

COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 7, 2020

The meeting was called to order by Council President Cathy Kernen at 7:05PM

ROLL CALL: Council President Cathy Kernen, Council VP Shannon Spencer, President Pro Tem Gary Hoffmann, Council Member, Craig Farr, Council Member Marion McKinney, Council Member Kathy Costello, Council Member Valarie Beckius and Mayor Aidsand Wright-Riggins.

ALSO PRESENT: Solicitor Dan Grieser, Engineer David Leh, Police Chief Bart Bucher and Acting Borough Manager Suzanne Robertson

Ms. Kernen asked if Lynn Fleischer was present to discuss the Rotary's gift to the Borough. The Mayor noted that the Rotary Club's meeting is taking place at this same time, so she is probably attending that.

Ms. Kernen said that council has decided to add a second public comment section at the start of the meeting. This way, residents can bring a subject to Council without having to wait through the entire meeting. She asked if anyone had any comments. None at this time. Ms. Kernen said there will be another chance for public comment at the end of the reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Treasure's Report: Ms. Augustine noted that there is \$647K available in the general fund at this time. She said she was asked by Mr. Hoffmann to estimate the expenses until the end of the year and she has estimated \$800K. There are still monies due to come in. The budget committee will be meeting next week to firm up the budget for 2021 and have it ready for Council to review in a couple of weeks. Ms. Augustine asked for approval of check numbers 4479-4529

MOTION to approve check #'s 4479-4529 and the Treasurer's Report by Ms. McKinney with at second by Mr. Hoffmann **MOTION** carries 7-0

Business Development: Ms. Kernen asked Mr. Grieser if he had any update regarding the WB Homes development. Mr. Grieser said that he spoke with Mr. Canavan and that things are moving forward with the design plans and that they expect to present to the Borough in 30-45 days. There will be a conditional use hearing in December. Ms. Kernen explained that the working name for this development has been "Hudson Square". During a tour of a similar project in Lansdale, Ms. Kernen said she mentioned to Mr. Canavan that the word "Hudson" has no meaning in our Borough. Mr. Canavan said that he is open to suggestions, but asked only that we keep Station as the second word. At the Business Development Committee meeting, several suggestions were brought forth: Freeland Square, Perkiomen Bridge Square and College Square. If anyone has any other suggestions, we welcome them! Ms. McKinney asked if Collegeville Square was considered. Ms. Kernen laughed that that obvious choice had not been mentioned. All suggestions will be discussed at the Business Development meeting next month. Ms. Kernen said they had a guest speaker at the meeting. Peter Staz from Core Development was present to discuss the preliminary plans for the development of the 400 block of Main

Street. There are plans to have retail space on the first floors of the buildings on both west corners of 5th & Main with housing above. There was a report given from Ursinus College about how well the students are doing with wearing masks and social distancing.

Communications: Ms. Spencer noted some of the articles included in this month's newsletter. Voting is at the top of the list! There is a Halloween statement, a Wildlife statement and updates on all of the regular topics covered. Mr. Hoffmann noticed an update of the polling places on the website, and then said when he looked again it was back to the primary information. Ms. Spencer said she will make sure it gets updated properly! Ms. McKinney thanked Ms. Spencer for her work on the newsletter.

LPVRS: Ms. Robertson reported for Ms. Stagliano (not present) that the sewer project is moving along and that they are working near the Arcola Rd Bridge.

CTMA: No report

Public Works: Ms. McKinney said it was a very lively meeting this month. She noted that Trappe Borough agreed to sign the Police Agreement allowing Collegeville Borough Police to patrol in Water Works Park, Public Works and the Annex, but they refused to pay toward the additional insurance. She noted that Ms. Beckius had very reasonable questions and that no one would give reasonable answers. She said that a \$100K lighting project was brought up and yet they will not split less than one thousand dollars. She thought that was disheartening. She feels that they are still mad about the salt shed and now are also angry because they think we stole Ms. Twardowski from them. Time to move on! She asked Mr. Hastings to make a log of the vandalism that has been done in the park and what the amount is moving forward with the police presence. Mr. Farr thanked Ms. Robertson for going back to the insurance carrier and getting a better rate. He noted that we are right where we started. It began with us paying about \$500 for the coverage and with the adjusted rate, that is where we are now. Ms. Spencer asked if it is decided that we will be paying for this additional insurance. Ms. McKinney said yes, and she feels it is money well spent. Mr. Hoffmann agreed that it is what is best for our residents who live bordering the park. Ms. Beckius said it will be safer for everyone and feels it is worth it. **MOTION** to pay the added insurance for Police coverage at Water Works Park, Public Works and Annex by Ms. McKinney with a second by Mr. Farr **MOTION** carries 7-0

CPVRPC: Ms. Beckius said they are moving along with the interactive trail map. It is almost finished. They also discussed the development "Trappe Village" and the zoning on 7th Ave. There was also a discussion about drones and she plans continue the discussion at the next meeting.

Planning Commission: Ms. Robertson noted that the committee met on September 17th to discuss a small land development project on 8th Ave. Local builder Terry Tumelo, Engineers Dave Leh and Chris Yohn as well as the owners, Daniel & Jessica Kelly, brought their sketches for input from the board. The plan is to demolish an existing home and build two homes on 8th Ave with two flag lots behind. There was much discussion and the Planning Commission gave feedback and suggested the least curb cuts would be the most attractive option in their opinion. They are going back to work on the suggestions and hope to be before council at the November meeting and then on to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Parks: Ms. Costello reported that the new fence at the Collegeville Park has been installed. She asked if it has been determined whether or not she can access the tree fund to add some shade trees along

Third Ave and in the park near the basketball court. Mr. Hoffmann said that those funds in that account are for use anywhere in the borough and are available. Ms. Spencer asked what size trees Ms. Costello is planning to use. Ms. Costello said that she got a price from our current landscaper for 10'-12' foot trees planted for \$700 per and for the same size planted from Corkum's only \$420. Ms. Spencer asked what kind of trees would be used. Ms. Costello said she is looking at maples, but was advised by her contact at the Perkiomen Watershed to vary the type, so she is looking at other varieties as well. Another project she is still working on is the ADA swing and ramp. Ms. Spencer asked about the price of the swing. Ms. Costello said she has seen prices from \$150 for a more modest swing to \$3000 for a deluxe version with the ramp. Mr. Grieser suggested a **MOTION** to access the funds in the tree fund. **MOTION** to approve the parks committee using the tree fund to plant trees at Collegeville Park by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer **MOTION** carries 7-0

Personnel: Ms. Kernan said she is thrilled to announce that the Manager position was offered to Ms. Twardowski and that she accepted.

Streets, Public Safety & Lighting: Mr. Farr asked Ms. Robertson if she had any update on the street light replacement heads. Ms. Robertson said she was told the project would be underway in the coming weeks. She said she will follow up with her contact, Mike Fuller. Mr. Farr said that speed pillows were discussed at the meeting. He said that he, Chief Bucher and Mr. Leh evaluated Park Ave to decide exactly where they would be placed. Initially it was thought that there would be two sets, but now it has been decided that three sets are more appropriate. Mr. Leh provided an estimate for \$15K, so Mr. Farr is requesting this amount be added to the 2021 budget for his committee. Ms. McKinney noted that she saw an email in which someone from the Fire Company noted that they are not good for all the emergency vehicles. Mr. Farr noted that he spoke with Mr. Freas about this issue and they decided that as long as the fire trucks could pass freely, the other support vehicles could slow down to pass over the pillows. Ms. Beckius said that she originally was in support of this idea, but upon further research has some concerns whether they are right for our community. She asked if could bring her research to the next meeting to present it to the committee. Mr. Farr said the decision has already been made, so if she has concerns, he would like to hear them now. She has spoken to reps for PennDot as well as leaders in surrounding communities and found that the overall feeling is that people don't use them because the negatives outweigh the positives. There are drainage issues as well as problems if cars hit them at too high a speed. Cars have been known to go airborne if there are leaves or debris around them. Mr. Farr said they would not be installed against the curb, so drainage will not be an issue. He then said that Park Ave is a posted 25 MPH road and there would also be posted signs warning motorists that they were coming up on the pillows. He feels it is highly unlikely that someone would go airborne! Ms. Beckius agreed that drivers should be going the speed limit and watching the signs. She worries that in the event that they don't, the borough could be liable for damages because of the change in the road. Mr. Hoffmann asked Mr. Grieser if we would be liable in that situation. Mr. Grieser said it is our road, so there is some liability. The posting of the signs mitigates that liability. Ms. Beckius said there is a class coming up put on by PennDot regarding traffic calming, and she plans to attend. Mr. Farr noted that he is confused by Ms. Beckius' level of involvement at this point in the discussion. He noted that Chief Bucher had already reached out to all the area Chief's on this topic, so why would she also? Ms. Beckius said she does not want to discount the work done by Mr. Farr and the Chief, she only wants to explore

all the information before making a decision. Mr. Hoffmann agreed. He said that since this is not an imminent project that needs to be decided right now, he is open to hearing more information. Ms. Costello said that she too was all in favor of the pillows before she heard Ms. Beckius' points. Ms. Kernan stepped in and said that this is a big decision and that there will always be people that are not happy with the decisions made by Council. She said this issue needs further investigation and discussion at the next committee meeting before it moves forward. Mr. Hoffmann agreed and said Trappe Ambulance should be invited.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Engineer: Mr. Leh said generally the progress at Royal Farms has been good. They came across an abandoned storm sewer from the 40's that had to be relocated to get the utilities in, but they are working through that. He noted that the three new homes on 8th Ave are moving quickly. Glenwood Reserve is coming up on completion. The widening of the road is set to start next week along with cleaning up the basins and the final landscaping. Ms. Beckius asked if there will be another exit for that road. Mr. Leh said it is one way in and out. That road drops off to the trail. Ms. Beckius asked if the residents are aware of that. Mr. Leh said they should be. Another exit was never part of the plan.

Solicitor: Mr. Grieser said he spent time working on the contract for our new manager and the Police service agreement. Also, the new TMobile Agreement for the Trappe Water Tower was approved last month and it will run for the next 20 years.

Manager: Ms. Robertson said she met with the owner of Keystone Inspection Agency to discuss bringing on another inspector who would focus only on the Fire/Safety Inspections. The thought was to finally get started on them the last quarter of this year. But once we started discussing the revised schedule, we realized that it would be wise to wait until January of 2021. Mr. O'Brien noted that in the other townships they service with this particular inspection there have been many hurdles. Many medically related offices are simply not letting anyone that is not a patient in for any reason. Many businesses are working on modified hours. There is also a previous issue brought up at council that some of the shop owners in the shopping centers claim to have to do this type of inspection already for their insurance. It seemed prudent to wait, so a letter was drafted and sent out this month explaining to all that any fees paid will go toward the inspections in 2021.

Police: Chief Bucher reported that there was a residential burglary. Search warrants have been issued and an arrest is imminent. He reported that there were a couple of suspicious incidents on campus at Ursinus College and they are investigating those as well. Collegeville PD is participating in a Thanksgiving Food Drive. Donations can be dropped at Borough Hall thru October 30th. This effort is in conjunction with the Montgomery County Children & Youth Services. He noted that the annual Drug Takeback Day is Saturday, October 24. He will be at Borough Hall from 10AM – 2PM. Ms. Spencer asked what happens to the drugs they take in. The Chief explained that they are taken to a facility where they are picked up by the DEA and then incinerated in such a way that does not adversely affect the environment. Ms. McKinney asked for the non-emergency police phone number. 610/489-9332 Chief Bucher said there will be a new number for the county dispatch soon and he will distribute to all of Council when it is issued.

Fire: Mr. Freas reported that there were 28 incidents for the month, eight of which were in the Borough. There were 85 man hours of service and an average of 9 mins to on the scene. The Virtual 5K had good attendance and he thanked all who participated. Ms. Spencer asked Mr. Freas if there are any Fire Prevention Month flyers he would like to submit for the Newsletter. He said he will send her something. He said they are still taking part in visiting schools and day care centers to teach fire safety. Ms. Beckius thanked him for continuing those activities. She feels they are very important for the community. Ms. Kernan thanked the Fire Company for their involvement in securing another polling place in the borough.

Mayor: The Mayor noted that on Wednesday, October 14, there would be a Community Connections Forum on race in conjunction with the Rotary. He said that our Chief Bucher and Judge Kathleen Kelly Rebar would be there for a conversation about law enforcement and criminal justice. The link will be on the Collegeville Rotary website and will take place at 7PM. Mayor Wright-Riggins noted that there is planned spring cleanup scheduled on October 31 and there are three stream sites being considered: Doe Run at Campus Dr, Perkiomen Creek at Freeland Dr and Perkiomen Creek at the 29 pull off. All are welcome to choose one of the sites as a priority and email us that preference.

MOTION to approve the Committee and Administrative reports by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer **MOTION** carries 7-0

Public Comment: No Comments

Chats Attached

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1) **MOTION** to approve the Police Service Agreement. Mr. Grieser explained that there is a PA State Statute that requires Trappe to authorize our police to conduct police activities in their Borough. **MOTION** by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer **MOTION** carries 7-0
Chief Bucher asked for clarification for when this will go into effect. Mr. Grieser said 12:01 tonight.
- 2) **MOTION** to ratify the hiring and contract for Tamara Twardowski as Borough Manager. Mr. Grieser explained that Borough Code requires a contract for managers. This contract will be in force from November 16, 2020 until January of 2022, which is the next reorganization.
MOTION to approve by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer **MOTION** carries 7-0
Welcome Tamara!

OTHER BUSINESS:

Ms. Robertson shared some pictures of the newly finished art installation on the smokestack at Ursinus College. Ms. Spencer said she hopes this is the beginning of more murals in Collegeville. Ms. Kernan said there are hopes for one at the Collegeville Station.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:16 PM

