

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
December 17, 2018 - 7:30 p.m.
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823
www.bellefonte.net

6:30 p.m. Executive Session - Personnel

CALL TO ORDER:

The December 17, 2018 meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order at 7:34 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL

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

EXCUSED: None.

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Mr. Don Holderman, Assistant Borough Manager
Mr. Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager

GUESTS: Chris Morelli
Carl and Connie Bjalme
Wanda Parnay
Sharon Johnson
Jeannine Lozier
Lori Haines
Nancy Perkins
Laura Sarge
Robbin Deguatu
Jeanne Newberry
Sarah Palz

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Johnson moved to approve the December 3, 2018 meeting minutes;
Prendergast 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).

Finance Stover McLaughlin Invoice
Finance Voucher Summary November 2018
Finance Voucher Summary November 2018

**Brachbill moved to accept the consent agenda;
Johnson seconded the motion;
Motion carried.**

REGULAR AGENDA:

**COMMUNICATIONS:
WRITTEN:**

Letter from J. Griffin re: cat ordinance

Email from G. Hoover re: Bellefonte State College Weekend Bus Transportation

There is interest in increasing CATA transportation to the Borough on the weekends. CATA will be doing a study in the new year to see if full weekend service is warranted. This would require an increase of contributing funds by the Borough if the service is increased. CATA's budget runs from July 1 through June 30. If the schedule is changed, Council would have to approve the share of the cost in spring 2019. Stewart voiced to the Chamber that there are costs involved with increasing service. This is only an exploration of the possibility of extra service to Bellefonte and nothing has been decided.

Letter from Centre County Library re: NOVELCOM

May 4, 2019 the Library (and the Historical Museum) will hold its annual Novelcom. They are asking that the Borough close Allegheny Street from Howard to Burrows from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Eaton moved to approve the closing of Allegheny Street from Howard to
Burrows from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. pending PennDOT approval for the
Novelcom;
Prendergast seconded the motion;
Motion carried.**

Letter Request from Mount Nittany Health

Mount Nittany Health would like to do an event called The Bellefonte Open Streets. That event would be held on Saturday, May 18, 2019. They are looking to close Allegheny Street from Howard to Bishop and High Street from the Courthouse downward. They are looking for close of the diamond.

**Hombosky moved to approve the request by Mount Nittany Health;
Johnson seconded the motion;**

Wilson stated that the merchants in the downtown area will complain about the streets being closed two Saturdays in May. He liked the idea of Mt. Nittany Health, but when he read the letter about the street closings, he felt it would be a burden on the businesses.

Brachbill stated that he has an issue with the EMS getting through depending on how much is being set up in the roadway. There must be a lane left open for EMS personnel to get through. Stewart indicated that there are detours and that PennDOT would have stand on the closures and detours.

Brown moved to table until further discussion. There was no second on the motion to table.

Stewart stated that it appeared that it is more of exercise activities and does not see any structures or booths or anything that would prevent EMS from getting around. It is more of a type of athletic event to get people more interesting in taking care of their health. Johnson recommended tentatively approving it pending Mt. Nittany Health coming in with more information.

Nicole Manik, director of Mt. Nittany Health and Jeannine Lozier of Mt. Nittany Health were in the audience and spoke to some of Council's questions. They explained that the event does close down traffic to pedestrian traffic. There may be a few pop-up tents on the side where the parking would be. The main lane is free. This would be sporadic around the closed area and will not be on top of each other. The amounts of hubs would be dependent upon the merchants and the idea would be to have some of the merchants have something in front of their store that allows them be part of their program.

Wilson stated he liked their idea and he offered that some merchants were upset about closing that corridor when the road was closed. He just wanted to make sure that they were prepared for this. Hombosky stated that with this so far in advance, some additional ideas can be planned out. They have already spoken with the Chamber of Commerce and they are set to speak with the Downtown Bellefonte, Inc. members in early 2019. They are scaling out the area to see what hubs could be located and how the area will be used best.

Tosti-Vasey inquired about the hubs taking up both sides of the street and if the streets will be open for traffic at all, or only for EMS. Lozier stated that it would only be open for EMS vehicles. The idea is to shut it down to motor vehicles. The hubs would be staggered on both sides of the road. They hope to have a good sense of what they are doing with the hubs in January or February, so they can begin advertising. This has previously been done in other communities and has been successful.

Tosti-Vasey also had concern with closing the Diamond all the way down to the train station. Lozier clarified that they are hoping to just close from the Diamond to Spring Street and be able to use the green space in Talleyrand Park. They would like to have crossing guards present. They are only asking for the gazebo side of the park. Eaton stated that Mt. Nittany Health is exempt. The fee would be waived but not the damage deposit.

Brachbill called the question.

Motion carried.

ORAL COMMENT: None.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Comparison of Monthly Code Stats – November 2018

CCMPO Summary Report – November 2018 meeting

Tosti-Vasey inquired about the PennDOT reduction of fatalities and injuries over the next five years. She inquired about the fatalities being higher for the 2019 period than the baseline period. She stated that it appeared to be going in the wrong direction. Johnson will inquire about this and get back to Council with some clarification.

Spring Creek Watershed Phase II Public Hearing Comments due by January 10, 2019

Tosti-Vasey reported that a public hearing was held on the Water Update Plan at Boalsburg Fire Hall. The report is available at www.springcreekwatershedcommission.org/update-project. Public can make comments. Comments can be sent to the commission directed at springcreekwatershedcommission@gmail.com. Comments need to be in by January 17. Once comments are received the report will be finalized and it will be used to move forward with the implementation planning.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Bellefonte Milesburg Trail Feasibility Study Meeting

Wilson reported briefly on the trail feasibility study. It is a complicated undertaking in the trail project for the shortness in distance. The cost will be about \$6 million. This is not uncommon for a trail of this type. This would be a grant funded trail with some matching funds. There are a number of organizations behind this project that may kick in the money. This is a County initiative. He thanked Mike Bloom for his work on this project in County Planning.

There will be another meeting of the trail commission, made up of Milesburg, Bellefonte, Spring Township, Boggs Township and Clearwater Conservancy. Eventually the vision of this connection is that you would be able to hike and bike from the Pine Creek area in Clinton County to State College.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS – HARB Items

Consider Zoning Ordinance Amendment and Zoning Map Change per Planning Commission recommendation

Stewart asked Council to consider the Planning Commission recommendation to rezone the Centre Crest parcel and surrounding properties to R-2. This has been discussed in length at Council and the public hearing was held last week.

Eaton moved to support the Planning Commission recommendation to Borough Council to change the R-4 zoning back to its original R-2 zoning making changes in the R-2 to include the addition of 10,000 square feet usage which would make the nursing home a conforming use; and Johnson seconded the motion;

The other properties in the area are not affected and do not lose their current use. Stewart explained that since they have already been in existence, they are not affected by the zoning change at all. Even if the properties burned to the ground, they would have two years to rebuild under the same use with the same apartments, etc.

Johnson stated that there has been a lot of input from the community and there has been a lot of discussion on this.

Brown opined that Centre Crest was dishonest to the Borough relative to the parking lot, as shortly thereafter they made the announcement that they were moving. Brachbill supports the change as he felt that there was spot zoning done in 2007 even though it may have gone along with the Nittany Valley Regional Planning Commission. The Borough should not be penalized because they joined the commission. It was still nonconforming when the change was made. Making the change now will put it back and make it conforming.

Stewart discussed that many of the properties in that area are non-conforming, but it does not mean anything for the owners. It is just a way of the Borough keeping track of the properties.

Motion carried.

Wayfair Signage Grant Meeting with Ted Martin, PA Dept of Community and Economic Development (DCED) December 7, 2018

There was a meeting held on December 7, 2018 with representatives from Sen. Korman's office, Rep. Benninghoff, Downtown Bellefonte, the Borough and Tosti-Vasey called Nancy Perkins to speak about the meeting.

Perkins stated briefly that Martin was taken around town to see some of the things that were planned. He had the full report of the information provided during the grant application. He stated that he understood the issues and thinks that Bellefonte generally looks good. She stated that they pointed out that being the County Seat, there are visitors from other areas and there is not good parking and directional signage for business visitors. She will hear in June of the decision and she will know if the Borough can move forward with grant funding. Tosti-Vasey

thanked Perkins for being at the meeting and explaining to Council member the meeting with DCED.

ZONING/PLANNING:

HARB:

Certificates of Appropriateness: 121 E. Howard Street, 441 N. Spring Street, 401 W. High Street

**Brachbill moved to approve the HARB recommendations for 121 E. Howard Street, 441 North Spring Street and 401 W. High Street;
Prendergast seconded the motion
Motion carried.**

HARB Meeting minutes December 11, 2018 DRAFT

Downtown Bellefonte, Inc. will have their annual meeting on January 15 at 6 p.m. at Big Spring Spirits, per Shannon Wright's report. Council is invited.

BUILDING AND PROPERTY – Point Person, Anne Walker

Gamble Mill closing delayed until January 2019 – waterworks building affected

Walker reported that the closing is delayed on the Gamble Mill until January. The Borough's waterworks building is involved with this sale.

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

Budget v. Actual November 2018

Current v. Prior November 2018

Thomas Kronenwetter PA DCED Intervention/Strategic Financing Program overview, January 7, 2018 11 a.m.

Stewart stated that the PA DCED member visited the Borough Office a while ago to promote the intervention/strategies program. Kronenwetter called recently and stated that he will be back in the area on January 7 and would like to meet with interested Council members to go over the program and give an overview. If there is interest, he will bring in the central office of DCED to explain the program.

Tosti-Vasey asked about the Treasurer's report – special projects, budgeted receipts and expenses was listed at \$355.00 each while the actual expenses to date were listed at \$150,160. She asked that Thompson go back to Lori Walker and inquire about the discrepancy. Stewart stated that it may be a grant project.

PARKS AND RECREATION – Point Person, Melissa Hombosky

Steps on Suspension Bridge being rebuilt/replaced

The steps are being rebuilt. The island side is done, and it looks really nice.

BASD Lease for Governors Park ballfield

The lease has been executed.

Governors Park Restrooms ADA work – update in January 2019

ADA work plans have been completed and they will be presented in January, most likely the first meeting per Holderman.

Brown inquired about Talleyrand Park restrooms. Stewart stated that they are now closed for the season.

HUMAN RESOURCES – Point Person, Renee Brown

Executive Session – Union Contract

Brown reported that the contract negotiations are ongoing. The negotiations will not continue until the end of January due to a medical leave of one of the negotiators.

SAFETY – Point Person, Randy Brachbill

The Fire Executive Meeting will be held January 17, 2019. There may be discussion to finalize Chapter 35 prior to the meeting.

WATER/SANITATION – Point Person, Doug Johnson

Daily Water Withdrawal – November 2018

Authority approved removing pine trees at Big Spring due to the Cover Cleaning Regulations. Plans to open spring to park side for Visitor attraction

Stewart explained the Authority's decision to remove the pine trees next to the spring. The DEP permitting clearly states that the cover must be kept clean. Part of the pines are dying and dropping needles which clogs the drain. This will open up the area near the park to a tourist attraction. With a better design for the cover, the landscaping will be improved, and the visibility improved as well. A landscape plan will be developed to take the trees out and make it attractive to residents and visitors to the Park. Only the trees on the cover side will be removed.

STREETS – Point Person, Jon Eaton

A work session will be held after the meeting relative to the new Sidewalk Repair Ordinance.

Wilson stated that he would like someone to look at the broken water cap that is broken down by Blonde Bistro.

Johnson stated that on East Howard Street by Crestside Towers, there is an amacite sidewalk which has become overgrown by grass. There is a divot in it and cones have been placed over it. The Code Enforcement officer should notify the Crestside Towers' owner that that needs to be repaired. It has been too long to be left that way.

Brown stated that new people have moved into Allegheny Street at the top of the hill and someone else is also new on Burnside. There is no parking down the street, but so far, they are unaware that they cannot park there. Parking there is a hazard. Maybe someone can go check to see if they know about the parking situation. Stewart will check the situation out.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION –Point Person, Mike Prendergast

Sustainability Report

Prendergast reported that Council did receive the report from the PSU Hazelton students on the Big Spring Cover. It is a comprehensive report. Stewart indicated that they will look at costs over the Spring semester and come back to Council with their final approval at the end of the semester.

Nancy Perkins comments re: Big Spring Cover Design

Perkins summarized the comments in the written report. The aluminium cover was well liked with a faux pond on top. Materials were important. Stewart stated that the soft, cloth cover was not received well. A metal cover would need to be engineered to hold the weight. A solid coverage was much more favorable to the DEP than a soft cover. It is much less maintenance than the soft cover and would last longer. Long term maintenance issues and costs for winterization were discussed briefly.

OLD BUSINESS:

Consider approval of Tax Ordinance and 2019 Budget

**Prendergast moved to approve the 2019 Budget with the reduction of \$20,000 in the general budget;
Thompson seconded the motion;**

Stewart stated that the originally proposed budget included a 1.45 mil increase in real estate taxes. That would include a 1 mil increase to the general fund, a .20 mil increase to assist with EMS in the Borough, and a .25 mil increase to cover the debt relative to the swimming pool renovations. Brachbill suggested either reducing the 1 mil down to .8 in the General Budget and take off \$20,000 in revenue as there was something cut from expenses in the proposed budget with this budget approval for 2019. A mil is about a \$47 average household increase that would reduce the number down to about \$40 on an average household. Along with that there are some other increases. The Authority increased the water rates .10 per thousand on the water side and \$1.50 per quarter on the waste water side Centre County Solid Waste increased their recycling fees.

The Authority is a separate entity from the Borough, per Johnson. Tosti-Vasey stated that although Council does not have authority over the Authority rates, the rates need to be approved as part of the total budget.

Johnson stated that there are two decision makers in the increase and wanted to let the public know this.

Motion carried.

Tax Levy Ordinance 12172018 approval

Stewart stated that the total proposed 1.45 mil increase would be reduced to 1.25. The budget would be reduced by \$20,000.

**Thompson moved to approve the Tax Levy Ordinance;
Prendergast seconded the motion;**

There was a tentative budget made available for public inspection. The proposed budget was at 1.45 mil. Though more discussions the budget was dropped \$20,000 bringing the increase down to 1.25 mil.

Motion carried.

Fee Schedule 2019

Stewart stated that the 2019 Fee Schedule was modified. Some fees are pass through. Centre Region Code changed some of their fees, but they go directly to the Code Office. This includes the water rates and the wastewater changes.

**Brachbill moved to approve the fee schedule for 2019;
Hombosky seconded the motion;**

Brachbill stated that this is basically a recovery of fees. There is nothing to be made from this schedule.

Eaton requested that the fees state when they were modified. He does not know when the fees originated or when the last modification was made, except for the Water Authority. They indicated the changes in fees and the dates.

Motion carried.

**Eaton moved to have the fee schedule structured to have an origination date and a modification date for all fees to see when the fees were established, and they can be evaluated in the future;
Brachbill seconded the motion;
Motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS:

2019 Meeting Notice

**Brachbill moved to approve the 2019 Meeting Notice schedule with a change to move the Council meeting from Martin Luther King Day to January 22, 2018;
Johnson seconded the motion;
Motion carried.**

2019 Holidays

Stewart stated that the holiday schedule was in the packet for information.

Appointments /reappointments to ABCs

Tosti-Vasey would like to see a motion made to reappoint the following:

Water Authority Board 5-year term ending 12/31/2023; Doug Johnson
Water Authority 5-year term ending 12/31/2023; Brian Walker, pending receipt of his volunteer application;

Civil Service Commission 6-year term ending 12/31/2024; Randy Brachbill

HARB, 5-year term ending 12/31/2023; Megan Tooker and Maria Day

Planning Commission 4-year term ending 12/31/2022; Matt Edwards and Dallas Gallo
Zoning Hearing Board 5-year term ending 12/31/2013; William Luther
Zoning Hearing Board, 4-year term ending 12/31/2022; Deborah Cleeton.

**Prendergast moved to approve the appointments and reappointments as presented;
Brown seconded the motion;**

Mike Smith's position was discussed. He was working on his application and had a few questions. He may be in the process of reupping, per Stewart.

There are three applications for two positions on the IDA. This is for a five-year term and both end on 12/31/2023. Matt Hill is asking for reappointment and the new applicants are Michael Scott and Martha Mahon.

**Hombosky moved to nominate Michael Scott;
Johnson seconded the nomination**

**Johnson moved to nominate Matt Hill;
Eaton seconded the nomination;**

**Thompson moved to nominate Martha Mahon;
No second.**

Motion carried to nominate Scott and Hill with one opposed, Tosti-Vasey.

Water Authority will be postponed until the January 2019 meeting.

HARB is left open as they are looking for someone with architectural background.

Housing Appeals Board 1-year appointment to finish out Benton Reese's term.

Zoning Hearing Board Alternative – 3-year term ending 12/31/2021.

These will be placed on the website.

Appointment of SEO

There are a few applications for this position. Stan Wallace and Charles Herr have applied. Stewart stated that Stan Wallace has been used for a number of years. There are only a few on-site septic systems in the Borough.

**Brachbill moved to reappoint Stan Wallace as the Borough SEO;
Prendergast seconded the motion;
Motion carried.**

Stormwater Engineer

**Johnson moved to reappoint Don Franson as stormwater engineer for the Bellefonte Borough;
Brachbill seconded the motion;
Motion carried.**

OTHER:

Holderman thanked Tannenbaum Tree Farm for donating the Christmas Tree for the diamond.

Centre Region Code Services is in the process for interviewing for the code services manager position for the Borough. If anyone has any comments, please provide them to Holderman as he will be part of the interviewing process.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Centre Daily Times wished to clarify the delayed closing on the Gamble Mill. Stewart stated that the waterworks building is currently owned by the Borough; however, the Borough has no control of the sale of the Mill itself other than selling the waterworks building when the sale finally goes through. The building has been under bankruptcy proceedings and has been looked at by potential buyers and submitted sales agreements were accepted by the bank holding debt on the property. It is the Borough's understanding that the sale is moving forward although he is closing was pushed out further as a decision between the bankers and the perspective buyers. The Borough has nothing to do with this part of the process. The Borough owns a small portion of the land, the water works building, which is connected to the land. It was previously used as part of the water system. The Borough has agreed to add that part to the property if and when it sells.

There has been no action planned on the cat ordinance changes. There were some comments a while back but there is not action planned at this time.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business coming before Council,

**Prendergast moved to adjourn the December 17, 2018 Council Meeting;
Brown seconded the motion;
Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.