

COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JULY 5, 2023

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

ROLL CALL: President Cathy Kernen, VP Gary Hoffmann, PPT Craig Farr, Marion McKinney, Kathy Costello, Valarie Beckius and Dean Miller

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

MOTION to approve the minutes from the June meeting by Costello with a second by Farr
MOTION carries 6-0

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Janette Korenkiewicz-234 Liberty Court- Ms. Korenkiewicz noted that her parents live on 10th Avenue and she wondered about the shared parking between the two Ursinus properties for sale at 10th & Main Streets. Are they zoned residential or commercial? Ms. Twardowski explained that they are zoned residential, but since the college used them as dorms, they have non-conforming status to be used as dorms. That is not the same as a student home, as a dorm is owned by the college. A student home would require a special exception and is limited to 3 students. Anyone buying the property would have to go before the ZHB if they wanted to use them for anything other than a dorm, a single family home or a group home for handicapped persons and the limit is four people. She anticipates that there will be shared parking easement in place for the individually owned properties.

Jan Snovel-432 Chestnut Street- Ms. Snovel reported a bush at the corner of 3rd & Chestnut that is hard to see around. She thinks it could cause an accident. Ms. Twardowski is aware and sending the homeowner a letter to move or remove it.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUDGET & FINANCE:

MOTION to approve checks 6201-6238 and expenses in the amount of \$4,335,410.87 by Hoffmann with a second by Costello

MOTION carries 6-0

Note – 3.9 million of the expenses was just a transfer of FEMA grant money into a separate bank account.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Ms. Kernen reported that TransFleet has begun the task of cleaning up the DaVinci's building and hopes to have a restaurant tenant this year. She noted that meetings have begun to discuss the 400 block of Main Street and how the \$74K grant will be used. There are several new businesses that have opened Collegeville: Stay True Tattoo, Engage Personal Fitness, Hydra Smoke & Vape Shop and Fruit/Floral Creations.

CPVRPC: Ms. Beckius said there was no meeting in June, but the next meeting is scheduled for July 17 at 7PM at Schwenksville Borough Hall.

CTMA/PUBLIC WORKS: Ms. Beckius reported that two of our wells have come up positive for PFAS (polyfluoroalkyl substances). One well tested slightly over the allowable amount, and one tested extremely high. They will be tested again to verify the results. At this time, the committee is exploring options to obtain water from neighboring sources.

LPVRS: Ms. Stagliano reported that four EDU's were approved in Upper Providence. Plant generators submittals are under review. Communication with Allen A Meyers regarding final restoration of the middle interceptor and permit closeout is underway. Construction has been completed for the grit building pipe replacement. A pay application was approved to Eastern Environmental in the amount of \$63,668.00.

PARKS: Ms. Costello noted that there has been talk on social media regarding the borough's stance on having a dog park in the borough. Both council and the parks committee are very much in favor of having a dog park. That is, if we can find a suitable location and the money to build and maintain another park without sacrificing existing park maintenance or raising taxes. We have looked at all the areas that are currently owned by the borough and concluded that the only possible park, with enough space, is Hunsberger Woods. There are environmental and parking issues there. Our budget is tight. If we find that Hunsberger Woods is a viable option, we would need to apply for grants, match the amount given and look for ways to fund ongoing expenses. Our current 2023 park priorities are to repair and replace playground equipment in the community park and conduct extensive clean ups in Hunsberger Woods.

Regarding park funding, since 2020 the borough has only been able to afford improvements that were safety related. We have been able to fund our park improvements through grants, contributions from Ursinus College, the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy, a one-time contribution from WB Homes and volunteer work from the committee and residents. In the last three years, the only non-safety item we have been able to afford is one ADA swing. It is important to emphasize again that before we take on a new project, we need to secure funding and be sure we can sustain it along with our other parks and trailhead parking lot.

Concerning uses for the W 1st Avenue area, we plan to include the entire community in workshops to gather information. All ideas will be explored for that area beginning this fall. However, we will not have physical access to that area until all FEMA money is paid out and all structures are demolished. This could take up to two years.

PERSONNEL: No report

STREETS & PUBLIC SAFETY: Mr. Farr reported that E Carmen Drive and Larkin Lane have been chosen by our engineers to be paved in 2024. The traffic study on E 9th Avenue has been completed. It was calculated that the average speed is 35 MPH. The speed remained the same with the blinker as without. Some residents on Leslen Lane approached the committee to consider paving and dedicating their road as a borough road. This is a problem due to the width of the road and that there is no room to turn around.

MOTION to approve Resolution 2023-06 which allows for the inspection, maintenance and repair of curbs and sidewalks in the borough by Miller with a second by Costello

MOTION carries 6-0

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

ENGINEER: Mr. Leh reported that the structure at the 8th Avenue culvert will be stained this week and the project will then be complete.

Paving operations are scheduled to commence on July 6th. Paving of the perimeter streets (Walnut St, Chestnut St and Third Ave) at Freeland Square is scheduled to occur next week. Plans and specifications for the Creekside Park are complete. If Council approves, this project could go out to bid in July and the project awarded in August to potentially complete by the end of this year.

MOTION to approve payment request #3 to pay MDX Contractors for the 8th Avenue culvert in the amount of \$25,556.27 by Beckius with a second by Costello

MOTION carries 6-0

MOTION to approve payment request #5 to WB Homes in the amount of \$72,925.00 by Costello with a second by Farr

MOTION carries 6-0

MOTION to approve putting the Creekside Park Project out to bid by Beckius with a second by Costello

MOTION carries 6-0

SOLICITOR: Ms. Geiser continues to monitor the punch list for the Glenwood Reserve project and will have it on the agenda again next month as they work through the list. She noted that there is a court date with District Judge Rebar on July 25 at 11AM regarding the citations for the Perkiomen Bridge Hotel.

MANAGER: Ms. Twardowski noted that the citations continue to be written to the Perkiomen Bridge Hotel and are now up to about 25 issued.

MOTION to adopt Resolution 2023-07 for the Hazard Mitigation Plan by Miller with a second by Costello

MOTION carries 6-0

MOTION to approve Resolution 2023-08 to set the fee of \$125.00 for the residential Use & Occupancy permit by Beckius with a second by Farr

MOTION carries 6-0

MOTION to approve Resolution 2023-09 for old record destruction by Beckius with a second by Farr

MOTION carries 6-0

Ms. Twardowski noted that the first two settlements for the FEMA buyouts will be this Friday and will continue through the summer. There will be a second funding once demolition of the first wave of properties is completed.

MAYOR: The Mayor noted that he is excited to announce that as mayor of Collegeville he will be part of a delegation from Ursinus College and the Bethlehem Baptist Church selected to participate in the Legacies of American Slavery Public History Institute at Yale University.

The Institute will meet in New Haven, Connecticut, on July 30–August 4, 2023. It will be led by public historian Cynthia Copeland in collaboration with David Blight and his colleagues at the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition (GLC) at Yale University’s MacMillan Center. In collaboration with Dr. Patricia Lott, Dr. Edward Onaci, Lauren M. McCardel, and Diane Skorina we developed a project proposal to analyze the historic relationship between race and incarceration in this area of the Commonwealth and ways for the public to access and address this issue. This project is supported by the Mellon Foundation.

He will not be in town on August 2nd for the Council meeting due to this event.

He noted that he is also concerned about expenses that he and some Council members incur while in the course of our performing our duties. He is more concerned about the delicate and sometimes potentially compromising position they, as public servants, are put in when individuals or organizations offer to “pick up the check” or absorb the cost of admission for our attending and participating in some activities. He is hereby requesting of Counsel to research best practices regarding these concerns and to assess what kind of compensation or reimbursement is traditional and appropriate compared to other boroughs of our size in PA.

POLICE: The Chief’s report is on file at Borough Hall.

MOTION to approve closure of Main Street for the Collegeville Fire Company Car Show on August 13th from 7 am to 5 pm by Costello with a second by McKinney

MOTION carries 7-0

FIRE: Chief Kuklinski noted 28 calls last month, 7 of which were in the borough. He reported 304.6 hours of service to the community.

AMBULANCE: Mr. Long’s report is on file at the borough. He said things continue to go well.

MOTION to approve all reports by Costello with a second by Farr

MOTION carries 6-0

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

MEETING ADJOURNED 7:45PM

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tamara Twardowski, Secretary