.

President Becki said the emergency signs are very innovative, and they help the borough on Class #7 Rating for flood insurance and help provide a 15% discount.

### **Fire Department Report**

Etna Volunteer Fire Department (EVFD) Assistant Chief Todd Lunn provided a report with the following information: 15 Fire Incidents, 1 Overpressure Rupture, 16 Rescue & Emergency Medical Service, 3 Hazardous Condition (No Fire), 1 Service Call, 2 Good Intent Calls, 4 False Alarm & False Calls, and Total of 42 calls for the month and added that the Fire Department was present at the Etna Art Tour and at the Shaler Homecoming.

### **Hampton / Shaler EMS Report**

Hampton / Shaler EMS Director Eric Schmidt provided the following report: 54 Calls for the Month, 37 Transported, 1 Standby, 2 Refused, 2 Lift Assist, 2 No Patient Found, 1 False Call, 2 DOA, 7 Cancelled

Director Schmidt also added that studies had shown that the public access AED's are underutilized and a new AED had been manufactured called AVIVE. He said that the AVIVE device can be connected by cellular, Wi-Fi or Bluetooth and stated that these devices can send an email that interacts with the 911 call center and cardiac arrest machines. A 911 operator would be able to tell the caller if there is one of these machines in a nearby public access area and when it makes the alert sound, anyone can take the AED directly to the person in distress. These devices cost roughly \$1700.00 apiece and a possible avenue for funding would be corporate sponsorship. To lease a trainer machine, it would cost \$200 to \$500 a year. It is a life saver and a lifeline for someone in cardiac arrest. He added that Etna has just outfitted all their emergency vehicles and public buildings with updated AED's through their American Rescue Funds, which were great, but these new machines were just developed.

Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaneay said this would be a good presentation for next year's Community Care Fair.

### **Solicitor's Report**

The Solicitor Rushford's report included information on the following: Right to Know, requests, the Parking Ordinance, Open Public Comment Policy, Kostov v. Millville Police law suit; Officers in their Official Capacities, Pilot Agreement, Police Committee, Ann Street Zoning Map Error, 30 Pine Street purchase and Council In- service training.

Solicitor Rushford stated that he would like to pitch to the council that the in- service training could be held either on a Saturday morning or Friday evening for 3 to 4 hours. At this in- service training, he added the council will be going over the Sunshine Law, Borough Code, the Ethics Act and Labor Negotiations.



The meeting could be held at spaces such as the library, event space (Fugh Hall). The council is looking into a period after elections but before the November meeting. Some dates that might work are November 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> or November 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Rushford ask President Becki to check his calendar after the meeting and let him know what date works best. It could also be Saturday morning or afternoon.

President Becki said before Council went into the official agenda tonight, he was requesting council's permission to add an item number to the end of the agenda. He asked for a motion to add an item #11 which would deal with Negotiations. A motion was made by Councilwoman Gabriel and seconded by Councilwoman Tuñón for the addition to the Agenda. All Aye, Motion Carried.

## Agenda

### **1. Forms and Surfaces Property**

President Becki informed everyone that the borough was successful on its bid for the purchase of 30 Pine Street which would be the new home of the Borough office, police, public works, and possible rental space. He added that the borough is engaging with Piper Sander to review and assist with putting together a bond issue sale for this purchase and the terms for that bond issue. He added that the borough will also need to perform an Environmental Study of the building and land prior to any final sale. Originally, he said it was to be a Phase I Study, but it appeared that this was not necessary now as enough historical information was known and that would have turned up in the Phase I Study, which would then indicate the need for the more detailed Phase II Study. It would be somewhat of a waste of cost to have the Phase I undertaken, given the knowledge already know that would come out of that report and the borough needs the study performed to determine if there are any hazardous materials in the soil, etc.

President Becki stated that Council needs to make three motions: the first one is to ratify the agreed upon sale price of \$2,297,000.00; a motion to enter into an Engagement Letter with Piper Sandler regarding the bond issuance; and a motion to authorize a Phase II Environmental Study which has a cost range of between \$35,000.00 and \$50,000.00

Councilwoman Gabriel made a motion to ratify the sales price of \$2,287,000.00 for the property at 30 Pine Street, which was seconded by Councilwoman Schaefer. All Aye, Motion Carried.

Councilman Trader made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Tuñón to enter into the Engagement Letter for Underwriter services with Piper Sandler for assistance on the Bond Issue. All Aye, Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Councilwoman McElhaney to authorize the Manager to pursue the Phase II Environmental Study which was seconded by Councilwoman Gabriel. All Aye, Motion Carried. President Becki stated that with the adoption of the Reimbursement Resolution in September, the Borough had the ability to recoup these costs by inclusion in the bond issuance.

Manager Ramage added that if this all went forward, the Borough would selling the property on Clark Street where the public works garage and would also be able to demolish the three-garage storage area on Butler Street and Winschel Alley so that they could extend the size of the current public parking lot at that location.

### **2. U. S. Army Corp. of Engineers' Letter about West Little Pine Creek Flood Protection Project**

President Becki reported that as per the Manager's request, the Corps of Engineers (Pittsburgh District) had come out and done an inspection on the silt catching basin in the West Little Pine Creek Flood Control project. She had requested assistance with restoration after the heavy rain events of early April which damaged the basin and completely filled it back in after it had just been cleaned out. The Army Corps sent a letter that they have agreed that damage was done and they would include the restoration in their upcoming project season. They will issuing a contract for this repair work on the retention pond.

### **3. Interim Greeley Avenue Bridge Inspection Project**

President Becki said everyone had received the recent 2024 Interim Bridge Inspection on the Greeley Avenue Bridge. He stated that the report documented that nothing has changed since the last inspection of items that need minor repairs. He added that the minor repairs would be completed by the Etna Public Works Department. A motion was made by Councilwoman Gabriel and seconded by Councilwoman Schaefer that the report be received and filed. All aye, Motion Carried.



#### **4. Trans Associates One-Way Study**

President Becki reminded everyone that in August, Council had received the One Way Study report that covers Freeport Street from Buttler street to the 62<sup>nd</sup> Street Bridge., In this report it covered the number of cars that traveled the road, the width of the road, the turning radius, and trailers over 40 feet would be limited. It also indicated that Bridge Street would gain more parking spaces. He added that this report had been forwarded to PENNDOT by Manager Ramage, who stated it was now being reviewed by PENNDOT. Duquesne Light Company was still working on the work order to investigate the possibility of removing telephone poles on the northern side of the street, so the sidewalk can be improved. Manager Ramage added that the developers of 51 Bridge Street were beginning the sidewalk replacement, which would complicate the pole removal. He also added that once the borough hears back from PennDOT the next steps will be having meetings with residents and business to hear their concerns. PennDOT will also be invited to this meeting. Some of the findings in the report included were to implement a counterclockwise alternative converting Bridge Street to one-way northwest bound and Freeport Street to one-way eastbound. Timing is critical on this project since the sidewalks are already being demoed and the new sidewalk installed.

#### **5. Revised Open Public Comment Policy**

President Becki said last month council had received the Draft Public Comment Policy and based on input from that meeting, some changes were made. He said the new Draft was now before Council for adoption. He stated that in the revised version, the changes dealt with how long the comments period would be, who can speak which included taxpayers and businesses owners of Etna Borough and the pronouns were changed on page 2 (bullet 3 & 4). He asked for additional comments and there were none proposed. A motion was made by Councilwoman Schaefer and seconded by Councilwoman Tuñón to adopt the Revised Public Comment Policy. All Aye; Motion Carried.

#### **6. Zoning Map Correction**

President Becki said someone recently contacted the Zoning Officer, Bob Snyder regarding the Zoning Map and the color designation for Ann Street. This map, he stated was here hanging in the back of the council room and shown on the borough's website. Unfortunately, it was discovered that the Ann Street area, based on the color coded Zoning Map, showed that area designated as Central Business District. He added that this is primarily a residential neighborhood, with only Hampton Shaler Water Authority at the dead end of the street (in Shaler Township). Manager Ramage had provided a MEMO to all Council stating that the Central Business District was located in the main section of down town, and included a specific overlay in the zoning regulations. She and Zoning Officer Snyder felt that this was a clerical error done by the consultant when the Ordinance and Map were drawn up and adopted. The Manager had reached out to the consultant, who had confirmed that there appeared to be a "coloring area" mistake on the Ann Street area, which should have been a lighter orange colorization which was for an R-2 District. The area adjacent to this was yellow in color, and they believed that yellow had accidentally been extended underneath the lighter orange, hence the darker orange area, which would indicate "Central Business District". Manager Ramage stated she reached out to the borough's Solicitor for the procedure needed to correct this who provided all the necessary information and steps that would need, including the Map Amendment, public hearing, etc. She also stated that she informed Zoning Officer Snyder that we would have to allow any requests for permissible uses in the CC District (Central Commercial) until the map was corrected and amendment adopted making this area what the original intention was, which was R2 (Residential 2). She added that we would also have to inform both Sharpsburg and Millvale Boroughs, as we specifically share a Zoning Map with them.

Solicitor Rushford added that there will need to be 2 public meetings, and 2 notices publicized, prior to the zoning map changing. The process would be the council direction of the meeting, a county planning review and comment, public hearing at the county level, a planning commission public hearing, the Borough advertising the public hearing, ordinance change, and post procedures. This process is time consuming, and he is going to develop an ordinance for review.

#### **7. Trick or Treat**

President Becki announced that official Trick or Treating time for the Borough of Etna is October 31, 2024, from 6 – 8 p.m.

#### **8. Locust Street Development**

President Becki said the developer of the Locust Street lots, the City of Bridges Land Trust, have agreed to reduce the number of units to be built from 4 to 3 townhouses instead of requesting a Variance from the Zoning Hearing Board on a minimum lot size. A Public Meeting is scheduled with the County on



October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. in the Municipal offices regarding this project. The Planning Commission also has a meeting scheduled for October 24<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. that same evening, to go over what was discussed at the county meeting earlier in the day and the information and their recommendation will come to the council meeting in November 19<sup>th</sup> for Council's approval. Zoning Officer Snyder will be attending these two meetings and will be able to provide details on these properties.

#### **9. Teamsters Letter**

President Becki said that Council had received a letter from the teamsters about the police joining the Teamsters Union. All five of the borough police officers signed cards and wish want to be represented by the teamsters. No questions came from council regarding this notice. Council would like to ask for a holding period so they can talk to an Attorney from PELRAS on what legal obligations are needed to follow. Once received, President Becki stated, the council will readdress at a future meeting.

#### **10. Allegheny County Borough Association**

President Becki said the Annual meeting of Allegheny County Borough Association is being held at Holy Trinity Center (Event Canter) on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The borough will cover the cost for council members to attend at \$60.00 but if anyone wished to bring their spouse or partner, they will be required to cover that cost. Please let Mary Beth borough know if you are attending by November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024. President Becki stated that on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving local police departments collect unwrapped gifts for children and the police drive these present to Children's Hospital and toys will be collected at this dinner. He also stated this initiative was started by the police officers from Aspinwall, & Blawnox Boroughs.

Manager Ramage said that in the past the borough has given permission for Chief Rodman to have his daughter Bethany to ride in the car with him to deliver the toys.

#### **11. Executive Session**

President Becki said the Executive session, as per Borough Code, is not open to the public, and can be held for specific reasons outside of the public meeting. One of those permissible items to be discussed is negotiations and the Borough was currently negotiating at this time. He asked for a motion for the Executive Session which was held earlier this evening to confirm the negotiation discussions. A motion was made by Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney and seconded by Councilwoman Gabriel as per the President's request. All Aye, Motion Carried.

#### **Manager Report:**

Manager Ramage provided her monthly report which included: Code / Zoning Updates, Freeport St./PENNDOT/One Way Study, City of Bridges Land Trust/Locust Street Lots, TriCog Land Bank, Age Friendly Grant, Council of Governments, Fraud/Check Washing, Bridge Street One Way/Duquesne Light Poles, CRS/Flood Warning System Updates, Administrative Committee, Allegheny County Clean Air Fund, Reconnecting Communities/Federal Grant, Light the Night, Grant Reports, Little Pine Creek Connector Trail Grant, Consent Order Requirements/MS4 Requirements, Heart and Soul, and ARF. She added that CONNECT had reached out about a possible grant opportunity for Energy Efficiency upgrades at municipal facilities, which had a cap of \$50,000.00. She added that she had met with him to discuss the possibility of upgrades to the garage doors at the new municipal facility on Pine Street and added they were working to include this in the larger CONNECT grant.

President Becki asked the Manager about the vacant store front ordinance and if that was still limited to citing once per year. Manager Ramage replied yes, the owner can only be cited once annually. President Becki asked can the borough look into making it more frequently. Manager Ramage said in some cases it has taken at least 11 months to go before the Magistrate with continuance requests, etc. so she wasn't sure that it would matter if it could be cited more frequently. She stated that the case that was just finalized and the owner was found guilty, it took eleven months for that decision to come down. The President reiterated that he wanted to see this resolved sooner and the Manager replied that she would ask the Code Officer to cite the property owner once more before the end of this year.

President Becki informed Council that Councilwoman Semler had informed him of her resignation from her three-year term from Human Relations Commission (HRC). He added that The HRC can hold up to five members. Ms. Semler asked if anyone was interested in filling the position or if the borough could wait and fill it later. Manager Ramage said that we could advertise the open position on social media.

President Becki said it is time of the year to schedule a budget meeting for council and he proposed some possible dates which were October 15 or November 19 at 4:30 p.m. Manager Ramage reminded the



Chairman that the monthly financial reports can only be finalized after the last day of the month and normally in the past, Council waited until the October 31, report was finished which would take a few days after that date.

President Becki set Wednesday November 13 at 6:30 p.m. and added that Council would need to get public works and the police wish list for next year. He said that would require changing the Agenda meeting to Thursday the 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Tuñón said just like last month he would like to congratulate and thank everyone for all the work that you're all doing on the 30 Pine Street acquisition as this was s innovative and smart for the borough's future.

### **Council/Committee Members Reports**

Councilman Iannuzzi had nothing to report.

Councilwoman Schaefer had nothing to report.

Councilwoman Tuñón said Heart and Soul would be putting another question out to the community through the newsletter and would be conducting interviews at the Senior Center where they would supplying lunch from Cop Out Pierogis. She reminded everyone if they had not filled out their card to please do so and place it in one of the little mailboxes in the community. She also reported that the Etna Community Organization received a \$500,000 dollar grant for the Etna Center for Community.

Councilwoman Gabriel said the Garden of Etna Haunted Garden was this coming weekend on Saturday and Sunday and there will be crafts and pumpkins at the event. She added that the Fall workday is scheduled for November 9<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. and informed everyone that the Garden of Etna had received a grant from Grow Pittsburgh to replace some of the raised garden beds which will be replaced that day and any help would be greatly appreciated. She also reminded everyone to follow Heart and Soul on Facebook and Instagram.

Councilman Trader had a question for Manager Ramage about why the Etna Senior Center Reports were so late and asked why they are usually 2 weeks behind. He did not understand why the Director was consistently late in reporting. The Manager said she was off for quite a while, but that she would reach out and request that they be submitted in a timelier manner. He also questioned what was going on with the house on Spang Way where the garbage truck had driven through the building. Manager Ramage stated that as previously reported, the owner was suing both the Garbage Company and his own insurance company due to the amounts of the payouts from both companies. She said the Magistrate had granted Continuances for this reason and she could not push it any further along. The owner wished to rebuild and did not feel they were being provided with sufficient funds to do this.

Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaneY thanked everyone for all their work on the agenda items and all the items being worked on. She also thanked Public Works Director Balistrieri, for the great maintenance at the Park for deck hockey and the new lock box for those keys. She added that the recent Community Care Fair went well and that they hoped to continue making this a yearly event. She added that she didn't feel there was enough interest from the public on this event, but that they would continue to promote it as there was wonderful information for those that did attend, including information on community and mental health resources.

Councilwoman Semler wanted to add that she had recently renewed her Flood Insurance and even though it was a bit of a depressing thing to do but, on the renewal, she received a \$266 discount, thanks to the Community Rating System discount. She thanked the Manager for all the work on that program.

### **Public Comment**

Karen Tomaszewski from Locust Street said the Etna Neighborhood Association would like to ask the council to help judge the annual Halloween House decorating contest. They had hoped Council members from each Ward could judge in their Ward. Councilwoman Gabriel and Councilwoman Tuñón said they would be happy to do so for Ward 1.

Councilwoman Semler said she would do Ward 3 perhaps with President Becki.

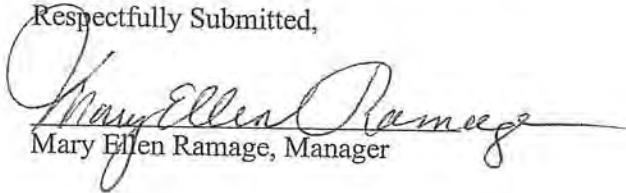
Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney said she would do judging for Ward 2 along with Councilman Trader.

Catherine Titus, President of the Etna Neighborhood Association thanked Council for volunteering to take over the judging and added that there will be four winners from each ward.

With no further Public Comment, a motion to adjourn the October 2024 regular session was made by Councilwoman Tuñón and seconded by Councilwoman Rothmeyer-McElhaney. All Aye, Motion carried.

Regular Session adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Mary Ellen Ramage, Manager

Date: 