

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
September 21, 2020 - 7:30 p.m.
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania 16823
www.bellefonte.net

CALL TO ORDER:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The September 21, 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
Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey
Mr. Douglas Johnson
Ms. Anne Walker
Mr. Jon Eaton
Ms. Melissa Hombosky
Mr. Michael Prendergast
Ms. Gina Thompson

EXCUSED: Mayor Tom Wilson

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

All votes taken will be recorded as unanimous when there is no audible opposition.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Prendergast moved to approve September 8, 2020 meeting minutes, as amended.

Johnson seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

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).

Nothing presented.

REGULAR AGENDA:

COMMUNICATIONS:

WRITTEN:

Electric Vehicle Webinar Series

Webinar is from September 26 through October 1, 2020. Tosti-Vasey discussed registration. The webinar is open to the public. The first session deals with the benefits of Electric Vehicle procurement and infrastructure for municipal governments, and Holderman and Tosti-Vasey will be doing a presentation at that webinar. Bellefonte, Lansdowne, and Pittsburgh will be highlighted. That webinar begins at 11 a.m. Tuesday will show the benefits of driving EVs for businesses. Wednesday, September 30 presents the benefits of driving EVs for residents of Pennsylvania. October 1, 2020 will show the benefits of the basics of driving EVs for fleet managers. The webinars will be listed on the borough website.

Court Decision re: Governor Wolf COVID-19 Actions

The court decision was presented in the packet for Council review.

Note from Sally Houser re: Victorian Christmas

This event will take place December 11 and 12, 2020. Houser is requesting closing Allegheny Street from Linn to Bishop and High from the courthouse down to Spring Street. There was a listing of how the event would be handled under Covid restrictions. Tosti-Vasey referred this event to streets committee. Houser added that the committee was thinking of limiting the event to a one-way in, one-way out. She may need assistance with barricades.

Curtin Street Resident note re: Ordinance on Parking of Trailers on Streets

The resident is asking Council to consider updating the ordinance. It is not as effective as it could be. This was referred to the streets committee.

Letter from Centre County Government (Margaret Gray)

Letter states expanded use of the Cares Act funding to be received from the County. Regular police expenses can be covered.

Hand Delivered Petition

Johnson received a hand delivered petition relative to a mask ordinance.

ORAL/PUBLIC COMMENT:

Johnson discussed the COVID testing site at the Nittany Mall. He reminded residents of the drive thru testing site which is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on September 25, 26, 29 and 30th and October 1, 2, 3, 2020. Patients are not required to show symptoms and no appointment is necessary, but photo identification or insurance card is required.

MAYOR – THOMAS WILSON - nothing presented

COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

Census Reminder

Tosti-Vasey stated that the Census will wind down on September 30, 2020. The Borough made a final push for the Census with an ad in *The Gazette*. Some grant funds were captured back, per Holderman. The average return for Bellefonte was 73.5%. Tosti-Vasey thanked Carol King for her support in the Census in Centre County.

BUILDING AND PROPERTY – ANN WALKER, CHAIR - nothing presented.

The waterfront property and Gamble Mill were discussed briefly. The grant for the Gamble Mill was discussed briefly as well as the wall at the raceway, which will replace the plywood wall that is currently there. The wall work will be done in house, per Holderman.

FINANCE AND GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE – GINA THOMPSON, CHAIR

Committee update

Budget was discussed at the meeting. Retirements were also discussed.

Work session will be held at the next Council meeting regarding the budget.

RFPs for Police Policy Review

Stewart contacted a few firms regarding the review. He will update Council when he has more information.

2019 Audit report was presented to Council for review. Council thanked the finance director for all of her good work.

PARKS AND RECREATION – MELISSA HOMBOSKY, CHAIR

Kepler Pool Update – Holderman reported that the contract is moving forward. The time frame is not yet determined. The liner was being removed at present.

Trick or Trot Special Event – Map was in the Council packet. The YMCA answered all questions that the committee had. There will be staggered starts, they will have different areas for social distance check ins and the route will go from the YMCA to Potter Street, make a left, go down on Potter near Reynolds Park and turn around and then go down Potter Street, over the Dunlop and go around to the waterfront up the steps across the street and through the park. The new bridge should be open at that time. The runners will do a loop through Talleyrand. The event takes place on October 31, 2020.

Holderman interjected that the brackets are in and it looks like the pedestrian bridge will be completed by the time this event occurs.

Hombosky moved to approve the YMCA Trick or Trot 2020 event with the route as stated, with the option to use the new pedestrian bridge if it is completed. Prendergast seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Krause Park Issues

Krause Park was discussed. The park will continue to be monitored and staff will go through and make sure that it is clear of refuse. Long range planning for the stream bank was discussed briefly.

The tree of heaven growing by the stream was discussed. It is a target plant for the spotted lantern fly. Prendergast suggested getting in touch with PSU extension to help mitigate.

HUMAN RESOURCES – JON EATON, CHAIR

Wastewater Operator Alec Coble leaving – internal posting taking place

Stewart discussed the opening at the treatment plant. The opening was posted internally. The opening is for an operator position.

New Hires

The new hires are on board and communication is good. Stewart will keep Council updated.

SAFETY – RANDY BRACHBILL, CHAIR

Fire Executive Committee Meeting – Meeting will be held on September 24, 2020 at 7 p.m. at Lambert Hall. This will be an in person and virtual vote.

Purchase of Fire Police Vehicles - Bellefonte Fire Department put a bid in for fire police vehicles (2). They are F150 Fords. The purchase price for both was \$15,153.00. This is covered

in the Fire Equipment budget and includes insurance and estimated repairs. No action was needed by Council.

A safety committee meeting regarding a potential mask ordinance was briefly discussed.

WATER/SANITATION – DOUG JOHNSON, CHAIR – Executive Session Legal Issue meeting is scheduled immediately following this public meeting.

Johnson reminded the residents that on October 2 and 3, there is a community wide yard sale. October 5-9 is riff raff pick up week for residents. Items not included are paint, tires, and batteries; material is limited to the size of a small pick-up for one person to load. Refrigerators and mattresses will be taken. Doors should be removed from the refrigerators. Stewart will check on the allowance of computers for riff raff. It will be posted to the website.

Johnson discussed leaf pick up. The leaf truck will start going out in October. Holderman reminded residents not to rake leaves into the street, where they may block storm drains. Leaves should be raked to the curb.

STREETS - DEB CLEETON, CHAIR

Street Committee Report – meter rates were clarified to residents. Rates are .25 per 15 minutes if you use coins and \$1.00 per hour for credit card.

LTAP will meet with the committee next week to discuss Gamble Mill cross walk, parking next to Krause Park, and East Bishop Street intersection, and the North Monroe and East Linn intersection. The crosswalk at the Annex will be discussed as well. The layout of the diamond will be discussed with LTAP as well.

October 1, 2020 was suggested for the reinstatement of restrictions on the alternate parking in the Borough. This was approved at the prior meeting.

**Johnson moved to begin alternate street parking on October 1, 2020.
Prendergast seconded the motion.
Motion carried unanimously.**

Street sweeping was reduced to once a week. The message was put into effect, per Stewart.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION – MIKE PRENDERGAST, CHAIR

PSU Sustainability Project Update – Talleyrand Park project information was received.

Bellefonte Climate Action Change – motion to approve

Prendergast moved to approve the Bellefonte Climate

Action Plan.

Cleeton seconded the motion.

Tosti-Vasey explained that this plan has been developed over the year. Input was gathered from the DEP and a student intern. The community was surveyed. The process of implementation will begin with the consultant that the DEP is providing for the next year.

Brachbill and Johnson inquired about the cost to the Borough. Tosti-Vasey offered that the plan will save money for the Borough over the years. There will be some up-front costs but will save money in the long run. Brachbill stated that there is no benchmark to compare to what the costs may be. The action plan was posted on the website. Johnson will be voting no for approval. Brachbill offered that he thought the costs would be shown.

Holderman stated that the plan contains goals that the Borough would like to attain. There will be opportunities for funding in the future. Hombosky interjected that she looks at the plan like a wish list not a mandate. She does not think that it will cost anything if the Borough does not want to spend the money. Brachbill stated that there is verbiage in the plan that indicates that certain things are required, and he mentioned this prior, and asked that required be changed to recommended.

Hombosky called the question with no objection.

Eaton, yes.

Hombosky, yes.

Johnson, no

Prendergast, yes

Thompson, yes

Tosti-Vasey, yes

Walker, yes

Brachbill, no

Cleeton, yes

Motion carried 7-2.

Cleeton inquired about the proposed solar panel array from last year. Tosti-Vasey asked them to hold off until the Climate Action Plan was approved.

Eaton suggested when providing changes to a document to provide a pdf without tracked changes as it makes it difficult to read.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Tosti-Vasey reported on the Spring Creek Watershed Commission. They met on September 16, 2020 and discussed the One Water Report. The plan to present to municipalities has been put on hold. The commission will look at grants and programs that could help fund the project. They will look at a needs assessment with the public.

Stewart discussed PennDOT multi-modal grant opportunity is open. There is a 30% local match minimum. November 6 is the deadline for submission.

There is an MPO meeting on September 22, 2020 to accept the Long-Range Transportation Plan, among other items. Stewart provided a letter to the MPO, providing comments on the LRTP. He asked that Route 150, Phoenix Avenue and Mill Street be included in the LRTP, among other projects.

Repairs to the stone wall supporting 150 along Spring Creek are included in PennDOT's 2020 Bridge Presentation Project which is funded by TIPS and repairs should be completed in the next year. The TIP will be voted on the next MPO meeting.

Thompson reported on Downtown Bellefonte, Inc. A cleaning event was scheduled for October 8-9, 2020 was postponed until the spring due to Covid-19. This affected the Route 150 corridors. Friday, September 25, is Friday in the 'Fonte and DBI has live music courtesy of Confers in front of their store from 5-7 p.m. and the Bellefonte Community Band will play from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the gazebo. The lights will be strung in the park. She invited everyone out. The Richard _Knupp Heritage Center will have a ribbon cutting at 1 p.m. on Friday, September 25, 2020. The wayfinding grant was discussed. The design will be presented at the next Council meeting.

The SAFR grant was discussed briefly by Brachbill. A meeting is scheduled for the last Friday of each month moving forward.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS:

ZONING/PLANNING – Planning Commission did not meet in September due to lack of agenda items.

HARB

160 Dunlap Street – Revisions to prior project

**Brachbill moved to approve the changes to the previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness.
Prendergast seconded the motion.**

Hombosky recused herself from the vote.

Motion carried with one abstention.

High Street Shoppes – Paint

Stewart reported that the paint was changed on the building and there was no certificate of appropriateness to approve the project. He will contact the property owner.

OLD BUSINESS:

Spring Township Intersection entrance signage

The Township was contacted regarding meeting on the intersection near Pine Mill, Route 144 and discussing police services. A meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday.

Letters to Rep. Benninghoff and Senator Corman re: Solvency Fee

The letters have been sent and Stewart is waiting to hear back.

Zion Road Meeting

Stewart has requested the stormwater mapping for the area from PennDOT. The mapping will provide needed backup prior to a meeting.

Stewart offered that there has not been anything definitive received on the firework's legal inquiry.

NEW BUSINESS:

Consider approval of 2020 CDBG Project – W. Bishop/S. Spring Street

Holderman discussed the 2020 application which is due next week. Seda-COG is putting together an application. An estimate on the project has been received. This would be a multi-year project and 2020-21 funds would be used. Streetscaping was discussed as well as working with Smoker's Express driveway improvements. Trans Associates reviewed this plan.

**Eaton moved to approve a streetscape safety improvement
Project for South Spring and West Bishop.
Prendergast seconded the motion.
Motion carried unanimously.**

Trick or Treat Event and COVID 19 – consider any changes

Stewart stated that Trick or Treat is usually held on October 31 from 6-8 p.m. The date has been moved to weather and football events. This year with COVID, he inquired about any changes that Council may like to make. He has been receiving calls.

The sense is to keep it optional and leave it up to residents and persons to participate by leaving their lights on. Spring Township is going to let Trick or Treat go on. Lights on at residences means the people living in those residences would like to participate. Porchlight off signals a no. The trick or treat date was already approved back in January. No motion was needed by Council.

MMO Approval – DB Plan Consider approval (to be received by Borough)

The final plan was up for approval (Defined Benefit Plan). \$75,747 was budgeted for 2021.

**Brachbill moved to approve the Defined Benefit Plan.
Cleeton seconded the motion.**

Eaton inquired about the figure not being correct. It is a payroll percentage, per Stewart. It can be amended, in the event that the figure is incorrect. Stewart will check back with Barbi Watson to make sure the number is not an error. An amendment can be made if it is shown that the number was in error.

Motion carried unanimously.

Hombosky stated that her term as Centre County Library Trustee ends in December 2020. She thinks it is a benefit to have a Council member sit on the board. It is not mandatory. The Borough does provide funding to the library and it may be beneficial to have someone sit on the Board. The replacement needs to reside in Bellefonte.

Johnson discussed the Delta Group efficiency survey. The data was collected, and Stewart stated that at an upcoming meeting, they will be scheduled. Holderman will make a call to see when that will be presented to Council.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Nothing presented.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business coming before Council,

**Prendergast moved to adjourn the Council meeting.
Brachbill seconded the motion.
Motion carried unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.