

COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL
ZOOM MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 6, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7PM by Council President Cathy Kernen.

ROLL CALL: Council President Cathy Kernen, Council VP Shannon Spencer, Council Pro Tem Gary Hoffmann, Council Member Marion McKinney, Council Member Craig Farr, Council Member Valarie Beckius, Council Member Kathy Costello, and Mayor Aidsand Wright-Riggins
ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Solicitor Dan Grieser, Engineer David Leh, Police Chief Bart Bucher, Manager Tamara Twardowski and Administrative Assistant Suzanne Robertson.

Ms. Kernen noted that there had been a Conditional Use hearing regarding the Freeland Square development prior to this meeting and that it had been approved. **MOTION** to approve Resolution 2021-01 (Preliminary Land Development Approval) by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer
MOTION carries 7-0

MOTION to approve the Minutes from the December 2, 2020 Council Meeting by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer. **MOTION** carries 7-0

Ms. Kernen opened the floor for Public Comment. No Comments

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BUDGET & FINANCE: Ms. Twardowski read out our fund totals from the report and requested approval for check numbers 4624-4690

She noted that we ended the year with a net income of \$62,875.02, our EIT and LST numbers held steady and that we actually ended about \$40K above what was budgeted in those areas. All in all, the year ended well considering that we did not know what to expect when COVID-19 hit.

MOTION to approve the Budget & Finance reports by Ms. McKinney with a second by Mr. Hoffmann
MOTION carries 7-0

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Ms. Kernen explained that the CEDC always used the area that is now Royal Farms to post upcoming events. Now that that is no longer feasible, she is proposing to use the trailhead across from the Collegeville Diner to post. Mr. Botti has made a rendering to see how that would look. Mr. Farr has concerns with it. He is worried that it will be visually distracting at an already busy intersection. Once the picture was shown on the screen, Ms. Kernen agreed. There was a discussion about the possibility of an electric sign at 5th & Main Streets. There had been talks about collaboration with Ursinus College a couple of years ago. This issue will be addressed at another time. Ms. Kernen is requesting approval for our Borough Hall to be included in the redevelopment plans that Core Development is working on with Ursinus College. Core is working on a plan to redevelop the Ursinus-owned buildings on the west side of 5th & Main Streets into first floor retail and student apartments above. They have offered to include our building in the renderings to give us some ideas how the

Borough property could be incorporated into the redevelopment. There is no cost to the Borough for this.

MOTION to approve Borough Hall to be included in the revitalization plans by Core Development by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Beckius. **MOTION** carries 7-0

Ms. McKinney asked if raising the roof at Borough Hall could be considered. She thinks the meeting room is too small to accommodate our residents. Ms. Spencer noted that Ursinus has, in the past, offered Bomberger Hall as a meeting spot. Mr. Penuel said the Fire House can accommodate 80 people comfortably. Ms. Kernan said these are still options for us going forward when we are back to meeting in person.

COMMUNICATIONS: Ms. Spencer reported she is working on the next newsletter.

LPVRS: No report

CTMA: Mr. Farr reported that there will be no increase in sewer charges for 2021.

CPVRPC: Ms. Beckius said there is no report as they will meet January 18.

PARKS: Ms. Costello noted that the Eagle Scout has submitted a proposal for the GAGA pit to Mr. Leh and he is reviewing it. She made reference to the Young Lungs at Play initiative that was brought to Council at the last meeting. Mr. Grieser explained that "No Smoking" could be added by Ordinance, but that it may be easier to pass an Ordinance that changes to the bylaws for the Park can be made by Resolution. Many municipalities handle changes this way. All Council members agreed this would be prudent. He said he will draft that Ordinance for the next meeting.

PERSONNEL: **MOTION** to approve 3% cost of living raises for Ms. Augustine and Ms. Robertson by Mr. Hoffmann with a second by Ms. Spencer **MOTION** carries 7-0
Ms. Kernan noted that next year raises will be determined by Ms. Twardowski based on merit.

PUBLIC WORKS: Ms. McKinney reported that the water usage fee was proposed to be increased by 2.35% which is approx. \$.10 per 1000 gallons of water.

MOTION to approve Ordinance 2021-02 water usage fee increase by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Beckius **MOTION** carries 7-0

Mr. Grieser pointed out that this comes out to \$1.55 per quarter for a family of four. Mr. Farr reported that we have exceptionally low water rates compared to neighboring towns. Ms. Beckius noted that if the fee is not covering the expenses, it must be raised. And it is better to do the increase incrementally than a large amount in a few years. It's just good practice.

STREETS, PUBLIC SAFETY & LIGHTING: Mr. Farr reported that they had a great meeting on Monday night. They discussed some old business as well as two Ordinances that are to be amended. The first is regarding parking on W 5th Avenue. It has been decided that parking on both sides of the street will be allowed. The other is the burning Ordinance that has been updated to take into account fire pits.

MOTION to approve advertising the Ordinance revision on Parking on W 5th Ave by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer **MOTION** carries 7-0

MOTION to approve advertising the Ordinance revision regarding outdoor burning by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer **MOTION** carries 7-0

Ms. Spencer asked if she missed the distance from the property line on the fire ordinance. Mr. Grieser clarified that the ordinance states a “safe distance” from the property line. That will be determined by either the Police or Fire Police on a case-by-case basis if a complaint is called in.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

ENGINEER: Mr. Leh reported that construction continues on Royal Farms and on the vacated portion of First Ave. Paving on this section of the road is scheduled to be completed the week of January 4. The store plans to be open by the end of January. He noted that he has received Escrow Release #3 for the Glenwood Reserve project and has made recommendation for approval under separate cover. WB Homes was before the Planning Commission at their December 17 meeting to review their conditional use and preliminary land development applications. The Planning Commission recommended approval of both applications.

MOTION to approve Escrow release #3 for Glenwood Reserve in the amount of \$142,388.85 by Ms. McKinney with a second by Mr. Hoffmann

MOTION carries 7-0

SOLICITOR: Mr. Grieser noted that Governor Wolf had extended the Emergency Order back in November that allows for our virtual meetings to continue through March. Mr. Farr asked if we can only continue based on that order. If we are uncomfortable meeting in public, are we allowed to continue via ZOOM? Mr. Grieser said the municipality can declare an emergency order if they desire.

MANAGER: Ms. Twardowski noted that she had several meetings last month. She and Ms. Kernen met with Montgomery County Planners, Ursinus College and the Phoenixville Borough manager to discuss development ideas. She and Ms. Augustine met with a representative from Victory Bank to discuss efficiencies. Right now we are using several banks. Victory is offering a free check scanner that will alleviate trips to the bank. Ms. Twardowski noted that she sat in on a meeting regarding the realignment of Germantown and Ridge Pikes. There won't be any work done in Collegeville at this point, but they are working on right of ways with an eye on the future second bridge. Ms. Twardowski was told that there will be a meeting for Collegeville officials and staff in the spring with a public meeting to follow in the summer. She reported that she has switched cell carriers and that it should save the Borough about \$80 per month. There will also be credits for the new business that could total up to \$2K in rebates. Ms. Twardowski has been working with our IT provider to change the internal phones over to a voiceover IP that will allow for staff to seamlessly work from home if necessary.

Collegeville Borough Council is making the following appointments effective January 1, 2021:

Zoning Hearing Board:

Heather Bernardin, 3 year term

Penny Balzereit, as alternate 3 year term

Vacancy Board:

Andrea Baptiste, a 1 year term

CTMA:

Marion McKinney, a 5 year term

Valarie Beckius, to fill Jim Traupman's term, to conclude December 2023

Public Works:

Valarie Beckius, a 2 year term

MOTION to approve the appointments for 2021 by Ms. Spencer with a second by Mr. Farr

MOTION carries 7-0

POLICE: Chief Bucher stated that his report is available for review and asked if there were any questions. He noted a thank you letter received from Montgomery County for the successful Thanksgiving Food Drive. Ms. Beckius thanked the Chief for his work on that project.

FIRE: Mr. Freas said they closed out the year with the following totals:

359 calls

93 Collegeville Borough

125 Upper Providence

83 Trappe

He reported 1750 man/woman hours to the community for the year. The average from dispatch to onsite is 10 minutes.

Mr. Farr thanked all of our first responders for the work they do!

MAYOR: The Mayor thanked Ms. Robertson for her help on the rebranding/new logo campaign for the borough. He noted that Martin Luther King Day is coming up and said he has four speaking engagements on the calendar on this topic. We are living in a historic time of change.

MOTION to approve the Committee and Administrative reports by Ms. McKinney with a second by Mr.

Hoffmann

MOTION carries 7-0

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Henry White 51 Chestnut St.

Mr. White complained that after the last snowstorm, the contractor dumped snow from the street onto his sidewalk. He stated that if the borough wants him to clear his sidewalk, he should not have to deal with the added weight of snow that had fallen in the street.

Bill Hollister 35 Addison Lane

Mr. Hollister wants to be sure there is enough money being held in escrow to ensure that the builder of Glenwood Reserve finishes the paving and site work at the monument.

Mr. Leh assured him that the work will all be completed before the final escrow is released. There is still \$65K left in escrow which can more that cover the completion.

Public Comment Closed

OTHER BUSINESS: Ms. Kernen alerted everyone that she received a resignation letter from Kelly Taylor, our tax collector. She is working on a job description to post on the website and is looking to appoint someone by March. This is an elected position, so the person will go on the ballot in the next election. The Mayor asked if this person has to be a resident and can they also be a council member. Ms. Kernen said they do need to be a resident, but thinks there may be a conflict if they are on Council. Mr. Grieser agreed, but said he will check into it.

Mr. Hoffmann noted that the Streets, Public Safety & Lighting Committee reached out to Joe Webster's office regarding the use of radar for speed control. They were told that Rep. Webster as well as Joe Ciresi both support it. Chief Bucher noted that this has come up many times in the last 20 years, and has never passed. Mr. Farr expressed his frustration about how issues are handled in this state.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:25pm