

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
March 2, 2020 - 7:30 p.m.
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823
www.bellefonte.net

6:00 p.m. Executive Session – Safety

6:30 p.m. Work Session

- Nick Shaeffer, Trans Associates, Spring/West Bishop study
- NVJRA – Update on Kepler Pool

7:30 p.m. Council Meeting

CALL TO ORDER:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The March 2, 2020, meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order by Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey at 7:30 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence to remember those who protect.

ROLL CALL:

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

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

GUESTS: Mike Bonchack
Mark Morath
Ben Confer
Phil Reidenbaugh
Rob Pacella

Tosti-Vasey announced that an **Executive Session** was held prior to the Council meeting, regarding safety.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Hombosky moved to approve the February 18, 2020 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).

Communications: Letter request re: Bellefonte Easter Egg Hunt Requested for Banner placed on Veterans Bridge 30 days prior to April 11 event

Communications: Email request re: Concerts in the Park

**Eaton moved to accept the Consent Agenda.
Brachbill seconded the motion
Motion carried.**

REGULAR AGENDA

COMMUNICATIONS

WRITTEN:

Letter Invitation to Annual Update from Centre County Drug Task Force 6-7:30 p.m. March 18 at American Philatelic Society

Letter from YMCA re: 5K run on May 30

The 5K run will take place on May 30 and will go down High Street, onto Spring Street and on through Pine out to Axemann Road and turn around and go through Mill Street into Talleyrand Park. Approval will be contingent upon approval of fire police. They must also list the Borough as an additional insured for their Certificate of Insurance.

**Prendergast moved to approve the YMCA run contingent upon approval of fire police. They must also list the Borough as an additional insured for their Certificate of Insurance.
Walker seconded the motion.
Motion carried.**

Letter Request re: Use of Governors Park for Jr. Legion Baseball

This was a request by the Pleasant Gap Legion Baseball team to use Governor's Park cooperating with other users of the ball fields.

**Johnson moved to approve the request.
Thompson seconded the motion.**

Discussion was held on if this was granted in previous years. Brachbill offered that the Bellefonte High School should be asked first to see what their schedule is since they are using the field regularly. This should be done prior to approval by Council. Tosti-Vasey added that there is no start and end date in the letter request. She does not see a schedule that has been worked out with both the school district and the county teams to assure that there is no conflict. She would like to see this matter tabled until more information is obtained.

Johnson inquired who was in charge of the field given the lease with the school. If the field is being leased to the school district from March to June, should Bellefonte have any hands on with any other projects. There have been conflicts with the pavilion rentals and ball tournaments. There needed to be clarification as to who is in charge of the field and the pavilion with the school district. Johnson offered that Council needs to meet with the school board to clarify how the scheduling is supposed to occur.

**Brachbill moved to table this issue.
Walker seconded the motion.
Motion carried.**

PA Municipal League District Meeting Invite – Dinner meeting 5-6:30 p.m. April 14 at Lewisburg Hotel

Boroughs Association Update – proposed fee for State Police

Tosti-Vasey reviewed the proposal and offered that she thought a motion was in order to send a letter to Corman and Benninghoff. The first topic was to oppose the fees for state police for those communities that have their own police departments. She would like to oppose the slashing of the DCED funds for the Main Street project. This would hurt the Downtown Bellefonte program. Thirdly, she would like to support increased funding for the Green Light Go program.

**Prendergast moved to send a letter to Sen. Corman and Rep. Benninghoff regarding the proposed funding proposals for state Police, Main Street program, and the Green Light-Go program.
Walker seconded the motion.
Motion carried.**

Downtown Bellefonte, Inc. – letter – Outdoor Expo

DBI has requested to co-host the craft beverage expo on June 7, 2020. The letter details the same security and set ups as previous craft beverage events.

**Prendergast moved to approve the DBI, Inc. request to co-host The craft beverage expo on June 7, 2020.
Brachbill seconded the motion.**

Parking at the Match Factory parking lot could not be approved by Council as it is private property. Those details would need to be worked out directly between DBI and the APS.

The request for Borough Police at the event was discussed. Eaton inquired about a cost assessment for police services. This will be clarified. It was noted that they were not asking for special police assistance and only if the police are on duty, they could just make themselves present.

Motion carried.

Downtown Bellefonte, Inc. – request to hold the fundraiser “Chalk the Walk”

This event was done a few years ago. They are requesting this event for May 3, 2020 because the museum has a special event that weekend. Rain day would be May 9. They are looking at using portions of High Street, Allegheny, and Spring Street. A sidewalk square could be purchased to decorate with chalk. Fees would go to DBI, Inc.

Johnson moved to approve the event Chalk the Walk for May 3, 2020 with a rain date on May 9, 2020.

Eaton seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Downtownproperties.net – Upcoming workshops

The workshops are regarding building a vibrant business district. This program will be held in Beaver, PA on March 19 and includes a tour with another workshop in Ohio on April 16.

Oral:

Centre County District Attorney Bernie Cantorna – Grant for police officer body cameras

The need for body cams was discussed by Chief Weaver. They are a necessity for police and provide layers of safety and transparency. The documentation can be used on the street and in court for evidence as well.

Funding was discussed. Software and storage is an additional cost. A grant was awarded to cover the cost of the cameras. Attorney Cantorna was pleased that the Borough followed through with the cameras over the past few years. He believed it was a very wise investment for the Borough. He presented the Borough with a check to assist in covering the entire cost of the cameras. (applause)

The Drug Task Force meeting was discussed briefly.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

IDA – Consider future round. Feasibility Study Grant to evaluate at-risk buildings.

There will be future funding available for evaluation of at-risk buildings in the Borough.

Census Update

Tosti-Vasey stated that the banner that will be going up on Allegheny has been delivered. It will be installed on March 3, 2020. At the table were packets of postcards for Council members. They will be split up via wards for distribution.

Bellefonte Fire Chief's Meeting

Brachbill discussed the meeting that was held on February 27, 2020. Nick Caputo also attended that meeting. He is the candidate that is being considered for the retention recruitment administration under the SAFER grant. The ad hoc committee supervises the position.

**Brachbill moved to approve Mr. Caputo upon condition of the contract being signed.
Johnson seconded the motion.
Motion carried.**

MAYOR:

Wilson congratulated the Bellefonte Wrestling Team for doing well at the Districts. They went on to regionals and won regionals. Nine candidates went to States. He commended the team on their accomplishments.

Wilson extended his volunteerism to help deliver Census postcards if anyone feels uncomfortable doing so.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

ZONING/PLANNING: Nothing Presented.

HARB:

HARB recommended a Certificate of Appropriateness for the exterior materials as presented, hotel only, for Bellefonte Waterfront Associates

**Thompson moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness.
Prendergast seconded the motion.**

Tosti-Vasey summarized the approval from the HARB meeting. The color of the window trim will be white, but they need to know what tone of white it will be. They also requested a report

back on the percentage of recycled materials being used. That needs to go before Planning Commission. The third item was a question relative to solar panels. The panels have not been decided on as of yet. The presentation did not show the bridge between the hotel and garage as they have not made a decision on that item. The covered walkway has not been finalized yet either. These issues will go back to HARB.

Stewart stated that there was discussion after approval of the motion as project was presented. He did not think that after motion discussion was appropriate, but he left it up to Council. The color white was discussed, and it was realized after the meeting was over, that the developer never noted which one of the paint colors they would be using. There were no nays against the project, just on abstention. _

Mark Morath spoke about the white color and he stated that there will be a satisfactory tone of white agreed upon. If HARB does not like the tone, another white can be chosen.

Prendergast called the question.

Motion carried.

HARB meeting minutes -February 25, 2020 Draft

BUILDING AND PROPERTY – Chair, Anne Walker

Walker reported that a discussion during the work session on plans for West Bishop and South Spring Street, per Trans Associates study. Curbs and ADA ramps were discussed and putting in a new sidewalk at this location. A concept proposal will be done for the Smoker Express business and it will be up to them relative to the parking.

This item was referred to Building and Property to review the next steps and discussions will be had with the business owner of Smoker's Express. The Highway Occupancy Permit will be reviewed as well.

Stewart stated that the Borough does not normally do sidewalk projects, but a street scape project was done prior and this area has safety issues before moving forward. The property owner will maintain the sidewalk.

One parking space is considered for removal. Turning the 200 block of West Bishop Street into a one-way street also proposed. These issues will also be discussed in the committee meeting.

FINANCE AND GOV'T PERFORMANCE - Chair, Gina Thompson

February 27, Strategic Management Planning Kick Off Meeting

This meeting was held with the Delta Development Group. Delta went over their tasks for the next several months. They provided a timeline for their study. Goals and strategy were discussed for the Borough and the organization.

Holderman added that they hope to have the final report by August 2020. Council will be asked to give some input. Delta will be presenting to Council on several occasions.

A brief committee meeting was held after the Strategic Management meeting,

PARK AND RECREATION - Chair, Melissa Hombosky

During the work session a brief update was given to Council regarding Keplar pool. The design phase will begin shortly, and the build will begin in the fall. They are worried about pump failure and would like donations to help defray the cost.

A parks and rec committee meeting will be held on March 9, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

HUMAN RESROUCES – Chair, Jon Eaton

February 27, 2020 a meeting was held with the Pa. Municipal Retirement System. PMRS ran Council members through the new IRS regulations. Minor changes will be verified with the union. Discussions will be ongoing.

SAFETY – Chair, Randall Brachbill

Walter Schneider, Fire Chief, Resignation

Schneider sent his letter of resignation to be effective as of midnight June 30, 2020. The resignation is due to personal issues.

**Brachbill moved to accept Schneider’s resignation
effective June 30, 2020.
Johnson seconded the motion.**

Schneider would like to get another grant application in before he departs, per Tosti-Vasey. Holderman thanked Schneider for assisting in bringing in over \$600,000 in grant monies to the fire department during his tenure as chief. He worked diligently on policies in the department and they go along way in fire safety, etc.

The next appointment will be one year to finish out Schneider’s term and another Chief will be chosen after that year is up.

Brachbill would like to see a letter of commendation to Schneider. Tosti-Vasey concurred. She remarked on her appreciation for his work to the Borough.

Motion carried.

WATER/SANITATION - Chair, Doug Johnson

Authority meeting will be held on March 3, 2020 at 6 p.m.

The WWTP project received a State-wide award for the project through the American Council of Engineering Companies and went to National Award and the Bellefonte Authority will be recognized via a black-tie event on April 28, 2020 in Washington D.C.

The Benner Township Act 537 presentation was discussed. Brachbill stated that there will be a presentation on March 17, 2020 at the Willowbank Building at 6 p.m. He was not sure if that would affect Bellefonte.

They are looking at the areas of Shiloh Road and adding service to those developments. The Authority decided not to write a letter relative to this issue, per Stewart. A brief discussion was held on why the sewer was re-routed away from UAJA. The Bellefonte WWTP has excess capacity, per Stewart. The DEP mandates expansion when the capacity is close to 80%. That is monitored closely.

STREETS - Chair, Deb Cleeton

Cleeton, Holderman and Nick Shaeffer from Trans Associates did a site visit to Halfmoon Hill to take a look at the hillside that seems to be crumbling. Shaeffer will provide the Borough with an estimate for a mitigation. Holderman stated that he will forward an email he received from Shaeffer to the Streets Committee. He stated that the work may be able to be done in house.

Streets Committee meetings on March 5 at 6:30 p.m.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION – Chair, Mike Prendergast

Committee meeting was held on February 25, 2020. Air pollution, stream quality and solar panel projects were discussed. A meeting will be set up with the DEP regarding the pollution issues.

Tosti-Vasey inquired about the solar panel information that was requested from Mike Shadow.

The climate change task force met last Friday. Tosti-Vasey reported that a draft climate change goal plan was started with short-term and long-term goals. They also began preparation of a draft questionnaire that will be going out via Survey Monkey and a small mailed random survey will be done.

A focus group is being planned for the end of April. She asked the community for interested participants to contact Holderman. The next meeting will be held on March 13, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

The Centre County Planning Office will also begin attending these meetings.

OLD BUSINESS:

Proclamation – April 2020 as Safe Digging Month

WHEREAS, the month of April 2020 is recognized as PA 811 Safe Digging Month across the Commonwealth and initiatives supported by Pennsylvania 811. The utility notification information center is celebrating its 48th year of continuous service to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, this unique service provides an easy to use one call notification about excavation projects which may endanger workers and jeopardize utility lines while promoting workplace and public safety, reducing underground utility damage, and minimizing utility service interruptions while protecting the environmental.

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania One Call system began with only six utility companies in Pennsylvania and now services over 100,000 excavators and over 600 critical underground infrastructures throughout the Commonwealth.

WHEREAS the service receives over 1 million notification requests and transmits 7 million notifications that provide protection to utility companies, employers, customers, and general public.

WHEREAS, economic development through the Bellefonte Borough and Pennsylvania is growing and is going to minimize damage to underground utility lines and danger to workers, environmental pollution, and loss of utility service.

WHEREAS, we are thankful for the services provided by the PA 811 and encourage all residents, engineers, designers, excavators and homeowners to dial 811 at least three days in advance of an excavation project, such as installing a mail box, planting a tree, building a deck or pool or replacing a driveway.

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED that Bellefonte Borough does hereby proclaim April 2020 as PA 811 Safe Digging Month in Borough of Bellefonte proclaimed this 2nd day of March 2020.

PA DCED Revolving Grant – received signed contract

The grant contract has been signed and received and the loan documents are being worked out. That will soon be ready to offer to the applicant.

Centre County Boroughs Association Executive Committee meeting being scheduled

The next meeting is under planning. A meeting date is desired prior to April 8, 2020. Fundraising activities are being reviewed to make the membership non-dues related.

Meters

Johnson stated that he had a few inquiries about the parking meters and the change in hours. They inquirers were not in favor of it. Council approved the program, per Stewart. This program will be monitored and may be reconsidered in the future, per Tosti-Vasey. J

Johnson stated that while he understands that the restaurants are open later and apartments may take the metered parking spaces after 5 p.m., he is open to more discussion on this program.

Wilson also received comments and complaints on the new proposed parking meter hours. He realizes that parking does get occupied quickly especially on weekends when persons are coming into town to go to the restaurants. There is opposition to the new time program.

Tosti-Vasey stated that the new parking meters are delayed due to parts. They are coming from China.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution Designating May 2020 as Bike Month

Walker moved to approve Resolution 03022020.

Thompson seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Consider new submissions for resolutions to Borough Association. April 8, 2020 deadline.

Stewart provided a sample list of resolutions pending on standing. The deadlines were listed, once the association received them. A work session will be scheduled in the near future to review ideas and thoughts on the resolutions.

Tosti-Vasey stated that at the PSAB meeting last summer, the healthcare plan resolution was determined to be able to be resubmitted. She is attending a meeting on Sunday morning and she will get an update to see what is happening in the state legislature. The resolution will be revised before she departs on vacation.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Nothing presented.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business coming before Council,

Brachbill moved to adjourn the Council meeting.

Johnson seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.