

Borough of Palmyra
Special Meeting Minutes
Thursday June 29th, 2017

The Special Meeting of the Borough of Palmyra was called to order by Mayor Michelle Arnold at 7:00 pm. at the Fire House on W. Broad Street.

At the call of the roll present were; Mayor Michelle Arnold, Mr. Frank Cosky, Mrs. Gina Tait, Mr. Lewis Yetter

Absent: President Timothy Howard, Mrs. Bernadette Russell, Ms. Mindie Weiner

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Public Notice of this meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act has been given by the Municipal Clerk in the following manner:

- A. Posting written notice on the official bulletin board at the Palmyra Borough Hall on June 22nd, 2017.
- B. Mailing written notice to the Burlington County Times, and the Courier Post Newspaper on June 22nd, 2017.
- C. Notice to All Council Members.

Pledge of Allegiance followed by presentation by Chief Rick Dreby:

Chief Dreby explained the need for the new ladder truck, why it has to be replaced and why it is a special ordered item. Our current ladder truck is 25 years old and trucks are recommended to be replaced every 20 years by the Insurance Underwriters. Our current ladder truck has required approximately \$22,000.00 in repairs in the last three years and has become unreliable. Chief Dreby explained the restrictions of our fire house, as it used to be a supermarket thus the door openings to the house are only 10 feet 2 inches. Chief Dreby indicated the Palmyra Fire Department averages 300 plus calls a year, and has an active roster of 30 volunteer firefighters. Chief Dreby also presented the PowerPoint presentation to all in attendance and made it available to anyone wishing to take copies with them, a copy of the presentation is also attached to these minutes.

Council Comments

Mrs. Tait indicated she wanted to get as much information as possible to the residents so they would be informed about the potential purchase of the ladder truck.

Mr. Yetter stated being a mechanic most of his life he understands how thing can break down and how useful equipment is which you cannot rely on. Mr. Yetter indicated he is in favor of purchasing the ladder truck.

Mr. Cosky stated he is not in favor of the referendum and can't see not supporting the fire department. We should be giving the department the necessary equipment they need to do their job efficiently and effectively.

Public Comments

Please state your name and address for the record. Council will give all comments appropriate consideration. Each citizen will be allotted up to five (5) minutes to speak, in order to allow everyone an opportunity to ask questions and express their opinions or concerns

Tom McElwee – Columbia Avenue – Mr. McElwee apologized to the Fire Department for bring up the idea of a referendum. Mr. McElwee stated there are 10 people here tonight which are not affiliated with the Fire department gathering information about the purchase of the ladder truck. Where are the council people who wanted to have this town meeting? Do other towns put away money for these types of expenditures? Chief Dreby indicated he did not know if other towns put away money however indicated he knew Riverton Borough did not. Mayor Arnold indicated we are being fiscally responsible and planning for future replacements.

Jean Butler – Arch Street – Mrs. Butler asked was the referendum going to be placed on the ballot in November. Mayor Arnold indicated that was still to be decided. Mrs. Butler asked if the \$27.66 per year for 15 years and why did the department pick the pierce truck, was it because it had the lowest price. Mrs. Butler also inquired if it was normal to spend 22,000.00 for repairs of the ladder truck over that period of time. Mrs. Tait indicated yes the \$ 27.66 per household was per year over fifteen years. Chief Dreby stated the Pierce Truck was chosen because the department is confident that the truck will work for our needs and will fit into our building. We have experience with this company as we have purchased a truck from them in the past. Chief Dreby also indicated not it is not normal to spend that kind of money repairing a vehicle. Mrs., Butler asked if there was anything thing else residents or the Fire department could do to help defray the cost of the truck, like fundraisers. Chief Dreby stated the Borough of Palmyra supports the Fire department and maintains the equipment. The Fire Company maintains and owners the building the trucks are stored in, the fundraising the Fire Company does helps maintain the building.

Ruth Yetter – Garfield Street – Mrs. Yetter inquired if the current ladder truck sellable, and if and when sold does the money from the sale of this truck got back to the fire company? Chief Dreby indicated the truck is sellable and thinks it could sell for maybe 50 to 60 thousand, he also indicated if and when sold the money would got to the Borough of Palmyra general account, not the Fire Company. Mrs. Yetter indicated she did not see a reason for doing the referendum.

Kathleen Rix – Harbour Drive – Why are we doing a referendum? Look around see how many people are here tonight.

Chief Dreby explained some potential ways the financing could be done and indicated that \$50,000.00 would be paid from the capital budget and the balance would be bonded, he also stated the balance would

not be paid until delivery of the truck. Chief Dreby also stated the equipment on our current ladder truck will transfer to the new truck thus no additional equipment needs to be ordered so there is no additional cost. Chief Dreby stated safety is paramount to the fire department and our firefighters.

Mr. Cosky stated all here tonight should reach out to their neighbors and explain what was learned here tonight.

Mayor Arnold indicated we have a grant writer who has looked into grants which might be available for the purchase of the firetruck, however has not be able to locate any currently. Safety of our firefighters must be a priority and good working equipment is necessary. Mayor Arnold indicated we will be moving forward with the decision on the referendum at our next meeting July 17th, 2017.

Mrs. Tait indicated everyone should have a happy and safe 4th of July.

Mr. Cosky made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Yetter second the motion.

At the call of the roll.

All voted in favor of the motion

Meeting Adjourned at 7:38 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

**Doretha R. Jackson
Acting Municipal Clerk**