

Approved minutes – Regular Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Approved minutes – Special Meeting 4/4/2023

Approved minutes – Special/Workshop Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Special Meeting  
April 4, 2023  
6:00 P.M.

A Special Meeting of the Meyersdale Borough Council was called to order by President Folk at 6:00 PM, April 4, 2023.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss filling a vacancy on Borough Council.

Mr. Ackerman, Mr. Baker, Mr. Folk, Mrs. Gnagey, Mr. Parisi, Mayor Smith, and Solicitor Valentine were present. Mr. Baer was absent.

Mr. Folk explained that there are two applicants, a motion will be made to put the two applicants on the ballot and Council will vote via roll call vote. During the roll call vote, each member of Council will state the name of the applicant in which they are voting for. Mr. Folk voiced his concerns regarding drama and discord within Council and the malicious comments and drama that are being circulated via social media.

Mrs. Gnagey made the motion to nominate "Ginny" Knieriem at Brett's request to fill his vacancy until the end of the year, until the fall election. Mr. Parisi seconded. Motion passed.

Mr. Ackerman made the motion to nominate Mr. Jeff Irwin. Baker seconded. Motion passed.

Mr. Baker asked Solicitor Valentine if he should abstain due to the fact that he abstained at the March 14, 2023 meeting. Solicitor Valentine indicated that he can make the choice to abstain or to vote. Mr. Baker explained that he has heard rumors regarding some Council Members and people in the audience have made comments that he should abstain. He reported that he initiated the request to ask Mrs. Knieriem to apply and that he will be voting for her. He also reported that he spoke with Mr. Irwin on this date and he told him what his vote was going to be. He indicated that some think that since Mrs. Gnagey is his boss on the Municipal Authority that she has control and he is her puppet. He explained that he did not speak to Mrs. Gnagey regarding this matter. Solicitor Valentine explained that although she is a board member, she is not his boss. Mr. Baker explained that he served with Mr. Irwin on Borough Council for eight years and thought that he did a wonderful job, but that he intends to vote for Mrs. Knieriem. Mr. Baker was angered by the situation and indicated that everyone is acting like third graders.

Solicitor Valentine reported that Mr. Baer did not show up tonight because he is upset. Mayor Smith spoke to Mr. Baer prior to the meeting and Mr. Baer asked the Mayor to report to Council that he has nothing against either candidate, but that he does not agree with the process and does not want to be part of the process.

A member from the audience asked for Solicitor Valentine to explain the process.

Solicitor Valentine explained:

- Nominations must be made by motion.
- No law to indicate that the persons being nominated have the opportunity to speak, although it is his thought that it is a better process if the candidates have a chance to speak, read their letter or have their letter read.
- Council should also have the ability to ask the candidates questions.
- Our class of Borough does not have districts, wards, etc. so when you are elected to Borough Council you represent everyone in the Borough, not just a specific area. It is his opinion that everyone should have the opportunity to ask questions, because it is owed to the tax payers.
- Solicitor suggested allowing the candidates to speak and then allow Council to ask questions.

Applicants were given the opportunity to speak.

Mrs. Knieriem summarized her letter

- Soon will be a 40 year resident of Meyersdale.
- Involved in volunteer work.
- Husband has a business in which she is responsible for the financial part of.
- Has worked with state and federal government through OSHA, IRS, prevailing wage.
- Currently Treasurer of the local Elks Club, hold responsibilities there on a local and national level.
- Looks at Meyersdale and loves the town. So much opportunity here and wants to be part of moving the town forward.

Mr. Irwin

- Reported that he had apologized to Mrs. Knieriem after the last election and there are no animosities between them.
- Disappointed the way the vote took place at the last meeting.
- He became aware that Brett was going to leave, he sent an e-mail to President Folk, the Secretary and the Mayor expressing his interest in serving on Council. Councilman Parisi reached out to him and pledged his support and he would hope that the support had not changed.  
Mr. Irwin thinks that Mr. Baker should recuse himself from the vote because one of his bosses in sitting beside him, he works with the daughter of Mrs. Knieriem, and Mrs. Knieriem's sister is also a MMA Board Member. Mr. Irwin thought that you could make a good case for ethics that it is inappropriate and that Mr. Baker has a bias if he were to vote for Mrs. Knieriem.  
Mrs. Gnagey objected to the statements made by Mr. Irwin.
- Mayor Smith texted Mr. Irwin earlier in the day and reported that he received a call the evening before from the State Police (Mayor Smith interjected that a call was received, but he did not know what agency it came from) as if there was an assumption made that the Mayor would need to break a tie vote. The caller indicated that if Mr. Irwin gets the position that there will be an investigation of an old police computer and that had Mayor Smith concerned. Also there is someone saying that if Mr. Irwin gets on Council the Department of Justice and Federal Government will be involved.
- He indicated that it is very unfortunate how the matter materialized and got to this point.

Mrs. Knieriem commented that she is her own person, she makes up her own mind and she is not in anyone's back pocket. She takes offense to Mr. Irwin's statement regarding Mr. Baker, she indicated that Mr. Irwin and his sister both were on Council. Mr. Irwin commented that he and his sister were elected onto Council by the general population. She felt as though she was railroaded at the last meeting. She didn't have a chance to speak, her letter wasn't read, Jeff's letter wasn't read and Brett's resignation letter wasn't read. She indicated that she has very little communication with Terry. Her communication with Karen is limited to occasional Relay for Life events, Karen doesn't tell her what to do on Relay and she doesn't tell Karen what to do on the Borough Council. Her sister recuses herself when there are issues concerning her daughter. She just wants to help the community, it is her chance to prove that she can look into things and be a little different.

Mrs. Gnagey reported that Council was not given the applicant letters until she got the attorney involved. She indicated that the letters were denied by Mr. Folk.

There was a heated discussion whether or not members of council could ask questions. Apologies were made and Mr. Parisi was permitted to ask each candidate the following question: Why were they not on the ballot and running for Council.

Mrs. Knieriem indicated that she found out about the upcoming vacancy and thought that she would get in and help the community to fulfill the immediate need. She could go on and try in the fall.

Mr. Irwin would not want to commit to 4 years. He found out about the vacancy and want to see how things go and possibly doing a write in campaign in the fall. He has been made aware that there is quibbling amongst the Council Members and he thought that with his experience as a Council member he could create some harmony and work together. He wants to support Mayor Smith with the police, support the Borough workers and help in any way he can. It would be his hope to run on a write in campaign in the fall.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

Each member of Council named the candidate they were voting for as follows:

Mr. Ackerman – **Mr. Irwin**

Mr. Baker – **Mrs. Knieriem**

Mr. Folk – **Mr. Irwin**

Mrs. Gnagey – **Mrs. Knieriem**

Mr. Parisi – **Mrs. Knieriem**

Mrs. Knieriem was appointed to fill the vacancy by majority of the roll call with three votes.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Ackerman made the motion to adjourn. Mrs. Gnagey seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 P.M.



Patricia C. Ackerman  
Borough Secretary

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF MEYERSDALE, SOMERSET COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPOINTING AN INDIVIDUAL TO FILL A VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF MEMBER OF COUNCIL**

WHEREAS, a vacancy in the Office of Elected Member of Council of the Borough of Meyersdale, Somerset County, Pennsylvania;

WHEREAS, Section 901 of the Borough Code charges the Borough Council with filling such vacancy; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Meyersdale, Somerset County, Pennsylvania has chosen an individual to fill the vacancy; and

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Borough Council of the Borough of Meyersdale, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, that Council hereby accept the resignation creating the vacancy on Council and that Virginia Knieriem, a registered elector of the Borough, be appointed to fill the vacancy that exists in the Office of Elected Member of Council.

BE it further resolved, that the above-named individual shall take office immediately upon the individual taking the appropriate oath of office and assuming his/her seat.

Be it further resolved, that the term of the above individual shall continue as provided by applicable law.

Duly resolved, this 4th day of April, 2023, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Meyersdale, Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

BOROUGH OF MEYERSDALE

By   
President of Council

ATTEST:

  
Borough Secretary

MEYERSDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL  
 Regular Meeting \_\_\_\_\_ Special Meeting 4/7/2023

GUEST SIGN IN

PLEASE PRINT

	NAME	ADDRESS	TOPIC
1	Landy Nulki	212 Salisbury St	
2	Yvonne Kruenen	106 Sherman St	
3	Margie Ainright	124 Willow Rd	
4	Donald Fohn		
5	Jackie Pelquin	305 Broadway St #2	
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GUESTS MUST STAND WHILE SPEAKING

Meeting minutes

KAREN GNAGEY <ksgnagey@bellsouth.net>

Tue 4/4/2023 10:00 PM

To: Patricia Ackerman <meyersdaleborough@hotmail.com>

Cc: Marc Valentine <valentine.northcenterlegalassoc@gmail.com>

Hi

I want it noted in the meeting minutes that I objected twice to Jeff individually questioning elected officials on how they were going to vote during tonight's meeting.

Thank you.

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)