

PARKESBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

Monday July 20, 2020
7:00 p.m. VIA ZOOM

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 by President Sharon Wolf.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Roll call was held, and Council members present were: President Sharon Wolf, Vice-President Todd Brade, Council Member Mark Agen, Council Member Lyle Gillespie, Council Member Rhett Lipscomb Council Member David Mellema, and Council Member Joshua Mellinger. Also present were Mayor John Hagan, Borough Manager/Secretary Neil Vaughn, Police Chief Brian Sheller, Solicitor John Carnes, and Treasurer Peter Barsz, CPA.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Rhett Lipscomb and seconded by Todd Brade. The motion was approved 7-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2020 Regular Council Meeting was made by Rhett Lipscomb and seconded by Josh Mellinger. The motion was approved 7-0.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The treasurer’s report was presented and an overview on progress was made by Peter Barsz. Mr. Barsz reported that changes in the data and format of the Treasurer’s report is still being worked on. A Motion to accept the report was made by Todd Brade and seconded by Mark Agen. The motion passed 7-0.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

A motion to approve the bills submitted was made by Todd Brade and seconded by Mark Agen. The motion passed 7-0.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORTS

Police Chief’s Report.....Chief Brian Sheller
A complete copy of the Police Chief’s Report is on file in the Borough Hall.

Fire Chief's Report.....Chief Robert Cazillo
No Report

COVID-19 Update.....Neil D. Vaughn
Minor changes to the "Green Phase" Reconstitution Plan due to the increase in cases within the County. Will continue to monitor changes in COVID numbers.

PRESENTATIONS

Susan Elks of the Chester County Planning Commission presented to Borough Council on the "next steps" following the Comprehensive Plan Update adoption. Ms. Elks reviewed the adoption process and gave tips for Borough Council to follow for plan implementation. These include proper budgeting, limiting projects, and performing an annual review of the plan and its actions. Ms. Elks stated that the Chester County Planning Commission could always be called up for support and questions.

SUBDIVISIONS/PLANNING COMMISSION

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A motion to accept the 2019 Municipal Audit and to advertise as required by the DCED was made by Mark Agen and seconded by Rhett Lipscomb. With their being no comments, the motion passed 7-0.

A motion to allow non-uniform employees to carry over up to five days of vacation time from 2020 to 2021 was made by Todd Brade and seconded by Mark Agen. With their being no comments, the motion passed 7-0.

A motion to approve Resolution #2020-16 reducing the performance bond amount for public improvements of the Parkesburg Knoll II-B project was made by Todd Brade and Seconded by Rhett Lipscomb. With their being no comments, the motion passed 7-0.

A motion to accept the resignation of Fire Marshal Ray Stackhouse effective 12/31/2020 was made by Rhett Lipscomb and seconded by Todd Brade. With their being no comments, the motion passed 7-0.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Engineer's Report – ARRO Consulting

A complete copy of the Engineer's Report is available on file in the Borough Hall.

Zoning Officer's Report – Neil D. Vaughn

A complete copy of the Zoning Officer's Report is available on file in the Borough Hall

Building Code Officials Report – Neil D. Vaughn

A complete copy of the Building Code Officer's Report is available on file in the Borough Hall

Code Officer's Report – Joseph Reali

A complete copy of the Code Officer's Report is available on file in the Borough Hall. Mayor Hagan thanked Mr. Reali for his efforts with vacant properties within the Borough.

Manager's Report – Neil D. Vaughn

A complete copy of the Manager's Report is available on file in the Borough Hall. A question was raised about the process for the additional bank signers and was reviewed by Mr. Vaughn. Mayor Hagan asked about the audit findings; Mr. Vaughn stated that the findings are actively being worked on.

Public Works Report – Theodore Toalton

A complete copy of the Public Works Report is available on file in the Borough Hall.

Fire Marshal Report – Ray Stackhouse

No Activity.

Mayor's Report – John P. Hagan, II

See attached Report.

Solicitor's Report – John Carnes

A complete copy of the Solicitor's Report is available on file in the Borough Hall.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Revitalization – Rhett Lipscomb

Nothing additional to add to Ms. Elks report. Ms. Lipscomb reminded everyone of the August 13th Public Meeting for the Comprehensive Plan update.

Budget & Finance – Mark Agen

Working with Treasurer's to clean up reports to be able to provide expanded reports to Council in the future.

Fire AND EMS – Joshua Mellinger

Reported that the Fire District Administrator position is vacant. The job announcement has been posted and interviews will be starting shortly. Hoping to have someone in place by September.

Community Life, Business Activity and Parks and Recreation – Todd Brade

Reported that the repairs were made by the Public Works Department to the lot at 419 West First Avenue; that the lights within the Minch Park gazebo were vandalized; and, that “P’Burg” magnets were for sale.

Property – David Mellema

Reported that the bid package for the public works building project should be ready in August.

Projects – Lyle Gillespie

Questioned the status of the meeting regarding the Train Station project. Manager Vaughn reported that the meeting is to be held on July 24th, 2020.

Police – Sharon Wolf

No Report

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Agenda and Non-Agenda Items)

None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Joshua Mellinger brought up concerns about the basketball courts. The concerns included trash, behavior, and damage to the area. The area will be monitored and will work on any issues that arise.

Lyle Gillespie discussed fireworks on July 4th in town and abundance of residents setting them off. Mayor John Hagan discussed banning fireworks or creating a local ordinance addressing fireworks; the Mayor also stated he would work with the Police Chief on this matter.

Sharon Wolf commented that the Borough Manager’s performance review was completed and processes are being worked on for other reviews; policy creation continues.

ADJORNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Rhett Lipscomb and seconded by Todd Brade. The motion passed 7-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Durnall
Assistant Secretary

Office of the Mayor
Borough of Parkesburg
315 West First Avenue
Parkesburg, Pennsylvania
19365

July 20th, 2020

During the Zoom meeting I spoke in my time slot in response to observations that the “public” has the perception historical “lack of accomplishment” by the borough council as a whole, with emphasis on council’s past.

Here is my attempt to put in writing to append to the official record of the 7-20-20 meeting.

I wish this be posted to the record, my observations as the mayor’s report 7-20-20, transcribed from the recorded council meeting of July 20th, 2020, to the best of my recollection and ability.

I do not have a formal report.

I agree with Rhett, paying attention to some of our fellow citizens. Particularly in our surrounding community with this Covid situation refreshing our memory, keeping us mindful I want to thank her for pointing this out earlier

I also want to address as what is perceived by the public, as inactive history of the council. There have been projects, there have been steps taken over the many years that I’ve been involved. Some them include having on hand a borough manager.

Developing Westminster, Parkesburg High School and Borough Hall. Two of which are reclaimed historic properties. Westminster, across the street resurrecting a Brown filed. A property not ecologically sound was mitigated, the borough was able to make that happen.

There are things that have happened within the borough that are not big headlines. You don’t see major influx of enterprise, Todd’s PAC efforts to resurrect commerce on Main St. a positive long view. Getting people to risk life and limb to open a private enterprise. The borough supported that effort -Final Fridays for instance, closing the Main to accommodate and providing security and traffic support. All to positively enrich Parkesburg reputation not only within but without, the Octorara area in general.

I think part of what happens when we listen to our constituents is, we hear only bad news and criticism without suggestions for improvement or resolution. You only hear critique, rarely praise. Councils past as well as present, and I make no slight to either, I do recognize something’s from the past leave a little to be desired at times, but hindsight is 20-20, truly.

We’ve done yeoman’s work to keep taxes inline as best as we could despite my request for increases these past 14 years.

There have been significant changes taking place in the borough , but before we respond to our constituents with “I get that, it doesn’t appear they (we) do anything”, maybe we ought to give them an opportunity to see what has been done. I wanted that to be part of the record here, this evening.

I’ve been around borough council as a counselor, a Vice President and your Mayor, all beginning in 1991, I’ve seen the struggle. We have a state the art fire department, we support the regional fire safety committee and related companies, we have a police department that is unscathed with controversy. Nothing is perfect but certainly. We aren’t looking at anything like Oregon certainly, or behavior like that.

We live in a relatively peaceful environment, active crime prevention community-based policing patrols that encourage civil behavior, is a matter of fact- not wishful thinking.

Whenever you have things that are going well you have folks who say things could be better and that’s necessary in order to improve.

I really wanted to be on the record here. That is one of things that strike me when I hear comments accredited “the public” reiterated here that disparage the council with sentiment like “council is much ado about nothing”.

This is almost a volunteer army here ladies and gentlemen. Giving up lots of hours, doing extraordinary work, even more so in this extraordinary time. You are to be thanked as well as brought to task, on occasion.

Thank you, Madame President