

CRAFTON BOROUGH

COUNCIL DISCUSSION MEETING MINUTES – JULY 10, 2017

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COUNCIL DISCUSSION MEETING
Minutes of Monday, July 10, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

President Amendola called the Discussion/Agenda Meeting of Crafton Borough Council to order, in Council Chambers of the Community Center. Flag Salute led by Mr. Amendola. ROLL CALL, by Manager Scott, recorded six (6) Members of Council present as follows: Mr. Amendola, Ms. Glaser, Ms. Damits, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Levasseur and Ms. Amendola. Ms. Perry and Mayor Bloom were not in attendance. Also in attendance were Solicitor Gladys and Manager Scott.

BILL LIST APPROVAL

MOTION: It was moved and seconded (*O'Brien/Levasseur*) to approve the payment of bills on the Bill List dated July 10, 2017.

MOTION #1- carried by a Unanimous Voice Vote (6-0)

ACCEPTANCE/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: It was moved and seconded (*Levasseur/Glaser*) to accept the Meeting Minutes dated June 26, 2017 as presented.

MOTION #2 - carried by a Unanimous Voice Vote (6-0).

CITIZEN'S PRESENT TO ADDRESS COUNCIL/Agenda Items only

Kathleen Watson, 74 Fountain Avenue, signed up to speak before Council. She stated she was inquiring the status of the demolition of 78 Fountain. She stated she would wait to hear what the Solicitor has to say on the matter under his Agenda.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

The Solicitor noted there could potentially be litigation regarding the work completed at the Splash Pad at the pool. His offices sent a letter to the Contractor Bonding Company regarding the outstanding issues with the construction. The Engineer and the Borough are gathering the required documentation requested by the Bonding Company. The Solicitor will keep Council abreast of any developments on this matter.

The next item on the Agenda, the Solicitor has prepared an estimate for legal services regarding the demolition of the top ten properties presented to Council. The estimated cost per property would be \$5,000 to \$6,000 each, which does not include Out of Pocket Costs. He noted numerous unknown variables may increase or decrease this proposed cost per property.

Mr. O'Brien inquired if there were one or two of these properties that may be the "easier" to obtain owner information and/or any other type of information required for a demolition. Solicitor Gladys noted there would be no way of telling that, until you just jump right into research property owner information.

Mr. O'Brien then inquired if the property owners of these properties were notified that their properties have been placed on the Top 10 Demolition Listing in the Borough of Crafton. The solicitor noted such a letter has not been prepared, however, property owners have received numerous code violations letters and some of the structures have been condemned.

Mr. Levasseur suggested Crafton, Thornburg and Carnegie Borough work with the Carlynton School Board, perhaps legal fees could be reduced on some of the properties. Or perhaps instead of going through the legal system, implementing Act 90 and taking over the properties through this mechanism.

Ms. Scott noted, implementing Act 90 would mean the Borough would be able to locate the property owner. In the case of 1508 Barr Avenue, the location of the current homeowner is unknown. Mr. Levasseur inquired if the Solicitor had access to the digital courthouse? Mr. Gladys stated his office can do research for known aliases and location information. This work is not included in the estimated cost proposal per property. Mr. Levasseur suggested a junior person in his office may be able to do a little of this leg work.

Mr. O'Brien stated it is difficult to believe that persons could simply pick up and move out of their home, leaving everything behind and having the Community and neighbors to clean up their mess. Mr. Levasseur suggested incorporating Act 90, perhaps property owners could simply walk away from these properties, and donate them back to the Borough for maintenance and upkeep. Solicitor Gladys noted, typically it is the School District taking the lead on this type of program, as they are the largest tax recipient. Mr. Levasseur suggested the Borough reach out to the School District and work with them on such a program. Mr. Amendola suggested Council consider hiring a private investigator, they have access to information without restrictions, including financial records. This could be very expensive, depending on the information requested.

MAYORS REPORT

Ms. Amendola asked Ms. Scott to speak on the Mayors Report. Ms. Scott noted that speed monitoring devices were placed on Chartiers Avenue, Council was provided a copy of the results. She noted the average speed recorded was 23 miles per hour, covering the period of June 13 to July 4 with 8,921 vehicles monitored. She noted the City of Pittsburgh already installed the stop sign on their side of Chartiers.

BUSINESS AGENDA

PUBLIC SAFETY

MOTION: It was moved and seconded (*F. Amendola/O'Brien*) to adopt Ordinance No. 1641 for the installation of a stop sign at the intersection of Fountain and Chartiers Avenue, as recommended by the Police Department and the City of Pittsburgh.

Ms. Amendola inquired if everyone had an opportunity to go down to the area and take a look at where the potential stop sign would be installed. Mr. Amendola noted he had gone down there this morning and believes it is in the best interest of the Community to have the sign installed. He stated it almost takes two people in the vehicle coming off of Fountain to enter the intersection, very dangerous. He believes the stop sign is warranted.

Ms. Amendola noted, submitted to the Borough was a listing of neighbors in the area, and a breakdown of their opinion on the installation of the stop signs. She noted 20 persons were asked, 60% of those asked agreed with the installation of the stop sign going up Chartiers in the City and only 30% agreed with the installation of the stop sign going down Chartiers in Crafton. Ms. Watson noted this represents the opinion of the neighbors living in the area.

MOTION #3 - carried by a Unanimous Roll Call Vote (6-0).

PUBLIC WORKS

MOTION: It was moved and seconded (*F. Amendola/Levasseur*) to authorize the Engineer to prepare plans and Specifications for the Manhole Rehabilitation Project estimated cost of \$115,000, included in the 2017 Sewer System Budget and required by the Administrative Consent Order entered into in 2015.

Mr. Levasseur inquired if this was throughout the entire Community. Ms. Scott stated that it was throughout Crafton, Gateway had prepared a listing of manholes through GIS data.

MOTION #4 - carried by a Unanimous Voice Vote (6-0).

Ms. Amendola stated the next item on the Agenda was a discussion related to the proposed demolition project. She reminded Council that the Borough authorized and advertised plans and specifications for the removal of two properties; 78 Fountain and 25 Sycamore, noting no bids were received. She stated that an asbestos removal permit is required by Allegheny County. It was the intention, when the bids were received, depending on the costs, the permit would be applied for, which home or both would be demolished.

Ms. Scott noted, that the engineer believes it may be a combination of not having the permit and contractors are busy at this time. Ms. Amendola recommended that since we will need the permit at some point, she suggested applying for the permit now. She inquired how long the permit is good for, Ms. Scott noted she would need to check with the engineer on that matter.

ADMINISTRATION

MOTION: It was moved and seconded (*Levasseur/Glaser*) to adopt Resolution No. 2017-08, approval of Allegheny County Side Yard Program, Lot & Block 69-M-295, Application made by Phyllis Barber, 17 Belvidere Street, Crafton Borough.

MOTION #5 - carried by a Unanimous Voice Vote (6-0).

MOTION: It was moved and seconded (*O'Brien/Levasseur*) to adopt Resolution No. 2017-09, opposing the elimination of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

MOTION #6 - carried by a Unanimous Voice Vote (6-0).

Ms. Amendola noted that a Special Meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 17, 2017 at 6:30 pm at Crafton Borough Building with Ingram Council to discuss the Comprehensive Plan and Early Intervention Program. She noted another special meeting is scheduled for August 21, 2017 to meet with the Department of Community and Economic Development on the Plans.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ms. Amendola noted the item on the Agenda for discussion is the Fire Department HB172, providing tax credits to fire fighters and the draft Ordinance.

Ms. Scott reminded everyone, the Fire Chief brought this matter before Council late in 2016. This bill provides municipalities with options to offer a real estate or earned income tax credit to active members of the volunteer fire department. Certain requirements must be met, they have to be on the active roster, meet training requirements and the live in the Borough.

Ms. Scott noted that the bill was enacted in January 2017, the PA Fire Commissioner has provided a Draft Ordinance for consideration, she sent a copy to the Solicitor for review.

Solicitor Gladys stated for each Community it's a decision of the amount of revenue they may lose versus how to maintain enough volunteers in the fire department to serve the Community. He suggested it may be helpful to Council to have an idea of the total revenue we are talking about by adopting this Ordinance. Ms. Scott stated, upon receipt of the listing of active volunteers from the Chief, she could provide estimated figures by the next meeting.

MOTION: It was moved and seconded (*Amendola/O'Brien*) to authorize advertise the proposed ordinance in reference to HB172 offering tax credits to volunteer firefighters for real estate and earned income taxes.

Ms. Amendola noted this is a great incentive to keep the volunteers in Crafton.

MOTION #7- carried by a Unanimous Voice Vote (6-0).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Amendola made the following announcements;

- ***POOL OPEN - REGULAR SEASON HOURS***
Monday through Saturday Noon to 8 pm and Sunday, 1 pm to 7 pm.

- *Senior Dinners will not be held in July and August, they will be back at Crafton Borough Building in September*

AUDIENCE AGENDA

Mr. Levasseur inquired when the pool parking lot was going to be paved. Ms. Scott noted this was part of the rain garden project, the Borough received monies through the GROW program offered by ALCOSAN. The parking lot will be paved after Labor Day and the pool is closed.

Next he inquired when the 2017 Road Program would begin. Ms. Scott noted the water company plans on beginning work on Ewing Road next week, July 17. The Borough is trying to coordinate the paving project with the water company to eliminate remobilization fees.

Mr. Levasseur inquired if the geotechnical study on Ewing Road has been completed and when the results may be available. Ms. Scott noted she has not received the report, Gateway should have available for the next meeting.

He inquired if the Concerts in the Park series information was on the Borough website. He noted a resident has inquired with him for information. Ms. Scott noted the schedule is indeed on the Borough website and she will email a hard copy to him for distribution.

Lastly he inquired the status of the cloud based GIS system, has it been installed, has anyone been trained, etc. Ms. Scott noted, Gateway is planning on making a presentation in August, however, he is unable to attend the meeting that night. He will be attending the Council Meeting in September to provide an update to Council. Once the system is upgraded and ready, training will begin for personnel.

Ms. Watson inquired, whether or not the resident that lives at the corner of Fountain and Chartiers will be able to keep his truck parked on the parking pad. Ms. Scott stated should would inquire with the Police Department on that mater.

Mr. Amendola reminded everyone to purchase their tickets for the Crafton/Ingram Rotary Chicken and Ribfest held on Thursday, August 3, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: It was moved and seconded (*F. Amendola/Levasseur*) to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm.

MOTION #8 - carried by Unanimous Voice Vote (6-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Ann C. Scott, Borough Manager