

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

June 19, 2017 @ 7:30 p.m.

236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823

www.bellefonte.net

6:00 p.m. HR Committee – Interviews Nuisance Code Enforcement Position

6:30 p.m. Work Session

- **Parking Lot Designs Overview**
- **Summary of Parks and Fishing Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER:

The June 19, 2017 regular meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order by President Gay Dunne at 7:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Gay Dunne
Joe Beigle
Randall Brachbill
Melissa Hombosky
Doug Johnson
Joanne Tosti-Vasey
Renee Brown
Taylor Lake

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Courtney Dickman

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager
Tom Wilson, Mayor

GUESTS: Emma Gonsalvez, The Express
John Kostas

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

The June 5, 2017, minutes were revised.

**Mr. Brachbill moved to approve the minutes, as revised.
Mr. Beigle seconded the motion;
Motion carried via voice vote.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

(The following items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered 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).

Letter Request CROPWALK

Letter Request re: Use of Fire Police at Philipsburg Heritage Days

Mayor: Police Report; Police Exonerations

Finance: Treasurer's Report May 2017; Voucher Summary May 2017: \$1,630,279.18.

Mr. Tosti-Vasey moved to approve the Consent Agenda;
Ms. Lake seconded;
Motion carried via voice vote.

(At this juncture Ms. Dunne indicated that an anonymous Complaint was received regarding Borough employees, and this would be discussed in Executive Session after the regular meeting).

REGULAR AGENDA:

COMMUNICATIONS:

Written:

Letter from H. Fritchman re: speeding on E. Howard Street

Police were notified and nothing was notably done. Mayor Wilson indicated that the police will sit at the problem areas. With a 10-12 mile variance, and no radar, Mayor Wilson indicated that it is hard to ticket drivers. He will speak with the Chief again about setting a presence up on Howard Street. The speeding occurs usually around 7:30 and 8 a.m. The speed limit is 25, changes to 35 and then changes back to 25 mph. The lack of a stop sign at Wilson and Howard on Howard was discussed briefly. Howard is a PennDOT road and any traffic apparatus would need to meet their criteria, which this

intersection does not. A representative from the police department will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss speeding issues and some of the stop sign issues.

Email from Bellefonte EMS re HP 699 Medical Assistance Insurance

Email from Scott Rhoat regarding PUC issues relating to transport and discussing financial difficulty. This was geared toward the bus. This sector of the EMS service is what helps them stay ahead financially. Mr. Stewart will inquire whether they need a support letter from the Borough.

Memo from Bellefonte Borough Authority recommending appointment of Joe Falcone to the Authority

Memo from Mr. Stewart from the Borough Authority supporting appointment of Joe Falcone to the Authority. Mr. Beigle interjected that Mr. Falcone attended the most recent Authority meeting and spoke highly of his skill, interest and experience.

Mr. Johnson moved to appoint Joseph Falcone to the Bellefonte Borough Authority;
Mr. Beigle seconded the motion;
Motion carried via voice vote.

PSAB Legislative Update

Notice from the Borough Association to take action and oppose the UCC Third Party Agency bill. This is regarding multiple code agencies being permitted to operate under the Borough. This creates safety concerns and lack of control. The association is asking that we oppose the bill. Ms. Dunne reported that the contract and agreement has already been signed with Centre Region Code Agency. The bill is devised to eliminate the current “monopoly.” The legislation raises excessive fees for code enforcement. The bill sponsored will give residents the opportunity to have inspectors compete at reasonable and competitive prices. If three are available, then the resident would get to choose who they would like to use for the inspector. Fees were discussed briefly. Ms. Hombosky suggested that perhaps someone in the state is abusing the inspection system, so this is a tool to correct that. If it passes through legislators, all must comply. Right now it is just proposed legislation and not law. Council members chose to neither support or oppose this bill.

Ms. Brown moved that the bill is neither supported nor opposed by Borough Council this time;
Mr. Beigle seconded the motion;
Motion carried via voice vote.

Using eCode 360 for Assistance in Ordinance Development.

For Council information – eCode 360 information.

Thank you letter from Centre County Library re: Borough Road Workers

Noise construction was reduced during a concert.

Email re: Annual Transmission Helicopter Vegetation Patrol

Chopper will do fly bys doing vegetation inspections for West Penn power. June 19-July 30, 2017.

Stream Work to Take Plac in Spring Creek

Work near Sunnyside area to restore a boating channel as a result of the flooding last October.

Quaker Cemetery

This sits near South Spring and Crawford Lane. The South facing wall is leaning inward. Matt Auman contacted the trust rep and the rep indicated that they do not have the funds to rebuild the stone wall. This is not in the historical district and most of the cemetery lies in Spring Township. Solutions were tossed around to find funding for this wall restoration. The BHCA historic preservation committee is meeting this Friday at 4 p.m. and this issue will be discussed at the meeting. Mr. Stewart will follow up. Garman Fund with the other sources may also be a solution. The BHCA historic preservation committee is creating a foundation which is not confined to Bellefonte and Curtin Village falls under the scope. Ms. Brown suggested that the CPI students fix the wall as a project this fall. This was not complained of by a resident; Borough staff saw the wall leaning and put up some safety taping around it.

Webinar and education handout for the Borough Association

ORAL:

Shannon Wright introduced herself to Council. She talked about her background and stated that she is very excited to be with the Borough.

Ms. Dunne talked about the Soap Box Derby over the weekend and stated that it was well attended and the children enjoyed themselves. It was cleaned up nicely afterwards.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey thanked Big Springs Spirits for putting together the Central PA Tasting Trail event. It was well attended (close to 2000 people coming in and out approximately).

They sold more tickets than expected and they did take care of controlling of the liquor. All in all it was a good time. They did a good job with clean up as well.

Ms. Brown indicated that the railroad event went over well and the Cruise was a success.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

Special Committee Reports:

Safety Committee Minutes June 14, 2017 DRAFT
IDA Meeting Minutes June 14, 2017 DRAFT

The weeds at the waterfront were discussed. Mr. Stewart received calls and emails about this. The IDA did speak about it at their meeting. Weeding was discussed. The plan was to plant wild flowers. Grass maintenance was discussed. The flowers that are coming up are nice but there are very many weeds, too many to weed. Recommendations from the Gardening Club were suggested. Mr. Stewart suggested checking with the people that did the landscape design to see what they would suggest. The possibilities will be investigated. The area will be trimmed down in the meantime.

Centre Area Cable Consortium:

Ms. Dunne reported on this meeting. She represented Bellefonte at the meeting last Friday. The meeting was held because the franchise negotiation attorney had retired and another attorney needed to be appointed. Cohen Law Group was recommended by the technical committee.

Mayor's Report:

Police report and exonerations reports were received. Brief discussion on the police report re: time of incidences. Mayor Wilson will look into including this in the report.

The Cruise took place without much incident, other than rain.

Mayor Wilson thanked Borough Council for allowing the craft festival (Big Spring Spirits) to take place in the park. The Mayor talked with a number of people that had come in from the surrounding areas. There was a good representation from other areas. There were a lot of ticket sales (double what they had anticipated). The restaurants that were opened got a lot of over flow business. Council was thanked for allowing this event.

The Sahakian office building complex was asked about often. It is a business office with unknown occupancy at this time. Stores and offices are supposed to be going into the center.

Office of Community Affairs:

HARB Items

Certificates of Appropriateness: 140 S. Allegheny Street, 135 N. Thomas St., 414 W. High Street, and 107 W. Logan Street.

107 W. Logan was removed by Ms. Dunne.

The HARB meeting minutes were discussed in that there seemed to be a lot going on without permits before beginning work. Consistency seems to be missing from some of the HARB decisions that are brought forward for approval. The Logan Street original application was approved; i.e., metal roof with ripple instead of standing seam. Mr. Stewart recapped the research done on roofs that were previously approved by HARB. Two incidents were found where this style of roof was approved. A similar roof was approved at the same meeting at 135 N. Thomas Street. Ms. Dunne reminded Council that on April 23 standing seam metal roof was conditionally approved. Council echoed the conditional approval on May 1. Mr. Stewart indicated that HARB did not make a blanket decision. He was concerned as the applicant was sitting in the audience most likely wondering how the others got approved and her roof was not.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey spoke with Ms. Wright about what was more appropriate regarding the roofs. The ripple style is not historically accurate for buildings of certain vintage and would not meet the guidelines of the National Trust of Historic Preservation which is where the guidelines come from. Ms. Tosti-Vasey's concerns are that if the roof is in the appropriate place it is okay, but it is a problem when trying to keep the town as a place to attract people to and expand economic development. This is a historical town, and we have great pride in what the town is trying to preserve.

Ms. Hombosky did not feel that homeowners living on Logan Street needed to be burdened with undue financial issues. She feels that historical appropriateness may vary in different neighborhoods.

Shingle roofs were discussed as a lesser cost alternative. Mr. Stewart indicated that this was presented as an option at Logan Street. The homeowner wanted to go with metal due to roof life.

The HARB administrator was asked by HARB to see if she would research what other HARB groups are doing relative to roofs.

**Mr. Beigle moved to approve the certificate for 140 South Allegheny Street;
Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion;
Motion carried via voice vote.**

**Mr. Beigle moved to approve the certificate for 135 N. Thomas Street;
Ms. Hombosky seconded the motion;**

The roof is inappropriate for the age of the building, per Ms. Tosti-Vasey.

Motion carried with one nay (Ms. Tosti-Vasey).

**Ms. Tosti-Vasey moved to approve the certificate for 414 W. High Street;
Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion;
Motion carried via voice vote.**

**Mr. Beigle moved to approve the certificate of 107 W. Logan Street;
Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion;
Motion carried with one nay (Ms. Tosti-Vasey).**

It was noted that HARB has a difficult job and it is appreciated.

HARB Minutes for the June 13, 2017, meeting were presented to Council.

Building and Property

The draft lease with the Café on the Park was discussed briefly. They are interested in leasing a part of the park land adjacent to the café. A lease was sent for review. Waiting on property owner comments. Mayor Wilson stated that he spoke with the owner at the tasting event, and he indicated that he looked at the lease and it is okay with him. He is just very busy.

Finance and Gov't Performance:

Ms. Brown reported on the current and priors. Insurance coverage RFP has gone out and is due back June 28. A July meeting will be held to review.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey attended the PSAB training in State College. She picked up a few packets. Budget planning was discussed.

Parks and Recreation:

Ms. Hombosky reported on the work session. Fishing on the waterfront was discussed at that time and a conclusion is drawing. She believes that working with Fish and Wild life will be the best option. She would like to have a meeting soon to discuss Krauss Park and make it a little nicer for residents. Everything is on schedule for the Liberty Swing. Rubber mulch or some other rubber base is needed. Waiting on that.

Human Resources:

Ms. Tosti-Vasey reported on the Water Authority appointment of Mr. Falcone. The nuisance code enforcement officer left about a month ago. Informal interviews were conducted. The position will be offered once the finances are figured out.

Brief discussion was held on hiring a part time employee without going through HR committee. The policy was questioned and discussed. The position being vacant for a month must put a lot of pressure on administration. Mr. Johnson inquired how this is carried out. Ms. Tosti-Vasey indicated that there were no applicants until about one week ago. Mr. Stewart indicated that things moved along as quickly as they could have.

Ms. Dunne and Mr. Brachbill indicated that the managers should make the decisions on the hires. The HR committee is an additional component, and it appears to be a challenge to combine these seamlessly.

It was reiterated by Mr. Johnson that the managers should be able to hire a 10-15 hour a week job without such a long drawn out process.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey opined that this “delay” was a result of the applications not coming in until late. She is a little frustrated that this concern about the function of the Human Resources Committee has come up two or three times. It seems to focus on the Human Resources Committee and this issue of hiring and review of applicants is viewed by some as not being part of the committee’s responsibility.

Difficulties arise without a policy in place. The nepotism policy was brought up as well. Ms. Dunne questioned parameters for a hiring process policy.

Mr. Stewart said that depending on the flavor of Council, regarding involvement, hiring takes on different duty due to the lack of a general policy. Mr. Stewart has hired from point “a to z” and just let Council know it was done to having Council fully involved. With other councils, like now, the HR Committee is and has been more fully involved. He advised that Council can be involved in how much they would like to be involved. The HR Committee was explained.

Mr. Hombosky interjected that the HR committee works hard and very quickly on matters. Ms. Dunne indicated that discussion should be held on this issue outside of the

Council meeting. When Mr. Holderman comes back from vacation, he can advise on this subject. A work session was called for on this matter, and on the committee structure as a whole.

Safety:

Mr. Brachbill reported on the Centre County Code Comparison of Monthly Code Statistics. The new report forms kick in this month. These should be in the next report in July.

Ms. Hombosky inquired about the I99 interchange tree cutting. This was not discussed at Safety Committee Meeting.

Other:

Water/Sanitation.

Mr. Beigle reported on the Authority meeting and minutes. Executive session to follow this meeting.

Streets.

Mr. Johnson reported that Rte.144/W. Linn St project has begun. Allegheny Street will be closed starting on June 22. Reminder to residents that this will be closed to Milesburg. This will increase traffic on Howard Street as a result of people trying to reach Interstate 80.

Temporary flashers were in operation to prepare residents for the delay.

Energy and Environmental Conservation

Ms. Lake missed the meeting. Ms. Tosti-Vasey reported on the solar panels. She reported that they met with Code Enforcement and a local solar panel installer. Model ordinance was reviewed. Anything redundant with the Uniform Construction Code was removed. Ordinance was revised drastically. The ordinance will be brought back for review.

Ms. Lake reported on the conference of Sustainability Communities. Sustainability was discussed with regard to current issues but always looking at the future as well. She was impressed with all the information she received. If a community is not focused on being sustainable, they will not succeed in the future. Sustainability is not just regarding environmental issues, it also has to do with finance, streets, planning, safety, etc. All of these items fall together. Communities also need to work together. Ms. Lake requested that other members of Council who may have attended previous meetings, pass them along to her. She also mentioned certification by the State. It was a very detailed presentation. There is a website. This is voluntary and fluid. This is not regulation. It

offers structure for a plan and ways to make the community aware of what is going on. The certification would be for the community – Bellefonte Borough. Five levels of certifications are available which are geared to allow communities to figure out how to use this to their own benefit.

OLD BUSINESS:

Feral Cats policy – Mayor Wilson thought this was referred to a committee. Ms. Lake volunteered her committee.

Memo from Mr. Stewart – former Skills home on East Linn Street
Hearts for the Homeless – representatives will be at the next Council meeting

Economic Development Summit, June 20, 2017 at Mt. View Country Club

Morgan Materials had a ribbon cutting – first global company to establish itself in Centre County.

Borough/County Town Hall meeting June 8, 2017 - report
Mr. Brachbill felt that it went well and thought it would be nice to have more public attendance. Consensus was that it needed to be better advertised. Regardless of the low turnout, the meeting was positive and it demonstrates the Borough and County working together, which benefits everyone.

Mayor Wilson wanted to thank Lucy Rogers, President of the Central PA Tasting Trail.

A question was raised on whether the draft of the IDA minutes in the Council packet were public. They become public information after the IDA's approval at its next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Memo - Consider reviewing and revising draft Minutes prior to Action at Meeting.

Memo from Mr. Stewart regarding reviewing the draft Council minutes prior to the meeting for changes. Discussion was held on the process. Mr. Stewart explained that the minutes are draft until approved. It was suggested that any minor changes are made prior and the draft in the packet should be ready to go and approve. This is an attempt to reduce time spent at the meetings. Ms. Lake stated that this was the process that was followed in the academia positions she worked in. Mr. Stewart explained that major items can still be discussed during the meeting, if needed. The minutes at the Council meeting are still in draft form. Council members will be able to look at the minutes twice. Ms. Dunne felt it was a good move to try this.

Mr. Brachbill moved to try the recommendation of Council minutes transcriptionist to review and revise the draft minutes prior to the Council meetings;

Ms. Hombosky seconded the motion;

Motion carried via voice vote.

OTHER:

Mr. Johnson inquired about making comments on the Pa State Association of Boroughs. Mr. Stewart's award was mentioned. Mr. Johnson reported on violence in the communities – presentation was done by the Police Chief from Murrysville. It was suggested that more training is done on incidences of crime (when they are least expected). Government grants were discussed, maintaining meeting decorum, policy making, and radar for local municipalities. The sponsor of this bill was present and has been going on for about seven years. He wanted to congratulate Mr. Stewart on receiving the Borough Certification award. (*applause*).

With nothing more to come before Council,

Mr. Brachbill moved to adjourn the June 19, 2017, Council meeting;

Mr. Johnson seconded the motion;

Motion was adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Executive session to follow.