

COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 1, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Council President Cathy Kernen.

ROLL CALL: President Cathy Kernen, VP Shannon Spencer, PPT Hoffmann, Council Member Craig Farr, Council Member Marion McKinney, Council Member Kathy Costello, Council Member Val Beckius and Mayor Aidsand Wright- Riggins

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Solicitor Rebecca Geiser, Engineer Dave Leh, Chief Bart Bucher, Manager Tamara Twardowski and Assistant Suzanne Robertson

MOTION to approve the Minutes from the November 3rd meeting by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Costello

MOTION carries 7-0

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chuck Draksler 484 Shakespeare Dr- Mr. Draksler asked if there had been enough time between posting the Ordinance for the tax increase and voting on it. Ms. Twardowski noted that the Budget Workshop meeting on November 8th was announced at the November 3rd meeting and also advertised in the *Times Herald*. The Budget and the proposed tax increase ordinance that was voted on at the November 8th meeting, were advertised in the Times Herald on November 12th as required by the Borough Code. Ms. Geiser confirmed that the Borough has met the legal requirements to adopt the Ordinance tonight.

BUDGET & FINANCE:

Ms. Twardowski reported payroll & ACH transfers in the amount of \$232,706.09

MOTION to approve check #5188-5229 and the Treasurer's report by Ms. Beckius with a second by Ms. Costello

MOTION carries 7-0

MOTION to approve Ordinance No. 609 to raise the general fund millage rate to 5.2 and the fire tax to 1.0 by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer

MOTION carries 7-0

MOTION to adopt the 2022 Budget by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Beckius

MOTION carries 7-0

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Ms. Kernen reported that there is a potential new business for the old Rock & Roll After School location in the Redner's shopping center. It is an imaginative children's play space that will also have a café. There is a potential bistro/coffee shop looking at 476 Main St (CEDC office) and Worthwhile Wear, an upscale thrift store, opening soon in the old Sears Hardware. Ms. Kernen announced that the Whitby's are retiring and will be actively looking to lease or sell their property.

COMMUNICATIONS: Ms. Spencer said that the December newsletter will be going out soon. As this is her last council meeting, she thanked everyone and said it has been her honor and privilege to serve on borough council.

REGIONAL PLANNING: Ms. Beckius reported that at their last meeting, the committee looked at ways to get information out to people. They discussed storm water, tree tender training and conservation. She gave an overview of topics that were discussed pertaining to each municipality.

CTMA/PUBLIC WORKS: Ms. McKinney reported that they paid bills and discussed a slight increase in the water and sewer fees.

PARKS:

MOTION to authorize getting bids to renovate the basketball court at Collegeville Park by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Beckius

MOTION carries 7-0

PERSONNEL: Ms. Kernan noted that she and Mr. Hoffmann completed the yearly evaluation of Ms. Twardowski and that she is exceeding their expectations.

STREETS & PUBLIC SAFETY: No report

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

ENGINEER: Mr. Leh reported that construction continues at Freeland Square. The majority of the storm and sanitary infrastructure has been installed. He noted that they have contacted PA-DEP to inquire on the status of their review of our permit application. They indicated that due to their backlog, we may not receive any response until February.

Ms. Twardowski noted that she spoke with Chris Canavan from WB Homes and he advised that four units are sold and they all were over \$500K.

SOLICITOR: Ms. Geiser reported that she has been transitioning into her role and getting to know Ms. Twardowski. She said she will have the Chief's Agreement ready for review at the January meeting.

MOTION to authorize Ms. Twardowski to opt in to the Purdue Pharma Settlement by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer

MOTION carries 6-1 (Farr)

MANAGER: Ms. Twardowski reported that she is still working on the grant applications for the hazard mitigation grant for acquiring land from flood victims. She received 23 applications. The appraisals have begun and the next step is for the homeowners to review the appraisal, accept it and move on in the process or opt out. There was a meeting at the Firehouse on November 20 that was very well attended. The consultant we hired was present and gave a lot of valuable information to residents.

Mr. Farr asked if the properties are bought out, if there is a fee to the borough. Ms. Twardowski said that FEMA pays to demolish the property and that ownership is transferred to the borough for free, but that we are then required to maintain/mow it and no structures can be built on it. More information on that to follow.

The new plowing contract went again to MAK Services from December 2, 2021 through December 31, 2022 with two possible one year extensions for 2023 & 2024. The rates went up approximately \$30-\$40 per hour depending on the truck used as was expected with the rise in fuel and labor costs. Mr.

Hoffmann asked if, going forward, we could do the contract from June to June so as to be able to allow time to find another contractor if we are not happy with the service. Ms. Twardowski agreed.

MOTION to award the 2021-2022 with two one year options for 2023 & 2024 to MAK Services by Ms. McKinney with a second by Mr. Hoffmann

MOTION carries 7-0

POLICE: Chief Bucher said he was asked by the PV School District to host a drop off for used cell phones for the benefit of Laurel House. Phones can be dropped off until January 17. He also noted that Santa will be giving out gifts from the firetruck on Saturday, December 18. Gifts are to be labeled and dropped off at Borough Hall by December 16.

FIRE: No report

AMBULANCE: No report

MAYOR: The Mayor explained the collective effort between the Borough, Ursinus College and PVSD to welcome the Lenape tribe back to their ancestral home of the Perkiomen Valley. He showed a brief video featuring Chief Brad Kills Crow and Asst. Chief Jeremy Johnson that highlights how appreciative they are to be back to explore the area. They presented the Borough with a gift of a flag from the Delaware Tribe.

MOTION to approve the committee and administrative reports by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Costello

MOTION carries 7-0

PUBLIC COMMENT:

John Zvarick 901 Clahor Ave: Mr. Zvarick said that he had his brother, who is a civil engineer, look at the culverts with him and he felt there is no imminent danger of collapse for any of them. He thinks the tax increase is premature and wondered if alternatives have been explored. Mr. Zvarick also said that he doesn't understand why the Borough doesn't require more from the college. He wants council to explore having Ursinus donate toward a capital fund.

Jan Snovel 432 Chestnut St: Ms. Snovel said that she was at the budget workshop and understands that to fix the roads and the culverts, a tax increase is necessary.

Mr. Hoffmann noted that all three culverts are not going to be replaced next year. The plan is for one culvert to be replaced, and two others repaired. The tax increase is for their replacement down the road and also for other road repairs.

Patrick Ellis 216 8th Ave: Mr. Ellis said he thought the meeting last night explained thoroughly why the culverts need to be repaired/replaced.

Ms. Kernen advised everyone that the tree lighting at 3rd & Main Streets is this Saturday at 4:15. Santa will come on a firetruck and light the tree. All are welcome to go inside the new Victoria's on Main to see the improvements and have refreshments.

Ms. Kernen shared the following tribute to Shannon Spencer as this is her last meeting:

"I am sad to say that this is Shannon Spencer's last meeting. Shannon has served on the Colledgeville Borough Council and the Planning Commission for the past four years.

One of the strengths of this Council is our differences. Each person brings his or her unique skills to the group so that we all make better decisions. Shannon brought her insight and sharp focus to every Council meeting which resulted in a more critical review of issues and developer plans than any of us could have done without her.

Additionally, Shannon is a highly talented writer. As head of our Communications committee, I think one of her greatest contributions was her total revamping of the borough's website. She also designed, wrote and published the borough's monthly e-newsletters. Today, thanks to Shannon, our newsletter circulation is inching upwards toward 1,000 residents.

Shannon's background as a city planner also was invaluable on the Planning Commission and helped us in many instances. My favorite story, though, is when Shannon enlightened us about a developer who wanted to erect snout houses in the borough. What is a snout house?

A snout house is **a house with a protruding garage in the front that takes up most of the street frontage**. This shuts the front of the house off from the streetscape. Thanks to Shannon, the new houses on 8th Ave. near Main St. were reworked so that the front doors face the street..

Shannon will be staying on our Planning Commission for a few more months in 2022 until her family moves to Virginia.

I can't mention Shannon without also mentioning her talented husband, Rich Wallace. Rich, formerly Professor and Chair of Ursinus College's Environmental Studies Dept., is now the editor-in-chief of the journal ***Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment***. Rich was also a valuable member of our Planning Commission and will be missed.

Shannon, it won't be the same here without you! We have talked with Ryan Beltz from the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy, and we will be planting a tree in your name in our new Creekside Park when it is built in the summer of 2022. Be sure to leave us your contact info since we are inviting you back—either in person or virtually—for your tree's dedication ceremony.

Shannon, knowing you, Rich and your family has been an honor! Best of luck in your move to Virginia!"

MEETING ADJOURNED 7:43PM