

Oakland Borough Council
380 State Street
Susquehanna, PA 18847
General Business Meeting
June 9, 2022

Attendance: President Valerie Senese, Vice-President Gary Boughton, Robert Muiteer, Patrick Gall, Solicitor John Martin, Mayor Randy Glover, Administrator Jennifer Bixby, Treasurer/ Assistant Administrator Rhonda Parfitt.

Absent: Brad Krayeski

President Valerie Senese stated that this meeting is being recorded.

Meeting Call to Order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence was observed.

1. Agenda:
 - A. Motion by Robert Muiteer, 2nd by Vice- President Gary Boughton to adopt the agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

2. Minutes:
 - A. Motion by Robert Muiteer, 2nd by Patrick Gall to approve the May 12, 2022 minutes as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

3. Public Comment was opened by President Valerie Senese at 7:02 p.m.
 - A. Douglas Arthur inquired about the bamboo at the end of bridge on the right side that has grown up quite a bit. President Valerie Senese explained there is a date to have the bamboo taken care of. Mr. Arthur proceeded to ask if the gravel at the end of Chestnut Street was going to be taken care of. Head of Department of Public Works Randy Glover explained that State Street is a state road and not Oakland Borough's responsibility. Any complaints for State Street or Westfall Avenue should be directed to PennDot.
 - B. Jessica Komula expressed a thank you to the Council for addressing the trash problem on Westfall Avenue. Ms. Komula inquired how 89 Westfall Avenue building could legally be rented out when the building is leaning and is dangerous for habitat. There are two apartments upstairs and two apartments' downstairs. According to Ms. Komula there is about 30 people living there. President Valerie Senese stated thank you for your comment and this would be looked into.
 - C. Stephen Metcalf, address 27413 SR 171, Susquehanna, PA 18847 inquired if the bids for tree removal for the Overlook Project was for both Phase I and 2 or just Phase I. President Valerie Senese explained that it would be discussed later on in meeting, but it is just for Phase I.

President Valerie Senese closed public comment at 7:05 p.m.

4. Community Development Committee Report:
 - A. Head of Community Development Committee Heather Krayeski was not present to give a verbal report.

- B. President Valerie Senese requested a motion to pay Susquehanna Fire Department for 2.5 hours with 4 people working hanging flags. Pennsylvania Volunteer rate is \$28.54 per hour. Oakland Borough's donation to Susquehanna Fire Department would be \$285.40. Motioned by Robert Muieter, 2nd by Vice- President Gary Boughton. All in favor, motion carried.

5. Financial Reports:

- A. Motion by Robert Muieter, 2nd by Patrick Gall to approve the Treasurer's Report with the following updates. All in favor, motion carried.
 - 1. Treasurer Rhonda Parfitt explained to Council that at the end of the year there was an amount of \$25,213.35 left over from the budget, and this amount was transferred into Capital Reserve. Making the balance for Capital Reserve \$56,395.04.
 - 2. Treasurer Rhonda Parfitt wanted it noted to the Council how much faster the Borough's Mortgage Loan is going down since refinancing to a lower fixed interest rate. A \$300.00 to \$400.00 is going on the principal instead of going on the interest to the Borough's Loan each month. Solicitor John Martin inquired if it was a 1- year or 5-year fixed rate. Robert Muieter stated it is a 5-year fixed rate.
- B. Motion by Patrick Gall, 2nd by Robert Muieter to approve and pay Bill List with the amendments as follows:
 - 1. A few of the Penelec bills were not received before meeting. Treasurer Rhonda Parfitt explained that these bills are in the budget.
 - 2. The Wex bill was paid and the bill was about \$214.00. This bill was also in the budget.
 - 3. Solicitor John Martin's bill of \$1,757.50 was added to the bill list.

All in favor, motion carried.

6. Correspondence:

- A. Thank You note was read by President Valerie Sense from Karyn Grausgruber for helping to remove the large branches that fell during the snow storm from her yard on clean up day.

7. Codes Report:

- A. President Valerie Senese informed Council that an Occupancy inspection for the Oakland Borough Building basement will be inspected on Friday June 10, 2022 from NEIC.

8. Police Report:

- A. Chief Officer Creamer was not present to give report. Council did review the Police Service Bill and Log. President Valerie Senese stated if no questions it will be noted and added to the meeting minutes.

9. DPW Report:

- A. Verbal report given by Head of Department Public Works Randy Glover as follows:
 - 1. The dump truck box is getting repaired.
 - 2. After the dump truck box is repaired, it will then go to Endless Mountains Garage to have the hydraulic lines fixed.
 - 3. A recall on the windshield wipers came in on the truck. Will be scheduled at some point to be fixed when more information comes in.
 - 4. Still waiting to hear from Powell's on the Dumper Dogg.
 - 5. DPW worker put down about 20 bags of cold patch on some of the streets.
 - 6. Weed whacking had also been done through the Borough.

7. Trying to get inside Borough Building painting finished up.

8. Head of DPW Randy Glover inquired about the agility program with PennDot. President Valerie Senese requested Ms. Bixby to give an update. Ms. Bixby explained that when the streets were swept the driver refused to do State Street and Westfall Avenue. The driver stated he was yelled at by PennDot once before and he will not do a state road again. Ms. Bixby was in touch with Erin at PennDot trying to work out an agreement under the agility program for Oakland Borough to have State Street and Westfall Avenue swept in return having PennDot do some line painting around the Borough. Erin checked with her supervisor and PennDot refused the agreement. PennDot will send out their own street sweeper. Head of DPW Randy Glover also stated that if Oakland Borough starts to take care a part of a state road PennDot could abandoned that part of the road and Oakland Borough would be responsible for that part of the road all year round. If anyone has a complaint it should be directed to PennDot.

- B. President Valerie Senese informed the tractor was advertised for sale, and there was only one bid on tractor. Motion by Vice-President Gary Boughton, 2nd by Robert Muter to accept the bid of \$400.00 on tractor. All in favor, motion carried.

10. Finance Committee Report:

- A. Robert Muter gave a verbal report. Finance Committee did not meet this past month.
 - 1. Robert Muter proposed to Council to consider putting some of the Capital Reserve Money into a Certificate of Deposit. Robert Muter explained that the CDs range from 3 months up to 48 months. Robert Muter also explained an option would be to scatter the purchases of the CDs for 6 months. Purchase one CD for \$25,000.00 for 6 months, then in 3 months purchase another CD for \$25,000.00. That way the money is not tied up. Treasurer Rhonda Parfitt expressed that purchasing CDS is safe. Oakland Borough's money would be guaranteed with interest.
- B. Robert Muter requested a motion to get an RFP for Certificate of Deposit quotes with scattered options or straight up option from 3 banks. Motion by Patrick Gall, 2nd by Vice-President Gary Boughton. All in favor, motion carried.

11. Parks Committee Report:

- A. Verbal report by Vice- President Gary Boughton.
 - 1. Vice-President Gary Boughton explained that one person, Dave Jenkins, showed up to place bid on for lighting at park. Three electricians were schedule for the meeting. The meeting at the park consisted of Mayor Randy Glover, Chris Maby, and himself, Vice-President Gary Boughton. Vice- President Gary Boughton expressed that the lighting at the park is insufficient and the committee feels improved lighting is necessary to protect patrons visiting the park.
The bid consists of installation of two 30 ft. poles. One 15 ft to the left of the existing Penelec pole with transformer on it. One to the left of and centered on the basketball court. Installation of 5 quantity 300-watt LED flood lights with integrated photo cells. One on existing pole by snack building, two on new pole by Penelec pole and two on new pole by basketball court. Installation of wire and breakers in the concession building. Installation of self-supporting Cat 6 wire in building and between and poles for cameras. Installation of two cameras, one on each pole. Price includes permits or engineering fees. The wires will be above ground so that the wires will not have to be dug back up when starting renovation on park. Estimate cost is \$13,583.00.

President Valerie Senese expressed to Council that there is an emergent situation for this to be done due to safety issues. Robert Muiter questioned if Oakland Borough has the money to support this. Treasurer Rhonda Parfitt answered that Oakland Borough does have the finances for this project. Robert Muiter made a motion to accept the estimate since several contractors were contacted and only one showed up, 2nd by Patrick Gall. All in favor, motion carried.

12. Food Pantry:

- A. Administrator Jennifer Bixby explained to Council that Ingrid from Weinburg came and did her final inspection through the Food Pantry. We passed the inspection and Oakland Borough is now their own entity. Robert Muiter explained that through his work there is grants available for assistance for projects like a food pantry. Robert Muiter explained that he would need the 501(c)3 information. Administrator Jennifer Bixby will look into getting that information for him.

13. Grant Update:

- A. Soil and Conservation Grant/ Upper Boyden Street.
 - 1. President Valerie Senese read the bid notice from the Scranton Times. 3 Sealed bids came in out of eight companies that received the plans and proposal.
 - 1. First bid was from Waco at \$194,986.00.
 - 2. Second bid came from Linde Corporation at \$169,910.00.
 - 3. Third bid came from New Enterprise and Lime at \$194,440.00.President Valerie Senese explained that these bids are well over 50% of engineer guide Lines. Engineer's estimate for the project was \$70,000.00. President Valerie Senese proposed to Council to have Delta Engineer do an audit since The bids came in well over 50%. Have Delta Engineer modify the scope of work to comply with the grant. Then contact Soil and Conservation for permission to change the scope of work to match the funds. Motion by Vice- President Gary Boughton, 2nd by Patrick Gall to have Delta Engineer do an audit. All in favor, motion Carried.
If within the month the audit comes back and the audit shows the bids are correct President Valerie Senese proposed to have Administrator Jennifer Bixby put out for a new sealed bid ad. Motion by Patrick Gall, 2nd by Vice-President Gary Boughton to possibly reduce scope of work and resubmit the bid. All in favor, motion carried.
- B. President Valerie Senese proposed Delta's Proposal to Provide Engineering Service to write the grants for the following:
 - 1. Boyden Street from 3rd Avenue to Westfall Avenue through Susquehanna County Conservation District Dirt and Gravel Roads Pollution Prevention Grant. Proposed Cost for Delta Engineer to write the grant would be \$1150.00.
 - 2. Scenic Overlook Project for the concrete pad through Community Development Block Grant. Delta Engineer proposed the cost to write grant would be \$965.00. President Valerie Senese explained this grant there is no match required. If Oakland Borough receives the grant federal money can be used to match state grants. Motion by Robert Muiter, 2nd by Patrick Gall to submit the grants. All in favor, motion carried.
- C. President Valerie Senese informed Council that the Municipal Assistance Program Grant has been submitted with DCED for the match of \$37,500 for the Engineering Stormwater Flood Study for entire Oakland Borough through U.S. Army Corps. Federal

Government money will come from U.S. Army Corps of Engineering.

Old/Tabled Business:

14. President Valerie Senese stated the bids for Phase I removal of ten trees for the Scenic Overlook. Bids are as follows:
 1. Top Notch: \$6,400.00.
 2. Brown's Tree Service: \$3995.00.
 3. Steve's Trees: \$8,000.00.Motion was made by Patrick Gall, 2nd by Vice- President Gary Boughton to hire Brown's Tree Service to remove the 10 trees. All in favor, motion carried.
President Valerie Sense stated it is good to know for applying for grants that Steve's Trees quoted for Phase II removal of the rest of trees was \$22,000.00.
15. President Valerie Senese presented to Council there is two corrections to be added.
 1. Susquehanna Valley Construction will be renting office space downstairs from Oakland Borough not PennDot.
 2. Susquehanna Valley Construction is able to fill the Overlook Area from the SLIDE project on State Street with fill and compacting for free.
16. President Valerie Senese explained to Council that phone calls were made inquiring for a quote for drawing up a contract for blighted houses. President Valerie Senese asked Ms. Bixby to explain who she had contacted. Ms. Bixby proceeded to explain that she had contacted PSAB they have nothing like that. Contacted Bobbie Jo Turner at Susquehanna County Housing. Ms. Turner explained the contract they use is about 25 years old. Then Ms. Bixby contacted DCED and they never had anything like that. Ms. Bixby also contacted two other businesses and five attorneys and they were not interested at this time. The one indicated to do this was Strauss and Associates. President Valerie Senese excused herself from any decisions due to conflict of interest. President Valerie Senese turned over the decision to Vice- President Gary Boughton.
Robert Muiter opened the discussion asking who would be purchasing the blighted homes from? President Valerie Senese explained that Oakland Borough would buy the blighted houses from tax sales. Community Development has started saving seed money for this. The Borough would then under contract sell the house to a contractor, construction company, or individual willing to fix up the house to bring it up to market value.
President Valerie Senese also explained that this would take about a year to get the contract in place, and the Borough would be ready when the first purchase happens. Council asked to see a proposal with numbers for this contract before committing.
Motion by Robert Muiter, 2nd by Patrick Gall to pursue for further information. All in favor, motioned carried.
17. Solicitor John Martin explained that with the ARPA restrictions Oakland Borough would be held responsible for the money. If Oakland Borough should get audited and the Water Authority spent the money in the wrong way Oakland Borough would be held responsible to pay it back. Solicitor John Martin purposed to Council instead of a contract to send Water Authority a letter explaining Oakland Borough has \$30,000.00 in ARPA funds to be made available for reimbursement for expenses. Inform Water Authority what expenses would be covered under the ARPA funds. Water Authority would then submit to Oakland Borough an invoice to be reimbursed. Motion by Robert Muiter, 2nd by Patrick Gall for Solicitor John Martin to send letter to Water Authority. All in favor, motion carried.

18. President Valerie Senese presented a few drafts to Council of the Oakland Borough News Letter to review. Treasurer Rhonda Parfitt agreed to interview the Department Heads.

New Business:

19. Motion by Patrick Gall, 2nd by Robert Muite. All in favor, motion carried to Modify Rules of Conduct as follows: "Oakland Borough Council does not discuss employees in a public meeting. Any concerns should be done in writing via a personnel complaint form and provided to the Borough's Administrator during office hours, mailed to Oakland Borough, or emailed to oaklandborough@gmail.com. The concern will be directed to the presiding Council person for the corresponding department."

Council requested this also be shown on the website.

20. Robert Muite shared a letter from Emergency Management Coordinator Scott Aylesworth. The letter on behalf of the Economic Development Advisory Board. Using the County Comprehensive Plan as a base, the Economic Development Board is formulating an action plan to promote projects in our local municipalities for the next 5 – 10 years. There were four questions to be answered. Robert Muite suggested that each Council member submit answers to Ms. Bixby who will correlate the answers to send to the Board. All members were in agreement.

Adjournment: Motion by Robert Muite, 2nd by Vice- President Gary Boughton to adjourn the meeting.
All in favor, motion carried. Meeting ended at 8:06 p.m.