

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
MEETING MINUTES
December 4, 2023- 7:30 p.m.
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania 16823
www.bellefonte.net

I. CALL TO ORDER

The December 4, 2023 meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order 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 (EXCUSED)
Ms. Rita Purnell
Ms. Johanna Sedgwick
Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey
Mayor Buddy Johnson (EXCUSED)

STAFF PRESENT

Mr. Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager
Mr. Don Holderman, Assistant Borough Manager
Ms. Julie Brooks, Assistant Superintendent Public Works
Mr. Shawn Weaver, Chief of Police

IV. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

NONE

V. PUBLIC COMMENT - Agenda and Non-Agenda/General Items and Comments

NONE

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

The CATAGO! app will be available for download Wednesday, December 8th on both iOS and Android platforms. The CATAGO! mobile app has been designed to improve service efficiency and rider education, along with providing a better understanding of CATAGO! No council action is requested.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA (will be acted upon by a single motion unless otherwise noted)

Consent Agenda includes the following items:

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| <i>I. Finance</i> | Stover McGlaughlin Invoice October 2023 |
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Brachbill motioned and Tosti-Vasey seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. No discussion. Roll Call Vote. Motion to approve the Consent Agenda carried.

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|---------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
| Mr. Kent Bernier | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Shawna McKean | N/A |
| Mr. Randy Brachbill | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Rita Purnell | <i>yay</i> |
| Ms. Deb Cleeton | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Johanna Sedgwick | <i>yay</i> |
| Ms. Barbara Dann | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey | <i>yay</i> |
| Mr. Doug Johnson | <i>yay</i> | | |

VIII. REPORTS

Mayor Johnson

NONE

Police – Chief Weaver

Question from Tosti-Vasey regarding curfew fines and ages. It was clarified that curfew ages are as follows:

- Ages 11 or less – 9:00 pm
- Age 12 and 13 – 9:30 pm
- Age 14-17 – 10 pm

**There are exceptions that can be read on the Borough Website under section 244-5 of the ordinance related to curfews.

Office of Community Affairs (OCA)/Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB)

The Planning Commission will meet on Monday, December 11 at 5:00 p.m. in Council Chambers

The next HARB meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 12 at 8:30 a.m. in Council Chambers. This may be canceled if there are no projects to review.

IX. CURRENT and OLD BUSINESS

Consider approval of tentative 2024 Budget and to advertise/make available for public inspection.

- The Tax Ordinance/Resolution adoption and budget approval will be considered at the December 18th Council Meeting.

Dann motioned and Cleeton seconded to approve the tentative 2024 Budget. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion to approve carried.

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|---------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
| Mr. Kent Bernier | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Shawna McKean | N/A |
| Mr. Randy Brachbill | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Rita Purnell | <i>yay</i> |
| Ms. Deb Cleeton | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Johanna Sedgwick | <i>yay</i> |
| Ms. Barbara Dann | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey | <i>yay</i> |
| Mr. Doug Johnson | <i>yay</i> | | |

Solar United Neighbors (SUN) partnership for Centre County Solar Co-op.

Tosti-Vasey motioned and Cleeton seconded to partner with Solar United Neighbors (SUN) on the second Centre County Solar Co-op. Discussion included clarification of details regarding this partnership. It was clarified this was no cost to the Borough. Roll call vote. Motion to partner carried.

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|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Kent Bernier | yay | Ms. Shawna McKean | N/A |
| Mr. Randy Brachbill | yay | Ms. Rita Purnell | yay |
| Ms. Deb Cleeton | yay | Ms. Johanna Sedgwick | yay |
| Ms. Barbara Dann | yay | Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey | yay |
| Mr. Doug Johnson | yay | | |

Council member conference expenses reimbursement request.

Cleeton motioned and Sedgwick seconded to remove this motion from the table. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion to remove carried.

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|---------------------|-----|------------------------|---------|
| Mr. Kent Bernier | yay | Ms. Shawna McKean | N/A |
| Mr. Randy Brachbill | yay | Ms. Rita Purnell | no |
| Ms. Deb Cleeton | yay | Ms. Johanna Sedgwick | yay |
| Ms. Barbara Dann | no | Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey | ABSTAIN |
| Mr. Doug Johnson | yay | | |

Cleeton motioned and Sedgwick seconded to approve the reimbursement of conference expenses.

Discussion included Purnell mentioning several issues with this item. She pointed out that there should be record of prior permission for approval of reimbursement and Mr. Stewart clarified that he does not have any record of pre-approval. Mr. Stewart does not recall having a verbal discussion with Ms. Tosti-Vasey. There was also a question regarding itemization of receipts. One meal receipt was not itemized because the restaurant did not give Tosti-Vasey an itemization; she did however remove the cost of the wine from this total. There was another question as to why Tosti-Vasey chose this conference when the Council is no longer a member of this organization. Tosti-Vasey responded that in January 2023, the administration said any ONE professional conference could be attended with administrative approval. Several members feel that there was not enough transparency with this particular trip/conference. It was clarified that this conference reimbursement would be reimbursed through taxpayer money and Council does not have authority to use taxpayer money for an unauthorized conference. All details aside, the question posed is if this was an approved trip or not. Tosti-Vasey pointed out that council has never before required council approval for professional development conferences, only administrative approval, which she verbally received in August before registering for this conference.

Motion to amend the initial motion. Johnson motioned to approve the reimbursement of the \$667.71 based on the recommendation of the Finance Director. Dann seconded. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion to reimburse carried with 3 nays and 4 yays.

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|---------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
| Mr. Kent Bernier | <i>nay</i> | Ms. Shawna McKean | N/A |
| Mr. Randy Brachbill | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Rita Purnell | <i>nay</i> |
| Ms. Deb Cleeton | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Johanna Sedgwick | <i>yay</i> |
| Ms. Barbara Dann | <i>nay</i> | Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey | ABSTAIN |
| Mr. Doug Johnson | <i>yay</i> | | |

X. NEW BUSINESS

2024 Council Meeting Schedule – proposed. Council will review and may recommend changes to the proposed meeting schedule. Council action will be scheduled for the December 18th meeting. No council action is requested.

Tosti-Vasey discussed changing the following meetings:

- Council meeting change from Monday, September 15 to Monday, September 16
- Authority meeting on Nov 5 (election day) to November 6. The Authority will be asked if they would like to change this meeting day.
- Planning Commission meeting change from Columbus Day on Monday Oct 14 to Tuesday, October 15 to follow our federal holiday meeting protocol.

Authorities, Boards, and Commissions Vacancies. Staff is checking to see who is interested/not interested in being re-appointed. Appointments/ Reappointments will be made at the January 2nd, 2024 Council Meeting. No action is requested.

J.C. Orr & Son Inc Application and Certificate for Payment No. 4 for 301 N. Spring Street Project.

Tosti-Vasey motioned and Brachbill seconded to remit payment to J.C. Orr & Son Inc for 301 N. Spring Street Project Application (Armory) No. 4 in the amount of \$104,357.50. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion carried.

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|---------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
| Mr. Kent Bernier | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Shawna McKean | N/A |
| Mr. Randy Brachbill | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Rita Purnell | <i>yay</i> |
| Ms. Deb Cleeton | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Johanna Sedgwick | <i>yay</i> |
| Ms. Barbara Dann | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey | <i>yay</i> |
| Mr. Doug Johnson | <i>yay</i> | | |

John Nastase Construction Application and Certificate for Payment No. 3 for the Spring Street Streetscape Project.

Brachbill motioned and Dann seconded to remit payment to John Nastase Construction for the Spring Street Streetscape Project Application No. 3 in the amount of \$53,212.35. No discussion. Roll call vote. Motion carried.

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|---------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
| Mr. Kent Bernier | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Shawna McKean | N/A |
| Mr. Randy Brachbill | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Rita Purnell | <i>yay</i> |
| Ms. Deb Cleeton | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Johanna Sedgwick | <i>yay</i> |
| Ms. Barbara Dann | <i>yay</i> | Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey | <i>yay</i> |
| Mr. Doug Johnson | <i>yay</i> | | |

XI. COUNCIL COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Members may offer comments regarding various events and issues within the Borough.

Ms. Purnell mentioned the Convention of States meeting on December 16, 2023 at the Watermarke Church at 10am.

Ms. Cleeton invited the public to the ribbon cutting on Tuesday, December 5th from 5-8pm at the new Curtin and Armor Holiday Railroad display.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey did not have any comments tonight.

Mr. Brachbill mentioned an email regarding the meeting minutes for the Fire Department Executive Committee. The Committee would like Council to read the minutes from the meetings. Mr. Brachbill would like to not run the meetings anymore and put the responsibility of the meetings back onto the committee members.

Mr. Holderman reported that CATA is now a new member of C-NET.

Mr. Johnson commented that the Fire Committee members are welcome at the Council meeting at any time as it is a public meeting. They can also request to be put on the agenda if there are any issues they would like council to discuss. He also commented that he would like to work together as Council to ensure that protocols are written, made clear and followed for future conference reimbursements.

Mr. Stewart commented that the next borough Council meeting will be at the Large Room at the Armory. Council would like to have the last meeting of the year on December 18th in the new space.

Ms. Sedgwick went to the tree lighting and it was a very beautiful event. She also feels the lights downtown are effective and sufficient.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Dann. Second by Brachbill. Meeting adjourned at 8:18pm.

There was an executive session before the meeting and Council will hold an executive session after the meeting.