

AVALON BOROUGH  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
January 15, 2013

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm by Edward Repp with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Bernstein, Cortese, Donnelly, Klicker, Lloyd, Narcisi, Repp. Also present Solicitor Elizabeth Sattler, Borough Manager Harry Dilmore, Police Chief Kokoski and Makatura. Absent: Dixon, Vetterly.

Solicitor reported no executive session was held this evening.

Klicker Moved:

“To accept the minutes of the December 18, 2012, Avalon Borough Council Meeting and the reconvened “clean-up” meeting of December 27, 2012.”

Donnelly 2<sup>nd</sup>

CARRIED

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Letter from Allegheny County Boroughs Association annual dinner. Those attending, please let the administrative office know before the deadline Friday.
- Letter from Synergy Capital Inc. on possible purchases of vacant properties to purchase, put on the tax roles and then sell. Recommend Property and Finance Committees look into this opportunity and we meet with them.
- Letter from PA Department Labor and Industry on snow removal on sidewalks in the Borough.
- Letter from Allegheny League of Municipalities Convention at Seven Springs in April. Councilperson Donnelly to discuss.

VISITORS:

Jackie Yurkovich  
649 Grandview Ave.

The city steps were closed between Norwood and Birmingham. No problem walking the hill. However, the sidewalks along this route are covered with ice and snow and are in disrepair and unsafe. What is the fine for not shoveling your sidewalk.

Dilmore stated it could go as high as \$300 if it gets to the Magistrate, our fine is \$50. The Magistrate reserves the amount over \$50 for recurring offenses. Meeting the police to discuss the latest snowfall, lack of compliance and establishing new procedures on issuing citations. Further discussion on the borough crew doing snow removal and billing those owners. Yurkovich questioning Quigley property and lack of compliance on snow and sidewalk repair. Dilmore suggesting a sidewalk project this year. Yurkovich questioned the responsibility of those owners that have abandon properties but are still near by. Further discussion and comments from Repp, Donnelly regarding owners not being responsible and ignoring citations as well.

Haslett commented on the police knowing the their responsibilities going forward and owners have been warned that citations will be forthcoming.

Michael Bodycombe  
605 Ohio River Blvd.

Question regarding the status of 719 Ohio River Blvd/Locust and it's demolition. Dilmore commented that we are awaiting word from the County and it is on the list for demolition. County (DCED) has not confirmed funding.

One or two houses up from 719 Ohio River Blvd. has had 20 bags of for 2 months. Not sure of the address.

Any hearing date set at 607 Ohio River Blvd. (absentee landlord and abandon dog). Building inspector recited the owner after your second complaint was filed. We will contact you when the date is set for your to give testimony as well.

Rob Powell  
814 Florence Avenue

Addressing Ohio River Blvd and the tree at Locust Ave. Dilmore stated the tree was disposed of Monday.

Bev Meyers  
234 Locust Avenue

Questioned whether the Borough had a garbage ordinance. 607 Florence Avenue – 6 bags out from Thursday to Sunday. Contacted the County Health Department and they want to know what is stated in the borough ordinance. Additional information given to the County - two homes on Taylor, one on Florence – to follow-up. Ordinance states the garbage can go out 24 hours before pick-up and must be in containers, not bagged. Residents should be cited if not in compliance.

Also, the alley behind 610 California, the bricks are falling off the top of the building and a rusty steel door. Mr. Snead has been contacted.

The wall behind 741 Florence Avenue that was built without a building permit. Dilmore stated the building inspector was contacted to address the problem.

Thank you to the Chief for correcting the parking problems at the elementary school.

Robert Meyers  
312 S. Birmingham Avenue

Thank you for cleaning up the property at 600 California Avenue.

Beth Mosley  
635 Center Avenue

Update on Avalon NOW. Website [www.avalonnow.org](http://www.avalonnow.org), and Facebook group Avalon Now, over 50 members to date. Next meeting is January 30, 2013, 7:00 pm here in council chambers to discuss possibility of volunteers addressing the snow removal and issues of today, etc. and the spring clean up event. Lloyd commented on the new website and the new members and their enthusiasm for the cause.

Wendy Blake  
523 Eugene Avenue

I pay taxes to live in this borough, since 1994. However, I have noticed that several homes and buildings are going by the wayside in all aspects, abandon vehicles, construction type material piled at homes, etc. Are there any ordinances for property maintenance, garbage, etc. Donnelly questioned the knowledge of Dumpster Day. Ms. Blake stated that she lives here and never knows when Dumpster Day is held because she does not read the Citizen, doesn't get a paper, but, as a taxpayer and homeowner, I would think that someone should drop something off in her mailbox telling her when Dumpster Day is scheduled. Dilmore and Donnelly stated that a flyer is sent with your tax bill and it is posted on the website. People need to be told they cannot use their property as a dumping site when I have worked hard to update my property.

Mr. Bodycombe added that there is a property on Orchard that has had ladders up on this house for years, tarps on the roof, 607 or 609 Orchard

Narcisi moved:

“To accept the recommendation of the Safety Committee and hire Chris Brown as a full-time police officer with the Avalon Police Department.”

CARRIED

Council President Repp asked Mayor Haslett to swear in the new officer:

“I, Christopher Brown, do hereby solemnly swear to support The Constitution of the United States and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and I will perform the duties of a police officer with fidelity, so help me God.”

Congratulations and photo opportunities followed.

MAYOR:

Additional comments regarding the steps on Birmingham and their state of disrepair. People still using them, we need signs. Dilmore stated that residents tear down signs, walls, fencing. Haslett suggested taking the lower section down, keeping the upper section as need for residents. Further discussion on the liability of removing a portion of the steps and keeping people from using them and the difficulty in getting equipment in to remove them. Donnelly asked it was possible to put in a path, go green. Haslett admitted to using them as well. Repp recommends going back to the Safety Committee and looking into removing them.

Addressed the snow removal again, reinforcing issue citations. Cortese also questioned whether we would site them every time or just once. Questioned the cost of going to court of \$50 fine, and an officer is paid \$43.75 to attend.

Dilmore stated it's not a money making thing, it's principal. Repp also stated it is not permitted to place chairs in the street to save your parking space. Solicitor Sattler also stated you can have your DPW do the sidewalks and bill the residents, nonpayment results in a lien and threat of sheriff sale. Lloyd also noted that the businesses on 65 were plowing their lots on to sidewalks. This was also addressed.

Avalon Fire Department board members, officers, administrative officers were sworn in Monday.

**MANAGER/SECRETARY:**

- Attended the Miller unemployment compensation hearing. Personnel issue discussed with council and solicitor.
- 2012 Audit preparation.

**SOLICITOR:**

The borough has settled Kersting vs. the Borough of Avalon.

**ENGINEER:**

Auto Zone has submitted the final plan for the sanitary and storm sewer. It has been improved. Nice improvement to the sewers in that area. Required to supply us with shop drawings for our review. Once approved we will send someone out to inspect installation, all at the cost of Auto Zone.

**FINANCE:**

Lloyd moved:

“To accept the Treasurer’s Report for the month of January 2013, as submitted.”

Donnelly 2<sup>nd</sup>

CARRIED

“To accept the Finance Report for the month of January 2013, as submitted.”

Donnelly 2<sup>nd</sup>

CARRIED

“To accept the Tax Collector’s Report for the month of December 2012 as submitted.”

Cortese 2<sup>nd</sup>

CARRIED

“To pay the List of Bills in the amount of \$68,411.33 as submitted for the month of January.”

Cortese 2<sup>nd</sup>

CARRIED

“To pass Resolution #1085, authorizing a tax anticipation note with Fidelity Bank in the amount of \$300,000.00.”

Donnelly 2<sup>nd</sup>

CARRIED

“To have the Secretary read the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of Ordinance #1344, an ordinance levying an Ad Valorem real estate tax and fixing the tax rate and exact millage for the fiscal year 2013.”

Donnelly 2<sup>nd</sup>

Repp asked for clarification of rates. Dilmore stated the existing is 9.01 and the new one will be 6.830, resulting in about a 30% change. Assessed values went from \$135,000 to \$208,000. The formula brings us to 6.830 mils.

Lloyd explained that if your assessment increased 30% you can expect to see a tax increase. If it went over 32%, you can expect a 2% increase. If below 30%, then you will see a decrease.

CARRIED

“To accept the 2011 lien list as prepared by Jordan Tax Service.”

Donnelly 2<sup>nd</sup>

Dilmore stated the outstanding face value is \$85,601.39.

CARRIED

PUBLIC SAFETY :

Narcisi moved:

“To grant a handicap parking space in the vicinity of 619 Parkview Avenue, residents have met all requirements.”

Lloyd 2<sup>nd</sup>

CARRIED

STREETS: No Report

Cortese questioned who levies the fine for sidewalks in disrepair. Dilmore stated the code officer. Clarification on the process if the fine is not paid. Dilmore stated appeals go to Judge Gallo.

PROPERTY: No Report

HEALTH & SANITATION:

No direct report on Health & Sanitation.

Klicker moved:

“To authorize the Secretary to proceed with paperwork associated with refinancing the bond issues.”

Donnelly 2<sup>nd</sup>

Klicker commented that we are in a unique situation where both bonds are callable at the same time. A plan has been put together with the interest rates being at good place for refinancing the bonds into new 5 year callable notes, we will realize a substantial savings.

Cortese abstained

## CARRIED

Klicker moved:

“To use the monies from the 2011 lien property list towards a fire truck fund.”

Lloyd 2<sup>nd</sup>

Klicker clarified his reasoning behind this motion as the need for continued maintenance on the fire trucks and budgetary constraints that we experience year to year, he sees the lien list is a potential source of funding that is not currently allocated into a budget line item. We do not plan on receiving this money, it is turned over for liens, so as the money comes in we could turn it over to a truck fund. The truck fund has been discussed many times, it allows us to save money without it actually affecting our general fund resources.

Mixed reviews. Donnelly agreed. Cortese disagreed that this is actually a loss from the previous year. Klicker reiterated that we budget to collect between 92-94% of our real estate tax. And we traditionally collect at that rate. There is no loss to a budget line item. This amount would be above and beyond that rate. The maintenance on the trucks is necessary and we are not taking from one budget line to pay another. This will help fund our goal of purchasing a new truck and not take from other budget line items to pay for truck maintenance. This will be a maintenance fund, not a new truck fund.

Dilmore added that it would be a viable way to put money aside for maintenance purposes. This allows us to not use the money saved during the year through providing Ben Avon Heights service. It is worth a try, not a windfall, comes in slowly, has merit and should have your approval.

## CARRIED

CORP/PLANNING: No Report.

### INTER-BOROUGH:

Quaker Valley COG reorganization meeting will be held at 7:30 pm., Wednesday, January 16, 2013, here in Council Chambers. All are welcome to attend.

Regarding the Borough steps. Clarify with Rosensteel that it is Borough property. By going green, I'm suggesting possibly a park, instead of steps, create walking atmosphere. Gravel walkways, benches, plant trees and shrubs. There is RAD money available through the COG.

Rosensteel suggested meeting with Dilmore to view the site and see what could be done. Dilmore received information from the state regarding going "green" and funding available. The problem is the steepness of the site. The Borough only owns the right of way (50ft). We had looked at doing something like that before but the grade requires a large serpentine for the path and would involve more than the right of way. Possible donation of property of neighboring properties might be needed, ie Haslett's property. Dilmore to further discuss with Donnelly.

ALOM banquet reorganization meeting on Saturday, February 2, 2013. If you would like to attend, please let Mr. Dilmore know by Friday.

PARKS & RECREATION: No Report.

LIBRARY:

No meeting last month.

Friends of the Library also did not meet.

Marshall Elevator bought out by Otis. The new contract will be coming soon. Prices will remain the same.

4<sup>th</sup> OF JULY:

Work to start soon for the planning process. If you would like to help in any way, contact one of the Klickers.

Cortese moved:

“To Adjourn at 8:30 pm.”

Narcisi 2<sup>nd</sup>

CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Harry W. Dilmore  
Secretary