

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
MEETING MINUTES
September 3, 2024 - 7:30 p.m.
301 N. Spring Street, Suite 200, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania 16823
www.bellefonte.net

I. CALL TO ORDER (Council President Kent Bernier)

The September 3, 2024 meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL/MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Kent Bernier <i>President, North Ward</i>	Ms. Shawna McKean <i>West Ward</i>
Mr. Randy Brachbill (via zoom) <i>South Ward</i>	Ms. Rita Purnell <i>North Ward</i>
Ms. Deb Cleeton <i>South Ward</i>	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick (EXCUSED) <i>West Ward</i>
Ms. Barbara Dann <i>Vice-President, South Ward</i>	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey <i>West Ward</i>
Mr. Doug Johnson <i>North Ward</i>	Mr. Christian Larson <i>Junior Council Member</i>
Mayor Buddy Johnson <i>At Large</i>	

STAFF PRESENT

Mr. William Witmer, Acting Police Chief
 Mr. Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager
 Mr. Don Holderman, Assistant Borough Manager

IV. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

- Deb Cleeton requested to add an informational announcement to “Current and Old Business” regarding public transit task force public meeting – non action item. This item was added to tonight’s agenda.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT - Agenda and Non-Agenda/General Items and Comments (*Oral*)

As advised by the Borough Solicitor, Resolution 08052024-01 passed at the August 5th, 2024 Council Meeting is null and void. For Public Comment, Borough Council will follow Resolution 20211220-01

- Joe Beigle, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in opposition of the Gaza cease fire resolution. He also thanked council members for serving their community.
- Elizabeth Folk, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Peter Serafine, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in opposition of the Gaza resolution. He also expressed concern regarding Sunshine laws.
- Bonnie Smeltzer, a clergy representative, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Megan Irwin, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Raul Jabar, a non-resident representing the Islamic Society of Central PA, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Tony White, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Joan Landes, a non-resident representing Faculty for Justice in Palestine, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Julia Kasdorf, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Sajay Samuel, a non-resident representing Faculty for Justice in Palestine, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- John Holtz, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Roh'oh Dahaz, a non-resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Stacy Hall, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Claudia Wilson, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Tom Dann, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in opposition of the Gaza resolution. He commented that the responsibility of council is to handle Borough business only, not foreign policy.
- Marceline Forestmire, a Bellefonte resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.

- Alex Lubin, a non-resident, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.
- Philip Ruth, a Bellefonte resident and public historian, spoke in support of the Gaza resolution.

Council took a 5 minute recess and reconvened at 8:40pm.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS (Written)

- Letter to North Ward Council Members, Support of the Bellefonte Gaza Ceasefire Draft Resolution. This relates to an action item on the agenda.
- Centre County Chamber of Business and Industry (CBICC) October 9th Luncheon, Presentation of CC Economic Development Plan. Council members – let staff know if you would like registered. No council action requested.
- Centre County Library & Historical Museum Letter of Thanks and Offer to Meet with Council. No council action requested.
- Centre County Refuse & Recycling Authority August Newsletter. No Council action requested.
- Centre County Government Accepting Liquid Fuels Grant Applications. Applications due October 18th. No council action requested at this time.
- Email asking the Borough Council to consider the Use of the Conservatorship Act for several properties on North Thomas Street. Council may refer this to the Bellefonte Area Industrial Development Authority (BAIDA).

Johnson motioned and Dann seconded to send this to the Bellefonte Area Industrial Development Authority (BAIDA) for consideration.

Mr. Kent Bernier	yes	Ms. Shawna McKean	yes
Mr. Randy Brachbill	yes	Ms. Rita Purnell	yes
Ms. Deb Cleeton	yes	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	ABSENT
Ms. Barbara Dann	yes	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	yes
Mr. Doug Johnson	yes		

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

Consent Agenda includes the following items:

1. Finance	Budget V. Actual July 2024
2. Finance	Budget V. Actual Summary July 2024
3. General	Council Meeting Minutes August 5, 2024

4. Finance	Treasurer's Report July 2024
5. Finance	Voucher summary July 2024

Tosti-Vasey motioned and Dann seconded to approve the Consent Agenda items 1-5. Discussion included comments correcting a motion/second for an invoice to John Clarr. Motion to approve Consent Agenda items 1-5 listed above carried.

Mr. Kent Bernier	yes	Ms. Shawna McKean	yes
Mr. Randy Brachbill	yes	Ms. Rita Purnell	yes
Ms. Deb Cleeton	yes	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	ABSENT
Ms. Barbara Dann	yes	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	yes
Mr. Doug Johnson	yes		

VIII. REPORTS

Mayor Johnson

- Mayor Johnson made a proclamation regarding Patriotism Week, September 9-15, 2024. He urged all citizens to join with the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks in expressing gratitude for the privilege of American citizenship.

Junior Council Member Report

- Mr. Larson highlighted several activities for the start of the new school year. He mentioned that there is a new phone/electronics policy at the school this year.

Police (Acting Chief Witmer)

- July 2024 report
 - The department moved into their new station.
 - The department began and concluded the civil service hire process for the 2 vacant positions.
 - They also did some trainings and participated in several public outreach events.

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

1. Recommended for approval (Specific motions are stated in the OCA memo):

- NONE

2. Administrative Approvals:

- NONE

3. Items of interest:

- NONE

4. Zoning:

- NONE

Liaison Reports (Reports were submitted)

IX. CURRENT and OLD BUSINESS

- Bellefonte Elementary School Project, Airport Road. The Borough has received a number of noise complaints. The Borough does not have an ordinance that regulates construction noise to certain hours.

Tosti-Vasey motioned and Dann seconded to have staff review construction-related noise ordinances that have been adopted by other boroughs. Discussion included questions regarding the construction project. Motion to approve review of ordinances did not carry. Council voted no unanimously.

Mr. Kent Bernier	<i>no</i>	Ms. Shawna McKean	<i>no</i>
Mr. Randy Brachbill	<i>no</i>	Ms. Rita Purnell	<i>no</i>
Ms. Deb Cleeton	<i>no</i>	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	<i>ABSENT</i>
Ms. Barbara Dann	<i>no</i>	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	<i>no</i>
Mr. Doug Johnson	<i>no</i>		

- Spring Street Streetscape Phase II projected start date 9/4 with completion date of 11/7. Big Rock Paving expected to begin work on High and Spring and work towards Dollar General. Contractor will mobilize and work out of a trailer to be set-up in the Municipal Lot next to Cherry Lane.
- Batting Cage at Governor’s Park. Nastase Construction is to start in mid-September with completion in 6 weeks. Restroom renovation work will begin at the same time.
- Public Works Union Contract. The Council’s negotiation committee has been meeting and will continue to meet with AFSCME regarding negotiating a new Public Works Agreement.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- Deb Cleeton announced that the Public Transit Task Force will have a public meeting on Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at 6pm in Council Chambers to gather feedback from consumers about the new B-Line service provided by CATA, and how the loss of CATA-GO services has impacted residents in Bellefonte Borough, Spring and Benner Townships. The Borough will offer a zoom link for the meeting, contact the Borough for more information.
- Draft Resolution 09032024-01 for Gaza Ceasefire. Council may act on this Draft Resolution or modify it.

McKean motioned and Tosti-Vasey seconded to approve Draft Resolution 09032024-01 with or without modifications. Discussion included council members offering their opinions and comments regarding this resolution. Mrs. Purnell offered a statement in opposition of the Cease-Fire Resolution. She noted that it is not council business to discuss or vote on foreign policy. Cleeton spoke in favor of the resolution. Brachbill commented that he also opposes the resolution, as it is not Borough business. Dann commented that she also opposes the resolution, as it is not Borough business. Tosti-Vasey spoke in favor of the resolution. Mayor Johnson spoke in opposition of the resolution, as it is not Borough business. Motion to approve the resolution did not carry with 6 no votes and 2 yes votes.

Mr. Kent Bernier	<i>no</i>	Ms. Shawna McKean	<i>yes</i>
Mr. Randy Brachbill	<i>no</i>	Ms. Rita Purnell	<i>no</i>
Ms. Deb Cleeton	<i>yes</i>	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	<i>ABSENT</i>
Ms. Barbara Dann	<i>no</i>	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	<i>no</i>
Mr. Doug Johnson	<i>no</i>		

- Resolution 09032024-02 Authorizing Petition to PA Liquor Control Board for extension of exemption from Amplified Music Regulations. The current exemption is set to expire in October 2024.

Cleeton motioned and Dann seconded to approve Resolution 09032024-02. No discussion. Motion carried.

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

- Civil Service Commission Eligibility List for Police Officers. Acting Police Chief Bill Witmer is recommending the selection of Noah Bollman.

Dann motioned and Tosti-Vasey seconded to select Noah Bollman from the Eligibility List and to make an offer of employment. No discussion. Motion carried.

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

- Installation of the Rivet / Discovery Space free Little LABrary in the landscape strip along S. Spring across from the Dollar General.

Dann motioned and Cleeton seconded to approve location and installation of the free Little LABrary. Tosti-Vasey asked questions and comments regarding the purpose of the LABrary. Motion carried.

Mr. Kent Bernier	yes	Ms. Shawna McKean	yes
Mr. Randy Brachbill	yes	Ms. Rita Purnell	yes
Ms. Deb Cleeton	yes	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	ABSENT
Ms. Barbara Dann	yes	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	yes
Mr. Doug Johnson	yes		

- Armory building large Partner Desks, Filing cabinets and miscellaneous furniture surplus/not in use. Permission to put out for bid these items that are not in use.

Brachbill motioned and Dann seconded to put out for bid Armory building surplus furniture and filing cabinets. Motion carried.

Mr. Kent Bernier	yes	Ms. Shawna McKean	yes
Mr. Randy Brachbill	yes	Ms. Rita Purnell	yes
Ms. Deb Cleeton	yes	Ms. Johanna Sedgwick	ABSENT
Ms. Barbara Dann	yes	Ms. Joanne Tosti-Vasey	yes
Mr. Doug Johnson	yes		

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ISSUES NOT ON THE AGENDA

- Tosti-Vasey made an announcement regarding a meeting on Sunday, September 8, 2024, 3-5pm, at Webster’s Bookstore and Café, 133 E. Beaver Ave in State College. The meeting will be an informational presentation advocating for affordable housing.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Dann motioned and Johnson seconded to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at (time not announced) pm.