

**BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**September 3, 2019 - 7:30 p.m.**  
**236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823**  
[www.bellefonte.net](http://www.bellefonte.net)

**6:30 p.m. Work Session**  
- Bryan VanSweden from PHMC

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The September 3, 2019 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.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**EXCUSED:** Mr. Michael Prendergast

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Mr. Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager  
Mr. Donald Holderman, Ass't Borough Manager

**GUESTS:** Gay Dunne  
Sam McGinley  
Debbie Cleeton  
Megan Tooker  
Walter Schneider  
Vana Dainty  
Sal Edor  
Bryan VanSweden

---

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Brachbill moved to approve the August 19, 2019 meeting minutes.  
Thompson 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).

**Communications:** *Letter request from St. John's Catholic School re: Governors Park*

**Communications:** *Letter request from Lion's Club re: Rib Dinner Sale*

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

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**WRITTEN:**

**Land Use Webinar – September 16 - Stormwater Utilities**

Webinar will be held 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. in Council Chambers. It will also be recorded and can be sent to those unable to attend.

**Letter from Faith Centre Re: Over the Edge Event**

The event will be held on September 17. They are looking for sponsorships. Proceeds will benefit the Faith Centre in Bellefonte.

**Letter from State College Area School District re: Solar Power Purchase Agreement**

They are compiling a solar power purchase agreement and other municipalities and other entities outside of the Centre Region are invited to join in on this agreement. If the Borough is interested, the deadline is September 25, 2019.

Tosti-Vasey moved this topic down on the agenda for discussion.

**Letter re: Closure of Citizen Bank in Bellefonte**

The Borough branch will be closed December 4, 2019. The Borough does not have any accounts at that bank. Persons with accounts at this location will be directed to other branches.

### **Letter from CATA re: elimination of service to Halfmoon Township**

CATA has eliminated services to Halfmoon Township. The local shares may be affected in the future, but the immediate costs has been taken care of with CATA funds.

Brachbill discussed extra costs involved with Halfmoon dropping CATA bus services. He did not understand why the other municipalities had to make the funds up if they are not providing the services. Stewart stated that the local share is about 5 or 10% of the total budget for CATA. Both CATA and Halfmoon agreed to ending services. There is a shortfall in the local match. There is about \$3,000 deficit in the shares which CATA will put in for the remainder of this year. Brachbill interjected that if the service is not provided, there should not be a fund deficit.

Stewart stated that once more information is received, it will be passed on.

### **Email re: Sgt. Holliday has given notice of departure**

September 15, 2019 Sgt. Holliday will be leaving the Bellefonte Borough P.D. Stewart thanked him for his service to the Borough. (applause).

Sgt. Holliday was with the Borough for 24 years. He thanked his family for their love and support, and he thanked the Borough for the opportunity and thanked all his co-workers, dispatch and everyone that had his back no matter. He thanked everyone who supported him along the way. He was happy to be part of the Borough and happy to be there for people when they needed him. He was grateful for serving the Borough for 24 years. (applause).

### **PEMA Press Release**

Press conference will be held on September 4, 2019 at 12 noon at Talleyrand Park. The focus is on emergency operations and the benefits of Restore PA to emergency funds and programming.

### **Howard Fire Company – request for fire police**

Howard Fire Company needs some help with fire police for the Punkin Chunkin event scheduled for October 12 at Bald Eagle. They sought assistance to provide fire police for that event.

**Walker moved to approve providing fire police assistance  
for the Howard Fire Company's Punkin Chunkin Festival  
on Saturday, October 12 from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Bald Eagle.  
Brown seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.**

**ORAL:** Nothing presented.

### **SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **Spring Creek Watershed Commission Update**

Tosti-Vasey reported on the August 18 SCWC meeting. The final draft of the One Water report will be voted on for acceptance by the commission for forwarding to the municipalities at the

September or October meeting. A video will be created explaining what is in the report and they will create a general resolution that can be tweaked by each municipality as to how and if they would like to participate in the One Water plan. There is no financial commitment at this point. Between September and November, Cory Miller from the UAJA and Jason Deter from the Fish and Boat Commission will be presenting the report, video, and resolution to each Council for consideration. At that point, each municipality can join or decline as they see fit.

## **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

### **Proclamation of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of September 4, 1969 Plane Crash, Sculpture Garden, 6 p.m. September 4.**

Wilson thanked David Smead for spearheading the memorial of the plane crash. He thanked the Borough Manager, Ass't Manager and the staff for the work put into the event.

Wilson proclaimed the following:

“WHEREAS, on September 4, 1969, four men from Bellefonte Borough left Bellefonte Airport to meet with State Officials in Harrisburg to discuss the celebration marking the bicentennial of the discovery of The Big Spring, the spring that gives Bellefonte its name, La Belle Fonte (beautiful fountain).

WHEREAS, today we are here to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tragic plane crash that took the lives of those four well respected citizens, Robert Dunlap, Harold Flick, Gerald Robinson, and Mayor Sydney Weller.

WHEREAS, while no words will ever be adequate, or any honor truly benefitting their sacrifice, we pay tribute to these four men who left their families that day to work on details for the celebration of The Big Spring in our community.

WHEREAS, today affords us the opportunity to recall the personal sacrifice of these four men and show their families our fullest respect and support.

NOW WHEREFORE, I invite all Bellefonte citizens to gratefully acknowledge Robert Dunlap, Harold Flick, Gerald Robinson, and Mayor Sydney Weller for their services to Bellefonte Borough.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, my handset and sealed this 4<sup>th</sup> day of September 2019.”

Wilson encouraged residents to attend the ceremony.

Wilson thanked Sgt. Holliday for his services.

He offered Council members the opportunity to ask any questions relative to a police report to Sgt. Holliday.

## **OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS –**

### **ZONING/PLANNING:**

#### **HARB:**

#### **Certificates of Appropriateness for 127 W. Curtin Street, 136 S. Allegheny Street**

**Johnson moved to approve the certificates of appropriateness for 127 W. Curtin Street – fence, and 136 S. Allegheny Street – third floor fire escape.**

**Thompson seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried.**

#### **HARB Minutes August 27, 2019 Draft**

The new red parking meter color was reviewed by HARB and they chose “chili pepper red.” Tosti-Vasey would also like HARB to review the colors for the 15-minute gold meters. Stewart will pass that request along to HARB.

DBI, Inc. report was also prepared for Council by Shannon Wright.

## **BUILDING AND PROPERTY – Chair, Anne Walker**

### **Committee Meeting Report**

Meeting was held earlier this week. The committee discussed the possibility of extending paid parking hours from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. or later. It was decided that this will not occur at this time.

Walker also reported that they are expecting a mapping of the red, silver, gray, yellow, and blue colored meters and where they are located in the Borough. The County GIS department will assist with the creation of this mapping,

Additionally, the fee schedule that is in the ordinance at present was discussed. A fee schedule by Resolution may be substituted (i.e., removing the fees from the ordinance to the combined annual fee schedule) so that it will be in line with all of the other fees in the Borough.

The possibility of adding another parking meter enforcement officer was discussed. At this time there is only one officer. This will be part of the budget “wish list” for the upcoming fiscal year.

Stewart explained that when fees are placed in a resolution instead of the ordinance it is easier to adjust them accordingly, if needed.

## **FINANCE AND GOV'T PERFORMANCE, Chair, Gina Thompson**

## **Committee Meeting Report**

### **Committee recommends RFP process – Early Intervention/Strategic Finance Planning Consultant**

**Thompson moved to approve the RFP for the Early Intervention Program.  
Johnson seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.**

### **Creation of Policy Expense Reimbursement for Appointed and Elected Officials**

Thompson stated that the policy would clarify this process. A sample policy was provided, and the committee is reviewing it.

### **Council Committee Chairs - Start wish list for upcoming 2020 Budget Discussions**

The due date for desired items for the budget is September 20, 2019.

Thompson will attend a finance workshop on September 11, 2019.

### **PARKS AND RECREATION – Chair, Melissa Hombosky**

#### **Thank you – volunteer group painting suspension bridge walkway**

Hombosky thanked the group for painting the suspension bridge walkway. Eric Gerber, Pastor with Freedom Light church contacted the Borough regarding the work. They did a very nice job per Stewart. He wanted to recognize them for their efforts.

Tosti-Vasey would like to see the full suspension bridge walkway replaced as it is in bad shape. She suggested seeking grant funding for it as it will be an expensive repair.

Wilson thanked Hombosky and her husband Troy, Shannon Wright, and Lauren Stan and the Borough workers who were down at the waterfront putting up the lights for the dinner. Tables will arrive Friday morning. The public is invited to help decorate from 1-3 p.m. on Friday. The tickets are sold out.

### **Committee meeting scheduled for September 10**

### **HUMAN RESOURCES – Chair, Renee Brown**

#### **Consider Chris Morelli Application for Planning Commission vacancy**

Stewart stated that there is a volunteer application from Chris Morelli to serve on the Planning Commission. The application was in the packet. The term would expire December 31, 2021.

**Johnson moved to appoint Chris Morelli to the Planning Commission  
Vacancy with a term expiring December 31, 2021.  
Brachbill seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.**

## **WWTP Operator Position Update**

Interviews were held last week. Three persons were interviewed. A decision will be made with the three applicants by the committee. Stewart stated that a date and time will be set up for discuss the new hire.

## **Email re: office hour changes for Keystone Coordinator**

DBI, Inc. emailed regarding changing the office hours for the Keystone Coordinator. Stewart stated that he thought it would be wise to review the agreement. The prior review of the agreement was never completed. He suggested that the agreement should be reviewed, and a recommendation be made.

**SAFETY** – Chair, Randy Brachbill

## **Chapter 35**

At the previous Council meeting, Chapter 35 was approved. Brachbill offered that there was clean up to do with Chapter 35, and there was a motion made, seconded, and approved, on June 4, 2018 stating that Chief Snyder would serve as interim fire chief until Chapter 35 was reviewed and rewritten.

**Brachbill moved to appoint Walt Schneider as fire chief to finish the term.  
Thompson seconded the motion.**

The date of the term expiration was unsure at the time of the meeting.

Tosti-Vasey recalled that the decision was to re-appoint or re-advertise. There was no re-advertising, per Brachbill, and the motion that was made prior was to make him interim fire chief. The motion on the table is to appoint Schneider as fire chief until the end of the term. The appointment was approved in 2018 and it is a three-year appointment (2021). Holderman stated that the process would start in March or April. The expiration was believed to have been in 2020 or 2021. Stewart stated that staff can review this and review the minutes.

Hombosky stated that she recalled that the motion was to reopen the position, but she could not be sure. The minutes clearly do not reflect that statement, per Holderman, but he thinks it was part of the discussion.

Tosti-Vasey stated that, for transparency purposes, a motion to table may be in order.

**Walker moved to table discussion until the next meeting.  
Johnson seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.**

## **WATER/SANITATION – Chair, Doug Johnson**

### **Authority Meeting will be held September 5 at 6 p.m.**

Big Spring Cover RFP to be reviewed, and information will be given on fixed based meter reading. This discussion was held at the Borough Conference where another Borough in Pennsylvania installed this fixed-based meter reading and leak detection. Both can be read from the office and customers can check their own usage as much as they want to. The Borough can look for leaks, and the customers can look for leaks. This may allow the leaks to be caught sooner. Stewart spoke with the vendor and they are doing a primitive study of the water system and looking at the customer base. The information is being put in order as well as pricing. They will come back to the November Authority meeting, in time for budget season.

Once the system is in place, you may adapt and add on to it. Another innovative idea was to adjust the streetlights i.e. amount of lighting certain times of the day to save energy; you can dim them down through the same system. There are many features you can add once the system is in place.

### **Memo re: National Rural Water Association Conference**

The conference will be held September 9 thru the 11<sup>th</sup>. This conference is being held in Nashville.

There is low water pressure in parts of Bellefonte Borough. Both Brown and Tosti-Vasey reported this.

## **STREETS – Chair, Jon Eaton**

### **PennDOT Paving/ADA ramps update**

Stewart stated that the contractors paving Bishop Street, Thomas Street, and Airport Road are still about one month out due to scheduling. Parts of Thomas Street and Airport Road will be done but the curbs still are not done, which must be done before paving work starts. Permits are still outstanding relative to the curb designs. Realistically, the work will start no sooner than two weeks, but probably four weeks out, per Stewart. School busses and vehicles will be shifted to a one lane pattern to the areas as they are being paved.

### **Consider approval advertise Sidewalk Ordinance Amendments**

Stewart stated that additional changes will be made. The ordinance can be advertised. It can be brought to Council at the next meeting. There is a 60-day time frame to adopt the ordinance once it is advertised. **Eaton moved to advertise the Sidewalk Ordinance amendments.**

**Walker seconded the motion.**

Johnson stated that the ordinance can be slightly modified without advertising. Anything major will need to be re-advertised. He stated that Council has not seen it yet. Stewart interjected that the motion is to advertise the ordinance. He offered that the committee members worked very hard to simplify the ordinance and make it user-friendly. September was noted earlier on, as the time of the year to go to bid and get pricing. The more it is put off, the more the schedule is behind, per Stewart.



**Johnson moved to table.  
Brachbill seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.**

Hombosky asked that the ordinance be sent to Council members to expedite the discussion on the ordinance and any future changes. Tosti-Vasey also asked that the separate concrete specifications also be sent so that council can see what is referenced in the ordinance.

**Consider Committee Meeting re: Airport Road intersection, parking meters/kiosks, and handicap spaces.**

A meeting will be scheduled.

### **Parking Seminar**

The vendor who recommended that Council and staff attend the seminar was traveling and was to send additional information regarding this event, and Stewart had not received it as of the day of this meeting. This is a seminar in Cleveland that would discuss parking meters versus kiosks, per Tosti-Vasey. The seminar is on parking management and parking administration.

Holderman interjected that the seminar is the same date as the Borough/County Town Hall meeting. (September 25).

### **Howard/Wilson Intersection**

Stewart wrote a letter to PennDOT after the last Council meeting and he has not yet received a response. He discussed the flashing traffic light on Benner Pike that went in in no time, but the traffic light requested at Wilson cannot be worked in the plan with PennDOT.

Johnson stated that the light at Linn is so quick to turn from green to red. He asked that it be adjusted. PennDOT will be asked to change the timing. The request must be very specific in what they need to change it to. The light is delayed turning back to green once it turns red. Johnson asked that the light be extended on green.

**Johnson moved to have PennDOT to increase the timing and assess the sensitivity of the light on Linn Street going east and west through the intersection.**

**Brown seconded the motion.**

Eaton also offered that the light is unresponsive to anything other than a car – a motorcycle will not trigger the light.

**Motion carried.**

Tosti-Vasey also mentioned an issue at West Bishop and South Spring Streets where there was a truck parked on the sidewalk such that you could not walk on the sidewalk at the intersection with Bishop Street. It is a dangerous situation and it the structure of that particular part of the sidewalk that needs to be addressed.

## **ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION –Chair, Mike Prendergast**

### **Consider committee meeting to review air pollution ordinance**

A consultant may be obtained to assist in the review of the ordinance. That consultant was added to the Council budget wish list.

### **Planning Commission to consider proposing changes to zoning for incinerators**

PC has been looking at the zoning regulations that would apply to incinerators. There is no recommendation at this time.

### **Fire pits – not zoning issue, viewed as a code enforcing issue**

PC looked at the fire pit issue and they offered that it is more of a code enforcement issue and not a PC or zoning issue at this point in time.

### **Climate Action Program**

This was discussed at the previous meeting. The Borough was accepted into the program. There is an introductory webinar on September 5. It can be viewed at the Council room at 1 p.m.

Tosti-Vasey offered that the Borough is one of 22 local governments in the state that are being given a college student to complete a local greenhouse gas inventory this fall, and, in the spring, they will do a climate action plan. It is a joint program with the DEP and an international group called ICLEI, Local Governments for Sustainability. The state got involved with this as “they want to ignite a movement of local government, climate action to both mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and address impacts of extreme weather in the events that are already impacting local Pennsylvania communities.” The student assigned is Madeleine Pelchat from Drexel University. More details will be forthcoming.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **Copy of sign ordinance included - consider Ad Hoc Committee for review**

Ad hoc committee was already assigned, and a doodle poll will be sent out to review the sign ordinance.

#### **Wayfinding Grant, No Decisions have been made**

No decisions have been made on the grant as of yet. There are some questions outstanding, per Tosti-Vasey.

#### **Mr. Lucas regarding Cowdrick Lane near Howard, update**

Stewart met with Lucas about two weeks ago. He informed Lucas that the paving project that he is waiting on is part of the contract work that the Borough has with HRI that is going to do the state's paving as well. The paving has not taken place yet and is on the priority agenda to get taken care of as soon as possible.

## **PALCB Hearing**

The noise exemption hearing is this Thursday, September 5 at 10:30 a.m. in Council chambers. Chief Weaver was invited to speak about the Borough's noise ordinance at that hearing.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **Letter re: RACP funding to Bellefonte Waterfront Redevelopment II Project**

The RACP funding was discussed. The developer will hire their own consultant to do the paperwork. The responses that were due have been taken care of. The next phase is a 6-month period to do an application. Things look positive.

### **BAI Environmental Services – Request for approval to look at the feasibility of having solar energy on Borough property. No fee for the initial study**

Meeting was held with BAI. They are requesting approval to look at the feasibility of having solar energy somewhere on Borough property. The initial review has no fees attached. They are looking for approval to begin the process.

BAI representative, Mr. Edor, gave a brief summary of their business and their exploration of solar for several local governments in Pennsylvania. They would like to get permission from Council to explore the potential for solar energy for the Borough, possibly on Borough property. The exploration process would be of no cost to the Borough. If a project is identified that is viable, options will be provided for the Borough to consider a project.

BAI approaches the project from a cost-savings point of view with no investment out of pocket and no capital expenditures. Centre County Government just recently did a project at the correctional facility using a similar model to BAI's.

The State College School District is also exploring a coalition of local governments together to explore a massive solar project that may satisfy the needs of the municipalities and reduce the emission of green house gases and carbon impacts. BAI was offering a proposal for just Bellefonte Borough.

Tosti-Vasey explained that the rebates back to the investors come back much higher now due to a change in either state regulations or legislation. It is a relatively new project idea at present.

Eaton inquired about the foggy-day nature of the area in the valley and how beneficial solar would be. He added that projects like this seem to focus on the wrong site.

Although site is important, BAI stated that maximizing the financial benefit of the solar would site the project close to the point of use. Due to weather analysis they can predict the productivity of a region. Distribution costs were discussed for maximizing savings.

**Brachbill moved to approve BAI to do a feasibility study to have a local solar panel program for the Borough, the study being done at no cost to the Borough.**

**Johnson seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.**

The feasibility study should be completed for the next Council meeting in two weeks.

**Press Conference 12 noon September 4 Jeff Warren, County EMA, Restore PA Initiative**

Stewart confirmed that the press conference will be at noon at Talleyrand Park.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business coming before Council,

**Brachbill moved to adjourn the September 3, 2019 Council Meeting.  
Johnson seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.