

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
May 3, 2021 - 7:30 p.m. via Zoom
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania 16823
www.bellefonte.net

The May 3, 2021 virtual meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order by Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey at 7:30 p.m. Executive session was held regarding real estate and work session on Spring Creek.

Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence.

MEMBERS PRESENT (via Zoom):

Mr. Randall Brachbill
Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey
Mr. Douglas Johnson
Mr. Jon Eaton
Mayor Tom Wilson
Ms. Melissa Hombosky
Ms. Debbie Cleeton
Mr. Michael Prendergast
Ms. Mary Abbott

EXCUSED:

Ms. Anne Walker

OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Mr. Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager
Mr. Don Holderman, Assistant Borough Manager

Minutes: Prendergast moved to approve the minutes. Cleeton seconded the motion, as amended. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda: Nothing presented.

Oral: Bellefonte Free Mason President, Mr. Matthew Hill spoke before Council regarding renting the lot. The new parking regulations are infringing on membership lease and parking after hours. They are requesting 30-40 permits. Meetings run until about 9:30 p.m.

Brachbill moved to approve providing parking passes in the vicinity of the lodge for parking for use only during their meetings for 30-40 passes starting at 6:30 pm. Prendergast seconded the motion.

Mr. Stewart suggested we try this on a trial basis only to make sure that we don't have a conflict with other permit holders.

Prendergast called the question. Motion carried unanimously

Bruce Cifelli spoke before Council regarding his permanent Airbnb operated in Bellefonte. He submitted a letter to the manager last week and had frustration about the recently proposed restrictions on Airbnb and short-term rentals. He asked Council to investigate the economic impact of the proposed changes to Bellefonte.

Written Communications:

Written communications were received by Council members. Lengthy conversation held on overgrown grass and the fining process. The property owner lives in Florida and any correspondence should be sent to her.

Brachbill moved to conditionally approve the Chalk the Walk event request. Final decision to be made by the Streets Committee. Prendergast seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Prendergast moved to conditionally approve CCRs table event in Talleyrand Park on May 15, 2021 1-4 p.m. Final decision to be made by the Parks and Rec Committee. Eaton seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Prendergast moved to approve the Pinewood Derby at Talleyrand Park on May 23, 2021 fee waiver. Cleeton seconded. Motion carried. The Derby still needs to come before the Parks and Rec Committee for their Covid review before final approval is granted.

Mayor: Wilson read aloud a proclamation for EMS week, the week of May 16, 2021.

Council President: Tosti-Vasey reported on the Drive Electric PA Coalition meeting. The handouts were available this evening. She reviewed information on where PA stands in the electric vehicle purchases and discussed types of vehicles and pricing. She also reported on the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission virtual conference.

Building and Property:

Brachbill moved to approve the Friday in the Fonte event for June 25 between 5-9 p.m. with conditional approval that Bellefonte Borough may cancel the program due to changes in state guidelines. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Brachbill moved to approve the Friday in the Fonte event for July 30 between 5-9 p.m. with the closure of Howard Street between Allegheny and Spring Streets. with conditional approval that Bellefonte Borough may cancel the program due to changes in state guidelines. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Bridenbaugh was thanked for his assistance to the Borough.

Holderman discussed the request from the County for ten parking spaces. This was deferred to the committee for discussion.

Finance and Government Performance: Cleeton met with the Borough finance director on April 27, 2021 for an overview of the finances. There is a meeting scheduled to review the guidelines for the use of the American Rescue Act funds.

Parks and Recreation: Hombosky reviewed the approved events that came through the parks committee. The vandalism in the parks that occurred last year was discussed.

Hombosky moved to approve the final payment to Lycoming Supply in the amount of \$64,887.31. Cleeton seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The CDBG funding was discussed by Holderman. There will be a remaining balance of \$8,395.14 after this payment.

Eaton moved to transfer this amount from project cost to administration to be drawn down back to the general fund. Prendergast seconded. Motion carried.

Human Resources: Stewart reported on the wastewater treatment plant and new management team and the refuse openings and meter enforcement position. New union contract was discussed.

Brachbill moved to accept the amendment to the public works union contract. Eaton seconded. Motion carried.

Safety: SAFR grant bid opening for marketing was discussed by Brachbill. There were three vendors, Blink, First Arriving, and Letterpress Communications.

Water and Sanitation: Johnson reported that May 14-15 is the Community Wide Yard Sale and the following week will be bulk trash (aka "Riff-Raff") pick-up week. He reminded residents that there should not be any tires, batteries, or items too heavy for two men to lift to be put out at the curb. No construction materials or paint cans, hazardous waste are prohibited as well. Do not stack refuse in cardboard if rain is predicted.

Authority meeting will be held on May 4, 2021 at 6 p.m.

Streets: Abbott discussed the committee meeting on April 29, 2021. Closing of East High Street was discussed for Friday in the Fonte was discussed.

Abbott moved to approve the closing of East High Street up to just past Domino's from 5-9 p.m. on May 28, 2021. Prendergast seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Discussion of crosswalks at the diamond was reported on by Abbott. A roundabout was discussed for the future. Stamped concrete crosswalks was discussed. The committee is working with Pennoni Engineering to assist in finding affordable short-term solutions to the issues involved. Brachbill discussed both the short-term and long-term options.

Changes are recommended to the sidewalk ordinance. Abbott explained the changes. Abbott discussed the change that if a property owner outside of the historic district wishes to use a different kind of material not outlined in the ordinance, they would need to get the material approved by staff before installation. PennDOT standard was discussed.

Prendergast moved to approve advertising the ordinance. Eaton seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Abbott moved to approve the 2021 paving schedule as listed under the control of Bellefonte Streets Manager and to approve the low bid offered by Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc. Johnson seconded. Motion carried.

Energy and Environmental Conservation: Committee meeting scheduled for May 5, 2021. ICLEI meeting scheduled. Plan of action information is available to the public.

The crematorium issue was discussed. Information was provided in the packet. Stewart summarized the issues from the email with the DEP contact.

Zoning and Planning: No planning commission meeting was held.

HARB:

413 West High Street (Parapet wall repair), 201 East Bishop Street (Clean and paint exterior), 234 West Curtin Street (Install wooden picket fence).

Brachbill moved to approve the projects. Prendergast seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Special Committee Reports: Special committee reports were received by Council. CATA services were discussed. The public hearing is scheduled for May 18, 2021. There was a concern raised that this meeting conflicts with Primary Election Day. This concern will be sent to CATA.

The Borough logo and trademarking of the logo were discussed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Short term rental ordinance draft was discussed. The solicitor comments were in the packet. Residents commented as well, via correspondence. Brachbill acknowledged some inconsistencies. Council will reach out with owners of Airbnb's to discuss details and the owners of bed and breakfasts. The guidelines should be the same no matter what they are doing as they are both short term rentals. Wilson agreed with Brachbill and felt that having both sides and persons who actually run these rentals should work this issue out. Tosti-Vasey also concurred. Proper safety regulations and consistency in the ordinance was discussed. Stewart reported that if data can be collected from a public forum and then passed to the ad hoc committee, that may be the best route. The ordinance is in draft form, so the clock is not running. Draft can be posted to the website and the public can be informed that Council and the Borough is accepting comments on the draft, via email or USPS.

A public hearing will be set for additional input. The legal comments can be posted as well. Gina Thompson will be involved with the process ongoing. Johnson and Wilson did not think that Council members should be involved in the ad hoc committee and it should be citizen generated. The ordinance was discussed by Planning Commission was never publicized, per Johnson.

Prendergast moved to advertise the current interim draft ordinance with posting of the interim draft to the website, solicitor letter and date and time for a public comment period, and an informational hearing would be held and comments would be turned over to an ad hoc committee for a redraft. Cleeton seconded. Motion postponed and then carried after public comments were heard at the end of the meeting. A copy of the Bed and Breakfast ordinance will also be posted for informational purposes only.

Letter was received from the DEP regarding the extension of the Spring, Benner, Walker sewer line to Shiloh Road. PennDOT light timing was discussed and addressed by PennDOT. Spring Creek millrace project was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Final draft of the strategic management plan was canceled. A new date will be proposed for an upcoming work session. Returning to hybrid Council and other committee meetings was discussed briefly. Police liability consultant and policy were discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Public comments were received by residents/non-residents regarding short term rentals.

ADJOURNMENT: Brachbill moved to adjourn. Prendergast seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:14 p.m.