

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
December 19, 2016
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CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order by Council President Gay Dunne in the Bellefonte Borough Municipal Building.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Council remained standing for a moment of silence. It was requested that cell phones either be placed on vibrate or turned off.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Dunne, Hombosky, Johnson, Tosti-Vasey, Beigle, Brachbill, Clark,

Members Excused: DeCusati, Brown,

Officials Present: Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager
Mayor Tom Wilson

Staff Present:

Guests: Emma Gosalvez, Lock Haven Express; Linda Magro

CONSENT AGENDA

(The following items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and will be acted upon by a single motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless members of Council request specific items to be removed for separate action.)

- Minutes - Approval of December 5, 2016 Meeting Minutes
- Mayor – Police Exonerations
- Mayor – Police Report
- Finance – Voucher Summary November 2016: \$5,204,908.48
- Finance – Treasurer’s Report November 2016

Mr. Beigle made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. Mrs. Dunne requested the minutes be removed from the Consent Agenda. Under Parks & Recreation the final sentence said Mrs. Dunne stated anyone may join the Talleyrand Park Committee or HBI, but she meant the BHCA Committee rather than HBI.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey made a motion to change HBI to BHCA and to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous. A voice vote was unanimous to approve the Consent Agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

COMMUNICATIONS

WRITTEN

- An email regarding Historic Preservation Tax Credits possibly being repealed. There is information on how to contact legislators at the federal level. It was suggested that a letter be sent from Council and that individuals send letters also. Ms. Tosti-Vasey reported currently the Historic Tax Credits are only available for commercial properties. She encouraged individuals that now is the time to request they be expanded for residential properties also.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey made a motion that the secretary be charged with sending a letter to the Senators and our Congressman to support continuing Historic Tax Credits. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

- PEMA Winter Preparedness Tips – These will be put on the Borough website as an attachment. There are good safety tips.

- A letter from Mr. Stan Wallace, who has served in the past as the Sewage Enforcement Officer. He sent his services and the name change for his business entity. The service is done on an “as-needed” basis. This is an appointment that is done. The service is rarely needed but someone needs to be appointed in case it is needed.

Mr. Beigle made a motion to appoint Mr. Stan Wallace as the Sewage Enforcement Officer. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

- A thank you letter from D. Fanning, a resident on Holmes Street. The Borough recently installed a “no parking here to corner sign”.

- There were six emails in regard to the resolution about equity and inclusion that was tabled at the last Council meeting.

- Information on the RACP Funding. An email was received from County Staff saying the Borough can go through the state representatives and state senator to put some concept projects in the works. The funding comes through the Office of Budget. This will be discussed in a work session.

- Information about a Bike Sharing Program webinar. Council members are asked to inform Mr. Stewart if they are interested in this webinar.

- A letter from L. Magro regarding amending parking code-ordinance. It suggests possibly restricting the number of vehicles that households are permitted for on-street parking spaces to make it fairer.

- An email from a resident interested in possibly being the Assistant Borough Treasurer if that position is going to be filled.

- There is information at the table regarding Borough Association webinars. Council members should notify the Borough office if they would like to participate in any of the webinars.

ORAL

- Linda Magro wrote the letter regarding the parking ordinance. She thanked Council for considering it and referring it to the committee. She wrote it because she feels it is a serious problem in the neighborhood and encouraged Council to consider limiting the number of vehicles per resident.

Chief Weaver said he talked to the Mayor about this issue, which is a historical issue they have been dealing with in the past. As new people move in it becomes an issue. He is willing to discuss this with the Code Enforcement Officer.

- Ms. Tosti-Vasey and Chief Weaver met last week regarding domestic violence issues. Ms. Tosti-Vasey serves on the Centre County Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Task Force, which meets monthly. They discussed some upcoming issues. Bill Witmer will be the liaison between the Bellefonte Borough Police and the task force going forward. The task force is an organization that is put together across the county with police enforcement, the DA's office, the probation office, Child & Youth Services, Advocates from the Community get together trying to make sure whatever programs dealing with Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and stalking are handled in such a manner that nobody falls through the cracks.

- Chief Weaver and the Mayor met last week and if Council has any questions when it looks at the Police Report, or if there is anything they would like expanded on or done differently they should email it to the Mayor and Chief Weaver, Karen and the Mayor will sit down and see if they can develop what Council would like. Many times when there are new Council members they would like to see different things.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Draft IDA meeting minutes from December 14, 2016.

- Draft Safety Committee meeting minutes from December 14, 2016.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- Chief Weaver, Sergeant Holliday and Officer Witmer were available at the Council meeting to answer any questions. Chief Weaver said at the last Council meeting Council graciously approved the hire of Mr. Witmer. In record time they had him on the street. Bill has been a Police Officer since 2004. He began working part-time with the Borough in 2008 and shortly thereafter he took a full-time position with

Spring Township. Bellefonte is creating an atmosphere where they retain officers and they actually retire from the Bellefonte Police Force.

Council members welcomed Bill back to the force.

- Mayor Wilson said on the police report it includes the statistics and incident summary. He wants to be sure Council reads the reports. Mayor Wilson said there was a downtown business that discussed the initiative where the officers check the doors. One of the businesses left the door unlocked and the officer was able to get in through an adjoining business and lock both doors. The business owners complimented the department on that service.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

ZONING/PLANNING

- An email was received from Centre County Planning Office saying the County is planning to develop a residential lot along Wood Street. The lot is near Centre Crest.

- In the next few months the County will be going out to bid on their rain garden by the Courthouse Annex. That will include the elevated walkway. The Borough asked if they could do an alternate bid for the downhill side of High Street. That would provide an estimate of what it would cost to mirror the rain garden and the elevated walkway to provide some symmetry.

HARB

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

1) Repair Clocks in the tower of the Court House

Mr. Beigle made a motion to approve this Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion. Ms. Tosti-Vasey asked about frosted acrylic versus clear acrylic. Ms. Tosti-Vasey would like the frosted look maintained. After discussion, a voice vote was unanimous.

- Draft HARB meeting minutes from December 13, 2016. Ms. Tosti-Vasey said the Parks & Recreation Committee met a few weeks ago with the BHCA Preservation Committee. They are working on plaques throughout town. She feels the logos used on the buildings referred to in the minutes should look similar to the other historic plaques in town. Mr. Stewart said this came out of an agreement from approximately two years ago. Joann Knupp and Susan Hoover are the two contact people regarding the signs.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey did not understand the last paragraph in the minutes when they discussed the original architect and she wanted to know if Anna Wagner Keichline got paid with a car.

BUILDING AND PROPERTY – There will be a Committee meeting before the next Borough Council meeting to review the proposals for the parking lot design.

FINANCE AND GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE – Mr. Brachbill made a motion to approve the 2017 Budget. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. Mr. Stewart said it is a total Borough-wide budget for \$11,161,479.00. It involves all the projects, capital and operating. It does include fees as part of the revenue. It has been advertised and available for public inspection. A voice vote was unanimous.

- Mr. Beigle made a motion to approve the 2017 Tax Levy Ordinance. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. This levy increases the real estate taxes 1 mil. The millage will be 15.265.

- The Authority approved rate changes in the Water System and the Wastewater System. The water rate change is an increase of \$.05 per thousand, bringing the rate to \$5.60 per 1,000 gallons. The sewer increase is \$10.00 per quarter for a total of \$120.00 per quarter. Refuse rates went up \$1.00 a quarter and will now be \$57.00 per quarter.

- Mr. Brachbill made a motion to adopt the revised fee schedule. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Ms. Tosti-Vasey made an amendment to the motion to remove anything that talks about violations because those are fines and not fees. All those violations have the fees designated by ordinance. Mr. Holderman can create a separate document with the varying violation fines that are set by ordinance. The second half of her motion is under parks where it says Talleyrand Park Rentals to add the wording fees exempted for non-profits upon Council approval.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey made a two part motion: first, remove any blocks or squares that discuss violations or fines; second, under the Talleyrand Park Rental Section on page five add a sentence that says rental fees exempted for non-profits upon Council approval. Ms. Hombosky seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

A voice vote was unanimous.

- The Current v. Prior for November 2016 was in the packet for review.

- The Budget V. Actual for November 2016 was in the packet for review.

PARK AND RECREATION – Ms. Hombosky received an email from Mr. Holderman regarding a grant the Borough receives. Mr. Stewart said it was for the pergola at Talleyrand Park and some ADA accessibility issues on the brick walkway; mud sill work on the bank across from the main park. The local match came from local community groups.

-The Committee met this week to discuss signage. They have the icon down to one of two pictures

HUMAN RESOURCES – Ms. Tosti-Vasey thanked Bob “Pete” Peters for his sixteen years of service with Bellefonte Borough. He worked with the Water Department and

will be retiring on December 31, 2016. She wished him luck and asked him to come back to visit.

- A meeting has been scheduled with the union regarding the Police Contract Negotiations for Wednesday, December 28th.

SAFETY – No report.

WATER/SANITATION – Draft Water Authority meeting minutes from December 13, 2016 were in the packet for review. Mrs. Dunne questioned the increase for Corning line customers. Mr. Stewart reported that was previously approved.

- Mr. Beigle requested citizens to report anything unusual with water, such as a break or leak, to report it to the Borough.

- Refuse pickup for Monday, December 26th, will be picked up on Wednesday, December 28th. A robo call will be done. Please make sure you phone number is registered with the Borough.

- Mr. Beigle reported the Solid Waste Authority did a study on recyclables and they decided to continue with recycling in their current manner because the residents are trained on what to recycle. He said some areas do not recycle and Mr. Stewart stated you have to have a population of 5,000 residents and then you are mandated to recycle.

STREETS – Mr. Johnson reported they had an informal meeting tonight before the Council meeting in regard to the unordained streets and the trees on them. He feels this should be dealt with at a work session. Mr. Stewart will put the legal opinion in the packets for Council to review before a work session. Mr. Stewart will take a map of the Borough and highlight the unordained streets that need to be reviewed.

- Mr. Johnson complimented the Borough staff for getting the roads cleared in a timely manner.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION – Mrs. Dunne said the Sustainability Expo was very informative. The sustainability students who have been involved in projects in partnership with other entities created posters and were anxious to share their information with people in attendance. There was a risk assessment done for the State College Borough that was very interesting. Mrs. Dunne felt it was inspiring to talk to the students and think about projects the Borough could take on.

OLD BUSINESS

- War Memorials database pertains to large memorials/monuments – Mr. Stewart talked to some members of the County planning staff that originally sent the email. They clarified that they are only interested in the larger memorials or war monuments.

There is one in the Union Cemetery called Soldiers Circle, but they said it doesn't qualify as a war memorial because it was put there for different purposes. What you see in front of the Courthouse is what they have in mind.

- 2017 Appointments/Reappointments –

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve Joe Beigle to the Authority for a five-year term. Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous. Mr. Beigle abstained.

Mr. Brachbill made a motion to approve Kent Addis for a new term going into 12/31/22, a six year term, for the Civil Service Commission. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey made a motion to appoint Jeff Stover as the Borough Solicitor for 2017. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to appoint Debra Burger as Borough Council Treasurer. Mr. Beigle seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

The application for Assistant Treasurer will be turned over to the Human Resources Committee for review.

Mr. Brachbill made a motion to appoint Justin Miller to the Centre County Library Board. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to appoint James Mills to the Planning Commission. Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey made a motion to appoint Karen Harvey to the Shade Tree Commission. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

Mr. Beigle made a motion to reappoint Don Franson as Storm Water Engineer. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

Mr. Beigle made a motion to reappoint Mark Johnson to the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous. There are still a few vacancies that need filled.

Council asked if there is a vacancy on the Council. Mrs. Dunne said Council can go no further with applications that are received until Mr. DeCusati announces his resignation date.

- A memo from Mr. Stewart regarding Equity and Inclusion – Mr. Stewart said Council is there to serve any resident. Mr. Stewart, Mr. Holderman and Mrs. Dunne liked Ferguson Township's version of a resolution and included it in the packet for discussion.

Mr. Beigle feels it is creating fear with what is going on. The statement says people in the small community of Bellefonte are afraid and that bothers him. He feels there is a hysteria that is created and the press got on the bandwagon and turned it 180 degrees around. The press put a lot of thoughts in people's heads that is not there. He said a lot of the letters came from out of the area. He said the people in this town are friendly and he doesn't understand why anybody would be afraid.

Mr. Brachbill read Ferguson's and likes some things and disagrees with some things. He agrees with Mr. Beigle that the media has driven this. He said Council took an oath and another resolution can be made to make people feel better, but you have to be careful that you don't put Bellefonte in a situation where you failed somewhere.

He would like it tabled so it can be reviewed and generalized so it's an "all do" for everyone.

Mrs. Dunne suggested it could be a reaffirmation of how people have always been welcomed but not spoken about it. Maybe it could be considered in that way rather than a political way.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey is hearing people say is including a reaffirmation statement within the resolution or whatever is done to say Council reaffirms the long-standing commitment towards accepting and welcome people of the community might help.

Mr. Beigle suggested putting an advertisement in the paper saying Bellefonte is a friendly community.

Ms. Hombosky feels this is a nice thing that is getting jammed up.

Mr. Clark said every email is from somebody outside the community and it is very frustrating to him.

Mrs. Dunne feels the basic attitude has been fair and good all along, but if it is time to reaffirm that it may be appropriate to do so.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey is going to work on a draft.

NEW BUSINESS

- The first work session of 2017 will be January 3 before the Council meeting. There will be a list of the notable accomplishments for 2016 and projects going in to 2017. Mr. Stewart would also like to review policy issues and priorities for Council.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- None.

ADJOURNMENT

- With no other business to come before Council Mr. Beigle made a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting of December 19, 2016, at 8:57 p.m. Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Following adjournment Council went into Executive Session to discuss Real Estate.