

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

May 2, 2022- 7:30 p.m.

236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania 16823

www.bellefonte.net

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The May 2, 2022, meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order by Randy Brachbill at 7:30 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (followed by a moment of silence.)

III. MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Kent Bernier
Mr. Randall Brachbill
Ms. Deborah Cleeton
Ms. Barbara Dann
Mr. Douglas Johnson
Ms. Shawna McKean
Ms. Rita Purnell
Ms. Johanna Sedgwick
Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey
Mayor Buddy Johnson

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager
Mr. Don Holderman, Assistant Borough Manager
Harry Brooks, Code Enforcement Officer
Gina Thompson, HARB Administrator
Sean Weaver, Police Chief

IV. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: (none)

V. PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda Items):

Bruce Cifelli, property owner on Curtain St, spoke about his thoughts and concerns regarding the proposed STR (Short Term Rentals) property ordinance. He encouraged and invited council members to tour his property and engage with STR owners while moving forward with the ordinance.

Lisa Drobka, Summit Drive, AirBNB owner, spoke about her thoughts and concerns regarding the proposed STR property ordinance. She highlighted some of the ordinance stipulations that College Township has in their STR ordinance as an example of what Bellefonte Borough Council could include in the proposed ordinance. She mentioned that many of her guests who rent her property are families and professionals who are visiting area residents or are working nearby.

Susan Fairo, a resident, spoke regarding an email she sent last week regarding the proposed STR ordinance. She mentioned that many of her guests are from a variety of backgrounds, and that AirBNB's have protective measures in place, including a review system, that helps to ensure good behavior by both guests and property owners. She said that limiting number of stays, and total number of rental days allowed in a year will have serious, negative impacts on her business. She also mentioned that STR's are good for local businesses and our area, by generating income and tax revenue, shopping local and dining out. She urged council members to engage with area STR owners when developing the proposed ordinance so that members will have a better understanding of how each STR is unique and different, and how different limitations and restrictions will affect STRs.

PUBLIC HEARING: (*none*)

VI. COMMUNICATIONS:

Old Business: Trinity UMC fundraiser on Oct 7-8 of 2022. A motion was made to remove this item from the table by Ms. Tosti-Vasey, seconded by Mr. Johnson. The motion carried. Mr. Brachbill then called for a motion to approve the 5K race scheduled for October 7, 2022 in Governor's Park. Motioned by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Bernier. It was discussed that all the needed information was provided for the event. The motion carried to approve the event.

Auman's Key Shop (AKS) has requested to purchase the property at 146 S. Water Street, adjacent to a small municipal parking lot. A motion was made by Ms. Tosti-Vasey and seconded by Mr. Johnson to put the property out for bid with a right to refuse all offers. There was no discussion. The motion carried.

The YMCA Summer Program requested formal approval for the use of Governor's Park pavilions 1, 2, and 3 on Monday, June 13 through Thursday, August 25, 2022. The motion was made by Ms. Purnell and was seconded by Ms. Cleeton. Discussion included clarification that the program runs weekdays, Monday – Friday, from 6:30am-6:00pm during the summer dates mentioned. The motion carried.

The Faith Centre requested conditional approval to hold their 15th Annual Walk/Run 5K on October 15, 2022 and a Howl-oo-Ween Pooch Parade the same day in Tallyrand Park. They are hoping to save the date and the event will come back before council later with more details for formal approval. The motion was made by Mr. Bernier and seconded by Ms. McKean. There was no discussion on the motion. The motion carried for conditional approval of the date.

CATA announced the return of Sunday services and extended pass discount. Residents are urged to go to the CATA website for more details about the changes in service. No council action required for this item.

Herbie's Hometown Loop requested conditional approval for an event on August 20, 2022. Council will meet with organizers at a later date to discuss details about the event. A motion was made by Ms. Sedgwick and seconded by Ms. Purnell. Discussion included clarification on type of event, a 5K, and the motion carried.

Bellefonte Emergency Medical Services (EMS) sent in a number of reports for their municipal update. Information only, no council action was required.

2023-2026 Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is accepting public comments from April 29 to May 30, 2022 at 5pm. We have 2 projects – the replacement bridge on W. High Street and a traffic light around the Match Factory/Phoenix Ave. Discussion included Mr. Brachbill urging council to write a letter to discuss concerns. Council will also reach out to Spring Township as an additional resource due to the development of the Cerro property. They will revisit this topic at the next meeting.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA:

General: Council Meeting Minutes April 4, 2022

General: Council Meeting Minutes April 18, 2022

Motion was made by Ms. Sedgwick and seconded by Mr. Johnson. Motion carried.

VIII. REPORTS:

Mayor Johnson discussed Teacher Appreciation Week and recognized our local educators. Proclamation: Recognition of Small Business Week held May 1-7 in the Bellefonte Borough.

Office of Community Affairs (OCA):

Ms. Thompson requested final comments on the proposed sign ordinance.

Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB): : Motion to approve the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following projects:

203 N. Allegheny - 2 story porch replacement

136 S. Water Street - repaint exterior, replace rubber roof, update fixtures

308-310 E. Linn Street – replace shingle roof, Owen's Corning Slatestone Gray

Motion by Ms. Purnell, Ms. Cleeton seconded, motion carried.

Planning Commission: Nothing presented.

Zoning: Nothing presented.

OLD BUSINESS:

3/21/22 Stover McGlauglin Invoice and Meeting minutes of 3/21/2022.

Call for a motion/ 2nd for a correction and approval of the Stover McGlauglin Invoice. Motion by Ms. Cleeton, second by Mr. Bernier. Discussion about clarification of the correction. Motion carried. Ms. Tosti-Vasey motioned to approve the 3/21/22 meeting minutes as amended. Seconded by Ms. Dann. No discussion, motion carried.

Meeting Minutes of March 7th 2022: Ms. Tosti-Vasey motioned to approve the corrected meeting minutes of March 7th 2022. Seconded by Ms. Cleeton. No discussion. Motion carried.

Borough Celebration is scheduled for Thursday, June 9th, 2022 at 2pm-4pm in Council Chambers. No council action is requested. Council was not able to recognize retirements during the 2-year pandemic, so council is urged to attend to recognize contributions to the borough.

Chapter 575 Zoning, Article XXI Signs Ordinance No. 05022022-01. Call for a motion/ 2nd to approve Sign Ordinance No. 05022022-01 as amended. Motion made by Ms. Cleeton, second by Ms. Dann, no discussion, motion carried.

LERTA Program – at their regular meeting on April 26th, the Bellefonte Area School Board unanimously approved a Resolution to join Bellefonte’s LERTA program. The Centre County Commissioners plan to have a “first read” of their LERTA Ordinance at their meeting on May 3rd. No council action is requested.

Train Station bid acceptance letters Mid-State Roofing & Coating and Romanworx painting. No council action is requested. Waiting on performance bonds, work is tentatively scheduled to start on September 6th and painting will begin on September 19th.

RFP- Paving Bids were due Monday, May 2, 2022 @ 3pm. Ms. Dann motioned to allow staff to review, approve and select paving bids and locations. Mr. Bernier seconded. Discussion included whether any of the streets will be repaved by Columbia Gas, and whether it’s possible to mix and match the bids according to lowest bidder. It was also asked if S. Monroe Street is included in the project. The motion carried.

Short Term Rental Draft Ordinance as received from and recommended by the Borough Planning Commission. Ms. McKean motioned and Ms. Cleeton seconded to consider substantial changes to the draft ordinance. Discussion included clarifying that nothing is being approved, the council will have a public hearing before approving the ordinance. Further discussion included suggesting that an ad-hoc committee is formed of both borough STR owners and residents to help amend the ordinance. The goal is to have the ordinance drafted, approved and adopted by the end of this year. If substantial changes are approved, then staff will re-draft the proposed ordinance accordingly and resubmit it for further consideration. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Consideration to reduce the number of financial reports currently provided to increase staff efficiency, time and paper usage. Ms. Cleeton motioned and Mr. Bernier seconded to keep the following financial reports: Budget v. Actual, Budget v. Actual Summary, Voucher Summary and Treasurer's Report. Removed 3 reports: general fund statement activity, current v. prior YTD/MTD, draft budget v. actual. No discussion and the motion carried.

Consideration of Resolution No. 05022022-01 Cannabis Legalization. Mr. Johnson motioned and Ms. Cleeton seconded to approve the resolution. Discussion included clarification of a resolution vs. ordinance and concern about being involved in this issue. There is also concern about how the community views this issue. This issue will be discussed at the Annual Conference. It was suggested to table this resolution, and it was also suggested that council members research this issue. An article published by the Missouri State Medical Association and Dr. Samuel Wilkinson, could be a good resource. The link to the article will be emailed to council.

There are 4 main issues to consider:

1. Regulatory Oversight
2. Black Market Sales
3. Personal Health and Safety
4. Social Safety/Degradation of Society

Another concern was raised about expungement of criminal charges and judgments, and excluding felony charges. The question was raised of how surrounding municipalities could be affected by adoption of this kind of ordinance. It was suggested to reach out to Spring and Benner townships for their input. The motion to table to the next meeting was made by Ms. Tosti-Vasey and was seconded by Ms. Purnell. Roll call vote was taken and the motion did not carry. A motion was made to approve the consideration of Resolution No. 05022022-01 Cannabis Legalization. Discussion continued about clarification of the resolution and motion. The motion did not carry.

Mr. Johnson motioned and Ms. Cleeton seconded to approve Resolution No. 05022022-02 recognizing Tom Zilla for his years of service to Centre Region Planning and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Discussion included accolades for Mr. Zilla and the new appointee for Mr. Zilla's open position, James Saylor. The motion carried.

Bellefonte awarded PennDOT Transportation Alternative Project Grant in the amount of \$325,000.00 for work on S. Spring and W. Bishop Street Streetscape improvements. No council action is requested.

Bellefonte awarded DEP 902 Recycling grant in the amount of \$310,070.00 for Musser Lane Composting projects (Pad Extension; Skid Steer and Compost/Mulch Bagging Equipment). No council action is requested.

Council was asked to consider items from Goals/Issues list to be scheduled for the May 16, 2022 Council Work Session.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Barry Kroeker, a resident, spoke to Council regarding his short-term rental. He would like to see the draft ordinance substantially revised.

Randy Hoover, a resident, spoke regarding crosswalks at the Diamond which will be installed sometime in late May/early June. They also discussed additional lighting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Tosti- Vasey moved to adjourn. Mr. Bernier seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.