

Borough of New Stanton
Borough Council
New Stanton Council Chambers
March 15, 2022
Minutes of Meeting

Attendance

Council members: Todd Bartlow, Alex Brown, George Miller, and Edwina Zack. Mayor Tom Smith. Absent: Linda Echard, Ray Strosko and Tom Theis.

Also in attendance: Borough Solicitor John Campfield, Borough Engineer Steve Eby and Borough Manager Jeffrey McLaughlin. Rob Cammarata and David Hauger from the New Stanton Volunteer Fire Department and resident Lance Biggie.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was recited.

Prayer

Jeff recited a prayer.

Call to Order

President Alex Brown called the regular March 15, 2022 council meeting to order at 6 PM.

Approval of Minutes of the March 1, 2022 Meeting

Tom Smith pointed out that there was a typo under the Mayor's Report on page 7 of the minutes.

Edwina made a motion seconded by Todd to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2022 with the correction to the typo under the Mayor's Report. Motion passed unanimously.

Opportunity for Public Comment -- Items Not on the Agenda

There were no comments.

Opportunity for Public Comment -- on Agenda Items Only

There were no comments.

Agenda

- 1. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action Awarding the Arona Road Culvert Construction Contract**

Alex referred to the bid tabulation sheet listing all of the bids submitted. He pointed out that Pugliano Construction Co. was the low bidder for the base bid in the amount of \$847,977 and for the alternate in the amount of \$117,646. Steve said that he would recommend not awarding the alternate because the paving would not take place until next year.

Jeff referred council to the financial report showing the balance in the Arona Road Culvert Turnback Fund as being \$554,630.94. As far as making up the shortfall, Jeff said that the borough has a couple of accounts with unrestricted funds and also have the Liquid Fuels, Local Services Tax and stimulus monies.

Steve said that it could be until October that the pre-cast culvert box is available, so a decision on the additional sources of funding at this point is not necessary.

Steve said the contractor is looking to replace the bridge half at a time which would eliminate the need for the bypass road, but the contractor would not be submitting their design until after being awarded the contract.

There was a discussion about going back to PennDOT for additional funding. Steve said that PennDOT was only going to consider our request after the contract was bid and awarded. If council decides to award the project, he will approach PennDOT about additional funding.

George asked how long the borough would have to spend the stimulus money. Alex seemed to think that the money did not have to be spent until 2024.

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina awarding the base bid of the Arona Road Culvert construction contract to the low bidder, Pugliano Construction Co. in the amount of \$847,977. Motion passed unanimously.

Steve asked that council also authorize Alex to sign the contract on behalf of the borough, contingent upon the solicitor's and engineer's review and to also authorize Alex to sign the notice to proceed when the project is ready to begin.

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina authorizing Alex to sign the contract on behalf of the borough, contingent upon the solicitor and engineer review and also authorizing Alex to sign the notice to proceed when the project is ready to begin. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action on Advertising the 2022 Paving and Storm Drainage Work

Steve reviewed the roads that were being looked at as part of the paving schedule: Virginia Avenue, Florence Avenue, Swartz Road, E. Post Avenue, E. Pennsylvania Avenue and Sewickley St. He stated that the last three streets would also include a stormwater project.

Jeff stated that since Steve applied for the LSA grant for the storm drainage project, perhaps it would be best to hold off on E. Post, E. Pennsylvania and Sewickley St. until after the grant awards are made. Steve agreed, saying that the borough would be ineligible for the funding if the project was started before any awards were announced.

Edwina made a motion seconded by Todd to advertise for bids for the paving of Virginia Avenue, Florence Avenue and Swartz Road. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action on the LERTA at New Stanton Technology Park Site

Alex stated that a LERTA was voted on last year and asked if this would be the same LERTA that is being discussed here. Jeff stated that the LERTA passed last year applied strictly to the New Stanton Technology Park site, not to the ten-acre portion of the Fox farm that SunCap is acquiring.

John reported that representatives from SunCap spoke to a representative of the county assessor's office and they thought that the LERTA could be tweaked to allow for the 10-acre parcel to be included in the existing LERTA. John contacted Melissa Guiddy, the Westmoreland County Solicitor, to get her opinion. She was of the opinion that all three taxing bodies would have to amend the ordinance that they originally adopted. He stated while SunCap would like to include the 10-acre portion in the LERTA, that have stated that they would be okay with proceeding as-is if getting the additional 10 acres included meant going through the approval process again.

Edwina made a motion seconded by Todd to table the discussion on the LERTA. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Advertise Sale of Old Christmas Lights

There was a discussion on whether to advertise the sale of the lights and the method of selling them.

George made a motion seconded by Todd to sell the old Christmas lights on Facebook or Craigs List for \$900 or best offer. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action on 2022 Grass Cutting Services for New Stanton Park

Jeff stated that Colmat's quote was over the \$11,800 threshold, so three quotes are now required. He left messages with two additional companies last week, but neither responded. He stated that he would like to table this until the next meeting so as to have time to get additional quotes.

Todd made a motion seconded Edwina to table action on 2022 grass cutting services. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action on Construction of a New Fire Station

Alex asked council how they wanted to respond. Alex said that the money is not currently in the borough accounts and he said that he would not ask for a tax increase to pay for a new station. He asked if council wanted to wait a few years to see what revenue would be like.

Todd suggested that council may want to consider forming a committee to look at the fire station. George suggested that the committee focus on the financial aspects of a new station.

There was discussion regarding the possibility of relying on other departments, the cost of the station, the possibility of more tax revenue being available in the future to finance a station, the fact that a new station would provide an emergency shelter for borough residents, and about a resolution that was passed by council in 2018 regarding a new station.

George made a motion seconded by Todd to establish an Ad-Hoc Fire Station Committee for purposes of exploring financing options for the construction of a new fire hall. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Lance Biggie, 411 Thermo Village Rd.

Mr. Biggie suggested that a community garden be created in the borough to create a sense of community. He said he would be willing to donate his time. He asked for a location for the garden. He said he would like to involve churches and businesses to help with its creation as a way to address food insecurity. Todd asked if each resident would have their own section or if it would be one garden. Mr. Biggie stated that he thought it should be one garden taken care of by all of those interested. George suggested that Mr. Biggie may want to approach one of the area churches about a location. Todd asked how the food would be divvied up. Mr. Biggie thought that those that helped would get to keep the food and that the garden would regulate itself.

Announcements

Alex reviewed the upcoming meeting calendar.

Tom S. suggested that the borough buy a gift card to the person serving as the Easter Bunny for the Easter Egg hunt. Todd did not think it would be necessary.

Tom S. also asked how to handle a proclamation. Alex suggested that it be placed on the next meeting agenda.

Jeff said that he put together a memo for council that provides a review of the grant workshop that he attended the day before the council meeting.

Alex reported that he attended the Hempfield School Board meeting regarding the replacement of the high school. He stated that the school district decided on the \$90 million option, which could swell to \$105 million with inflation. The plan calls for the substantial rehabilitation of the existing structure. This was not the costliest option which was for \$120 million. Alex stated that he and representatives from Youngwood were present at the meeting. He said that he expressed

council's very strong opinion that the borough does not support any option that would cause an increase in school taxes.

Adjournment

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 PM. There were no objections.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey McLaughlin
Secretary