

**BELLEFONTE BOROUGH  
COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES**

**August 21, 2017 @ 7:30 p.m.  
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823  
[www.bellefonte.net](http://www.bellefonte.net)**

**5:45 p.m. Street Committee – Columbia Gas Line Replacement – Thomas Street  
6:15 p.m. Executive Session – Legal  
6:30 p.m. Work Session – Police Department Staffing Issues**

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

The August 21, 2017 regular meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Ms. Dunne.

Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence.

**ROLL CALL:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Gay Dunne  
Randall Brachbill  
Melissa Hombosky  
Doug Johnson  
Joanne Tosti-Vasey  
Taylor Lake  
Joseph Beigle

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Renee Brown  
Courtney Dickman

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager  
Don Holderman, Assistant Borough Manager  
Tom Wilson, Mayor

**GUESTS:** Emma Gonsalvez, The Express  
Sean Yoder, The Gazette  
Matt Hill  
Stanford Lembeck

Caroline Lembeck  
David Helsel  
David Lembeck  
Sue Lembeck-Edens  
Michael Lembeck-Edens

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

**Mr. Brachbill moved to approve the Minutes of the August 7, 2017 Council Meeting;**  
**Ms. Tosti-Vasey 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).

*Email Request – Bellefonte Little League (pulled for discussion)*

*Mayor - Police Exonerations*

*Mayor – Police Report*

*Finance – Voucher Summary July 2017 - \$742,923.18*

*Finance – Treasurer’s Report July 2017*

**Ms. Tosti-Vasey moved to approve the Consent Agenda;**  
**Ms. Hombosky seconded the motion;**  
**Motion carried via voice vote.**

Email request – Bellefonte Little League was pulled from the agenda. The Little League is requesting a banner be placed on the bridge for a two month period through December and January. This would create a conflict for the Victorian Christmas festivities. The banner can be displayed for a maximum of 60 days. Displaying the banner after Victorian Christmas is recommended.

**Mr. Brachbill moved to approve the request for the Bellefonte Little league banner to be displayed starting after the second weekend in December as not to interfere with Victorian Christmas;**  
**Mr. Beigle seconded the motion;**  
**Motion carried via voice vote.**

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

**Written:**

***Letter from DCED re: CDBG Program FFY 2010-13 Corrective Action Plan  
Letter from DCED CDBG FY2015 Conditioned Project – Bellefonte Borough***

Mr. Stewart offered expansion on the two letters regarding the CDBG block grant program. The first letter relates to the correction action plan that was submitted to the Department and will be implemented.

The second letter is relative to a project that the Borough submitted under the fiscal year 2015 CDBG Program, regarding the fire sprinkler suppression system. This project is ineligible for funding, per the letter.

Mr. Tosti-Vasey questioned moving the funds to another project as previously discussed at Council. Mr. Holderman indicated that this was corrected; however, the letter also applies to the 2016 application which was used to apply for the fire suppression project. The funds from 2015 are being re-directed to another project.

Mr. Holderman questioned whether or not the Borough wanted to challenge the DCED as the fire suppression project is still a great project. He indicated that expertise may need to be contacted (Bill Siegel, Seda-COG), who are also in support of this project in the Borough. The County supports the project. Mr. Holderman and Mr. Stewart both support challenging the DECD's decision on the fire suppression project. This would be to keep the 2016 funding for the project.

**Ms. Tosti-Vasey moved to challenge the denial of the Fire Suppression Sprinkler project with an appeal;  
Mr. Johnson seconded the motion;**

Mr. Brachbill reminded Council that one of the reasons that moving the money was discussed was so as not to lose the funding. Mr. Holderman explained that the Borough has three years to spend the funding. Ms. Dunne suggested ascertaining someone to represent the State Historic Preservation Office to back this up. Ms. Tosti-Vasey offered that if an appeal is filed, specific items in the letter will need to be addressed i.e. archaic influences. She believed that additional representatives to talk about the effect on the low-income residents who reside in the unsprinklered historic structures, since this is a poverty based grant. Mr. Holderman offered that the letter is just an interpretation and that with some convincing with the right group of people, face to face, the denial may change. If the project is denied again, after meeting with them in person, Mr. Holderman

indicated that the Borough will have to come up with another project to replace the sprinkler project. Council agreed that it is worthwhile to pursue.

**Motion carried via voice vote.**

**Video/Junior Council Program**

Ms. Dunne indicated that she just received a video from the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs. This is being distributed to each Borough and is entitled “By the People for the People - Understanding local government in Pennsylvania.” This is an education aid for schools and elsewhere. In the letter enclosing the video, Junior Council program was mentioned. Ms. Dunne believes that this program needs to be resurrected. She called for Council members to feel free to make contact with the schools.

**Email from Allen Stewart/Wine Café on the Park**

Mr. Stewart had concern about the water level in the raceway. This has been addressed.

He would also like Council to reconsider the closing of W. High Street for special events. He feels that the closing negatively impact his business. He would like special consideration of this by Council.

Mr. Johnson indicated that the road is closed probably only two times a year. Although he advocates small businesses, the events bring crowds of people walking in front of the Café. He does not believe that the closing impacts the Café with all the foot traffic. Closing the street is necessary for safety.

Mr. Beigle felt otherwise. He stated that perhaps the street can remain open. Ms. Tosti-Vasey offered that perhaps that Council can have a deadline for event chairs to decide whether space is needed and if it is not, the road can be reopened i.e. The Cruise. She thought that during the Arts Fest, the closing is appropriate, i.e. EMS Parking. Ms. Dunne opined that either way, there are still a lot of pedestrians walking around. Closing the road in a case by case basis seemed more appropriate.

Ms. Hombosky offered that the only feedback she received was that the Café is not opened when people most want to go there.

**Thank you Letter from Rose Chaveka**

She thanked the Borough for signage that was placed at the West 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue area to assist in alleviating detour traffic.

**ORAL COMMENT:**

## **Hearts for the Homeless – Ginny Poorman and Bob Langdon**

Brief presentation was given to Council relative to the Hearts for the Homeless facility. Ms. Poorman founded the Hearts for the Homeless. It originally started as a day time drop in facility in State College in 2014, but due to demand, this was transitioned into short term apartment program. The biggest problem is that there is no long term housing for homeless. Thirty to sixty day stays are the maximum. The goal is to move to integrate the home residents into the community where they can thrive and have a home and not have to face being homeless for whatever reason it may be. In May, the property at 116 E. Linn Street was purchased. This was the former home owned by Skills. Six people were moved in. The program is designed for residents of Centre County. Due to staff reduction, Ms. Poorman was trying to manage all of the facilities. The original residents at Linn Street and the house manager were not a good fit. There were some issues. The manager is no longer there. House rules were instituted. Violators were evicted. As of August 1 the State College apartments are no longer operating. The shelter was closed temporarily through October. There are a new group of six residents at Linn Street. Chief Weaver was consulted. The goal is to integrate some of the residents into the community. Some will be there permanently due to their situation.

Mr. Brachbill inquired about curfews. Ms. Poorman indicated that the front door is locked at midnight. Issues early on have been resolved. He inquired whether any police calls put an extra burden on the police force. Mr. Brachbill inquired what the plan was to keep Bellefonte safe relative to the residents of the home. There is concern for residents and the elementary school located to close proximity of the home. Mr. Langdon interjected that potential residents meet with the Board prior to accepting them as residents.

Chief Weaver spoke relative to the home. In June, he did a tour and walk through of the home. He indicated that if communication is open between Ms. Poorman, himself and the Board of Trustees, things should be good. Issues were taken care of prior to his visit. The home is unique to the area. The biggest thing that can be done to prevent problems is a good vetting process. He suggested that staff and Council take a walk through of the home.

Ms. Hombosky stated that she knew people that volunteered for Hearts and they had nothing but excellent things to say about the program. She commended Ms. Poorman on her efforts and in all she is doing for the homeless.

Mr. Langdon indicated that they are currently looking for a house manager for Linn Street. With students returning to PSU, one of the goals is to possibly get some volunteers for this positions. The rent would be free. Currently there is only a male population at the home.

Ms. Dunne stated that she would like to come to the home and do a tour. If other Council members and staff are interested a tour should be coordinated. Mr. Stewart indicated that he could circulate workable dates and times.

Mr. Johnson inquired about rehabilitation. Ms. Poorman indicated that that is based on the client's needs. She indicated that over the years, she has helped over 400 people rehabilitated and are in successful living situations, which include homeless PSU students, and the elderly.

Council thanked Ms. Poorman and Mr. Langdon for coming in to speak about their efforts.

### **Carol Lembeck – Art Presentation**

The art was presented to Council – an original painting of Spring Creek by artist Alice Kelsey. The painting was presented to honor a special person in their lives. Mr. Helsel spoke and stated that his father, Dale Helsel, was the Borough Manager from November 1956 until August 1961. During his tenure, Talleyrand Park was built and water meters were installed. He offered an amusing story about locking the safe when visiting his father at his office on pay day. (*laughter*). The painting was presented to honor his father, who passed at the age of 90 a few months ago. (*applause*). Pictures were taken afterwards.

### **Public Comment**

### **SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **SAFETY COMMITTEE: Randy Brachbill, Chair**

#### **Safety Committee Meeting Minutes (Draft) August 9, 2017**

Mr. Brachbill indicated that there was discussion at this meeting regarding electrical receptacles to be installed into the floor in Council chambers. This may also be a good time to reevaluate the use of the room relative to the layout and spacing for meetings. Configurations were discussed. It is staff's hope that the work can be done in house. Budget will be evaluated.

The next inspection will be the Musser Lane composting site.

## **CACC Meeting Update**

Ms. Dunne gave a brief report on the **Centre Area Cable Consortium** meeting which occurred on August 21 at noon. The cable franchise agreement with Comcast expires in July of next year. The consortium approved the engagement of The Cohen Law Group of Pittsburgh to replace the former solicitor. They will assist the consortium in preparing for review and renegotiation of Comcast franchise agreement. They will conduct a franchise fee audit i.e. bundling of services, etc. Guidance will be given in this regard. A public educational government access channel for C-Net was authorized via consultant. The needs assessment may be used to get more financial support from Comcast. Budget was approved for 2017-18 based on the current number of subscribers in each municipality. Bellefonte would be \$7,089.30. This will be put into the budget. This is mostly applicable to 2018. Comcast is amendable to renegotiations now rather than an auto extension of 5 years which is part of the current agreement. This would be advantageous.

Mr. Brachbill attended the **COG Public Safety Committee Meeting**. He wanted to mention that a draft job description to help with customer service was included in the packet. This is moving forward. Also looking into software to help with the process as well.

## **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Wilson wanted to thank Steve Snook and his family for chairing the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Arts and Crafts Festival. Thank you to Debbie Hamilton and her staff for all the years that they chaired the event. She stayed on this year to help Mr. Snuck make the transition.

Mayor Wilson also thanked the businesses in Bellefonte for donating items for the raffles and gifts. Kevin Lloyd, Big Spring Spirits, donated a couple of really nice gifts for raffle. It was well attended. Thanks to the Borough for their help in staging the event. It was successful and weather was cooperative.

## **OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS:**

### **ZONING/PLANNING:**

### **HARB:**

**Certificates of Appropriateness: 129 W. Linn Street, 101 S. Allegheny Street, 429 N. Spring Street**

**Mr. Brachbill moved to approve the HARB recommendations for 129 W. Linn, 101 S. Allegheny and 429 N. Spring Streets;**  
**Mr. Johnson seconded the motion;**

Ms. Tosti-Vasey requested to divide the motion due to conflict of interest.

**429 North Spring Street being removed from the previous motion;**

**Motion carried via voice vote.**

**With regard to 429 N. Spring Street;**

**Motion carried with one abstention (Ms. Tosti-Vasey).**

**HARB Meeting Minutes (Draft) August 8, 2017**

Work Session scheduled on September 18, 2017.

**BUILDING AND PROPERTY: Courtney Dickman, Chair**

The lease with the Café on the Park was never signed. Mr. Stewart indicated that it was sent over but it was never signed.

CATA buses at the armory property were discussed. The busses are gone. Mr. Holderman indicated that they will be contacted about some divots in the grass that need to be taken care of.

**FINANCE AND GOV'T PERFORMANCE: Renee Brown, Chair**

Finance Committee Meeting – August 30, 2017 at 5:15 p.m. The police budget will be reviewed. A reminder will be sent out – third quarter meeting

RAC P Audit – PA Office of Budget – August 22- 23

Ms. Tosti-Vasey indicated that for the public information, this audit deals with the waterfront.

Current. Prior July 2017

Budget v. Actually July 2017

**PARK AND RECREATION: Melissa Hombosky, Chair**

**Reinstitute security cameras in Talleyrand Park and Big Spring –**

Ms. Hombosky proposed the security cameras. They have not been in operation in some time. She would like to get the operable again as they would help with enforcement of ordinances and discouraging other problems. This will be a budget item for 2018.

There is always the possibility of increasing surveillance via cameras in other places.

## **Liberty Swing Update**

The Liberty Swing rubber mat will be installed in a few weeks.

## **Krauss Park Clean Up**

No date has yet been determined.

Mr. Holderman mentioned that if there is any digging seen in Talleyrand, they are connecting electrical to the freight station.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES: Joanne Tosti-Vasey, Chair**

Approval of Nittany Valley Joint Recreation Authority Member – Michael Musser

**Ms. Tosti-Vasey moved to approve Mr. Musser as member;  
Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion;  
Motion carried via voice vote.**

## **WATER/SANITATION: Joe Beigle, Chair**

### **Authority Meeting Minutes (DRAFT) August 1, 2017**

Water report reflects an increase in the Corning section.

Mr. Holderman indicated that signs were purchased for the composting area relative to what and what cannot be placed there. Brush, grass, and those types of materials are allowable. Commercial contractors are hauling there as well. Borough pays for the materials to be ground up. Next year, fees for commercial dumping should be addressed. The composting area was started for residents of Spring and Bellefonte and not commercial haulers. Mr. Stewart indicated that about 70% of the materials are from commercial haulers. The question came up whether the commercial haulers were working for residents of the Borough and Spring and taking their debris to the compost site. That is an unknown.

Brush collection was discussed briefly. Mr. Holderman made an announcement that the week of Labor Day there will be NO brush pick up that week.

## **STREETS: Doug Johnson, Chair**

Columbia Gas is going to install main line replacement on North Thomas Street. Tentative start date is September 5, 2017. They contacted the Borough regarding parking that will be required. There will be about seventeen spaces lost during the construction. In order to make accommodations, the Borough will contact Columbia to try to come to a resolution. Mr. Johnson will report at the next meeting regarding a recommendation on this parking issue. The construction will be open cut with a trench.

Howard and Wilson Street stop sign issue is still pending. Crash statistics were inquired about with PennDOT 2-0. The Borough would like to see if the local police have any data on non-reportable crashes at the intersection. Correspondence received today from PennDOT indicates that turning movement and volume counts need to be collected during peak times and the traffic unit would evaluate the data to see if it warrants a four way stop sign. District 2-0 will collect the data if the formal request is made to make it easier on the Borough. Time frame is unknown. Safety is key and it is a dangerous intersection due to blind spots and school students walking that intersection to school.

**Mr. Brachbill moved to move forward on a study on the intersection of Howard and Wilson Streets;**  
**Ms. Hombosky seconded the motion;**  
**Motion carried via voice vote.**

Caution light on North Thomas Street was discussed. This was brought up about a year ago. Mr. Johnson indicated now is the beginning of the Green Light Go Funding period. Mr. Holderman will pursue this grant to see if the Borough can get some relief on that project. The application process begins August 28.

The new traffic lights in the historic district are progressing. The one on High Street and Spring Street is operable now. The older poles that are not being replaced will be painted black if that is something that can be budgeted for. Ms. Tosti-Vasey received compliments on the new lights. Historical street signs are intended to be installed on the top of the poles as well - most likely next Spring. Mr. Stewart will check with the contractor to assure that this is taken care of.

Borough road crews are doing street patching at present. There are some cuts in the streets. If anyone from the public has a concern about their street, please call the Borough office and staff will take down the problem area and the Borough will take a look at the problem and see if repairs can be done. This is not a guarantee, but it will be assessed.

The West Linn Street project with the guardrail on the turn has been extended to the end of October due to the bedrock being deeper than expected. The depth and size of the rebar needed to be changed.

The stop sign at Pike Lane and Locust Lane near the YMCA in the parking lot has been knocked down again. Streets Committee met and based on a recommendation from Borough staff, a stop sign will be installed on the Locust Lane side instead and the Pike Lane traffic will not have a stop sign. A traffic speed bump legal in the state of Pennsylvania is being shopped for. Traffic may be able to be slowed down for pedestrians that cross there going to the YMCA and stores. The speed bump will be placed on Pike Lane.

Three or four sites were visited regarding storm water management. A report has not been received from the Borough engineer as of this date. Mr. Matt Hill from E. Beaver was present in the audience. He explained that there is a situation with Benner Avenue coming down on to the end of Beaver and the water that comes down from E. Curtin onto Benner flows onto the front of his home. He thinks there should be a storm drain or two to catch the flow. This has been happening for years. Mr. Hill requested that this be looked into. He is hoping that Streets and Council sees the need for the drain install. Damage is being done to his property and also to the neighbor next door to him. He hopes to have this project approved and budgeted.

Consideration to make East Curtin and East Linn one way from North Allegheny Street to North Wilson Street. East Curtin Street is narrow and becomes a challenge of who will stop where to let cars through. Mr. Johnson did an informal survey of about half a dozen residents on East Curtin and Linn and it was a favorable response. If Council agrees, he would like to survey all of the residents to see if they would be amendable to this change. CATA would be consulted as well.

Mr. Wilson was concerned about speed increasing on these streets if they do become one way. Mr. Brachbill indicated that there are other streets that are the same way – High Street and Logan Street for example. Mr. Stewart indicated that in the past, if a suggestion is made, a study and survey are done and then put it on a trial basis.

Ms. Hombosky had concerns about no lane between properties at Linn and Lamb. Depending on which way it runs, it would make it hard for residents on Lamb due to the blocks being long. There is not a lot of opportunity to turn around to park in front of your home.

No formal action was taken.

## **ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION: Taylor Lake, Chair**

### **Air Pollution/Solar Ordinance –**

A meeting needs to be scheduled. Ms. Lake indicated that this should probably wait until all members can be present.

There is training on Wednesday regarding Zoning ordinances for improvement of sustainability. Ms. Tosti-Vasey will be attending this training session. The HARB administrator will also be in attendance.

### **2018 Sustainability Project –**

Ms. Dunne reported that Mr. Holderman and she had a conference call with a professor from the PSU Sustainability department and she indicated she was interested in assisting with the suggestion to bottle Big Spring water. She had the appropriate student resources to do this project and found it interesting to pursue. Funding necessary for capital investment for the facility, equipment and operation will be reviewed. Based on a certain volume of water per day, that could be used for bottling will also be reviewed. Food safety regulations will be ascertained as well. The professor will present the project to her students on Tuesday. Mr. Holderman added that five separate projects were offered that would be good for the Borough. The water bottling project is the one that seemed to be a good fit. This would be a full year project, finishing in the Spring of 2018. He commended last year's class on the success of the composting site report.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **Centre Region Code Report -**

Mr. Holderman put the Code reports from the last meeting back into this meeting for an opportunity to review it. Mr. Schneider is asking for feedback on the report and if the report is providing Council will information they have been looking for.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey inquired about unsafe condition reporting. She asked about time limits for rectifying the unsafe conditions. She knows of a property on her street that failed inspection and wanted to know how and if it was rectified. Perhaps reaching out to Centre Region Code would give answers to specific questions. Timelines should be included in the Property Management Code.

Mr. Holderman recalls asking Centre Region Code to work with the residents to make changes. Nevertheless, guidelines need to be followed. The report would always be a month behind because of the need to gather the information.

Specifics of the report were discussed. Corrected violations were unclear in the report. Ms. Tosti-Vasey thought it would be helpful to add how many unsafe conditions were resolved. Mr. Schneider will be notified of this addition.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **House Bill 1620 – Zoning and Legislation on Mini Cell Towers** (Moved from Written Communications)

Letters needs to be written to oppose the towers. This issue has been voted down once and now this issue is back again. Although this was discussed at Council previously, this Bill is a newly introduced Bill. Ms. Tosti-Vasey requests that comments from the prior Council meeting be included in the opposing letters to reiterate prior opposition.

**Mr. Johnson moved to craft letters opposing the towers;  
Mr. Brachbill seconded the motion;  
Motion carried via voice vote.**

Mr. Johnson discussed the Junior Council representative. Ms. Dickman was working on the school connection.

Relative to the “Musser Hill Landfill” maybe renaming the facility could be a contest project for students.

Mr. Stewart mentioned Centre Crest relocating. There were meetings held regarding the parking area behind the building being rezoned; Council does not know what will happen with this project now that Centre Crest has decided to relocate The area and the structure and the adjacent properties are R-4. He would recommend Council ask the Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator to review the zoning of that area and look at the possible uses at the location that would go well with the neighboring areas.

**Mr. Beigle moved to direct Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator to review zoning alternatives for the Centre Crest site;  
Mr. Johnson seconded the motion;  
Motion carried via voice vote.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business coming before Council,

**Mr. Brachbill moved adjourn the August 21, 2017 Council meeting  
Mr. Johnson seconded the motion;  
Motion carried via voice.**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.**