

Borough of New Stanton
Borough Council
New Stanton Council Chambers
November 1, 2022, 6 PM
Minutes of Public Hearing & Regular Council Meeting

Attendance

Council members: Todd Bartlow, Alex Brown, Linda Echard (Via computer), George Miller (arrived at 6:07 PM), Ray Strosko, Edwina Zack and Mayor Tom Smith. Absent: Tom Theis.

Also in attendance: Borough Solicitor John Campfield, Borough Engineer Steve Eby and Borough Manager Jeffrey McLaughlin.

Call to Order

President Alex Brown called the regular November 1, 2022 council meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was recited.

Prayer

Jeff recited a prayer.

Approval of Bills

Edwina made a motion seconded by Todd to approve the bills in the amount of \$38,153.59. Motion passed with all voting in favor with the exception of George who was not yet present.

Approval of Minutes of the October 4, 2022 Meeting

Alex pointed out that there was an extra “the” in the personnel report in last month’s minutes. The minutes should read:

Alex said that with the Budget Committee meetings taking place, the Personnel Committee will need to meet to discuss compensation.

Edwina made a motion seconded by Todd to approve the minutes of the October 4, 2022 meeting with the correction. Motion passed with all voting in favor with the exception of George who was not yet present.

George arrived immediately after the vote.

Opportunity for Public Comment -- Items Not on the Agenda

Jennifer Byrnes, UPS

Ms. Byrnes stated that UPS would like to change the route of their 5K walk and run because of the closure of the private road, Siebe Dr. due to the construction of the SunCap warehouse. The course would begin at the new parking lot facing Broadview Road, head east toward Center Avenue, go through an empty field paralleling Center Avenue and then turn onto Broadview Road, going its entire before turning around and retracing the route.

Jeff stated that the last time he spoke to Ms. Byrnes the route was still tentative, needing to be approved internally by UPS so he did not put it on the agenda. He said he would put it on the next meeting's agenda for consideration by council.

Jennifer also mentioned that as in previous years the event would also include a car show and new for next year would be a dog walk.

Alex thanked Jennifer for continuing to hold this annual event for the community.

Opportunity for Public Comment -- on Agenda Items Only

There were no comments on agenda items.

Agenda

1. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Accept the 2021 Municipal Audit and Financial Report

Jeff reviewed some items in the management letter and stated that if council had any questions, he could have the auditor's attend a future meeting.

Alex said that there appeared to be a few more issues in the management letter than in the past. He said that one of the issues that limits the borough is the limited number of staff to provide financial controls. He asked that the more fixable issues be addressed as soon as possible. Tom suggested that the council be updated on those items every couple of months. There was mention made of escrow accounts that need addressed.

George asked about getting someone into cleanup the books. Jeff pointed out that Henninger Accounting Services is available to provide assistance during the year.

Todd made a motion seconded by Linda to accept the 2021 Municipal Audit and Financial Report. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Accept the 2021 Tax Collector Financial Statements

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina to accept the 2021 Tax Collector Financial Statements. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Advertise the Concise Financial Statement

Edwina made a motion seconded by Todd to advertise the 2021 Concise Financial Statement. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Contract with Major Solutions to Provide IT and Computer Security Services

Jeff gave an overview of the contract proposal for IT and computer security services. Currently the borough pays on an as-needed basis. George asked if our insurance policy has a cyber rider. Jeff said that he would check.

George made a motion seconded by Edwina to enter in the IT agreement and computer security services agreement with Major Solutions in the amount of \$4,660. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Pay the Annual Dues for the PA State Association of Boroughs, and the Association of Mayors of the Boroughs of PA

George made a motion seconded by Todd to pay the annual dues for the PA State Association of Boroughs, and the Association of Mayors of the Boroughs of PA. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to the Sewickley Creek Watershed Assoc.

Edwina made a motion seconded by George to pay the annual membership dues to the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association in the amount of \$200. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Donate to Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling

George made a motion seconded by Todd to pay the \$25 annual membership fee to Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Changes to the Codification of Ordinances and Zoning Map

Alex reviewed the handout that was in the agenda packet. These are the changes recommended by the Administration Committee:

Juvenile Curfew Ordinance: Alex said that this is not being enforced and the borough does not have a police department or the staff to enforce. He said that if there are juveniles out at night doing things that they shouldn't be doing residents can call 911. He said an argument can be made that a curfew restricts people's right to travel. George said that he did not think it was a municipality's job to do what parents should be doing or what the state police should be handling depending on what is occurring.

Parking on Woodmere: Alex suggested that the ordinance banning parking on Woodmere Drive from November 1st until April 1st should be repealed. He said that the *no parking* ordinance is not being enforced currently. He said that when it was enforced, residents complained that their guests had nowhere to park.

Rollerblading, Skateboarding, or Riding on Coaster or Similar Toy Vehicles: Alex likened this to the juvenile curfew ordinance in that this ordinance is currently not being enforced and if there are problems occurring, like trespassing, people should call be 911.

Sidewalk Ordinance: Alex stated that the Administration Committee is recommending that the requirement for sidewalks would only apply to the B1 and B2 business zoning districts. He said if housing subdivision developers wanted to install sidewalks that would be up to them, but this change would not require them to do so.

Parking Space Size: Alex said that the present parking space size is 9' x 20'. He said that the committee is reviewing whether to go with a smaller space, but it is not yet ready to recommend a change at this time.

Signs: Alex said that this amendment calls for changing the length of time an Electronic Message Board must show the same message, from a minimum of 1 minute to 6 seconds. There was a discussion about the possibility of reviewing the entire sign ordinance in the future.

Traffic Studies: Alex said that the Administration Committee is reviewing the criteria for requiring a developer to perform a traffic study. He said that before making a recommendation, the committee wants to review the criteria that other municipalities have adopted.

Zoning Map: Alex referred to the Zoning Map in the agenda packet and said that the Administration Committee is recommending that the R-2 zoning district at the southernmost tip of the borough between Bridge St. and Sandworks Rd. be changed to B-2. He said that the area is behind a thin strip that fronts Center Avenue that is already zoned B-2. Only three properties are in the R-2 zoned area. He said that a developer is looking into a project in that area and he would not be able to proceed because of the R-2 zoning. He said that this would not be a radical change, in that the B-2 still lists single family homes as a permitted use.

John pointed out that changes to the zoning map, the zoning ordinance and the subdivision and land development ordinance would need to be reviewed by the Planning Commission. The commission would also need to review these changes in light of the comprehensive plan.

There was a discussion about putting this on the November Planning Commission agenda.

George made a motion seconded by Edwina to refer possible changes to the zoning map, the zoning ordinance and the subdivision and land development ordinance to the Planning Commission and to have them review the changes in light of the comprehensive plan. Motion passed unanimously.

9. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Adopt the 2023 General Fund and Liquid Fuels Budget

Alex directed council to the budget notes page which goes into detail on some of the budget items. He pointed out that the Post/Sewickley/Pennsylvania storm water project, the Arona Road paving project and the new Ford F-550 dump truck is in the budget for 2023. He stated that the Finance Committee tried to be conservative, underestimating revenues and going over on expenditures. He said one of the items that is concerning is the Capital Reserve Fund, the figure used to balance the budget. However, he pointed out that we would not be tied to spending all of the money. As a follow up, Jeff pointed that a project like the Post/Sewickley/Pennsylvania storm water project would not need to be undertaken, if or until, the grants that have been applied for the project have been received.

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina to Adopt the 2023 General Fund and Liquid Fuels Budget. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina to go into Executive Session at 7:07 PM. There were no objections.

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina to come out of Executive Session at 8:04 PM. There were no objections.

Alex said that the Executive Session consisted of Litigation and Personnel matters.

10. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action on PA Municipal Retirement Systems Audit Finding

Todd made a motion seconded by George to use John Campfield's letter as the borough's response to the Auditor General's audit finding for the borough's pension plan. Motion passed unanimously.

11. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action on Notification of Intent by SunCap to Seek a Variance on Construction Hours

Todd made a motion seconded by George to support, with caveats, SunCap's variance request for extended hours, keeping in mind sound, lighting and the concerns of nearby residents and giving Steve authority on how to convey these concerns. Motion passed unanimously.

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina to have John sign the Rhymer and Rhymer joint petition regarding their property tax assessment. Motion passed with all voting in favor with the exception of Alex who abstained because of his position as Chairman of the Westmoreland County Board of Assessment Appeals.

Reports

Administrative

Planning Commission

Jeff stated that there would be a Planning Commission meeting in November to discuss the proposed changes to the ordinances and the zoning map.

Borough Manager

Jeff reported that:

- He and Alex attended the October 27th online Central Planning District meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for December 8, 2022.
- He and Tom S. attended the 2-day G-Conference meeting on October 27th and 28th. Trevor Grace attended some of the Friday sessions as well.
- Plans for the Veterans Day event are proceeding: Pastor Steve Bane from New Stanton Church has agreed to give the Invocation at the Veterans' Day event and Anita has prepared the menu for the event.
- Jeff reported that a member of the Hempfield Football program that was renting space at the park contacted him. They are seeking to have a uniform drop off on November 14, 15, and 16 and are also hoping to store the uniforms in the pole building to which they have not had access. The equipment would then be cleaned on the following Sunday at the park and then the week after moved off site. The pole building is keyed separately and alarmed. Their lease was up on October 27th and the park is closed as of November 1, 2022.

There was discussion and it was decided that a borough employee should be on site for these activities and that the football program should pay for the employee's time.

Code Enforcement Report

Mark Cypher's monthly report was included in council's agenda packet.

Solicitor's Report

No report.

Engineer's Report

Steve said that the one side of the Arona Road Culvert has been installed and they will be paving shortly. The contractor will then begin demolition of the other side. The other pre-fab culvert will be delivered before Thanksgiving. He reported that another requisition for payment has just been submitted. Since the requisition was not on the agenda for payment, it was decided to hold the November 15, 2022 council meeting to save the contractor from having to wait another month to get paid.

Fire Department Liaison

Ray reported that the fire department's general account had a balance of \$92,044.09. He also made note of the high gas bill at the fire station. Jeff stated that there was no chief's report for the month.

Council President

Alex reported that the Central Planning District is looking at various ways to work together. He reported that he and Jeff are assigned to the committee that is looking at the feasibility of a Park Circuit rider which would essentially entail the sharing of a park employee amongst several

municipalities. He said that the borough should only participate in a joint project if it is in the borough's best interest.

Mayor

Tom reported that at this time Youngwood Recreation is not interested in a merger. They will continue to allow our children to participate in their program.

Tom said that attendance was low at the G conference, but he did learn some things and that it is worth holding.

Administration

Alex reported that the committee discussed the ordinance changes that were discussed earlier in the meeting.

Public Works/MS4 & Parks

Alex reported that the Public Works report was included in the packet.

Jeff reported that John Barnes listed the Borough's 2 old sets of Christmas lights for sale and they went for \$500 each, the same amount that the borough paid.

Community Betterment

Alex said that it sounded like plans for the Veterans Day event were proceeding nicely.

Workplace Safety Committee

Jeff reported that the committee met in September. The topic was First Aid Awareness.

Jeff mentioned that the Code Enforcement report was in the packet. There was a discussion about the progress being made.

Personnel

Alex stated that personnel was handled with the budget. He said that the staff has had to work through a period of inflation and that council wanted to make sure that by giving them raises that the staff knows how valuable they are to the borough. He said hopefully the inflation will slow down in the coming year. Jeff thanked council on his and the staff's behalf.

Steve mentioned that he found out about another stormwater grant. He said that with the second meeting in November being held, a motion to adopt a resolution to apply for the funding can be added to the agenda.

Finance Report

Todd reviewed the financial report: as of October 24, 2022, there was a checking balance of \$1,058,011.99; the total of all savings accounts was \$1,303,571.83 and the taxes remitted from September 27, 2022 through October 24, 2022 was \$21,044.14.

Additional Opportunity for Public Comment

There was no additional public comment.

Announcements

Alex said that the next council meeting will be on November 15, 2022 at 6 PM.

Adjournment

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 PM. There were no objections.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey McLaughlin
Secretary