

OLD FORGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

IN RE: REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

HELD:

Tuesday, December 19, 2023

TIME:

7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:

OLD FORGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
310 South Main Street  
Old Forge, Pennsylvania

C O U N C I L M E M B E R S :

**ORIGINAL**

RUSSELL RINALDI, President

RICK NOTARI

MICHELE AVVISATO

MICHAEL LETTIERI-absent

LOUIS FEBBO-absent

ANDREW BUTLER

MARYLYNN BARTOLETTI, Borough Manager

ROBERT LEGG, Mayor

WILLIAM RINALDI, Esquire, Solicitor

MICHELLE SMOLSKIS  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

1 (Pledge of allegiance.)

2

3 MR. RINALDI: Roll call, please,

4 Marylynn.

5 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman

6 Avvisato?

7 MS. AVVISATO: Here.

8 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

9 MR. BUTLER: Present.

10 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Febbo is

11 absent. Councilman Hoover?

12 MR. HOOVER: Present.

13 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman

14 Lettieri? He's absent. Councilman Notari?

15 MR. NOTARI: Present.

16 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?

17 MR. RINALDI: Here. Once again,

18 ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the regular

19 meeting of the Old Forge Borough. Tonight is

20 Tuesday, December 19, 2023.

21 The purpose of our meeting will be

22 to go through a few housekeeping motions.

23 We'll hear from our Council members, our

24 department heads, our mayor, borough manager

25 and solicitor.

1                   The public sign-in sheet I have. If  
2 anybody else who didn't sign in would like to,  
3 we'll give you a few minutes at the end of the  
4 meeting to address us.

5                   With that said, we're going to move  
6 into our first housekeeping motion, and that's  
7 going to be a motion to approve the prior  
8 minutes.

9                   MS. AVVISATO: I'll make that  
10 motion, Mr. Chairman.

11                   MR. RINALDI: Motion on the floor by  
12 Councilwoman Avvisato.

13                   MR. BUTLER: I'll second it.

14                   MR. RINALDI: Second by Councilman  
15 Butler. On the question?

16                   (No response.)

17                   MR. RINALDI: Public input?

18                   (No response.)

19                   MR. RINALDI: Roll call, please.

20                   MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman  
21 Avvisato?

22                   MS. AVVISATO: Yes.

23                   MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

24                   MR. BUTLER: Yes.

25                   MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Hoover?

1 MR. HOOVER: Yes.

2 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Notari?

3 MR. NOTARI: Yes.

4 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?

5 MR. RINALDI: Yes. The second item

6 is motion to approve treasurer report. Please

7 note this doesn't include the sewer account.

8 MR. BUTLER: I'll make the motion.

9 MR. RINALDI: Motion on the floor by  
10 Councilman Butler.

11 MS. AVVISATO: I'll second that  
12 motion.

13 MR. RINALDI: Second by Councilwoman  
14 Avvisato. On the question?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. RINALDI: Public input?

17 (No response.)

18 MR. RINALDI: Roll call, please.

19 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman  
20 Avvisato?

21 MS. AVVISATO: Yes.

22 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

23 MR. BUTLER: Yes.

24 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Hoover?

25 MR. HOOVER: Yes.

1 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Notari?

2 MR. NOTARI: Yes.

3 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?

4 MR. RINALDI: Yes. The third item

5 is motion to approve invoices for payment.

6 Once again, please note this doesn't include

7 the sewer account.

8 MS. AVVISATO: I'll make that

9 motion, Mr. Chairman.

10 MR. RINALDI: Motion on the floor by

11 Councilwoman Avvisato.

12 MR. NOTARI: I'll second it.

13 MR. RINALDI: Second by Councilman

14 Notari. On the question?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. RINALDI: Public input?

17 (No response.)

18 MR. RINALDI: Roll call, please.

19 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman

20 Avvisato?

21 MS. AVVISATO: Yes.

22 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

23 MR. BUTLER: Yes.

24 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Hoover?

25 MR. HOOVER: Yes.

1 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Notari?

2 MR. NOTARI: Yes.

3 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?

4 MR. RINALDI: Yes. The fourth item  
5 is a motion to approve treasurer report from  
6 the sewer department.

7 MR. NOTARI: I'll make that motion,  
8 Mr. Chairman.

9 MR. RINALDI: Motion on the floor by  
10 Councilman Notari.

11 MR. HOOVER: I'll second it.

12 MR. RINALDI: Second by Councilman  
13 Hoover. On the question?

14 (No response.)

15 MR. RINALDI: Public input?

16 (No response.)

17 MR. RINALDI: Roll call, please.

18 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman

19 Avvisato?

20 MS. AVVISATO: Yes.

21 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

22 MR. BUTLER: Yes.

23 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Hoover?

24 MR. HOOVER: Yes.

25 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Notari?

1 MR. NOTARI: Yes.

2 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?

3 MR. RINALDI: Yes. Last item under

4 housekeeping is a motion to approve sewer

5 department invoices for payment.

6 MR. NOTARI: I'll make that motion,

7 Mr. Chairman.

8 MR. RINALDI: Motion on the floor by

9 Councilman Notari.

10 MR. BUTLER: I'll second it.

11 MR. RINALDI: Second by Councilman

12 Butler. On the question?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. RINALDI: Public input?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. RINALDI: Roll call, please.

17 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman

18 Avvisato?

19 MS. AVVISATO: Yes.

20 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

21 MR. BUTLER: Yes.

22 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Hoover?

23 MR. HOOVER: Yes.

24 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Notari?

25 MR. NOTARI: Yes.

1 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?

2 MR. RINALDI: Yes. We'll move into  
3 our first department head, DPW manager Joseph  
4 Lenceski. Good evening, Joe.

5 MR. LENCESKI: Good evening.

6 MR. RINALDI: Anything for the  
7 meeting?

8 MR. LENCESKI: Nothing for the  
9 meeting.

10 MR. RINALDI: Any members have any  
11 questions for Joe?

12 MR. HOOVER: No.

13 MR. LENCESKI: Thank you.

14 MR. RINALDI: Thanks, Joe. Second  
15 department head is Mike Sokolowski, code  
16 enforcement/zoning officer. Mike, anything for  
17 the meeting?

18 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: I have nothing  
19 right now.

20 MR. RINALDI: Any members have any  
21 questions for Mike?

22 MR. NOTARI: I have nothing for  
23 Mike.

24 MR. BUTLER: I have a couple  
25 things --

1 MR. RINALDI: Sure.

2 MR. BUTLER: -- that I got called  
3 on. Mike, they called me again about that 602  
4 Maple Street that the guy is back in the house.

5 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: He's supposed to be  
6 out of there. I'll go back.

7 MR. BUTLER: The relative called me,  
8 said he's back in there --

9 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: Yeah.

10 MR. BUTLER: -- that he was gone.

11 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: Yeah, he was  
12 supposedly gone. Actually, we were over there,  
13 I'm going to say three, four weeks ago, I'm not  
14 sure, and he was supposed to be gone.

15 MS. AVVISATO: Yeah, he was gone.

16 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: Yeah.

17 MR. BUTLER: Yeah, he was. I know  
18 he was out of the house and now all of a sudden  
19 now she says he's back in the house. She's  
20 related, so she probably should know.

21 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: All right. We'll  
22 go back over again.

23 MR. BUTLER: Just double check on  
24 it, make sure he's not in it.

25 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: All right.

1 MR. BUTLER: And the other thing  
2 would be down at the Gerara (phonetic) property  
3 down there, those RVs, I mean, is that guy  
4 going to be get them out of there?

5 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: Shuback (phonetic)  
6 is supposed to be taking over. With football  
7 and everything, he said he got tied up and  
8 then --

9 MR. BUTLER: Okay. All right.  
10 Thank you.

11 MR. NOTARI: What property is that,  
12 Mr. Butler?

13 MR. BUTLER: Gerara's, Louie  
14 Gerara's.

15 MR. NOTARI: What's the address?

16 MR. BUTLER: Main Street. I'm not  
17 sure.

18 (Inaudible crosstalk.)

19 MR. BUTLER: Where the pond reader  
20 (phonetic) was.

21 MR. NOTARI: Oh, okay. Oh, right.

22 MR. RINALDI: The yard behind the  
23 pond reader.

24 MR. NOTARI: Right. Okay. All  
25 right.

1 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: Yeah, there's two  
2 pieces left that he hasn't been out of there.

3 MR. RINALDI: Any other questions  
4 for Mike?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. RINALDI: Thank you, Mike.

7 MR. SOKOLOWSKI: Thanks.

8 MR. RINALDI: You're welcome. Dave  
9 Lopatka, engineer, anything for the meeting?

10 MR. LOPATKA: I believe it might  
11 already be on there, the Josephine Street, you  
12 guys have to vote to put it out to bid, the  
13 sewer.

14 MR. RINALDI: Okay. Bill, we'll  
15 have to add that to the agenda this evening?

16 ATTY. RINALDI: Yep. It's not here.  
17 Yep.

18 MR. RINALDI: Anything else, Dave?

19 (No audible response.)

20 MR. RINALDI: Any members have any  
21 questions for Dave?

22 MR. HOOVER: Dave, Louie Mancusso's  
23 going to go look at that driveway tomorrow.

24 MR. LOPATKA: Okay.

25 MR. HOOVER: That we were there

1           today. See what he thinks.

2                   MR. LOPATKA: Yeah.

3                   MR. HOOVER: The driveway being cut  
4 is out of the question. You knew that.

5                   MR. LOPATKA: I know, but that's  
6 probably the, I mean, that's probably the long  
7 term fix.

8                   MR. HOOVER: Yeah.

9                   MR. LOPATKA: But a short term fix  
10 is probably putting in a small area drain.

11                   MR. HOOVER: So, he's going to look  
12 at it tomorrow. Give your price to Marylynn  
13 and we'll find out.

14                   MR. LOPATKA: Yeah. And, Marylynn,  
15 if she just wants to send it to me once you  
16 guys get it, I'll just take a peek.

17                   MR. HOOVER: Yeah. Okay.

18                   MR. RINALDI: Any other questions  
19 for Dave?

20                   (No response.)

21                   MR. RINALDI: Thanks, David.

22                   MR. LOPATKA: Yep.

23                   MR. RINALDI: Chief Dubernas,  
24 anything for the meeting?

25                   CHIEF DUBERNAS: No. The only thing

1 I had was it's on the agenda, so --

2 MR. RINALDI: About the no parking?

3 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Correct.

4 MR. RINALDI: Okay. Anybody have  
5 any questions for the Chief?

6 MR. NOTARI: I have two things.

7 MR. RINALDI: Sure.

8 MR. NOTARI: Chief, on Marion Street  
9 between Sussex and Railroad, there's a dumpster  
10 on the right side of the road closer to  
11 Railroad Street --

12 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah. It's right  
13 at the --

14 MR. NOTARI: -- on the no parking  
15 side of the street. It's really a hazard,  
16 don't you think, it's a safety hazard?

17 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah. I'm not sure  
18 whose dumpster. There's no markings on it. I  
19 saw it today when I was going over to the  
20 school.

21 MR. NOTARI: Maybe it's the property  
22 owner's then, and it needs to be moved.

23 CHIEF DUBERNAS: All right. I'll  
24 take care of that.

25 MR. NOTARI: I mean, when there's

1 traffic there at night when Romar's going on --

2 CHIEF DUBERNAS: There was a cone in  
3 the back of it, but now everything's gone.

4 Like, there's no cone, no tape, no nothing  
5 there. That's a Novak's house. I'll call  
6 them. I have the phone number.

7 MR. NOTARI: I mean, irregardless,  
8 if it's coned off or anything, it's still in  
9 the way of traffic on a no parking side of the  
10 street. So, I mean, I would think that it  
11 should be moved. It's empty. I mean, I'm sure  
12 it's going to be filled. It looks like they're  
13 gonna --

14 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah, I think  
15 they're at Novak's.

16 MR. NOTARI: Those apartments are  
17 empty there, so something's gonna happen.

18 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Oh, they're empty?  
19 I didn't know that.

20 MR. NOTARI: I saw somebody moving  
21 out a week or two ago.

22 CHIEF DUBERNAS: All right.

23 MR. NOTARI: And the other thing is  
24 the Romar parking situation. I had a resident  
25 tell me that a little girl had her foot run

1 over.

2 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah. That was two  
3 weeks ago.

4 MR. NOTARI: Last week when I was  
5 leaving the school, cars were double parked,  
6 cars were parked on the wrong side of the road,  
7 they're parked in the no parking zone, they're  
8 parked from the stop sign to the corner,  
9 illegally parked, and I understand there's not  
10 a parking lot there.

11 I understand it's probably for 20  
12 minutes that they're there to pick up their  
13 child; however, it's a safety hazard and  
14 whether we have to put a cop there to direct  
15 traffic, especially now at night --

16 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah. Do we know  
17 their schedule? Maybe we can get in touch.  
18 Who do --

19 MR. NOTARI: I don't know.

20 MS. AVVISATO: Call Marylou.

21 MR. NOTARI: Marylou?

22 MS. AVVISATO: Yeah.

23 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Okay. Yeah.

24 MR. BUTLER: Rick, I think part of  
25 the problem is is that people are bringing

1           their kids there to the studio and sitting in  
2           the car waiting for them.

3                   MR. NOTARI: I understand that.

4                   MR. BUTLER: You know what I'm  
5           saying? So, there's really no drop off spot.

6                   MR. NOTARI: I get that. Again --

7                   MR. BUTLER: There should be maybe a  
8           drop off zone where people could actually pull  
9           up to the building and let their kids off and  
10          stuff like that.

11                  MR. NOTARI: And then leave.

12                  MR. BUTLER: Right. And leave.

13                  Right.

14                  MR. NOTARI: I mean, there were  
15          actually cars double parked.

16                  MR. BUTLER: Yeah. They were. I  
17          agree with you.

18                  MR. NOTARI: So, I mean, even if we  
19          just have a cop there to direct traffic just to  
20          help a little bit.

21                  CHIEF DUBERNAS: Even if they  
22          dropped them off and go up to the parking  
23          lot --

24                  MR. NOTARI: The school parking lot  
25          and park. Right.

1 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Okay.

2 MR. NOTARI: Right. Or park in the  
3 parking lot and then walk the kids down to the  
4 place, but I just don't want to see something  
5 serious happen there. That's all I have.

6 CHIEF DUBERNAS: I'll take care of  
7 that tomorrow.

8 MR. NOTARI: Thank you.

9 MR. HOOVER: Chief, did we ever do a  
10 study at Oak and Marion? I know we did that  
11 once. I think we did it once.

12 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Oak and Marion?  
13 Yeah, that's up to us because when I contacted  
14 PennDOT, they told us it was us and then we're  
15 responsible --

16 MR. HOOVER: For everything.

17 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Dave, if I'm  
18 correct, right, we were responsible to put the  
19 traffic light in, all the --

20 MR. LOPATKA: All the  
21 infrastructure.

22 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah.

23 MR. HOOVER: That's another thing I  
24 think we should bite the bullet and --

25 MS. BARTOLETTI: I think we need to

1 do that --

2 (Inaudible crosstalk.)

3 MR. NOTARI: Why don't we do an  
4 updated study, at least for line of sight.

5 MS. BARTOLETTI: Yeah. It's very  
6 dangerous.

7 MR. NOTARI: It's tough pulling out  
8 of there at all times of the day.

9 MR. LOPATKA: That's a fully -- it  
10 has to get approved, the traffic signal plan  
11 has to get approved by PennDOT and you have  
12 to --

13 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah, PennDOT does  
14 everything, and once they do the approval --

15 MR. LOPATKA: They don't design  
16 anything. PennDOT just reviews it. The  
17 borough's responsible to get it designed.

18 MR. BUTLER: They do the study,  
19 though, right?

20 CHIEF DUBERNAS: No. We do the  
21 study.

22 MR. LOPATKA: The study has to be --

23 MR. RINALDI: Real quick. Not to  
24 interrupt anybody, but just to update them, a  
25 few months back we spoke to the state

1 representative's office of Jim Haddock, and his  
2 chief of staff Ron Rilstein --

3 MS. BARTOLETTI: Yes.

4 MR. RINALDI: -- they told us that  
5 we have to get the study like you were saying.

6 MS. BARTOLETTI: Same exact  
7 information.

8 MR. RINALDI: And we wanted to do  
9 the study during the school hours when most of  
10 the traffic -- during the school months when  
11 most of the traffic was taking place to show  
12 them that --

13 MS. BARTOLETTI: Correct.

14 MR. RINALDI: -- it's in dire need  
15 of a street light.

16 MR. LOPATKA: Right. You want to do  
17 the traffic study when school's in session.

18 MR. RINALDI: Right. So, it's up to  
19 us to do the study and they get it back, the  
20 state rep's office, and they're going to get it  
21 to PennDOT for us.

22 MS. BARTOLETTI: Yeah. And then  
23 they would try to help us out to try to see if  
24 there's any grant information or anything.

25 MR. RINALDI: And then the Chief is

1 right, we have to pay --

2 CHIEF DUBERNAS: For everything.

3 MR. RINALDI: -- we have to pay  
4 for everything. We have to pay for the study,  
5 the --

6 MR. LOPATKA: The traffic study  
7 dictates --

8 (Inaudible crosstalk.)

9 MR. RINALDI: -- which I'm sure  
10 we're fine doing, but there's steps we have to  
11 take.

12 MR. LOPATKA: The steps dictate  
13 whether or not the signal is warranted, because  
14 PennDOT has requirements. You have to meet  
15 certain warrants.

16 MR. RINALDI: That's why we have to  
17 do it during school hours.

18 MR. LOPATKA: Right. But then you  
19 have to design the intersection --

20 MR. RINALDI: The nine months that  
21 school is in, that's the busiest.

22 (Inaudible crosstalk.)

23 MR. LOPATKA: -- all that gets  
24 submitted to PennDOT, they review it, approve  
25 it, and then you could do the work.

1 MR. RINALDI: Correct.

2 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah, I know they  
3 just put up a brand new flashing light and  
4 everything there with the speed limit sign in  
5 the last three weeks.

6 MR. RINALDI: They just put it up  
7 about a week ago. I saw them installing it.

8 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah. It's up and  
9 running. It's all LED.

10 MR. RINALDI: That's for the  
11 pedestrian crosswalk. We put that up?

12 MS. BARTOLETTI: We put that in.

13 MR. RINALDI: Okay.

14 MS. BARTOLETTI: Yeah.

15 MR. RINALDI: I saw someone  
16 installing it one week ago, right, Joe, maybe  
17 two weeks?

18 MR. LENCESKI: Well, they had the  
19 base in for a little bit and then the top  
20 portion came.

21 CHIEF DUBERNAS: That was the one  
22 they ripped out on us when they redid the  
23 sidewalk.

24 MR. NOTARI: Dave, correct me if I'm  
25 wrong, it's not just a traffic study that the

1 Chief would do, it's a professional traffic  
2 study by an engineer --

3 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Yeah. They would  
4 have a counter and everything for it.

5 MR. NOTARI: Do you do that? Does  
6 your firm do that?

7 MR. LOPATKA: No. But we have  
8 multiple traffic engineers that we sub to a  
9 lot.

10 MR. NOTARI: Okay.

11 MR. LOPATKA: So, we could get that  
12 set up. And they do, they do the traffic  
13 counts, they'll do a whole report and detail  
14 exactly what needs to be done.

15 MR. RINALDI: Could you start that  
16 for us, Dave?

17 MR. LOPATKA: I could.

18 MR. RINALDI: Thank you.

19 MR. NOTARI: Yeah. That's it.

20 MR. BUTLER: I just have one other  
21 thing.

22 MR. RINALDI: Sure.

23 MR. BUTLER: I got a call, too, that  
24 people are speeding up the alley, the one way  
25 alley by my house where the day care center is,

1 and they're kind of, I don't know, somebody  
2 that lives in one of those houses was actually  
3 backing out, because it's a one way alley,  
4 they're zipping up that way, but she has all  
5 those shrubs and stuff on the side of her --

6 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Ann Street?

7 MR. BUTLER: It's that little  
8 alleyway that's in --

9 (Inaudible crosstalk.)

10 MR. NOTARI: There's a day care by  
11 your house?

12 MR. BUTLER: Yeah. Across the  
13 street.

14 MS. AVVISATO: Yeah. It's approved.

15 MR. BUTLER: And she has all  
16 arborvitaes going down there. If somebody  
17 comes out of her driveway and stuff like that,  
18 I mean, if somebody's coming up there,  
19 somebody's going to get hit. I mean, if it  
20 wasn't a day care --

21 MR. NOTARI: Is it her clientele  
22 speeding?

23 MR. BUTLER: No. It's somebody  
24 that's in the -- I think it's the house that  
25 had the school bus in the back yard.

1 CHIEF DUBERNAS: Oh. I know what  
2 house it is.

3 MR. BUTLER: So, yeah, they're  
4 coming up the street and, I mean, they asked  
5 for a speed bump and I said I don't think we  
6 could put a speed bump there, but --

7 CHIEF DUBERNAS: I'll go down and  
8 look at it. I know exactly what you're talking  
9 about.

10 MR. BUTLER: Maybe a sign, slow.  
11 Kids zone or something.

12 MR. RINALDI: Any other questions  
13 for the Chief?

14 MR. BUTLER: No, I don't.

15 MR. RINALDI: Thank you, Chief.

16 CHIEF DUBERNAS: You're welcome.

17 MR. RINALDI: Bill Stull, assistant  
18 fire chief, anything for the meeting?

19 MR. STULL: Yeah, actually I do.  
20 So, back in April of '04, Pennsylvania adopted  
21 the uniform construction code, all right? In  
22 July of '04, the Council at that time adopted  
23 the code, the uniform construction code.

24 Under that code we have a third  
25 party inspector, which now we have two, okay,

1 BIU and NEIC, right?

2 MR. RINALDI: NEIC.

3 MR. STULL: So, under the

4 International Fire Code that the fire  
5 department uses and a bunch of other codes that  
6 BIU uses, I'd like to introduce to Council to  
7 consider at their work session to update  
8 yourselves to the International Property  
9 Management Code, edition 2018, and do away with  
10 our BOCA code that is dated back in 1996, I  
11 believe.

12 So, this book references everything  
13 of the International Fire Code that we use,  
14 everything that BIU uses. It's just that our  
15 property maintenance code is not updated, and  
16 I'd like just for the borough to consider  
17 updating to this edition.

18 This is the current edition that we  
19 use now in the state, the 2018. So, this is my  
20 copy. I would like to leave it with you, take  
21 a look at it.

22 MR. RINALDI: Sure.

23 MR. STULL: I think you'll see what  
24 it's all about. I think that might solve a lot  
25 of our problems with property maintenance code

1 in the municipality. So just something for you  
2 guys to consider.

3 MR. RINALDI: Quick question, Bill,  
4 we'd have to adopt a resolution?

5 ATTY. RINALDI: You'd have to just  
6 amend your ordinance.

7 MR. RINALDI: Just amend?

8 ATTY. RINALDI: I think BOCA was  
9 bought out and they merged and --

10 MR. STULL: Yeah. They formed the  
11 International.

12 ATTY. RINALDI: It's an easy  
13 amendment.

14 MR. RINALDI: Okay.

15 MR. STULL: If you actually look at  
16 the BOCA book and the International, it's  
17 almost identical. These codes are just  
18 updated. I mean, ours is 22 years old that we  
19 use.

20 MR. RINALDI: So, just to amend it.  
21 We could add it to our January regular meeting?

22 ATTY. RINALDI: And I'd have to  
23 double check, because I think our ordinance  
24 says as amended. So, we might already -- I'll  
25 double check, we might already --

1 MR. STULL: Yeah, I didn't see  
2 anything, even when I looked, when I was doing  
3 the research on it, but if somebody ever has  
4 questions or anything like that, they could  
5 say, Oh, you're using the BOCA book from 1996.  
6 At least we're current with the codes that are  
7 out there.

8 But I think the State of  
9 Pennsylvania every six years or so they update  
10 their codes, so I think the 2018 should be up  
11 for, I think it's up to maybe 2021, but I  
12 believe the 2024's are coming out now, but  
13 Pennsylvania's a couple years behind.

14 MR. NOTARI: If we need to, we'll  
15 get it on the agenda for January, right?

16 ATTY. RINALDI: Yeah.

17 MR. NOTARI: Yeah. If we need to.  
18 You said it might already be included.

19 ATTY. RINALDI: Yeah. So, that  
20 would be a January regular meeting.

21 MR. RINALDI: Regular meeting.

22 MR. STULL: And that's all I have.  
23 Thank you.

24 MR. RINALDI: Anybody have any  
25 questions for Bill?

1 (No response.)

2 MR. RINALDI: Thank you, Bill.

3 Attorney Rinaldi, solicitor's report for the  
4 meeting?

5 ATTY. RINALDI: You have three  
6 ordinances in front of you for consideration.  
7 One is adopting the 2024 budget as amended, the  
8 second one is levying the taxes for fiscal year  
9 2024, and the third is no parking on the west  
10 side of the 400 block of George Street.

11 MS. AVVISATO: And then we have to  
12 put Josephine Street on?

13 MR. RINALDI: And we're going to add  
14 the Josephine sewer project.

15 ATTY. RINALDI: We're going to add  
16 that to approve --

17 MR. RINALDI: And put it out to bid.  
18 Okay. Any questions for the solicitor?

19 MR. NOTARI: I have a question.

20 MR. RINALDI: Sure.

21 MR. NOTARI: Did we ever finish the  
22 lease with the Sons of Italy and St. Lawrence?

23 ATTY. RINALDI: I didn't get  
24 anything back. So right now they have the main  
25 floor for the term of the lease, and there was

1 no expenses, so they didn't have any expenses  
2 because they were all paid by the ground floor.  
3 So, we're just waiting to hear what you guys  
4 want to do. They want the whole building.

5 MR. NOTARI: But have they returned  
6 to you what their plan is or no?

7 ATTY. RINALDI: I gave it to --

8 MS. BARTOLETTI: I thought he was  
9 going to be discussing it tonight, but I think  
10 he -- obviously there's a reason why he's not  
11 here tonight, but there was some things that he  
12 wanted to discuss with the whole Council about  
13 possibly the Sons of Italy running the entire  
14 building and then opening it up to the public,  
15 and they would maintain it and keep track of  
16 everything, instead of the borough having to do  
17 that. So, we'll probably be having a meeting  
18 sometime.

19 MS. AVVISATO: So they would pay --

20 MR. RINALDI: They were looking to  
21 lease it off us, correct?

22 MS. BARTOLETTI: Leasing it probably  
23 by paying the utilities, but them being sort of  
24 like the administrators so that other groups  
25 would be able to use it.

1 I know the boy scouts are in there  
2 right now, the ladies who play Mahjohn, there's  
3 a bunch of other groups, and then possibly  
4 opening it up to other people as needed.

5 MR. HOOVER: That's a significant  
6 utility expense there to give them that; if  
7 they're going to pay the utilities, isn't it?

8 ATTY. RINALDI: It didn't matter  
9 before because it was all paid by --

10 MS. BARTOLETTI: We had an income  
11 coming in.

12 MR. NOTARI: Yes.

13 MR. HOOVER: Right, we had money  
14 coming in.

15 MS. BARTOLETTI: Yes.

16 ATTY. RINALDI: They paid income and  
17 they paid all the utilities.

18 MS. BARTOLETTI: They paid income,  
19 we paid utilities.

20 MR. RINALDI: When the school was  
21 there?

22 MS. BARTOLETTI: Yeah.

23 MR. NOTARI: On the same note, on  
24 the sale agreement with the diocese, the  
25 building's ours free and clear, right?

1                   ATTY. RINALDI: Yeah.

2                   MR. NOTARI: It's not like we have  
3 to return it to them if we don't use it, we  
4 could sell it for whatever we wanted to, the  
5 property?

6                   ATTY. RINALDI: Our option is only  
7 to buy the church if they ever decide to sell  
8 it. So, it's yours.

9                   MR. RINALDI: Both buildings are  
10 ours?

11                   ATTY. RINALDI: Both buildings.

12                   MR. NOTARI: Okay. Thank you.

13                   MR. RINALDI: Any other questions  
14 for the solicitor?

15                   (No response.)

16                   MR. RINALDI: Thank you, Bill.  
17 Borough manager, Marylynn Bartoletti, anything  
18 for the meeting?

19                   MS. BARTOLETTI: No. Well, we'll  
20 talk about the budget a little bit later, and  
21 then just does anyone have any questions on any  
22 of my financial reports?

23                   (No response.)

24                   MS. BARTOLETTI: No. Okay. Just if  
25 you want to make note that the reorganization

1 meeting is going to be on the 2nd of January at  
2 5:00.

3 MR. RINALDI: Okay. Anything else,  
4 Marylynn?

5 MS. BARTOLETTI: Nope. That's it.

6 MR. RINALDI: Anybody have any  
7 questions for the borough manager?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. RINALDI: Thank you, Marylynn.  
10 Marylynn, Tuesday, January 2nd, 5 p.m.?

11 MS. BARTOLETTI: Yes.

12 MR. RINALDI: Okay. Before we move  
13 into new business, we'll go into public comment  
14 first. Marissa Becker. Hi, Marissa. Good  
15 evening.

16 MS. BECKER: Good evening, Council.  
17 I'm here tonight along with this group of  
18 parents who would like to ask if Council has  
19 any plans to bring a community center to our  
20 town.

21 It's needed for many reasons and  
22 would benefit all residents but especially our  
23 youth. We are a community that thrives on  
24 unity, health and the wellbeing of our  
25 residents.

1                   Just some examples of other  
2 communities that have centers and what they  
3 provide, Dickson City, Dunmore, Taylor, Throop.  
4 Some offerings are before and after school  
5 programs, summer camps, basketball leagues,  
6 senior aerobics, toddler time, dances, Zumba  
7 class, open gym, gym rentals, community rooms  
8 that are used for bingo and other type of  
9 fundraisers.

10                   Imagine a place where families  
11 gather to cheer on their loved ones, where  
12 seniors engage in activities and where  
13 newcomers find a welcoming community. This  
14 center isn't just about recreation, it's about  
15 fostering a sense of belonging and community  
16 pride.

17                   I urge you to consider the profound  
18 impact a community center for sports and  
19 recreation would have on our borough. It's an  
20 investment in our people, our values and our  
21 shared future. Let's come together to create a  
22 space where our community can thrive, grow and  
23 unite. That's all.

24                   MR. RINALDI: To give you a couple  
25 comments on it, Council has discussed a

1 community center for the past few years. Most  
2 recently we discussed it back in June, and we  
3 were not final on it, but our area of where we  
4 were looking to put it would be next to the  
5 high school in either the front portion, if we  
6 move some of the stuff back, we decided, the  
7 kids, like, slides and playground and the  
8 pavilion to put in back, put the community  
9 center in front, but we were going to put it in  
10 the back a little bit behind Mr. Notari's  
11 father's golf park, because we figured there's  
12 adequate parking there.

13 We're getting grants for lights over  
14 there, the school's right next to it, very  
15 accessible and, you know, very easy for  
16 everyone to get to.

17 We also had to discuss many ways,  
18 and we're still in the process of it, we have  
19 the engineer looking into it, cost-wise of  
20 constructing it, cost-wise of maintaining it,  
21 cost-wise of staffing it, cost-wise of paying  
22 the utilities, cost of what's going to go in it  
23 as far as basketball courts, batting cages,  
24 some of the rooms and some of the uses you  
25 named for it, maybe a computer room for kids



1           could do. This one shows where you could add  
2           meeting rooms onto it if you had to additional  
3           to the pole barn itself.

4                         So, we are kicking it around, but  
5           it's going to take a while. It's something  
6           that it's going to take a while to do.

7                         MS. BECKER: Thank you.

8                         MR. RINALDI: Anything else,  
9           Marissa?

10                        MS. BECKER: That's it. Thank you.

11                        MR. RINALDI: You're welcome. Gina  
12           Dominick. Hi, Gina. Good evening.

13                        MS. DOMINICK: I've had the pleasure  
14           of helping out with the Old Forge summer  
15           program for the past many years, I see how  
16           excited students get being able to play with  
17           their friends outside of school. A community  
18           center would add to this joy.

19                        Children would be able to play with  
20           their friends that they would not normally play  
21           or see outside of the school day, which will  
22           aid with their social skills and self esteem.  
23           A community center is a wonderful environment  
24           for all ages.

25                        My son just recently, and his

1 friends, pay money for the Moosic Center and  
2 the Taylor Community Center to play basketball  
3 when it rains, snows in the winter, at night.  
4 It'd be wonderful if we had one right here in  
5 our town.

6 I've also been to basketball games  
7 and birthday parties at the Throop and Dickson  
8 City Community Center over the years. There is  
9 always a cost to get into these games. These  
10 type of programs could help pay for bills  
11 associated with the center.

12 I would personally volunteer my time  
13 to help run the center any way I could. I  
14 think others in our community would do, as  
15 well. Our town and especially our children  
16 deserve a community center.

17 MR. RINALDI: Like I said to  
18 Marissa --

19 MS. DOMINICK: And I love what you  
20 said.

21 MR. RINALDI: I mean, unless I'm not  
22 speaking for everybody up here, I think I am,  
23 and I think I speak for everybody in the  
24 audience and in the town, I mean, we would love  
25 to put in a community center for the kids and

1 for anyone in the community who would like to  
2 use it.

3 MS. DOMINICK: Right.

4 MR. RINALDI: And, again, we are in  
5 the early, early stages of it. As you know, I  
6 know we mentioned the church before, we  
7 discussed putting a community center down the  
8 church years ago, Councilman Febbo had it in  
9 the works with us and the plans, the building  
10 was just too small to put in basketball courts,  
11 bleachers. There wouldn't be any room. That's  
12 why that was never turned into it, I think.  
13 That's why I would never want the community  
14 center down there, I should say.

15 So, I don't know why it wasn't  
16 turned into it. I didn't think it was a good  
17 spot for the center. I don't know if any other  
18 members did.

19 We thought a bigger building, like  
20 Councilman Hoover said, a pole barn type with a  
21 concrete pad, a good size structure, and then  
22 if we have, which we do have room down there  
23 where we were thinking about putting it next to  
24 the school, in the future if more money was  
25 raised or more money was generated or revented,

1           however we did it through some of the services  
2           you said, I don't want to use this term, but if  
3           taxes had to be raised, however the money was  
4           accumulated, we could add onto it, but I don't  
5           think anybody sitting here does not want to put  
6           some type of facility, a community center, up  
7           for the borough.

8                       MS. DOMINICK: Wonderful. Thank  
9           you.

10                      MR. RINALDI: You're welcome. Ray  
11           Wascavage. Hi, Ray. Good evening.

12                      MR. WASCAVAGE: Good evening,  
13           gentlemen and gentlewoman of Council. I'm here  
14           speaking on behalf of the Old Forge basketball  
15           league, and as Gina and Marissa had stated  
16           before, one of our biggest frustrations is the  
17           lack of court time, and we've been at the mercy  
18           of other leagues in order to get our children  
19           to play in what we've considered a borough-type  
20           rec league.

21                      We made the decision this year to  
22           put our boys and girls in the Holy Cross league  
23           up in Scranton. One of the things that  
24           occurred, or reasoning for this, was because  
25           they provided an hour practice time associated

1 with the registration fee, which was a huge  
2 bonus for us because it provided a schedule for  
3 parents for both practice and game times to  
4 provide more structure.

5 Previously, we were practicing and  
6 utilizing rental gym time, and sometimes it was  
7 on a weekly basis or a daily basis where we  
8 were able to obtain gym time. This was very  
9 difficult on both administrators, coaches and  
10 parents as there was lack of notification  
11 sometimes with scheduling.

12 This year we made that decision and  
13 it was balanced by competitive balance and the  
14 time, but unfortunately one of the things, too,  
15 with putting this group of kids, Holy Cross  
16 doesn't necessarily function as a pure borough  
17 or rec basketball league. Highly competitive,  
18 always has been. Going to go back to Gerry  
19 McNamara, one of the guys that played up there.

20 We were notified three days before  
21 the start of the season that they were  
22 canceling our girls' division, and we were now  
23 at a situation where we had to struggle to find  
24 a league and now practice time.

25 And one of the things with the lack

1 of a community center or place to have  
2 permanent gym time is our average league cost  
3 is 45 to \$50 more than most of the other  
4 leagues that run in the area, which also throws  
5 a financial burden onto the parents.

6 So, I'm just speaking here on behalf  
7 of the basketball community that we are looking  
8 and are in desperate need of having some sort  
9 of facility to house our children.

10 MR. RINALDI: Ray, quick question  
11 for you.

12 MR. WASCAVAGE: Sure.

13 MR. RINALDI: Maybe some of the  
14 other members who already spoke or some of the  
15 members just in the audience in general, when  
16 you go to those type of facilities out of town,  
17 you mentioned that you have to pay, you get an  
18 hour of court time or an hour of practice time,  
19 where is the, just because I'm not familiar,  
20 where's the last place you went, you said?

21 MR. WASCAVAGE: Holy Cross hall.  
22 Just off of Luzerne Street up in Scranton.

23 MR. RINALDI: So, it's not a  
24 community center?

25 MR. WASCAVAGE: No.

1 MR. RINALDI: It's just a basketball  
2 court?

3 MR. WASCAVAGE: It's one of the  
4 leagues that it functions in the area, but what  
5 they do is when you enter into the league, you  
6 get one game a week, ten game season, plus  
7 playoffs, but they provided you a week of one  
8 hour practice time.

9 We decided to move all of our  
10 divisions up there this year. Now, last year,  
11 as an example, we had our girls' division at  
12 the Taylor Community Center. We paid \$350 last  
13 year to enter into the league versus \$450 up in  
14 Holy Cross, only \$100 difference, but TCC did  
15 not provide any practice time for our children.

16 So, that was one of the reasons we  
17 made the decision because we couldn't get  
18 concrete practice time for our kids. And,  
19 again, this is an hour a week.

20 Two of the facilities that we're  
21 using this year are Moosic Community Center for  
22 practice and also St. Stanislaus Polish  
23 National Church up in South Scranton. We pay  
24 \$30 an hour down at the Moosic Youth Center, we  
25 pay \$50 an hour up at St. Stanislaus.

1                   If you were to, let's say, use  
2                   Riverfront in season, they charge \$195 an hour  
3                   for one hour of the full court basketball  
4                   rental, and this is on top of the drive. I  
5                   mean, there's a financial burden that goes onto  
6                   the league. And this isn't just from the  
7                   perspective of sports, it's just community  
8                   youth involvement.

9                   You know, I would sit there and say  
10                  I've been involved in various capacities of  
11                  youth sports on and off for about 20 years, and  
12                  the other night I saw one of the greatest  
13                  things in the world, I have a player who  
14                  scored, we'll call it his first legitimate  
15                  basket, who last year didn't know where he  
16                  should be on the court, what he should be  
17                  doing, what end of the court he should be on,  
18                  and he actually caught a rebound, scored a  
19                  basket.

20                  If anybody's ever seen the movie  
21                  Parenthood, I looked like Steve Martin running  
22                  up and down the sidelines when I saw this, and  
23                  the joy that I experienced from this kid was  
24                  absolutely incredible, because it's not  
25                  necessarily just about the kids that are going

1 to go out and play in high school or even  
2 college, it's about being able to put  
3 together a proper league where just as we had  
4 at St. Mary's many years ago, then when it  
5 converted over into the league at the  
6 elementary gym, to be able to have more  
7 inclusive players within the league.

8 MR. RINALDI: Well, the reason my  
9 question was, again, like I said, I'm not  
10 familiar with it, but if you went to other  
11 community centers in the area, not per se the  
12 Holy Cross building, but other community  
13 centers, do they charge you to use it in the  
14 community centers?

15 MR. WASCAVAGE: Yes.

16 MR. RINALDI: Oh, wait. Gina.

17 MS. DOMINICK: I was trying to get  
18 our junior cheerleaders into a community center  
19 last year because it was raining, and Taylor  
20 Community Center told me \$90 for an hour for  
21 their court.

22 MR. RINALDI: Well, then my question  
23 would be do they charge everybody that, even if  
24 it's Taylor residents?

25 MR. NOTARI: No.

1 MS. DOMINICK: It was just --

2 MR. NOTARI: They don't charge  
3 Taylor residents.

4 MR. RINALDI: So, they don't charge  
5 their own residents, they charge outside  
6 residents?

7 MS. DOMINICK: Probably not, but  
8 outside residents, I know that.

9 MR. RINALDI: Okay. That was my  
10 question, because, again, that's another way.  
11 I wouldn't look to charge our residents, so  
12 that's why I was saying look for a way, like,  
13 how do they fund it? Like, maybe that's one of  
14 their obviously one of their avenues that they  
15 use to fund it.

16 MR. WASCAVAGE: Russ, I'll give you  
17 an example, I believe Marissa or Gina mentioned  
18 the Throop Civic Center, now I've been at  
19 multiple basketball games up there, youth  
20 basketball that, again, typically what they do,  
21 they have a charge at the door, very minimal, a  
22 dollar for students, I think two or three for  
23 adults, so that's nominal, but, you know, that  
24 does bring in revenue.

25 But my daughter was up there for a

1 birthday party. Now, their gym is large enough  
2 where, very similar to our high school gym  
3 probably in size, where they had a full size  
4 bounce house in there and they rent it out for  
5 parties. I'm just using it as an example of  
6 how some of these centers generate revenue.

7 But, again, look, I'm just kind of  
8 talking from the basketball perspective and the  
9 youth sports perspective is we have, through  
10 obvious reasons, we -- back in the day when I  
11 was in high school, we had three teams that ran  
12 in winter, now we have five, six.

13 MR. NOTARI: Five and then plus --  
14 well, I mean, if you count seventh and eighth  
15 as one team, we have five programs.

16 MR. WASCAVAGE: Right. So, the gym  
17 time available over there is a lot less. Now,  
18 we secured minimal amount over the weekends  
19 but, again, a lot of times games are on the  
20 weekends. We don't have the numbers, per se,  
21 to run something completely internal and, you  
22 know, we are going to these leagues, but with  
23 the lack of not having gym time or even be able  
24 to run something internally, it throws a lot of  
25 burden on both players and parents.

1 MR. HOOVER: I know there's an  
2 answer to this, but I'm going to ask the  
3 question anyway, what's the matter with the gym  
4 over at St. Mary's church, they won't let you  
5 use it?

6 MR. WASCAVAGE: No.  
7 (Inaudible crosstalk.)

8 MR. NOTARI: It's been buckled for  
9 at least five years.

10 MR. BUTLER: Yeah, they got water  
11 damage. And it's not full court.

12 MS. AVVISATO: No, it's bad in  
13 there.

14 MR. BUTLER: It would need to be  
15 repaired. Ray, I have one question.

16 MR. WASCAVAGE: Sure.

17 MR. BUTLER: And I've been out of  
18 the circulation with biddy basketball and stuff  
19 like that forever, but we have two gyms, I  
20 mean, we can't get any -- I mean, my son Billy,  
21 that's where we played, we played in that  
22 second gym.

23 MR. NOTARI: Mr. Butler, the varsity  
24 teams can't get time.

25 MR. BUTLER: Well, how do we do it

1 with one gym, Rick?

2 MR. NOTARI: It's because we have a  
3 boys team, a girls team and a freshman  
4 basketball team. Seventh and eighth grade  
5 girls used to play in the fall. The popularity  
6 of soccer, I believe, has moved seventh and  
7 eighth grade girls to now the winter.

8 So, now seventh and eighth grade  
9 girls, seventh and eighth grade boys, freshman  
10 boys, varsity girls and varsity boys now  
11 playing. Plus cheerleading. Cheerleading also  
12 uses both gyms to practice.

13 MR. WASCAVAGE: And, Mr. Butler, I  
14 mean, I've had this conversation with our  
15 parents over and over again, like, we get a  
16 copy of the calendar right from the school and  
17 you look at this and it looks like a Jenga  
18 puzzle, and that's what it is.

19 And it's like, okay, we could carve  
20 an inch here, we could carve an inch there.  
21 Again, and that's also assuming that another  
22 organization within the school who takes  
23 priority of us, because we're an outside  
24 organization, you know, so if there's a school  
25 dance, whatever the organization it may be,

1           there was a kickball tournament up there a  
2           couple weeks back.

3                         And it's one of the things it's  
4           very, very difficult. We are right now  
5           supporting eleven teams between -- I'm sorry,  
6           twelve teams counting kindergarten, K through  
7           six, and fighting for gym time is insane, and  
8           we have to outsource. It's the only way to sit  
9           there and get some practice time in.

10                        And, like I said, we found a couple  
11           places but we're still paying a fee, which adds  
12           into our average operating cost per team or per  
13           player, depending on how you want to break it  
14           down.

15                        MR. NOTARI: Ray, how many kids on  
16           the team, ten?

17                        MR. BUTLER: Other than soccer, I  
18           mean, we still had girls basketball in one gym  
19           at one time, did we not?

20                        MR. NOTARI: Girls and boys  
21           basketball.

22                        MR. BUTLER: Yeah. In one gym.

23                        MR. NOTARI: And freshman  
24           basketball.

25                        MR. BUTLER: Yeah. Now we got two

1 gyms and we can't get any playing time for  
2 kids?

3 MR. NOTARI: No, we can't. I'll  
4 show you the schedule. I'm not lying to you.

5 MR. BUTLER: I know you're not  
6 lying, but I'm just saying, like --

7 MR. NOTARI: I mean, think about it,  
8 when I was in school our freshman team used to  
9 practice before school because there was no gym  
10 time.

11 MR. BUTLER: What do the other  
12 schools do that don't have two gyms?

13 MR. NOTARI: They all have two gyms.

14 MR. WASCAVAGE: If not more.

15 MR. NOTARI: Right.

16 MR. WASCAVAGE: Rick, we --

17 MR. NOTARI: Forest City has two  
18 full court gyms.

19 MR. WASCAVAGE: So, the highest  
20 number of players we have on one team is  
21 twelve. The lowest we have is nine.

22 MR. NOTARI: So, you have roughly  
23 over 100 kids participating in the program.

24 MR. WASCAVAGE: We have 136. 136  
25 over twelve teams, yeah.

1 MR. RINALDI: Let me ask you a  
2 question.

3 MR. WASCAVAGE: Sure.

4 MR. RINALDI: Don't take this the  
5 wrong way.

6 MR. WASCAVAGE: Absolutely not.

7 MR. RINALDI: And no one in the  
8 audience take this the wrong way. It sounds  
9 like we just need another gym. The school has  
10 a lot of land, can't they build another gym?  
11 Or do we need a community center? That's what  
12 I'm asking. It just sounds like we need  
13 another gym, or do we need a community center?

14 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Yes, we need a  
15 community center.

16 MR. RINALDI: Okay.

17 MR. WASCAVAGE: This is a part of  
18 it, and unlike Marissa and Gina up here,  
19 they're speaking globally, I'm speaking about  
20 one particular niche. I'm talking about one  
21 particular problem that we have on the  
22 basketball side.

23 I can get into twenty other things  
24 that I'm in all agreeance with what they're  
25 saying, I'm just here to talk about some

1 specific numbers associated with Old Forge's  
2 basketball.

3 So, I mean, yes, it's a question of  
4 how do we get more courts, how do we get more  
5 indoor courts? I mean, the unfortunate thing  
6 is we're the one sport that you can't go in a  
7 yard, you can't go, you know, you can't ride  
8 down, go down the park and play because it's a  
9 little nippy out.

10 And it's not football, it's not  
11 baseball. You know, you can count out 60  
12 square feet and all of a sudden you have a  
13 baseball diamond and you could put that just  
14 about anywhere and have baseball practice. You  
15 could run football drills anywhere.  
16 Basketball's obviously a different story.

17 And the other inclusions that would  
18 come along with a community center are just  
19 golden for the whole thing.

20 If you've ever been up in Throop,  
21 I'd advise you to take a drive up there and  
22 take a look at what it looks like, they have a  
23 nice little library, they have a computer room,  
24 they have a gaming room, and I think they have,  
25 like, maybe eight or nine games they set up,

1 and it's fairly high tech. It's well above my  
2 pay grade of playing regular Nintendo, but it's  
3 a pretty cool, pretty neat environment that  
4 would benefit the community.

5 But, like I said, I'm just here to  
6 talk about specifically one little niche. You  
7 know, if anybody else has any further  
8 questions, I'd be happy to answer them.

9 MR. NOTARI: Thanks, Ray.

10 MR. RINALDI: No. Thank you, Ray.  
11 I appreciate it.

12 MS. AVVISATO: Thanks, Ray.

13 MR. WASCAVAGE: Thank you for your  
14 time, gentlemen.

15 MR. RINALDI: You're welcome.

16 MR. WASCAVAGE: And Michele.

17 MS. AVVISATO: Thanks buddy.

18 MR. RINALDI: Michelle Bilski.

19 MS. BILSKI: Hi everyone. Thank you  
20 for your time. I just wanted to highlight some  
21 points why I believe a community youth center,  
22 or a community center also focused on the youth  
23 may impact mental health-wise our youth.

24 Social connection and healthy habits  
25 are two of the main pillars I would say are

1 used in recovering from mental health  
2 disorders, structured activities being one of  
3 them, and like we talked about before, sports,  
4 of course, but things like arts and crafts,  
5 games, educational workshops, volunteerism,  
6 these are all things that can boost self-esteem  
7 at a young age. This helps to foster a sense  
8 of accomplishment and provide healthy outlet  
9 for stress for a lot of our kids.

10 Regular physical exercise has been  
11 linked to improving mental health by reducing  
12 anxiety, depression, stress, as well as  
13 promoting better sleep, which our kids, I  
14 think, really could benefit from, and an  
15 overall sense of wellbeing again.

16 Being part of a community center can  
17 give children a sense of belonging and  
18 connection to their community. Feeling  
19 connected is crucial for mental health. A  
20 sense of belonging provides a support system  
21 and helps children to develop positive  
22 identity.

23 And that brings me to role models  
24 and mentorship. Community support introduces  
25 children to positive role models and mentors.

1           Having individuals to look up to, whether it's  
2           older peers, community leaders, volunteers,  
3           this can inspire young minds to guide children  
4           in fostering a sense of purpose and belonging.

5                     Skill development, leadership  
6           programs, teamwork all support healthy mindset  
7           and wellbeing. Community centers can help  
8           children establish routines, learn time  
9           management skills. Having a structured routine  
10          contributes to a sense of stability and  
11          predictability positively impacting mental  
12          health.

13                    A safe environment, a well  
14          maintained and supervised community center  
15          provides a safe and secure environment for  
16          children when they're outside of school.  
17          Feeling safe is fundamental for mental  
18          wellbeing allowing children to explore, learn,  
19          play without undue stress or fear.

20                    Having a community center with a  
21          focus on youth programs for our small town not  
22          only gives us an obvious space for things to  
23          do, but it has the potential to impact our  
24          children in the long term.

25                    As I said before, it provides a