

**BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**May 18, 2020 - 7:30 p.m.**  
**236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823**  
[www.bellefonte.net](http://www.bellefonte.net)

**6 p.m. Executive Session – HR Issues, Real Estate**  
**7:25 p.m. Connect to Zoom**  
**7:30 p.m. Council Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The May 18, 2020, virtual 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.

**ROLL CALL:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT (via Zoom):**

Mr. Randall Brachbill  
Ms. Debbie Cleeton  
Mr. Jon Eaton  
Ms. Melissa Hombosky  
Mr. Michael Prendergast  
Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey  
Mayor Tom Wilson  
Mr. Douglas Johnson  
Ms. Anne Walker (late arrival)

**EXCUSED:** Ms. Gina Thompson

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

**GUESTS:** Scott Rhoat

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Brachbill moved to approve May 4, 2020 meeting minutes, as revised.**  
**Johnson 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 Invoice from Stover McGlaughlin*  
*Finance Voucher Summary April 2020*  
*Finance Current v. Prior April 2020*  
*Finance Budget v. Actual April 2020*  
*Finance Budget v. Actual Summary April 2020*

**Prendergast moved to approve the Consent Agenda.**  
**Cleeton seconded the motion.**  
**Motion carried.**

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

**COMMUNICATIONS:**  
**WRITTEN:**

**Letter Request from Chamber of Commerce re: Annual Croquet Tournament**

The Chamber would like to schedule the tournament for July 12, 2020 in Talleyrand Park Extension Area and are requesting a waiver of all fees. They are also planning on having an after event that would involve adult beverages but would establish a perimeter for adults and certified personnel would be watching over the event.

**Brachbill moved to conditionally approve the Croquet Tournament**  
**On Sunday, July 12, 2020 with the alcoholic service as outlined in the letter with the provision that the Chamber limits the participation to the 25 person CDC Guidelines for COVID-19 crowd restrictions, if applicable and also waive the registration fee and application fee, but not the damage fee.**  
**Hombosky seconded the motion.**

Motion was revised.

**Prendergast moved to conditionally approve the Croquet Tournament**  
**On Sunday, July 12, 2020 with the alcoholic service as outlined in the letter with the provision that the Chamber limits the participation to the CDC Guidelines and Governor's orders for COVID-19 crowd restrictions, if applicable and also waive the registration fee and application fee, but not the damage fee. The Borough has the option to cancel the event in the event that anything changes relative to the COVID restrictions.**  
**Brachbill seconded the motion.**  
**Motion carried.**

### **Letter re: Bellefonte Arts and Crafts Fair**

A letter from the Bellefonte Arts and Crafts Fair organizers stated that the event has been canceled for the first week in August 2020.

### **Letter from Bellefonte Bed and Breakfast**

Letter from one of the Bed and Breakfasts in Bellefonte asking of the Borough would consider suspending a portion of the ordinance that a person staying cannot stay more than 14 consecutive days for a total of 45 days in a 12-month period. The suspension would give more options for persons staying in their establishments during this time.

**Prendergast moved to approve temporarily suspending the 14-consecutive day requirement for a 12-month period for a Bed and Breakfast.  
Johnson seconded the motion.**

This request is only temporary during the phases of reopening Pennsylvania. Stewart stated that a simple suspension could easily take care of this request. Wilson offered that the person that wrote the letter just opened up in the Borough about a year ago and have been very good stewards. They have some good ideas. He would like to help out the Bed and Breakfast businesses at this time. This can be brought back under Old Business at a future Council meeting. Holderman stated that the Borough may need to check with Centre Region Code regarding their regulations. Stewart believed the restriction was a local ordinance. Motion was amended.

**Prendergast moved to approve temporary suspending the 14 consecutive day requirement for 12-month period for a bed and breakfast until the end of the first meeting in December 2020.  
Cleeton seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.**

### **Letter from Rep. Benninghoff re: Union Cemetery**

Letter from Rep. Kerry Benninghoff regarding the Union Cemetery. He had concerns about the short-term conditions and long-term revitalization of the cemetery. The Borough has been assisting with the mowing for many years. The letter expressed concern about the cemetery. The members of the association are few and getting older. There is a situation that will need some local attention in the near future.

Tosti-Vasey referred this to Building and Property for review and recommendation and would like to invite Benninghoff to that meeting for input.

Wilson discussed this cemetery last year with staff to see about getting a more sustained effort to cut the grass and maintain the property. BHCA may be interested in pursuing this since there is a large movement to preserve historical places. He would like to see some more care at Union.

Tosti-Vasey stated that the cemetery received a donation of \$40,000 through the Bellefonte Historic Preservation Foundation. There are many funding opportunities.

#### **Letter from PA State Mayors' Association**

The letter requests nominations for Mayor of the Year.

#### **Letter Request from Bellefonte Moose #206**

The Moose would like to do a duck derby similar to the one that was done last year by the Little League.

**Brachbill moved to approve a duck derby race on Spring Creek at the Talleyrand Park Suspension Bridge and the Lamb Street bridge on September 12, 2020, from 1-3 p.m. with the understanding that any CDC COVID-19 restrictions regarding crowds will apply and Council reserves the right to cancel the event depending on any restrictions due to COVID-19. Prendergast seconded the motion.**

Tosti-Vasey offered that if Pennsylvania goes to green, it is expected that the maximum number of persons gathering can be 100. She recalled that last year's event drew hundreds.

Brachbill inquired who would be responsible for monitoring the event and the number of people. The police would respond, per Stewart's understanding.

Hombosky noted that the last race occurred during The Cruise so there was already a large crowd in the area.

**Motion carried with one nay – Tosti-Vasey.**

#### **Email from M. Cooper re: Compost Facility**

This email was regarding grass to help break the leaves down. Holderman stated that the grass may be okay, but the brush is getting full.

Tosti-Vasey deferred to the Water and Sanitation Committee.

#### **Email re: Join PA SHPO and PDC for our #READYFOR PRESERVATION webinar**

A webinar will be presented on revitalizing and restarting the downtown area. The webinar is Wednesday, May 28 from 10-11 a.m. If interested, Council can schedule it. Ms. Thompson will be in attendance.

**Email re: C-Pace for Centre County – rescheduled virtual information sharing event**

Clean energy seminar has been rescheduled for 6 p.m. May 26, 2020. This is for Centre County. Staff can register Council members, if interested.

**Email re: Central PA Tasting Trail**

The venue is requesting to hold a pickup location for tasting trail member products within the Borough for one to two days per week for the summer or until the Pennsylvania yellow phase ends. Locations to be considered are the Lamb Street Bridge, or the Gamble Mill parking lot, with the owners' permission. Pick up location would only require 1-2 12x12 tents and staffed by certified employees. The product would be purchased online for pick up. If the event intends to be held on Dunlap, they would need to gain permission from Tom Songer. Seda-COG may also be involved. They would obtain all other permitting.

Tosti-Vasey would like them to not conflict with the farmer's market due to the crowding issues. The event could be held after the farmer's market.

**Prendergast moved to approve the request for a tasting trail two days a week for the summer in the Borough, or until the yellow phase is lifted. They shall operate outside of the time that the farmer's market operates and they need to obtain permission from the property owners, as necessary complying with state permitting. Cleton seconded the motion.**

Hombosky recused herself from the vote.

**Motion carried.**

**Code Enforcement Statistics**

These were included with the agenda items.

**PUBLIC COMMENT: Scott Rhoat (virtually)**

First-quarter stats were forwarded to staff for 2020 and final year-end for 2019 along with a pandemic update up to this point and looking into the near future.

The Centre Crest program was updated. Rhoat stated that the Borough has always been the majority of the call volume with 40% of usage. As discussed, after the facility moves to College Township, they anticipate a decrease of about 150 calls per year, but he anticipated the Borough still being the highest use. The projection for the new facility to open is the end of 2020. Rhoat does not know if the pandemic pushed back their timeline, if at all.

**Big Spring Spirits – special call in regarding an event (Kevin Lloyd)**

Lloyd proposed a possible pop up drive-in at the waterfront or the armory property and have food trucks to help local food providers. A fee could be charged and a percentage of sales from the food vendors would be donated to a local charity. The event would be self-contained, and they would be able to maintain distances and give people an opportunity to go out and do something.

He asked the Council's suggestions and thoughts. The timeframe was open. Tickets and reservations can be sold in advance. He would like to be able to advertise and get tickets sold and proposed sometime in June. Tosti-Vasey suggested July 4 because everything else in the area has been canceled.

This item was deferred to building and property for discussion. This will be brought back to the first meeting in June, per Tosti-Vasey.

*Ms. Walker joined the meeting at this juncture.*

**MAYOR:**

**EMS WEEK PROCLAMATION:**

Wilson presented the EMS Week Proclamation, May 17-23, 2020.

**WHEREAS**, Emergency Medical Services is a vital public service; and

**WHEREAS**, members of the Emergency Medical Services team are ready to provide life-saving care to those in need 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; and

**WHEREAS**, access to quality emergency care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury; and

**WHEREAS**, Emergency Medical Services has grown to fill the gap in providing important out of hospital care including preventative medicine, follow up care, and access to telemedicine; and

**WHEREAS**, the Emergency Medical Services system consists of responders, technicians, paramedics, pre-hospital registered nurses, pre-hospital physicians, emergency medical dispatchers, firefighters, police officers, educators, administrators, trained members of the public and other out of hospital medical care providers; and

**WHEREAS**, the members of the Emergency Medical Services team, whether career, or volunteer, engage in thousands of hours, specialized training, and continuing education to enhance their skills; and

**WHEREAS**, the Emergency Medical Services providers within the Borough of Bellefonte as have their brothers and sisters throughout the nation demonstrated exemplary dedication to the mission and concern of overall public health and safety preparing to respond to potential pandemic related incidences related to Covid-19; and

**WHEREAS**, it is appropriate to recognize the value and accomplishments of Emergency Medical Services providers by designating Emergency Medical Services week.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Thomas Wilson, Mayor of the Borough of Bellefonte, Centre County, Pennsylvania, in recognition of this event do hereby proclaim the week of May 17-23, 2020 as

Emergency Medical Services Week with the theme EMS Strong, Ready Today Preparing for Tomorrow.

Wilson encouraged the community to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

Thanks were extended to Scott Rhoat and his EMS team. He thanked the Mayor and Council and staff for the recognition and support throughout the year.

#### **COUNCIL PRESIDENT:**

Tosti-Vasey discussed phone calls regarding back yard burnings. The major concern this time was associated to air pollution, smoke, and the complainant's inability to breathe because of the smoke. The police were called and asked to follow up. She encouraged the revision of the Air Pollution Ordinance with regard to backyard fire pits.

#### **COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

Brachbill attended the Centre Region Council of Governments Public Safety Meeting. It was approved to transfer the Hazmat program from Penn State to COG (Alpha Fire). The committee approved this. Bellefonte abstained from that vote. This may affect the local departments due to the change. He was not sure when this change would take place.

There were committee reports at the meeting. Jim Steff retired April 3, 2020, as Executive Director. Eric Noremburg was hired on March 26, 2020 as the new director. There were also some personnel changes in the Code office.

#### **Authority Minutes May 5, 2020 Draft**

Payments for utilities was discussed. There has been only a small percentage of nonpayment, per Stewart. The meter installations will be rescheduled when appropriate.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

##### **Revolving Loan Fund Plan**

Draft agreement prepared by Rodney Beard, Esquire with the IDA. Holderman has been assisting with this agreement. Holderman stated that the agreement was drafted as if the Bellefonte Area Industrial Authority would oversee the revolving loan. He asked if Council would like to appoint an ad hoc committee to oversee the grant money for the Gamble Mill. It will take a couple years for the funds to begin rolling back in.

Tosti-Vasey deferred the oversight committee to Finance.

### **Water Main Break and Repair North Spring Street**

The line was repaired the evening that it happened. The incident occurred last week. The sidewalk and road are still in disrepair at the location and as staff becomes available, it will be repaired. There are cones in the street.

### **Refuse Truck Accident on Howard Street**

May 7, 2020 there was an accident with one of the refuse trucks. It is being looked into.

### **EMS Update and Funding**

#### **Bellefonte Wastewater Treatment Plan Operator vacancy – filled**

The position was filled for the operator. The person began working last Monday and is onboard going through training.

### **Governor's Park Baseball Field Memorandum**

This was a memorandum from Holderman to describe the Borough's relationship with the school district relative to maintenance at the ball field. Nothing beyond mowing was ever done for the teams that used the field.

### **Police Overtime 2020**

Report for police overtime to date was included in the packet. Finance/HR may review. Tosti-Vasey stated that the overtime was down, after going up at one point. The overtime was up over Easter weekend and was a holiday issue. Eaton would like to see this information tracked for future reference and budgeting. Johnson would like to see the overtime better explained in the report. Wilson will review this.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **The NVJPC will be taking municipal and public comments on Benner Township's Act 537 Special Study through May 28, 2020**

Stewart offered that the NVJPV will take comments on Benner's Act 537 Special Study through May 28, 2020. This involves the controversial sewer line running from Shiloh Road through to and under Spring Creek, ending near the Airport. This is controversial as UAJA is right in the vicinity. This has been under discussion for about 3-4 years. The Borough Authority weighed in on it a few years ago. The special study needs to be completed for the DEP before anything else can be done.

Johnson offered that the Authority has addressed the situation prior. The Authority wishes not to be involved in this issue any further. There are environmental impacts to connecting to the alternative treatment plant instead of just hooking up across the road.



Tosti-Vasey offered that concerns she had two years ago; she still has presently. She would be willing to put together something on behalf of Council. Brachbill agreed to work with Tosti-Vasey on drafting questions to be sent to the NVJPC.

### **Borough Loss/Revenues**

Tosti-Vasey explained that the Borough was looking at loss and revenues such as EIT due to all of the layoffs throughout the County. The Borough will be losing income tax for many people. Council is considering short term adjustments, including not bringing back some seasonal workers, staggering work schedules and offering early retirement incentives.

### **Proclamation for Bellefonte Area School District 2020 Graduating Class**

Proclamation of the Borough of Bellefonte, Centre County, Pennsylvania congratulating the Bellefonte Area School District and Higher Education Classes of 2020 on their exemplary academic career.

**WHEREAS**, the Bellefonte Area School District Class of 2020 has demonstrated exemplary academic resilience and strength in the face of adversity and challenging times; and

**WHEREAS**, many of the young adults in our community who are graduating from colleges, universities and technical schools have also demonstrated a similarly exemplary academic resilience and strength and

**WHEREAS**, the graduating class and students have exhibited a commitment to community health and safety by holding this year's commencement ceremonies in a virtual environmental, and

**WHEREAS**, while the commencements ceremonies cannot take place as originally planned, the circumstances should in no way diminish the sense of pride and accomplishments felt by the graduating class and students on the day of celebration; and

**WHEREAS**, as emerging leaders in our global community, it is the solemn responsibility of each student in the class of 2020 to usher in a new era of social and civic responsibility; and

**WHEREAS**, it is acknowledged that the condition of scholastic excellence instilled in each student has prepared them to meet this responsibility head on and succeed as future leaders, pioneers, creators, motivators, and role models.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Bellefonte Borough Council and the mayor do hereby congratulate the Bellefonte Area School District Class of 2020 and the Higher Education Classes of 2020 for the exemplary academic careers, and

Further, the Bellefonte Borough Council and mayor hereby extend its sincere wishes for a bright and limitless future to the graduating seniors as they embark on the next journey in their lives.

Recorded this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May 2020.

Signed by Thomas Wilson, Mayor and Joanne Tosti-Vasey, President, Council

**May 25, 2020 No Refuse**

Holderman reminded residents that there is no refuse pick up on Memorial Day. If your refuse day is Monday it will be picked up Wednesday, May 27. There will be no brush pick up next week either.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business coming before Council,

**Eaton moved to adjourn the Council meeting.**

**Hombosky seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.