

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
December 3, 2018 - 7:30 p.m.
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823
www.bellefonte.net

6:00 p.m. Vacancy Board

6:30 p.m. Work Session:

- PSAB Staff – CBAs, Pension Program, Budget

CALL TO ORDER:

The December 3, 2018 meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence to honor and remember former-President George H.W. Bush who passed away on Saturday evening.

Tosti-Vasey stated that Ms. Gina Thompson was appointed to Council earlier in the evening. Thompson was sworn in by Wilson.

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey
Mr. Randall Brachbill
Mr. Jon Eaton
Ms. Melissa Hombosky
Mr. Douglas Johnson
Mr. Michael Prendergast
Ms. Anne Walker
Ms. Gina Thompson
Mayor Tom Wilson

EXCUSED: Ms. Renee Brown

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Mr. Don Holderman, Assistant Borough Manager
Mr. Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager
Shawn Weaver, Chief of Police

GUESTS: Chris Morelli
Walter Schneider

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Eaton moved to approve the November 19, 2018 meeting minutes;
Brachbill seconded the motion;**

Motion carried.

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).

No items on Consent Agenda

REGULAR AGENDA:

**COMMUNICATIONS:
WRITTEN:**

Letter from Anti-Defamation League re: Holiday Displays

Stewart stated that this letter was regarding concern for religious displays and religious liberties. It was presented to Council for their review.

Save the date – PSAB 108th Annual Conference and Exhibition

Conference will be held June 9 through 12, 2019 in Hershey, PA.

Email response from Shelly Houck re: PSAB re: Police Funding

This email was regarding a question regarding the police funding that was raised at the budget session. It basically identifies the real estate funds as the method to take care of the police expenses.

PSAB Training

A seminar on parliamentary procedure is being given on December 5 at 5:30 p.m. At times, a recorded copy can be obtained if members cannot attend. Council should notify Kathy Stanton if they wish to attend.

Bellefonte Milesburg Rail to Trail Press Release and Public Meeting

Public meeting on the study update will be given at this public meeting. The meeting will be held on December 6, 2018 from 5-7 p.m. with a presentation at 6 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Bellefonte Borough Building.

Letter from National Association for Recreational Equality

The group promotes recreational equipment for people with physical and cognitive disabilities. They are looking for basketball bank shot facilities. The bank shot basketball was deferred to the Parks and Rec committee for review.

ORAL:

Thank you to Public Works Personnel

Tosti-Vasey thanked the public works personnel, Matt Auman, Ray Lucas, and Chad Mower for coming to the rescue at the First Presbyterian Church on February 6 when the power was lost during the elections. They came forward with an emergency generator that was critical to continue voting until West Penn Power was able to fix the problem. The poll workers and voters in the room at the time were very appreciative. She also thanked the West Penn Power workers for coming back with a quick response at the church.

Vacancy Board

A Vacancy Board meeting was held earlier this evening. Three candidates came forward to put their name in for the South Ward vacancy. All three were excellent and all would have made excellent candidates. Gina Thompson was the person elected. Congratulations was given to Thompson and the other two applicants. That seat will open up for a four-year term next November. Thompson will be serving until December 31, 2019 as replacement of Evan Duffey.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Sustainability Expo

PSU Sustainability class partnership with Bellefonte was discussed. There were several projects presenting at the expo. One of our projects came in first place in the awards that evening. Stewart remarked that it was great to work with the students. Tosti-Vasey stated that the directors of the PSU Sustainability program highlighted the Musser Lane project from a few years ago was used as part of a subsequent grant application. The Borough received \$400,000 in grant money as a result of this project.

FCC Letter RE: Centre Area Cable Consortium (CACC)

Amy Farkas, Secretary for Harris Township submitted a letter on behalf of the CACC for Centre County and the letter states that the consortium opposes the new rules that will affect the franchise fees and may affect the CNET operations. These proposed rules could also take away municipal rights in the public right of ways which are regulated currently by the Borough. The CACC stands in opposition of those new rules and this letter is an effort to prevent them from being enacted.

Spring Creek Watershed Meeting (J. Eaton)

On November 14, 2018 Eaton attended the Spring Creek Watershed Commission meeting in substitution for Tosti-Vasey who was on vacation. He discussed a homeowner's guide to stormwater which was presented by Matt Royer who is the director of Agriculture and Environment at the PSU College of Ag. The presentation gave a good overview of how to institute rain gardens and such on your home property. He also reviewed the other programs that they are doing throughout the state along the Susquehanna River in the Lancaster County area and the feedwaters into the Chesapeake Bay. He found the presentation interesting. The Spring Creek Watershed Commission inquired about the efforts for Spring Creek itself.

A second education topic was given by Todd Giddens, a local hydrologist. According to what Giddens described, there are about 250-280 feet of water in the limestone formation waiting to fill the Big Spring on a continual basis for the next several months. Water is plentiful. He also learned that 73% of the water from the Susquehanna River is used for the cooling of generation plants. That is what it is regulated for.

Tosti-Vasey added that there will be a public hearing on December 4 at the Boalsburg Fire Hall for the Phase II watershed plan. It begins at 7 p.m. Public was encouraged to attend.

Comparison Monthly Code Stats October 2018

Walt Schneider provided the monthly statistics for October 2018. There are fee changes relative to building permits.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Wilson touched on the Bellefonte to Milesburg Trail Public Meeting again. It will be held on December 6 and the meeting will be open from 5-7 p.m. There will be maps and discussions and it will give the public a chance to see what the new plan is after the first meeting input was given and the modifications were implemented. There will be a presentation of a breakdown of the parts of the trail at 6 p.m.

Wilson also applauded HBI Victorian Christmas which is coming up this weekend. Opening ceremony will be held on the courthouse steps at 7 p.m. Judge Brown will be speaking.

He also commended Bellefonte Women's Club History on Wheels event. This is the second year for the event. Tickets are available at Plumb's Drugs, the Train Station through Friday and then available at the American Philatelic building on the date of the event. There are about 8 buses going out for that. It was well attended last year.

For further details on Victorian Christmas residents can go to bellefontevictorianchristmas.com.

Chief Sean Weaver was in the audience. No questions were posed. The advisory board was discussed briefly.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS – HARB Items

ZONING/PLANNING:

FYI – Meeting re: DCED Wayfarer Signage Grant

Tosti-Vasey reported that Bellefonte has applied for a wayfaring signage grant through DCED. DCED is meeting with the Downtown Bellefonte Inc. design committee, Shannon Wright, and Tosti-Vasey this Friday. If time permits, they may also do a walk of the town to see the start of Victorian Christmas.

Public Hearing Proposed Rezoning of Centre Crest and Surrounding Properties 6 p.m. Wednesday, December 12 at Lambert Hall

Stewart mentioned this again for the public. If anyone has questions, he encouraged giving the Borough a call.

Zoning Hearing Board Written Decision on Catherman Property vehicle sales – received 30-day appeal period starting

The fuel station along Willowbank went before the Zoning Hearing Board and a decision has been rendered. There is a 30-day appeal period.

HARB:

Article in *Rural Perspectives* on Historical Preservation Ordinances

BUILDING AND PROPERTY – Point Person, Anne Walker

Mills Brothers Historic Marker sign on High Street damaged – being replaced by PHMC

The marker sign was damaged and will be replaced. Stewart stated that staff reported the damage and called the Historic Museum Commission to find out what the process was to get a new sign. They said that would need insurance information from the vehicle that hit the sign and they would take care of ordering it. The person who hit the sign cooperated with stopping and providing insurance information. Public works staff will install the new sign.

Parking lot H Yellow Bollards – update

The remaining yellow bollards will be covered in the Spring, if not sooner. The black covers need to be made to cover them. Tosti-Vasey liked the sleeves much better than the yellow paint. It fits in better with the historical district.

FINANCE AND GOV'T PERFORMANCE - Point Person, Gina Thompson

Nothing to report.

PARKS AND RECREATION – Point Person, Melissa Hombosky

Hombosky reported that the “Bellefonte Under the Lights Winter Market” is Saturday December 7 from 3-9 p.m. Local vendors will be present and vendors for the tasting trail will also be set up on the Gamble Mill end of the waterfront. The lights are up. Lamb Street will be closed at 11 a.m. The market is free. If you want to participate in the tasting, you will need proper identification. Two tents are set up with heaters.

HUMAN RESOURCES – Point Person, Renee Brown

Executive Session – Personnel

Public Works Union Contract – ongoing

Tosti-Vasey reported that the contract discussions probably will not be settled until after the new year. Public works will continue under their old contract. Any back pay will be paid at the point the new contract takes effect.

SAFETY – Point Person, Randy Brachbill

Brachbill reported that the Fire Executive Meeting was held on Tuesday, November 26. Chapter 35 was not discussed but one of the members brought up the job description for the Fire Chief that was approved. They were suggesting a change to this job description from a minimum of 10% attendance at emergency calls; they want to take it back to 25% and have the 25% include across the board for trainings and everything the fire member does. It gives more avenues to be involved. The next meeting will be in January. At that time Chapter 35 will be finalized. Nothing was given back to Brachbill on the job description.

WATER/SANITATION – Point Person, Doug Johnson

Next Authority Meeting December 11

The quarterly increase for sewer will be discussed at that meeting.

STREETS – Point Person, John Eaton

Courtesy Parking during Holidays

Reminder – 2-hour courtesy parking now through January 1 for the holiday season.

PennDOT Paving Projects for 2019

Matt Auman received notice from PennDOT that in 2019, they will begin to pave the scheduled streets: N. Water from High to Linn; Bishop Street from Allegheny to School Street; Airport Road will be paved from Zion Road to the Borough line and Upper Coleville Road will be paved from Lee Street to the Veterans Bridge at High Street.

Stewart stated that PennDOT is asking the Borough if they want the curbs that face local streets to be upgraded for ADA access during these paving projects. PennDOT will automatically upgrade their owned side of the corner of the sidewalk. They will pay for that. They are asking the Borough, as done in the past, if the Borough will pay to do their side of the corner. Stewart stated that even though it will cost some money to do it, it is the way to do it as it is already engineered and designed. They estimated the project to be between \$250,000 and \$300,000. There are some highway funds in the budget set aside for other types of work. PennDOT will manage the project from the get-go. It is more cost effective to do it this way per Stewart. Every corner that is NOT up to ADA standards would be included in this project.

A resolution will be received from PennDOT with a listing of the intersections that need to be done. Route 144 was done a few years ago, per Holderman. He believes that cost was about \$150,000. This project would entail many more intersections than the 144 work. No action was needed by Council. This will be placed on an upcoming agenda.

Eaton was concerned about taking funds for the curb project and not having availability for another project i.e. water line work, etc. Stewart stated that water line work is paid for from the water budget. Some of the overlays may need to be cut back for next year. Once the total numbers are in, this will be better determined, per Stewart.

Sidewalk ordinance ad hoc committee

Review of the sidewalk ordinance was proposed. Holderman stated that a few years ago, the ordinance was modified a few times. The last time it was revised, the way the ordinance reads, is that the Borough would go put a contract for contractors for when the property maintenance staff goes out to assess sidewalk damage. He does ¼ of the Borough each year. What had transpired initially is the Borough would hire a contractor and some residents did not like how the work was done and did not want to pay for the work. It was changed to allow the residents to do it. This past year residents complained about the cost of the replacements. Holderman stated that it may be better to get a contractor, after speaking with the State College Borough.

Since it is winter and in the off season, Holderman stated that it would be a good time to review the ordinance and see if it can be tweaked. If the sidewalks are repaired by an outside contractor bid out by the Borough, any issues will be between the resident and the contractor, but this all needs to be worked out. Eaton will chair the ad hoc committee with two other members (Prendergast and Brachbill).

Update on Stop Signs/MPH for Alleys

Holderman stated that Weaver stated that the police would not be able to set up any traffic stops in those alley areas at all. Signs may be able to be installed, but they will not be patrolled. Tosti-Vasey was leery on putting 15 MPH signs in alleys. She opined that that was fast for the alleyways. Johnson had concerns about cars not stopping. Certain alleys have a speeding issue and others, if signs are installed, may create a problem that is not there, per Tosti-Vasey.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION –Point Person, Mike Prendergast

December 12, 2018 - meeting in Hazleton, PA

Stewart discussed the meeting with the students in Hazleton regarding the Big Spring project. The presentation will be on December 12. Two weeks after this presentation a written report should be received. He will circulate that in the Council packets. Stewart opined that it would be nice to attend the presentation since they did all of the work for the Borough. That is the same date of the public hearing for the rezoning on Centre Crest. The presentation is from noon to 2 so members can make it back in time. Stewart has room in the Borough vehicle for four Council members. Johnson and Tosti-Vasey expressed interest in going. He has room for one more person. He will leave around 9:30 and arrive in plenty of time to see the presentation and head back for the public hearing at 6 p.m.

Historic Downtown Marketing Class (Tosti-Vasey)

Tosti-Vasey reported on the level 400-marketing class project by the PSU students. They are doing a presentation on Wednesday, December 5. They will include, giving month to month details on how to improve the marketing for the Borough. Nancy Perkins from the Downtown Bellefonte, Inc. design committee, Jeanne Newlin from the BHCA Historical Preservation committee and Tosti-Vasey will attend the presentation. Shannon Wright may also attend.

Update on Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations

Holderman reported that the plugs have been ordered and should be delivered in the next week. Matt Auman will set up something with the electrician to do the install. He stated that this will happen this month or next and then all paperwork will be submitted for reimbursement of about \$30,000.

The charging stations will be located in Parking Lot A (4 plugs) and at the CVS Lot (2 plugs). They charge all types of EVs, not just Teslas.

OLD BUSINESS:

Cherry Lane Water Run Issue resolved – email from CC Government

The County addressed this. A valve was left open and allowed water to drain onto Cherry Lane. Brachbill was thanked for bringing that to Councils' attention as it could have become a messy safety issue.

NEW BUSINESS:

PSAB Legislative Updates on EMS Funding, Discussion Security Plans in Executive Session

Stewart noted that the EMS funding could potentially be helped by a change in that funding legislature for ambulance service. Another bill was passed stating that school districts and

municipalities are permitted to meet in executive session to discuss security plans. Municipalities were not authorized to do this before.

2019 Budget

**Brachbill moved to approve the 2019 tentative budget for advertisement to the public to then be decided at the December 17 meeting;
Prendergast seconded the motion;**

Stewart stated that the total number of funds together is \$15,396,474.00. That is all funds in total, including capital, operating, etc. In discussions a 1 mil increase to the general fund was proposed as well as a new real estate tax for EMS of .20 or approximately 1/5th mil. Lastly, a parks real estate line item increase is proposed of ¼ mil to cover the Borough's share of the swimming pool renovations at Governor's Park. This results in a 1.45 mil increase in total proposed real estate taxes. This would equate to about a \$75.00 increase for the average property owner in the Borough. The tentative budget will be on display at the Borough offices for the next fourteen days.

Johnson inquired about the pool payment and when it would be paid. Stewart stated that it would be paid in 5 years - \$140,000 over 5 years. Holderman stated that the grant awarded to the Nittany Valley Joint Rec Authority received was \$300,000. That was a 50/50 match. The cost is shared with Spring, Walker and Benner.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

OTHER:

Holderman reiterated that the opening ceremony for the Victorian Christmas will be at the Courthouse and he encouraged the public to come out. Faith Centre is providing refreshments afterwards. He looked forward to a good turnout for the opening night ceremony.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business coming before Council,

**Brachbill moved to adjourn the December 3, 2018 Council Meeting;
Prendergast seconded the motion;
Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.