

COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
January 2, 2019

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Council President, Marion McKinney

ROLL CALL: Council President, Marion McKinney, Council Member Shannon Spencer, Council Member Terrie Stagliano, Council Member Louise Tulio, Council Member Hugh Braun, Council Member Cathy Kernen and Mayor Aidsand Wright-Riggins. Council Vice President Mat McKnight was not present. Also in attendance were Solicitor Sean Kilkenny, Borough Manager Geoff Thompson, Engineer David Leh, Police Chief Bart Bucher and Administrative Assistant Suzanne Robertson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2018 meeting by Ms. Kernen with a second by Mr. Braun. *MOTION carries 6-0*

STREETLIGHT PROCUREMENT PROGRAM FEASIBILITY PRESENTATION: Michael Fuller from Keystone Lighting Solutions gave a presentation regarding Phase I of the Streetlight Procurement Feasibility Study. Mr. Fuller's presentation was an overview of the Borough's current streetlights, the energy used, costs and projected costs and savings gained if the streetlights were replaced with LEDs.

Ms. Kernen asked if the savings we could expect were annual. Mr. Fuller stated said yes.

Ms. Spencer asked if he had the figures for the actual cost of energy and energy usage. Mr. Fuller stated that this report reflects only the savings, not the cost. Those numbers are in the full information provided in the binders. Ms. Spencer asked about the life expectancy of the new fixtures. LED technology is relatively new, but they expect 25-30 years conservatively.

Mr. Fuller stated that the study is to replace what exists, not study usage for the area. They plan to meet or exceed what we currently have. There will be a lot more consistency than we currently have. The issue tonight is just to decide if you want to move to that next phase in which a full study of every light in the borough is analyzed for efficiency.

Mayor Wright-Riggins asked if he could talk about leverage procurement. Mr. Fuller stated they bring all the contractors together to get the best pricing. This is one of the largest of its kind in the country. There are many manufacturers and installers that want to be a part of this project.

Ms. Stagliano asked who the financing is through. Mr. Fuller stated that the financing will be bid or shopped for the best rate.

Ms. Stagliano said that many people have concerns with the level of brightness with LEDS. Mr. Fuller explained that are advanced control systems that are available which can be used to control and change the levels of brightness at our discretion. LEDs come in warmer or brighter tones depending on the use, residential or commercial.

Ms. Spencer asked if there are communities we could visit to see the finished product and if the new system will be metered. Mr. Fuller said that he could give us information on the communities in the first round of the project to look at the LEDs. The new lights will not be metered and PECO will accept whatever wattage they report and will bill accordingly. He stated that PECO is supportive of the program because it gives them a complete inventory.

Ms. Tulio asked about converting the existing decorative lights in her neighborhood.

Jim Troutman: If one bulb fails, do they all have to be replaced? Is there a good warranty? Mr. Fuller indicated that most of the LEDs have a 10-year warranty.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget & Finance: Mr. Thompson requested approval of checks 3352-3428 and noted totals in Treasurer's report. **MOTION** to approve by Ms. Stagliano with a second from Ms. Tulio, *MOTION carries 6-0*

Business Development: Ms. Kernen reported that Sweet Aloha will not be coming to the Borough. They had been interested in renting space in the CEDC building, but they received a better offer in Royersford. This has made the committee realize that they have a lot to learn about the negotiating process for new business acquisition. Their next meeting will focus on that.

Communications: Ms. Spencer reported that the December newsletter went out.

Community Engagement & Service: Ms. McKinney introduced Heather from Ursinus College to explain her new role. Heather stated that she started at UC 5 months ago and her focus is to build bridges between the University and the community. They have many activities during MLK week. They have a Greek group that is reaching out to churches and community organizations to volunteer. They anticipate the opening of the new Student Commons, with its meeting space and coffee shop, as a place where the community will connect with the students and faculty. Ms. McKinney asked how we can introduce the students to the residents so they would know that the kids reaching out to help are legitimate. Ms. Spencer said we can address that in the newsletter, as well as the website and the Facebook page.

CPVRPC: Ms. Kernen said there was no December meeting. The next meeting will be January 21st at 7PM at Trappe Borough Hall.

CTMA and Public Works: Arnold Mann reported the following items from the CTMA and Public Works meeting of December 19; Royal Farms was granted a sewer capacity approval, the Leslen Lane Water Main Replacement bids were received and the project was awarded to Shainline in the amount of \$49,000. The compost site is closed until March of this year except for two weekends. The solicitor is finishing up work on correcting the jointly owned Public Works properties. Ms. McKinney asked about the hourly rate increase discussion. Jim Traupman stated that the vote was not confirmed by Collegeville Borough Council so it will be revisited at the next Public Works meeting.

Parks: No report

Personnel: No report

Planning Commission: No report

Public Safety: No report

Streets, Roads & Lighting: No report

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Engineer: Mr. Leh requested the final escrow release for Collegeville Walk. **MOTION** to release the escrow by Ms. Stagliano with a second by Ms. Kernen
MOTION carries 6-0

Solicitor: Mr. Kilkenny said it was not a busy month. He continues to work with Mr. Thompson and Mr. Leh regarding Developer's Agreements.

Manager/Zoning Officer: Mr. Thompson said Christmas trees will be picked up on January 12th. He submitted the completed the \$55K grant contract to the county for the handicap ramps at the park.

Police: Chief Bucher stated that all officers have completed their Continuing Education credits and all are certified for the year. He said the new patrolman will be on his own in January.

Collegetown Fire Company: Brian Freas read from his report the statistics for the Fire Company. He said the Santa run went well. They expect to be in the new building in February and there will be a "Grand Housing" party in September.

Mayor: In the coming months, I look forward to hearing from community members who are calling for a Human Relations Ordinance and Commission that I trust the Borough Council will affirm positively. The Ordinance will be an antidiscrimination ordinance that protects Collegetown residents on the basis of race, religion, gender, and sexuality. It will be an ordinance that proclaims clearly that in Collegetown, diversity is celebrated.

Although this ordinance is not about me, it impacts people like me. Allow me to share my latest episode in my Collegetown Experience:

On the first day of Kwanzaa, December 26, 2018, I proudly flew my red, green and black Pan African flag to proclaim my delight in African American people and my hope for these yet to be United States of America that one day, we would all be judged by the content of our character rather than the pigment of our skin.

The first day of Kwanzaa is called "Umoja", or Unity; Unity of family, community, nation and race. Yesterday, the first day of the New Year and last day of Kwanzaa, is called "Imani", or Faith. Faith in our people, our families, our educators, our God and the righteousness of the African American struggle. My last-born child, now 36 years old is named Imani.

Yesterday at 9:00 AM my family left our home to celebrate the day by breaking first bread at the home of a loved one, Alice, a person we claim as family, not by blood but by relational kinship. Umoja and Imani were on our minds and in our hearts as we enjoyed breakfast in her house. Needing to work on a report and sermons, I returned home alone at 12:40 PM yesterday to discover that the flag of my ancestors had been desecrated, my home violated, and my trust in my fellow human beings interrogated.

This is not the first time something like this has happened to me, a 28-year resident of Collegetown and today commemorating my first year anniversary as Mayor of our Borough. The N word has been written on my fence. A sign in my yard announcing that Jesus was an Immigrant was ripped to shreds. Campaign literature claiming that I was a supporter of the gang M S-13 had been disseminated. My car has been keyed and egged.

What some very few decadent people in this incredibly wonderful community do not realize about me is that my flags and signs and posts are never negative. I try hard to not be categorized as Anti-Anybody. I speak to those who will not speak to me. I reach out to those who refuse to reach out to me. I try hard to understand those different from me. Even harder than I try to get them to understand me.

I do believe that it is my duty as a person of faith, as a public servant, and as a citizen to proclaim what I stand for. It is true. I do stand for immigrants and refugees. I do believe that persons living with disabilities must be respected. I stand with women who claim that they and they alone are in charge of their bodies. I proclaim that people and the planet must be valued over profit. I do believe that Black and Gay lives do matter. I celebrate diversity; religiously, racially and sexually even when I am uncomfortable with it or fail to truly comprehend it.

For the handful of Neanderthals in our community who think it fun to come at me with their Junior High School and Baby Klansmen in Training tactics, please know that I can take it. I do not welcome it. But I can take it. My parents, Aidsand Jr and Elva Loraine; and grandparents, Malachi and Laura Pearl taught me how to take it. This year, 2019, is the 400th anniversary since my ancestors from the west coast of Africa were stolen, enslaved and landed on the east coast of this country. I stand before you as the product of an unbroken chain of survivors and people who thrived in the face of insurmountable odds. In my veins flows the blood of a people that slavery could not kill, Jim Crow could not stifle, mass incarceration could not nullify, nor could James Crow Esquire disqualify.

While I can personally deal with the occasional assaults, I do not yet trust my ability to deal with dastardly deeds directed toward my wife, children or grandchildren. Every once in a while, the Honorable Reverend Doctor Aidsand F "Ace" Wright-Riggins is seized by the spirit of some of my other ancestral spiritual heirs... Denmark Vesey Huey Newton, Malcom X and Nat Turner. Let me be clear. I do not start fights. My head and heart are committed to a philosophy and spirituality of non-violence rooted in the teachings of Jesus the Christ and Mahatma Gandhi. I consciously attempt to practice radical hospitality. I must admit however that my fists are quick to fly when my life or the life of my family members must be protected. My hands are not as converted as my head and heart. God is not through with me yet.

I will not be intimidated by vandals or vandalism. I will not relent from speaking my mind and telling my truth. No one should ever mistake my kindness or niceness or drive to create community as weakness. With my last ounce of courage, I will work until America becomes what it purports itself to be. And, I will refuse to be buried until I die.

I look forward to your affirming a Human Relations Ordinance and a Human Relations Commission in the coming days.

MOTION to approve the committee and administrative reports by Ms. Stagliano with a second by Ms. Tulio.
MOTION carries 6-0

PUBLIC DISCUSSION (Items not on the agenda)

Carol Ewing: 288 Lloyd Ave

Ms. Ewing came to this meeting regarding fire at the house next door to hers. She said she was assured she should come back in about 3 months and there would be an update. Since then, the house is still boarded up, there is an abandoned car in the driveway and the windows are open. There is trash in the back of the house that smells. Ms. Ewing said she spoke with someone she saw coming out of the house that claimed to work for the bank that owns the property now and they said it would be secured. It is not. People have been going in and out and it is still a mess. She wrote a letter to Mr. Thompson with copies for Ms. McKinney and Ms. Robertson expressing my concerns, and no one got back to her. Mr. Thompson said that when he received the letter, he contacted the husband of the owner and the trash was removed from the front of the home. Ms. Ewing claims the trash was not removed, only moved to the rear of the home and that it stinks. Ms. Stagliano explained to Ms. Ewing that the Borough's hands are tied in matters like this since we do not have any options. We can mow the grass if it gets too high, and have in the past with other foreclosure homes. Ms. Ewing was upset that she did not get a response from the letter. Mr. Thompson apologized for not calling, but said he thought she would see that the trash had been removed as requested. Ms. McKinney also apologized for not responding. She said she did not receive the letter. Craig Penuel said that he feels for Ms. Ewing and thinks the Borough lacks the necessary ordinances to

prevent things like this. He feels that Perkiomen Township does a much better job taking care of their residents. Ms. McKinney asked Mr. Kilkenny if the Borough has any recourse in this situation. He stated that his office could send a letter to the bank and that possibly that would carry some weight. He said that we have the option to do the work and then put a lien on the property to recoup what was paid. The Mayor asked about the staffing in Perkiomen Township. Mr. Penuel said they have a full time person, John Moran. Ms. McKinney said she would look into that.

Andrea Baptiste, 218 Militia Court

Ms. Baptiste said she was sorry for what the Mayor and his family are going through and inquired if anything has been done. The Mayor said the police had been out to his home on two occasions since the incident and that they could not find any clues to whom had done it. He said his major concern is not for himself, but for his wife and granddaughter who has witnessed too much in her 14 years. He also wanted to say that he feels that, overall, this is a wonderful community with good people.

Bruce Craver, 226 6th Ave

Mr. Bruce Craver is unhappy there is now a NO TURN ON RED sign at 6th & Main. It now takes him longer to respond to the firehouse when called. He has to stop twice since the lights are synced. He feels it is unnecessary. Ms. McKinney said it is for the safety of the students. Mr. Craver said the students are a big part of the problem. He also mentioned some trees across the path in Hunsberger Woods that are causing erosion. He is worried about ice on the path as a lot of people walk there. Ms. Stagliano said she will get with Joe Hastings to see if they can fix it.

Jim Troutman

Mr. Troutman said that it was difficult to read the Mayor's report. He hopes that the Mayor will consider using a quote from Nelson Mandela. In the quote, Mr. Mandela was asked how he can stay so positive and he replied that "they took everything from me, even my hate." The Mayor thanked him.

Ms. McKinney stated that she hopes this sentiment will spill over into the political rivals in town. She feels strongly that even though people have different ideas on how things should be done, that everyone should be respectful of other's opinions.

ACTION ITEMS

Consideration of Authority, Board and Commission Appointments

1. Civil Service Commission (6-year term)
2. CTMA (5-year term)
3. LPVRS (5-year term)
4. Vacancy Board (1-year term)
5. Zoning Hearing Board (3-year term)

Mr. Thompson asked the above reappointments be approved by Council. James Calvin, Jim Troutman, Terrie Stagliano, Andrea Baptiste and George Schiavo. Howard Kreibal's term on the BOCA Appeals Board has expired but Mr. Thompson said he has not been able to contract Mr. Kreibal about being reappointed. Mr. Kilkenny said that we can approve him and if he does not want to serve, revisit.

MOTION by Ms. Stagliano to approve the reappointment of James Calvin to Civil Service Commission, second by Ms. Tulio, *MOTION carries 6-0*

MOTION Ms. Stagliano to appoint Jim Troutman to CTMA, second by Ms. Tulio, *MOTION carries 6-0*

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MOTION by Ms. Tulio to reappoint Terrie Stagliano to LPVRSAs, second by Mr. Braun, *MOTION carries 6-0*

MOTION by Ms. Tulio to reappoint Andrea Baptiste to the Vacancy Board, second by Ms. Spencer, *MOTION carries 6-0.*

MOTION by Ms. Stagliano to appoint George Schiavo to the Zoning Hearing Board by Resolution with a second from Ms. Tulio, *Motion carries 6-0.*

MOTION by Ms. Stagliano to reappoint Howard Kriebel to the BOCA Appeals Board, second by Ms. Tulio, *MOTION carries 6-0*

Ms. McKinney asked if there is a way we can let people know in advance when these appointments are scheduled. She feels we have many qualified people live in our community and she would like to ensure they have access to the information if they would like to get involved. Ms. Spencer said she could put it in the newsletter and we can also post on the website as well as Facebook.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Kernan asked if anyone would like to help “undecorate” the tree. They will be doing that in the next few weeks. She said there is a new men’s styling salon: Chad Michael opening on 1/16. There is also a new Vietnamese restaurant opening this month.

ADJOURNED 8:50PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Geoffrey Thompson, Secretary