

MINUTES OF THE BIRDSBORO BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING  
DECEMBER 4, 2017 7:00 P.M. – BOROUGH HALL

**Council Members Present:** Joseph Peterson, Mayor  
Cindy McGee, Vice President  
Richard Happel, Member  
Neil McCauley, Member  
David Blank, President  
Robert Myers, Member  
Peter Uhniat, Member

**Staff & Professionals:** Terry Weiler, Solicitor  
Theodore Roth, Chief of Police

**Call to Order:** President Blank called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a moment of silence.

**Appointment of Council Member**

Three candidates for the open Council seat with term expiring December 31, 2018 were present. The candidates were George Walker, Jeffrey Kauffman and Austin Peterson.

Council members were given the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates.

**George Walker**

**Councilman Uhniat:** What is your vision for the Borough? **Mr. Walker:** I applied because of the dysfunction with Council and would like to serve the community.

**Councilman McCauley:** Have you had a chance to look at the Borough finances? **Mr. Walker:** No.

**Vice President McGee:** What are the most critical issues in the Borough and how would you resolve the trash situation and how would you stay in touch with the public. Have you volunteered recently?

**Mr. Walker:** I was not in favor of the one dump for trash and the ice sculptures were too expensive and a lot of residents were not in favor of them. I would keep in touch with the public just by talking to them at the market, gas station, etc. I have not volunteered in the past year.

**Councilman Myers:** Why would you be the best person for the Council seat? **Mr. Walker:** I like to listen to residents' viewpoints and I would listen to the residents prior to voting on matters.

**Councilman Myers:** Describe what you would like to see the Borough look like in 5-10 years? **Mr. Walker:** I would like to see a vibrant downtown, like Phoenixville, with restaurants and shops.

**Councilman Myers:** What is the principal function of a Council member? **Mr. Walker:** Adopt ordinances, run the Police Department, settling matters of the Borough.

**Jeffrey Kauffman**

**Councilman Myers –** What is the role of a Council member? **Mr. Kauffman:** To represent the interests of the residents by feedback at meetings and discussion with the residents. **Councilman Myers:** What can Birdsboro become in 5-10 years? **Mr. Kauffman:** Birdsboro Borough should be a product of residents' needs and less rentals and Furnace Street needs shaping up. **Councilman Myers –** Why are you the best person to fill the vacancy? **Mr. Kauffman:** I have 40+ years banking experience, I have been a long time resident and have had a lot of volunteer efforts, i.e. School Board, Rotary Club, Boy Scouts and other organizations and I am community minded.

**Vice President McGee:** Would you resign from the Birdsboro Municipal Authority? **Mr. Kauffman:** No, I could be a liaison between the two groups. **Vice President McGee:** How would you rejuvenate Main Street? **Mr. Kauffman:** Turn apartments back into commercial properties and look at grants and financial resources. **Vice President McGee:** Do you see Birdsboro Tomorrow as a conflict of interest? **Mr. Kauffman:** No, Birdsboro Tomorrow is just opinions.

**Councilman McCauley:** Have you looked at the Borough finances? **Mr. Kauffman:** I feel the Borough finances need to be improved and tightened up, a lot of items are being reacted to instead of being proactive and a Capital Reserve should be established.

**Councilman Uhniat:** What marketing ideas would have for the Borough? **Mr. Kauffman:** I would like to improve Furnace Street and see what the public would like to see happen with Birdsboro businesses and look into offering business incentives, i.e., tax incentives, LERTA, offer incentives on water and sewer rates for a couple years.

#### Austin Peterson

Mayor Peterson read a letter disclosing his relation to candidate Austin Peterson who then read an introductory letter covering his experience.

**Councilman Myers:** What is your vision for Birdsboro Borough? **Mr. Peterson:** Would like to see Furnace Street improved, with shops and noted the tax revenues from Birdsboro Power may help with such financing for bringing in businesses and start a marketing campaign. **Councilman Myers:** What do you see as the role of a Council member? **Mr. Peterson:** To make sure that decisions made will benefit the community. **Councilman Myers:** What motivated you to apply? **Mr. Peterson:** Would like to see the momentum continue, such as addressing blighted buildings and encourage business and foster a sense of community.

**Councilman Happel:** Will the Maple Springs loan with the Birdsboro Municipal Authority be a conflict of interest? **Mr. Peterson:** Maple Springs is positioned to pay off the loan and does not cause a conflict.

**Vice President McGee:** With your experience in contract negotiations, grievances and arbitrations, what groups do you see being brought together? **Mr. Peterson:** There could be more cohesion with the school board with the new school board members and there is already a good sense of community in Birdsboro.

**Councilman McCauley:** Have you looked at the Borough finances? **Mr. Peterson:** I do not have an in depth understanding of the Borough finances but the no tax increase is a benefit to the community.

#### Public Comment on Agenda Items

Steve Lusky, 211 Caravan Drive, said he could not ask for a better choice of Council seat replacement as Austin Peterson as he has community experience and knowledge.

Susy Lander, Borough resident, feels that Austin Peterson will bring a fresh viewpoint to Council.

Don Wary, 511 Jefferson Street, asked each candidate how many Council meetings they have attended in the past six (6) months. Mr. Walker stated he attended quite a few since April, Mr. Kauffman stated he has attended regularly for two years and Mr. Peterson stated he has attended two or three meetings.

Councilman McCauley nominated Mr. Kauffman to fill the open Council seat and President Blank called for a roll call vote:

Councilman Uhniat – no	Councilman McCauley – yes
Vice President McGee – no	Councilman Myers – yes
President Blank – no	Councilman Happel – yes

Motion failed with a 4-3 vote with Mayor Peterson breaking the tie with a ‘no’ vote.

Vice President McGee nominated Mr. Peterson to fill the open Council seat and President Blank called for a roll call vote:

Councilman Uhniat – yes	Councilman McCauley – yes
Vice President McGee – yes	Councilman Myers – yes
President Blank – yes	Councilman Happel – yes

Motion carried 6-0.

Mayor Peterson then swore in Mr. Peterson.

### **Minutes – November 20, 2017**

A **motion** was made by Councilman Uhniat and seconded by Councilman McCauley to approve the November 20, 2017 Budget and Council Meeting minutes. Motion carried 6-0.

### **Bills List**

A **motion** was made by Councilman McCauley and seconded by Councilman Uhniat to approve the Bills List dated December 4, 2017 and checks for ratification dated November, 21 2017 through December 3, 2017. Motion carried 6-0.

### **Manager’s Report**

#### **2018 Council Meeting Schedule**

A **motion** was made by Councilman McCauley and seconded by Councilman Uhniat to set the 2018 Council Meeting Schedule as follows and authorize advertising of such. Motion carried 6-0.

*Borough Council meetings will be held the first and third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. except for the months of June, July and August where there will be one meeting a month which will be held on the third Monday. Meetings will be held at 7:00 p.m. Borough Council Budget meetings will be held the first and third Monday for the months of September, October and November. Meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m.*

2018 Observed Holidays

A **motion** was made by Councilman McCauley and seconded by Councilman Uhniat to approve the 2018 Observed Holidays for Borough Hall as follows. Motion carried 6-0.

New Year's Day- Monday, January 1, 2018  
Good Friday- Friday March 30, 2018  
Memorial Day – Monday May 28, 2018  
Independence Day – Wednesday July 4, 2018  
Labor Day – Monday September 3, 2018  
Thanksgiving Day – Thursday November 22, 2018  
Day after Thanksgiving – Friday November 23, 2018  
Christmas Eve – Monday December 24, 2018  
Christmas Day – Tuesday December 25, 2018  
New Year's Eve – Monday December 31, 2018 (1/2 day)

Engineer's Report

Engineer Boyer was not present.

Emergency Management

N/A

Fire Department

N/A

Mayor/Police Reports

Chief Roth reported that on December 2, 2017 Officer Kasopsky found an unresponsive male in the 800 block of Colonial Drive and Southern Berks EMS administered medical treatment.

Solicitor's Report

Fire Escrow Law Ordinance

A **motion** was made by Councilman Happel and seconded by Councilman McCauley to approve Ordinance No. 471, Fire Escrow Law Ordinance which provides protection to the Borough for costs of fire incidents. Motion carried 7-0

Solicitor Weiler noted the budget is to be passed at the December 18 meeting and the tax ordinance is to be passed at the January meeting.

Solicitor Weiler noted that they can discuss the police contract at the next meeting.

Council Reports

**Councilman Uhniat** noted that Christmas in Birdsboro is on PA Americana.

**Councilman McCauley** noted that the next Pioneer Landfill Crossing meeting is December 6 at 5:30 p.m. at the landfill.

**Councilman Happel** encouraged support for radar guns is relayed to the Senators.

**Vice President McGee** noted that there is full vendor participation for Christmas in Birdsboro and they are working on the vendor and volunteer schedules also noted was that Engineer Boyer met with Parks and Recreation regarding the Rustic Park pavilions.

**President Blank** noted that a good job was done with the Christmas lights. President Blank asked for a motion to approve a \$250.00 donation to Berks County Solid Waste Authority for the hazardous waste, shredding and additional programs.

A **motion** was made by Councilman McCauley and seconded by Councilman Uhniat to approve a \$250.00 donation to Berks County Solid Waste Authority. Motion carried 7-0.

**Mayor Peterson** noted there is no business for the Planning Commission to discuss in December.

**Public Comment**

No public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie L. Frisco  
Administrative Assistant