

COUNCIL MEETING
Minutes of March 10, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

President Hayes called to order the Agenda Meeting of Crafton Borough Council, in Council Chambers of the Community Center. Flag Salute led by Mr. O'Brien. ROLL CALL, by Mrs. Tremblay, recorded seven (7) members of Council present as follows: Mr. Amendola, Ms. Amendola, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Phillips, Ms. Post, Ms. Weitzel and Mr. Hayes – Also present were Mayor Bloom, Manager Callen, Director Beechey and Engineer Minsterman. Ms. Weitzel requested that Council conduct themselves with a level of respect toward each other, careful of the language used, and also requested that time limits be observed on comments/discussions.

BILL LIST APPROVAL

MOTION: It was regularly moved and seconded (*Weitzel/Post*) to approve the Bill List dated March 10, 2014. **COMMENTS:** Mr. Amendola requested clarification of the charges for the Campbell Durant Invoice.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (7-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: It was regularly moved and seconded (*Post/O'Brien*) to approve the Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2014.

MOTION carried by as Six Yes, 1 Abstention (*Weitzel*) Roll Call Vote (6-0-1).

CITIZEN'S PRESENT TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Ms. Weitzel requested that Council conduct themselves with a level of respect toward each other, careful of the language used, and also requested that time limits be observed on comments/discussions. President Hayes reminded Council and Residents of ground rules for conduct during the meetings.

Phillip Levasseur, 401 Clearview Avenue – Trees: Mr. Levasseur distributed photo copies of the four sycamore trees on Clearview to Council. He met with Manager Callen and Gateway Engineers to discuss a solution to preserving these trees during the Phase III Clearview Restoration Project. He originally requesting a 6" bump-out from the curb be considered rather than removing the trees, but realizes that this may present a traffic hazard. The suggested bump-out would narrow the road, so his preference would be a no parking area along that curb rather than a bump-out. By not removing the trees, the Borough would save \$20,000. He also spoke of the non-vegetation slope, and erosion and sediment controls.

Coreen Cassade, Engineer, Collective Efforts – Trees: She also spoke about a bump-out resolution and she noted that a possible 24" street excavation would cause possible damage to the tree/root system. Also, if the trees are removed, the 100+ year old root mass would decompose under the surface, causing differential settlement impacting the sidewalk, street and possibly the retaining wall.

Olivia Zitelli, 501 Clearview Avenue, Robin Anthony, 1715 Crafton Blvd., Mike Gawlas, 509 Clearview Avenue, Jacquelyn Levasseur, 401 Clearview Avenue, Tammy Sorco, 601 Clearview Avenue, Judy Kueshner, 1572 Barr Avenue, Jacob Gutwein – Trees: Residents spoke of the beauty and aesthetic value of the Clearview Avenue Trees; the four trees are very old, irreplaceable and have historic value, add to property value and influence potential homebuyers. Mr. Gutwein advised that residents on Crafton Blvd. also park on Clearview, and did not want to lose any parking spaces.

Angela Zenone, 519 Reamer Drive, Carnegie (Woodlawn, Promenade Property Owner) – Sewage Bills: Ms. Zenone complained of high sewage bills, left unpaid by her tenants, and questioned why service wasn't shut-off by Jordan to alleviate mounting account delinquencies. Mrs. Tremblay noted that when landlords permit service to be in the tenant's name, it is their responsibility to make sure it is being paid. By the time the account becomes very delinquent, Jordan then researches the account and property owner information for possible termination and property lien.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Engineer Minsterman spoke on the options for speed humps (permanent or temporary) on Crafton Blvd, and alternatives to slow down traffic (bike lane, walking trail, narrowing cartway). He noted that permanent speed humps can be built, or rubber, pre-made, speed humps can be installed by drilling holes and bolting them into the pavement. These can also be removed during certain times of the year, if desired. He noted that installing the speed humps as a traffic calming device may set precedence for future requests by residents.

Engineer Minsterman spoke on the tree issue on Clearview Avenue – Engineer Minsterman noted that they do consider the ecological and aesthetics aspects of the design for street reconstruction, as they did in this case. Tree removal was in the original design because this is a full street reconstruction. He noted that two other trees, in Phase IV, are to be removed as well. With the removal of the brick, sub-base and soft soil, excavation could be 24" to 36" inches, depending on the amount of soft soil removal, especially along the curb, presents challenges. He also noted that the trees have somewhat encroached the street which will present problems when installing the forms and curbs. The arborist consultant advised that excavation of that depth would impact and possibly destroy the trees. He recommended that at least a 9 ft. bump-out would be needed to not impact the tree during excavation. Engineer Minsterman added that an 18 ft. cartway would be needed for a two lane street, and since this is presently only a 19 ft. cartway, any bump-out may require changing the street to one-way. Procedures were discussed to change to a one-way street; resident petition, accelerated traffic study, public meeting. Engineer reminded everyone that Phase III grant funds will expire in June, and any bidding delays or one-way directional changes may exclude this project. Mr. O'Brien noted that a street needs to be defined; what kind of street is it, when Council considers street paving or reconstruction projects. He also suggested possibly including an alternate bid for the bump-out to be considered. Engineer Minsterman agreed, and noted that they don't have to let the contract, they can provide a design/bid amendment for a bump-out, and have the project re-bid - which may cause only a 3 week delay, or so.

CVFD Consolidation Study Review, Chief Michael Crown

Chief Crown spoke of the history of the consolidation study; initiated in 2009/2010, a professional was hired through the Dept. of Community and Economical Development to look at the fire service for Crafton, Ingram, Carnegie, as well as Thornburg, Rosslyn Farms and Pennsbury Village. The result of their findings and recommendations are provided in the study report provided to Council. They are not looking for a full consolidation at this time; possibly some partial consolidation approach, but more so for long range planning, maybe to include all emergency services in the next 10 years or so. Next step would be for the DCED to put forth another consultant to look into actual implementation of the project, including a more detailed study considering debt, budget/finances of each department/municipality. Ingram has no debt for their fire equipment. Carnegie Fire Dept. is interested, but have no input yet from their Borough Council. Ingram Fire Dept. backed out, but a copy of the study was provided to Ingram Council, but no input has been offered from them as well. Presently, mutual aid is provided to Carnegie and Ingram. He confirmed that he is a member of the CharWest COG Fire Chief Committee, and some of the benefits will be training opportunities and also looking into joint municipal bidding for hose and ladder testing. Consolidation would result in

operational and administrative benefits; which is presently very time consuming for the volunteers. Also, improved response times, and later, economical benefits, grant opportunities and recruitment incentives. Currently, CCAC offers free tuition (Associates Degree) for fire fighter volunteers, but require a 5 year commitment to the fire department.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ITEMS

- **Administration – Blackboard; sample policy:** A draft policy was provided to Council for review. Need to establish a policy, who has authority to use it, how and when it is to be used. Ms. Amendola reported that she spoke with Mt. Lebanon, and they have a full time person who handles all of their social media.
Newsletter: A Draft Newsletter has been prepared/provided to Council for review (on Cubby). Request any additional articles, suggestions be provided to Ms. Beechey within the next two weeks so it can be sent over to the printer, and be sent out mid April. Ms. Beechey noted that once she has clarification from Blackboard on certain matters, this will be added to the front page for residents opting in to receive the automatic borough notifications. Also, depending on the amount of additional information for the Newsletter, it may go from the usual 8 page to a 12 page. She noted that this would be the final Newsletter in print being mailed.

- **Budget/Finance – General Obligation Note/Borrowing-PNC Bank:** Ordinance prepared and on Agenda for Adoption. This would be a 5 year debt. **Council/Back Salaries:** Mr. Phillips’ request for four years of Council Salary per Ordinance was discussed; Solicitors Opinion letters reviewed, various opinions regarding entitlement, budget affect, legal action. Mr. Phillips noted that in the past when salaries were discussed, Council was advised that seated Council would not be eligible – could not vote a salary for themselves, only new incoming Council members would be eligible. Ms. Amendola re-iterated the Solicitors prior comment that there is no guarantee that a prior Councilmember may or may not seek back pay. Mr. O’Brien stated that when he and others ran for their Council seat, no salaries were being paid to Council and there were no expectations of receiving a salary. Mr. Hayes reported that the recent Solicitor’s opinion was that there is no clear answer; in the courts, it could go either way. Additional comments were heard. It was decided, based on additional Solicitor input, a motion on Mr. Phillips request may be placed on the next meeting agenda, in order to move forward on this matter. **E-Collect Proposal:** Manager Callen reported that Mr. Schuster, of Turnkey, was not available to speak to Council this evening regarding the Beta Testing program. It was reported that the Solicitor had reviewed the proposal, and acceptable language changes were made by Solicitor and e-Collect, and will be provided to Council for consideration on the next meeting agenda.

- **Parks/Recreation** - Ms. Post reported that Director Beechey has put forth a proposal for the **new playground and equipment**. We would assist in the installation, at a savings, supervised by the Gametime installers, and would involve approximately two weeks excavation and 3-4 days for installation of the equipment and surfacing. Some volunteers could be used to help with putting down the surfacing material. Propose to be completed before Memorial Day. This would come out of the budget since grant funding was not provided. Motion on the Agenda to approve the purchase/install of this playground equipment.
It was also noted that approval to submit a **grant application to the DCNR**, in the amount of \$250,000, will be placed on the next agenda, for swimming pool renovations. The application deadline is April 15th, and will be awarded in the fall.

- **Public Works – Fee Resolution Amendment:** Director Beechey reported that the Borough could provide compost and wood chip mulch to the residents; delivered to their home rather than them attempting to come to the Public Works facility to get it. This would help reduce the large amount stored at the facility and provide a service to the residents. A fee resolution amendment is on the Agenda for consideration establishing a fee for this service. It was also noted that the proposed fee resolution also provides for a reimbursement cost to the Borough for any handicapped parking signs installed for a resident. **Paint Sprayer Equipment:** Purchase was budgeted; provided Council with information only on this intended purchase. **Brine Equipment Project; Multi-Municipal (2015):** Manager Callen reported that he attended a meeting with various communities to review and consider a joint purchase. Next few months, will have a demonstration, and could be considered in next years budget. Equipment cost is \$35,000 and retro fitting the trucks would be approx. \$7-\$8,000. **Clearview Tree Issue/Street Reconstruction:** Manager Callen stated that Council needs to advise the Engineer as to how he should proceed. Either as an alternate bid with a bump out design, or if going after a one-way directional change. Grant agency may need to be advised of revisions. If Phase III not done, it could affect previously received grant funds for this project; may need to return funds. One Way directional change process could take months; from petition, traffic study, ordinance adoption, and there are no guarantees which way the study would go. Engineer does not recommend the One-way change. Certain cost impacts on if there are delays in starting the project. It was the consensus of Council to authorize the Engineer to prepare a design for the bump-out, as an alternate in the bid, and by the time bids are considered (approx. 6 weeks) and commencement of actual work, these other factors can be considered; possibly put a delay option in the bid for awarding the contract. Engineer was excused from the remainder of the meeting.
- **Ordinance/Zoning –** A proposed ordinance was prepared for special purpose/handicapped parking spaces on Alice Street, as requested by the Nativity Episcopal Church. It would only be for a few hours on Sunday morning. They have no parking lot/off-street parking. It was unclear if they actually need handicapped parking spaces or a space for drop-off (van). Any one displaying the placard could use that space and therefore, the space would not be available as a drop-off zone. Ms. Weitzel expressed concerns that this might set precedence for other churches, etc. Mr. O'Brien noted that guidelines for requests would need to be considered. Motion to advertise the proposed ordinance to be Tabled - Mr. O'Brien to review the request with the Church to further clarify their actual needs (handicapped spaces vs. drop-off zone). **Blight/Abandoned Property Committee:** Manager Callen reported that, per previous comments, he obtained additional background information on the candidates. He also reported that the Ordinance Officer, Dave Morgan, would be spearheading this committee. If Council is prepared to move forward, this could be placed on the next meeting agenda.
- **Comprehensive Plan –** Ms. Weitzel posed question to Council on available funding to move forward. Ms. Amendola stated that this can commence with available funds, and doesn't need to be done all at once; can be done over next few years. Intergovernmental cooperation will also be looked at for grant funding; Ingram, Roslyn Farms and Thornburg could be approached, if any interest on developing a joint plan. Mrs. Post noted that she could also mention this at the next COG meeting. Ms. Weitzel will try to have a recommendation for Council at the next meeting for consideration.

- **Other** – Manager Callen noted that he had met with a Councilwoman from the City of Pittsburgh, to discuss the Clearview Trail and Animal Control Services.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Tremblay noted that the invitation was provided to Council for the annual CharWest COG dinner, and she would need RSVPs by the end of the month, if planning to attend.

BUSINESS AGENDA

ADMINISTRATION

~~**MOTION:** Motion to advertise Ordinance No. 1622 amending the Vehicle and Traffic Ordinance, Section 214-39 to include Special Purpose Parking at 33 Alice Street to accommodate handicapped parking and drop-off.~~ **TABLED/Needs further clarification and information**

MOTION: It was regularly moved and seconded (*Post/Weitzel*) to adopt Resolution No. 2014-2 amending 2014 Fee Resolution No. 2013-16 to include a sign installation fee and compost/wood chip delivery service.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote.

FINANCE

MOTION: It was regularly moved and seconded (*Post/O'Brien*) to adopt Ordinance No. 1621 authorizing the Borough of Crafton to incur nonelectoral debt in an amount not to exceed \$1,300,000.00 through the issuance of a general obligation note, for a five (5) year term, at an interest rate of 2.05%, through PNC Bank, to be used to finance the settlement cost for property situate in the Borough of Crafton, known and numbered as Block and Lot No. 68-F-250.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote.

PUBLIC WORKS

MOTION: It was regularly moved and seconded (*Post/Weitzel*) to ratify Borough Council's approval for the Work Authorization order with Gateway Engineers for the preparation of bid documents in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 for the 2014 Road Improvement Program.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote.

PARKS/RECREATION

MOTION: It was regularly moved and seconded (*Post/N. Amendola*) to purchase playground equipment, including installation and safety surfacing, from Bitting Recreation, Inc., under CoStars-14 Contract, Vendor #177246, for an amount not to exceed \$74,999.95, per Quote dated March 3, 2014.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote.

ADDITIONAL CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Phillip Levasseur – He contradicted comments of the Engineer Minsterman; based on Mr. Levasseur's engineers input and other professionals, he believes no more than a 6-12" bump-out is necessary, not a 9 foot bump-out. He believes that it would not require a 24" excavation. He believes Council is not being provided with enough accurate information to make an informed decision. He believes all that may be necessary is a no parking area, rather than a change to one-way traffic. He would also be in favor if the Borough moved forward with the work, but left the trees in place; if the

trees die in a few years, down the road, he would take the responsibility to remove them at such time. He re-iterated previous comments, on behalf of his neighboring residents, and their desire to preserve the trees and request Council take the time to make a good decision. Mr. Hayes noted that all of Council, as a body, has expressed the desire to save these trees, and will try to do so. They will await additional information from the Borough's Engineer.

Crystal Boehm, 57 Belvidere Street – She noted that she recently removed a large 100 year old tree and continues to see ground sinkage from the decaying root system. She commented on a Green Infrastructure Grant, the ecological affect by removing the trees, and possibilities to proceed, but delay the work pending a traffic study.

Mary Luxbacher, Dinsmore – Commented that she was on Council at the time Council decided not to receive a salary; it was a decision to save money, to avoid layoffs, and most of Council felt they did not need to be compensated.

Robin Anthony, Crafton Boulevard – Requested that some of the wood chip mulch be placed on the Clearview Trail. Director Beechey noted that there are plans to do that.

Coreen Cassade, Engineer, Collective Efforts – Requested that Council consider moving forward with project, leaving the trees in place, and, possibly after excavation, it may be determined that the trees can remain.

Jacquelyn Lavasseur, Clearview – Re-iterated previous comments. She expressed concerns on the adverse affect removal of the trees, decaying root system, etc. could have on the already unstable slope below Clearview Avenue.

Jr. Council, Ms. Meredith reported that due to some major recent fires in Carnegie, a Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser is planned for March 23rd at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Carnegie, o help the two families and the Red Cross. Mrs. Post noted that she would provide additional information. Director Beechey suggested that donations be made as well.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: It was regularly moved and seconded (*Post/Weitzel*) to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (7-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Tremblay, Borough Secretary