

**BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL
REORGANIZATION MEETING
JANUARY 6, 2014
www.bellefonte.net**

CALL TO ORDER

The reorganization meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Wilson 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.

SWEARING IN

Council members Karen J. Harvey, Joseph Beigle, Paul DeCusati and Gay Dunne were sworn in by Mayor Wilson.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Beigle, Brachbill, Brown, DeCusati, Dunne, Halderman, Harvey, Li, Ramish, Schneider, Spicer

Members Excused:

Officials Present: Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager
Don Holderman, Assistant Borough Manager
Mayor Tom Wilson

Staff Present:

Guests: Julia Kasdorf; Mary Prendergast; Mary Vallero; Joseph Griffin;

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Mr. Beigle nominated Mr. Halderman. Mr. Brachbill nominated Mr. Schneider. Mrs. Dunne made a motion to close the nominations. Mr. Beigle seconded the motion.

A hand count vote was taken for Mr. Halderman. Mr. Halderman received six votes and will serve as Council President.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Dunne nominated Paul DeCusati. Mr. Schneider made a motion to close nominations. Mr. DeCusati will serve as Council Vice President.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF PRESIDENT PRO TEM

Mr. DeCusati nominated Gay Dunne. Mr. Beigle made a motion to close the nominations. Gay Dunne will serve as Council President Pro Tem.

TRANSFER OF GAVEL FROM MAYOR TO PRESIDENT

Mayor Wilson transferred the gavel to Council President Halderman.

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 16, 2013 minutes.
- Finance - McQuaide Blasko Invoice for November 2013.
- New Business - Approve Fee Schedule Changes.

Mr. Schneider made a motion to approve the consent agenda minus the Fee Schedule Changes. Mrs. Dunne seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

Mr. Schneider made a motion to approve the Fee Schedule Changes as presented. Mr. Beigle seconded the motion. Mrs. Dunne had a question regarding where some of the fee schedule changes came from. Specifically she questioned the equipment rental fee. Mr. Stewart stated there has been a list of equipment hourly rates for years and it needed to be updated to reflect the cost increase. The equipment isn't leased to the individuals, but that is the rate that will be charged for the Borough crew to use the equipment. Mr. Schneider suggested removing the fee rates out of the Codification of Ordinances and placed into a fee schedule so the ordinance doesn't have to be opened all the time to change a fee. The fee schedule is available online. There were only approximately ten fees that changed. A voice vote was unanimous.

Karen Harvey and Mr. Hockenberry were present at the December 16, 2013 meeting but they are not listed in the minutes.

COMMUNICATIONS

WRITTEN

- Mr. Stewart provided information regarding the Newly Elected Municipal Officials Training. The closest location is at the Hampton Inn in Clearfield, PA on February 7 and 8. Any interested members should inform Mr. Stewart and the Borough will take care of registration.

- A letter from Kerry A. Benninghoff, State Representative, 171st Legislative District, in regard to the recently passed Transportation Bill and identified some of the major line items that are important to local governments; specifically the increase in the prevailing wage levels for transportation projects.

Mr. DeCusati suggested exploring which grants and monies the Borough would like to apply for. Mr. Stewart stated the Borough is watching for grant opportunities as they become available.

- A letter from Andrew Richards, Treasurer, BHRS (Bellefonte Historical Railroad Society) thanking the Bellefonte Fire Police for their help during the Santa Express train rides on December 21 and 22.

The BHRS has donated \$250 to the Bellefonte Fire Police, through the Borough, as an expression of appreciation for their efforts.

- An email from Cynthia L. Hahn, C-NET, advising of slight changes to the C-NET schedule for 2014. Council meetings will be aired on Wednesday at 10:00 p.m.; Thursday at 7:00 a.m.; Friday at 2:00 p.m.; Friday at 6:00 p.m.; and Sunday at 1:00 p.m.

- A letter from Sally Houser, Event Chair, Bellefonte Victorian Christmas, thanking Bellefonte Borough Council, Management, and Employees for their continued support before and during the Bellefonte Victorian Christmas weekend.

ORAL

- Mary Vallero, 137 North Spring Street, thanked all the Council members and the Mayor for their service. She mentioned in recent meetings public comments are invited at the beginning but refused during the meetings. She stated this was a problem this summer at County Commissioners meetings and they resolved that problem by not only accepting comments at the beginning but if a new topic is brought up they allow the public to be heard and that is in keeping with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Law 107, which is intended to ensure that public meetings actually do provide an opportunity for public comment.

She stated this has been a difficult season for Bellefonte as they grieve the loss of two beautiful historic buildings on the diamonds. She questioned the rush to flatten the Garman on a cold Saturday morning. She asked if they wanted to be sure the Garman came down before the final BHCA's appeal was heard in court or before Borough Council could meet and try to stop the demolition. She stated the wall of the Courthouse Annex was damaged this weekend and damage to the building on the uphill side is a continued risk as demolition proceeds. On Saturday there was a water pipe break under the street from the weight. She is relieved that they didn't work today and hopes they don't work tomorrow. She feels it is ill advised for demolition to continue in these temperatures when both electric and water have been affected already.

She continued if the developer is under a Borough mandated timetable to finish in February could those dates be adjusted by the Borough? She said the Do-De and a large chunk of the Garman are now gone but from what remains you can see how well built the Garman is. She saw a worker walking into the second floor. Since the theatre,

the stage, the balcony, the dome and the chandelier are still intact she calls for Borough Council to suspend demolition until BHCA's appeal could be heard in Court. If the appeal would be successful it would be in the best interest of the Borough to minimize the damage done to this historic building.

Roger Herman, a Curtin Street resident for more than forty years. Years ago he sat on Council and one of the first things that happened was that there was a motion passed to raze the South Ward school building. He had a six-month moratorium put on the destruction pending a search for a sympathetic buyer. When that was publicized Henry Harannin stepped forward and bought the building and converted it to apartments. He feels this is a time with this Council organizing itself to make a committee with a chairman devoted to the idea of historic preservation and beautification of the Borough.

Mr. Herman was very interested in Ms. Dainty canvassing her people to see if they favored putting money into preservation. He asked if any of the other people were canvassed to see if purchasing the Armory property for \$750,000.00 with no real purpose was a good idea.

- Joseph Griffin, 133 North Spring Street, reported Art Curtsy wanted to be at the meeting but had another commitment. Mr. Curtsy was prepared to invest a very substantial amount of money to restore the Garman Opera House. He asked that Mr. Griffin would communicate his sentiment to Borough Council. He stated Bellefonte just destroyed one of the last best remaining reasons that anyone would come to visit, stay awhile and spend money; or for the community to get involved in an exciting uplifting project that would help preserve Bellefonte's history and legacy. He weeps for all the B&B proprietors and small business owners in the historic district who will experience losses due to certain Council members' shortsightedness and haste.

- Mrs. Dunne wanted to respond to Roger. She was on the Building and Property Committee regarding his design for the Big Spring and she did look into it to some extent. She will talk with him later.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Beigle reported things are quiet at the airport and flights were delayed.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- Mayor Wilson thanked and commended the people that came out to speak to Council when it is such a cold and blustery evening. Their dedication is to be commended. Mayor Wilson welcomed the new members of Council and he has paperwork for them to sign at the end of the meeting. He looks forward to the future of Council and the dedication to Bellefonte.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

ZONING/PLANNING

- Conklin: Lot Consolidation Plan Approval - Mr. Beigle made a motion to approve the Conklin Lot Consolidation Plan. Mr. Schneider seconded the plan. A voice vote was unanimous.

- Ingram Convenience/Service Station: Plan Approval - This will not be acted on until more information is received from the engineer.

- Ms. Dainty stated the Facade Grant was submitted on Thursday, January 2, 2014. She received ten letters of interest. She thanked the CDT for the great job they did in getting the word out. The Borough will know in April 2014 if the grant was received.

HARB

- None.

OLD BUSINESS

- Mr. Schneider reported in December 2013 a Federal Grant was applied for on behalf of both fire companies in Bellefonte. It is a \$199,000.00 for equipping both fire stations with automatic fire sprinklers. A decision will be made in the next nine to ten months if the grant was received. It is under the American Fire Grants Program under DHS.

- Mr. Stewart reported at the work session prior to the January 20, 2014 Council meeting to give everyone an overview of projects that are being worked on.

NEW BUSINESS

- Mr. Schneider made a motion to fill the following positions. Mr. DeCusati seconded the motion. Mrs. Brown suggested Karen Harvey serve on the Shade Tree Commission. The motion was amended to add Karen Harvey on the Shade Tree Commission and seconded. The amendment passed. The original motion was approved.

Airport Authority

Joe Beigle

Borough Authority

Daniel Badger

Jack Bechdel

HARB

Tammy Shuster

Alan Uhler

Megan Tooker
IDA
Paul Badger
Matthew Hill
Nittany Valley Joint Planning Commission
Randy Brachbill
Robert Dannaker
Planning Commission
Courtney Dickman
Shade Tree Commission
Vacancy
Zoning Hearing Board
William Luther
Housing Board of Appeals
Vacancy
Vacancy

- The question was asked if McQuaide Blasko invoices run a month behind, which they typically do.

- Mr. Brachbill found distractions during the work session with C-NET setting up. He asked if something could be done regarding that.

- Mr. Halderman would like Council members to inform him about what committees they would like to serve on so he can make appointments. The new Council members will be sent a list of the committees to help with their decision. Mr. Halderman would like the Junior Council members to get involved in committees also.

- Mrs. Brown asked if revenue is being received for the nine meters that are bagged downtown. They are charged \$10.00 per day.

- Mrs. Brown asked the process to reopen the budget for new Council members to look at it. Mr. Schneider suggested giving them a budget and allowing them to read it before doing anything. The library fund line item can be changed without changing the tax rate. Mr. Schneider requested adding this to the work session to answer questions.

ADJOURNMENT

- With no other business to come before Council Mr. Schneider made a motion to adjourn the meeting of January 6, 2014 at 8:20 p.m. Ms. Dunne seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.