

COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 7, 2024

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

ROLL CALL: Council President Cathy Kernen, VP Gary Hoffmann, PPT Craig Farr, Kathy Costello, Marion McKinney, Valarie Beckius, Damien Brewster and Jr. Councilperson Alicia Hoffmann

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

MOTION to approve the minutes from the July meeting by McKinney with a second by Hoffmann
MOTION carries 7-0

The Mayor swore in our new Police Officer, Sean Hart.

Ms. Costello introduced Carolyn Grayshaw. Ms. Grayshaw provided a slide presentation describing the Environmental Action Council (EAC) program. Ms. Grayshaw is a member of WeConservePA and is considered the foremost authority pm EAC's in Pennsylvania. She also manages the EAC Network, the Conservation Easement Assistance Program, and the organization's greenways and trails programming. Ms. Grayshaw explained the process of forming the committee and the requirements that need to be met. She provided the resources that will be available to us should we decide to proceed. It was decided that more discussion is needed and the proposal was tabled.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

BUDGET & FINANCE:

MOTION to approve the Treasurer's Report and check numbers 6945-7006 by McKinney with a second by Brewster

MOTION carries 7-0

Ms. Twardowski posted budget slides and Mr. Hoffmann explained them. He advised that over half of our budget goes to Public Safety. This includes our Police department, Fire Company, and Ambulance Service. The rest of the expenses are for our Streets, Trash, Public Services and Parks. He noted that the Park number is high because it has been mostly neglected in years past. All of the numbers are mostly on track. Due to the fact that we had several officers retire both last year and this year, there was more overlap with training last year. For this reason and the fact that we purchase a car in the beginning of 2023, the YTD number for police expenditures was higher in 2023 than 2024. We did some culvert repairs that were also expected in 2023, so the YTD was higher in highways also in 2023. There are no plans at this time to increase taxes, but he advised that these are some issues that will need to start planning for:

- Borough Hall needs building maintenance (HVAC systems, roof, parking lots and sidewalks to name a few) and the addition of security cameras

- We still have culverts and road issues, storm water systems, traffic light upgrades and maintenance
- Open space maintenance and Park upgrades
- Body cameras for the Police and updated police car laptops

Ms. McKinney asked if a second floor on borough hall is something to consider before we start replacing old systems and an old roof. The Police could use more room and our meeting room is too small. Mr. Hoffmann said that is something to consider. Mr. Farr agreed that all of these ideas should be combined into a five year plan. We could then start applying for grants to cover some of these upgrades. The goal for us is always to get money from other sources through grants. But, we need to have a long range system of maintenance and growth that is planned and not just reacted to.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Ms. Kernan said Silverback and Ursinus are working on submitting a business plan to the Redevelopment Authority for the \$3M in RACP grants that we received. She advised that Steg's BBQ is open every weekend on the porch at Chow from noon on Friday until sell out and will be open for this weekend's Car Show along with a pop up beer garden. She reported that the Main Street Plan is 98% complete and will be ready for review at a public meeting in September. Ms. Kernan explained that the consultant for the Main Street Plan has been paid for with the Local Share Grant the borough received. There has been no cost to the borough for this service. The committee is working with Historic Trappe to update their brochure and walking tour map. This will coincide with the 2026 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

CPVRPC: Ms. Beckius reported that the final review of the Transportation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan included a discussion of the bike-ability of our municipalities and the introduction to SEPTA micro-transit or SEPTA on demand. There was a review of the Housing chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan that included the "missing middle" that delves into the continued trend of single family homes and underscores the lack of diverse housing options. They discussed Collegeville adding Accessory Dwelling Units in its comprehensive plan. There were 5 single family detached and 40 single family attached units in Collegeville in 2023. They reviewed the 2023 County Non-Residential Construction Report. The next meeting will be 7PM on Monday, September 16.

CTMA/PUBLIC WORKS: Ms. McKinney noted that they paid bills and continued their discussions about the water. She advised that, at some point when they have clear options, there be a joint meeting with Trappe Borough to present the findings to the public.

LPVRS: Ms. Twardowski reported for Ms. Stagliano. Capital projects, operations and maintenance continue at the plant.

PARKS: Ms. Costello noted that she and Ms. Twardowski are planning to have a certified inspection of the playground equipment at the park. She also advised that she is looking for an Eagle Scout to help repair the library and sign at Collegeville Park. She explained that the committee has decided to lift the concrete sidewalks that are buckling and then repair the blocks that need it along 3rd and Park Avenues. This is a much less expensive option than complete replacement. She will be using allotted Park budget money for this project.

MOTION to approve the sidewalk repairs at the park by McKinney with a second by Brewster

MOTION carries 7-0

Mr. Brewster told everyone that he, his wife Rachel, and Mr. Hoffmann painted lines for two pickle ball courts onto the barely used hockey court. A local business owner, TJ Hartnett, of Pegasus Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning has donated two portable nets to the borough. The nets will be available at borough hall for residents to borrow. Council is open to resident feedback (good and bad) over the next year to decide if they will move forward with permanent nets.

PERSONNEL:

MOTION to approve appointing Jerry Stayer to the Zoning Hearing Board as an Alternate member by Beckius with a second by McKinney

MOTION carries 7-0

STREETS & PUBLIC SAFETY: Mr. Farr noted that they discussed ways to improve the signage on Route 29 near Royal Farms to advise drivers that Route 29 curves to the right where it intersects with E. First Avenue. Mr. Farr said that sidewalks are an issue throughout the borough. He feels that if we want residents to repair their sidewalks, the borough needs to address our own. They also brainstormed about the sidewalks on E Carmen Drive. He explained that the oak trees have matured and are busting up the concrete making it unsafe to walk. There are two ways to fix the situation. The trees can be removed and the sidewalks redone, or the sidewalks can be removed and replaced with grass allowing the healthy trees to remain. The latter is a more economical option. The committee is working on getting estimates for both to present to the residents. Ms. Beckius had concerns about consistency. She asked if there would be a requirement that homeowners sign an agreement stating they will maintain the new grass. Mr. Farr said our involvement in the project only goes so far and that as with any other homeowner, we don't control what they decide to plant etc. unless they are in violation of the property maintenance code. Mr. Brewster asked that since there will now be no sidewalks, would we consider having no parking on one side and paint a bike lane for kids to ride/walk. Mr. Farr noted that as it is a cul-de-sac, there is very little traffic so he does not feel that is necessary. Mr. Hoffmann advised that we are not contemplating taking on this project at our expense, we hope to find the most economical and pleasing solution for the residents.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

ENGINEER: Mr. Leh reported that all the homes from the FEMA Acquisition/Demolition project have been demolished, however there is still some restoration to be done.

MOTION to approve payment request #4 to G&R Excavating in the amount of \$28,420.92 by McKinney with a second by Brewster

MOTION carries 7-0

Mr. Leh also stated that 7 Brews has submitted revised land development plans and will be reviewed by the Planning Commission at their August 15 meeting. Ms. Twardowski said the Planning Commission may not address this project until after the ZHB on August 22. Will mostly likely be before PC on September 19.

SOLICITOR: Ms. Geiser advised that the Facebook policy that was noted on the Agenda is not quite ready and will be addressed at the September meeting.

MANAGER: Ms. Twardowski reported that the borough received a \$264K Green Light Go Grant that will help repair the old, malfunctioning lighting mechanisms in the street light timing systems at the trail crossings at 2nd and 3rd Avenues. She also noted that the Perkiomen Watershed has awarded the Borough with their 2024 Municipal Award for the work done at the Welakamike Creekside Park. The award ceremony is at their "Flannel Formal" on September 27.

MOTION to approve Resolution 2024-11 for old records destruction by McKinney with a second by Brewster

MOTION carries 7-0

POLICE: Chief Barnshaw advised that he has appointed Officer Andrew Sohl as our new detective, replacing Officer Millburn. Officer Sohl has been unofficially doing the job for the past year and has been excelling in the position. There is an aggressive driving detail going on for the next two weeks. He noted that Freeland Square Homeowners Association has requested to be added to the No Solicitation list.

MAYOR: No report

FIRE: Mr. Sassaman reported that there were 28 calls in July, ten of which were in the borough. He noted that the Car Show is this Sunday and invited everyone to attend.

AMBULANCE: No report

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

MOTION carries 7-0

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kelly Taylor – 424 Chestnut St – Ms. Taylor asked for authorization to close Chestnut Street between 4th and Park Avenues on September 28 from 2PM until dusk for their neighborhood block party. Chief Barnshaw said she needs to fill out the form with him and it will be approved. She also noted that the deer population in the borough seems to have increased this year and is wreaking havoc on vegetation and leaving feces all around. The Chief suggested contacting the Game Commission.

Ms. Kernan noted that the last Movie on the Lawn on July 26 at Ursinus was a huge success.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:29PM