

Oakland Borough Council
Monthly business meeting
April 15th, 2021
Passed motions

A motion to adopt the agenda

A motion to approve the March 17th minutes as presented

A motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented

A motion to approve the bills list as presented

A motion to approve the employee time sheets as presented

A motion to advertise ordinance# 2021-2 (Joining COG for sewer enforcement) in the County Transcript for approval at the May 13th meeting

A motion to accept the codes report

A motion to proceed with the police contract and to have it signed by Mr. Boughton

A motion to approve an expenditure of up to \$1,500 to hire a contractor or to rent a street sweeper which will remove materials from the road

A motion to allow Rhonda Parfitt to obtain telephone bids for the paving of East Boyden Street

A motion for Rhonda Parfitt to obtain bids for paving v. patching Spring Creek Ave

A motion to allow Rhonda Parfitt to apply for the 2021 Community Block Development Grant on behalf of Oakland Borough for the Westfall Ave sidewalk project

A motion to get three bids for engineering fees for Boyden

A motion for Ms. Senese to become the head of the streets

A motion to accept the resignation of Tim Senese from the temporary DPW position

A motion to accept the DPW report as presented

A motion for Rhonda Parfitt to apply for the \$150, zero match "I Speak for the Trees" Grant Program to help cover the costs of a community clean-up day

A motion to accept the Community Development Committee report

A motion to allow Rhonda Parfitt to allow for the Lowe's 100th anniversary grant with the intent to cover the costs for the Little League renovation

A motion to accept the parks committee report as presented

A motion to accept the volunteer committee report as presented

A motion for Ms. Parfitt to obtain proposals for engineers on retainer

A motion to advertise the Borough administrator position for hire

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:39pm

Oakland Borough Council
380 State Street
Susquehanna, PA 18847
Regular meeting minutes
April 15, 2021

The Council held executive session from 6:15 to 6:45 for personnel.

The regular meeting of the Oakland Borough Council was called to order at 7:00pm. Present were council members Gary Boughton, Valerie Senese, Robert Muieter, Brad Krayeski, and Pat Gall; and Administrator Rhonda Parfitt. Council member Debra White and solicitor John Martin were absent.

Present as members of the public were residents Doug Arthur, Sue Arthur, and Josh Cliff.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed.

1. Agenda
 - a. A motion to adopt the agenda was made by Ms. Senese, seconded by Mr. Muieter, and approved by unanimous vote.
2. Minutes
 - a. A motion to approve the March 17th minutes as presented was made by Ms. Senese, seconded by Mr. Muieter, and approved by unanimous vote.
3. Public comment: Sue Arthur brought a letter which she had received from the Borough Administrator and wanted to know why she had received it since there are no taxes collected in January or February. After a back and forth about when tax money begins to come in, Mr. Boughton asked that Ms. Arthur report to the Borough if there is any month that taxes are not collected.
4. Finance Reports
 - a. A motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented was made by Ms. Senese, seconded by Mr. Muieter, and approved by unanimous vote.
 - b. A motion to approve the bills list as presented was made by Ms. Senese, seconded by Mr. Muieter, and approved by unanimous vote.
 - c. A motion to approve the employee time sheets as presented was made by Ms. Senese, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.
5. Correspondence:
 - a. Adams Cable Service- a letter had been received which stated that cable fees would be increasing
 - b. Susquehanna County Conservation District- a letter had been received which invited the Borough leaders and community members to a meeting to discuss a County Clean water Action Plan. The meeting was to occur at the Montrose Branch Library on April 26th from 10:30am to 12:30pm.

- c. American Legion Post 86- A letter was received which requested permission from the Borough to use State Route 92 on the Oakland side of the bridge for the use of the Memorial Day Parade. Ms. Senese stated that they didn't even need permission because it was a state road, but Council felt it was a nice gesture to ask permission and it was granted.
- 6. Ordinance #2021-2 (Joining COG for sewer enforcement)
 - a. Ms. Parfitt stated that there had been an advertising error on the part of the County Transcript and that the ordinance had not been advertised to the public. It would need to be advertised for approval at the May 13th meeting. Ms. Parfitt made clear that this had not cost the Borough any money. A motion to advertise ordinance# 2021-2 (Joining COG for sewer enforcement) in the County Transcript for approval at the May 13th meeting was made by Mr. Muiter, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.
- 7. Codes Report: 1 codes complaint at 257 Westfall Ave. Excavation work resulted in a drainage blockage. Soil and conservation was called and they responded. They talked with the property owner and came up with a plan and they will be back to see it through.
 - a. A motion to accept the codes report was made by Mr. Muiter, seconded by Ms. Senese, and approved by unanimous vote.
- 8. Police Report
 - a. There was no police report presented.
 - b. A motion to proceed with the police contract and to have it signed by Mr. Boughton was made by Ms. Senese, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.
- 9. DPW Report
 - a. Put truck report here
 - b. Work performed
 - c. Sealing: [Council should discuss the best way to proceed with pavement sealing, crack sealing, paving, etc.] Ms. Senese suggested trying to contact the company that was advertised in the PSAB magazine.
 - d. Sweeping: [Rhonda, with the help of Moose, is obtaining quotes from a few different sources for street sweeping.]
 - i. A brief discussion was had and Ms. Parfitt stated that so far, the most expensive option should cost approximately \$1,400 but prices were still being obtained. A motion to approve an expenditure of up to \$1,500 to hire a contractor or to rent a street sweeper which will remove materials from the road was made by Ms. Senese, seconded by Mr. Muiter, and approved by unanimous vote.
 - e. Projects: [East Boyden Street needs to be finished. Funds will come from the Impact Fee account and the Liquid Fuels account, depending on cost.] Council discussed that the road was in need of paving.
 - i. A motion to allow Rhonda Parfitt to obtain telephone bids for the paving of East Boyden Street was made by Ms. Senese, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, and approved by unanimous vote.

- ii. Mr. Krayeski stated that he would like the Council to consider paving Spring Creek Ave as it seemed to be a constant problem. Some discussion was had and it was determined that an engineer should look at the road because perhaps there was an underlying problem causing the constant pot holes. A motion for Rhonda Parfitt to obtain bids for paving v. patching Spring Creek Ave was made by Ms. Senese, seconded by Mr. Muiter, and approved by unanimous vote.

[Westfall Ave sidewalks: work has begun.]

- f. Grants: [CBDG- discuss potential application for project as presented by Community Development Committee.] The Community Development Committee proposed applying for new sidewalks with a railing along the portion of Westfall Ave that has jagged sidewalks which are a couple of feet above the ditch. A railing would be needed for safety reasons. Because of the sidewalks already being done on Westfall, it would make sense to continue installing sidewalks until this road is complete.
 - i. A motion to allow Rhonda Parfitt to apply for the 2021 Community Block Development Grant on behalf of Oakland Borough for the Westfall Ave sidewalk project was made by Mr. Muiter, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote. Ms. Parfitt reminded all present that the CBDG did not have a match associated with it.

Conservation District- Ms. Parfitt asked for input on which project the Council would like to accomplish through the DGLVR grant through the conservation district. Ms. Senese stated that ideally, she would like to do Chestnut, but felt it was better to wrap that street in with the PennDOT slide project and the Borough officials currently had no information on that project. As a secondary project, Ms. Senese suggested completing Boyden Street from the beginning of the road all the way down to Westfall. Mr. Boughton recused himself from the discussion due to having a residence on Boyden Street. Council liked the idea of doing Boyden Street because of its attachment to the Pierson Street and 3rd Ave project that occurred last fall, and East Boyden was also being completed this summer. This would make a complete project. Mr. Krayeski asked about paving Spring Creek, as the road seemed to continuously pothole no matter how much patching was done. Much discussion was had about how to proceed with each road. Ms. Senese stated that she believed the Conservation District preferred shovel-ready projects and wasn't sure that engineering fees could be included in the grant request. Ms. Parfitt was asked to find out how much of the conservation district grant funds could be set aside for engineering fees. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gall, to get three bids for engineering fees for Boyden. The motion was approved by unanimous vote, with Mr. Boughton abstaining.

- g. Mayor Glover had requested that someone else be assigned the streets supervisor position due to his upcoming expiration of term. Mr. Boughton stated that he would like Ms. Senese to do it. Ms. Senese accepted, as long as Mr. Krayeski, who has been “second in command” for streets, did not want it. Mr. Krayeski stated that he felt he had enough on his plate and was happy to remain being a back-up contact. Mr. Muieter made a motion, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, for Ms. Senese to become the head of the streets. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.
- h. Mr. Krayeski reluctantly made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muieter, to accept the resignation of Tim Senese from the temporary DPW position. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.
- i. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muieter, to accept the DPW report as presented. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

10. Codes Committee report: see ordinance codification update below

11. Community Development Committee Report:

Blight Response:

- Home of the month
 - Go by street, while taking community nomination. This way we work methodically. Sponsor the “nominate your neighbor” in various venues.
- Buying tax sale homes
 - Look into the success rate of other communities who have employed these measures.
- Codes recommendations

Westfall Project:

- Design plan for Westfall
 - Vote on a couple options of metal fencing for along the sidewalk with a drop-off at the next meeting. Then present these options to the homeowners whose property is directly across from the proposed fence. Fence design with the highest tally will be chosen.
 - Beautification trees were discussed. In the end, it was decided to add the question “would you like trees along the streets?” added to the canvas that will be taking place this summer with a follow up on where they should not be placed.

State Street Project:

- Overlook- review and collection of new ideas
- DEP EE grant update
- Wider sidewalks
- Snow removal code
 - Reach out to Lanesboro and see what their public plowing has cost them.
- Retaining Walls
- Garden bed work in front of Borough building

- Sponsor a different color of flower each year and allow the community to vote. The first year we agreed to do yellow to cheer people up from COVID.
- Welcome to Oakland sign and a slogan
 - The committee will work on branding for a slogan. It was noted that a small sign from both directions on 171 would be adequate for Oakland and 1 large sign at the end of the bridge was desired.

Community Flags:

- Veteran's flags
 - The committee decided to start veteran's flags for Oakland. They will decide on a design at the next meeting and then begin advertising.
- Holiday flags
 - It was agreed upon to start looking at winter flags since we have the American flags.
- Flag placements

Trash Pick Up Day:

- Volunteers pick up trash and bag it and the Borough will remove
 - It was discussed to plan two pick up days a year with one of them trying to include the pride and polish group from the school. Valerie will reach out to the school to see what is possible. Things like leaf clean up, street sweeping, Christmas tree clean up and metal removal were discussed.

Walkability:

- Using our narrow streets to our advantage
 - Slow down traffic with more stop signs, trees, and pedestrian signs

Community Yard Sale

- Memorial Day Community Yard Sale
 - It was noted to not move the community yard sale since it has become an annual event that people are beginning to look forward to. Additionally, it was noted that several dates in the spring and summer conflict with other communities, events and vacation schedules. The community yard sale is scheduled for the first Saturday in August.

New Business:

- Round Table Discussion
 - When the taped off area at the park is remediated, it is the recommendation of the committee to create a parks and recreation department. We would like to see regular events of varying degrees at the park for the community.
 - We would like to put a copy of the park plans in the glass showcase box where the little league pictures are. The pictures will be returned to Little League

- It was noted that the Borough owns the small space where the old bridge used to be on the corner of State street and Westfall. We would like to explore cleaning the area up and creating a small pocket park.
- It was noted that some areas are dark where we plan to put pocket parks and discussion took place on potential solar lights. Valerie will bring some lights to explore for the committee.
- It was noted that the community development committee should create a mission statement. All members will think about cultivating and drafting a statement for review at the next meeting.

Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muieter, for Rhonda Parfitt to apply for the \$150, zero match "I Speak for the Trees" Grant Program to help cover the costs of a community clean-up day. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

- a. Mr. Krayeski made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muieter, to accept the Community Development Committee report. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

12. Finance Committee Report: Due to scheduling conflicts, the finance committee was unable to meet to discuss first quarter standings but will do so before the upcoming meeting in May.
13. Parks Committee Report: No meeting was held, but members communicated throughout the month. There was a graffiti problem in the pavilion which Tim Senese was able to clean. The committee had difficulty obtaining more than one bid for the excavating work despite making 6 contacts. As a result of this, Garnett Excavating and Snow Removal has been hired to complete the work for a price of \$9,320.00 (reminder that we have been given a \$20,000 budget for excavating, tree removal, and bleachers.) It is projected that work will begin no later than the first week of May and this will allow the field to be available for practicing and the hazards will be removed to make for safer summer recreation. Rhonda continues to have difficulty communicating with the removal/new construction contact from Penelec, but the excavating project has been altered so that we do not have to wait on Penelec to remove the pole from the bank. However, we cannot remove trees until the pole is moved.

Valerie found a grant that may help with the park renovation. Lowe's is celebrating its 100th anniversary by funding 100 community projects across the US. This is a **no-match** grant and we feel we have nothing to lose. We would like to apply for the grant, with the intent to cover the costs of the Little League renovation if the grant is received. Grant funds will be awarded this spring.

- a. Mr. Muieter made a motion, seconded by Ms. Senese, to allow Rhonda Parfitt to allow for the Lowe's 100th anniversary grant with the intent to cover the costs for the Little League renovation. The motion was approved by vote.
- b. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, to accept the parks committee report as presented. Mr. Arthur stated that a person was coming to take the bleachers and was allowing a Borough volunteer to use his bucket truck in order to cut some tree limbs. Ms. Senese stated that she would like to get the shed over to the park. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

14. Volunteer committee report: There was no meeting, but with summer coming there are sure to be projects to complete.
 - a. Mr. Muiiter made a motion, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, to accept the volunteer committee report as presented. The motion was approved by vote.
15. Ordinance codification: A small group (Brad, Randy, Creamer, and Rhonda) met with Tom Shepstone on April 5th, 2021 to review the ordinances and determine which ones could be left alone, which could be discarded, and which needed revision. Also discussed were several new ordinances to aid in tackling some of the repeated issues like sidewalks, driveway drainage, streets, etc., that the Borough faces. Mr. Shepstone is going to begin the actual revision and present his proposed packet to the group for review. The group will then pass this on to the Council.
16. PML education: Ms. Parfitt stated that all council members had been signed up for PML and should be receiving correspondence. They council members stated that they were not receiving any emails other than the ones forwarded by Ms. Parfitt and asked her to check on the issue.
17. Police contract: As noted in the police report, the contract was approved by both parties and would be effective May 1st.
18. Streetlight replacement: Ms. Parfitt had nothing to report, but someone asked about getting a lower brightness. Ms. Parfitt stated that the brightness that was ordered was the lowest possible option and she had intended to use it everywhere except for the major intersection at Westfall.
19. Petition to Penelec: Ms. Parfitt stated that she had not yet sent another letter because she could not find the proper person to send it to and other things had taken precedence. Ms. Senese suggested sending the letter to the highest-ranking person that could be found for the sake of trying to move forward. A petition from residents was also discussed as it may hold more weight than the elected officials on their own. Council was in agreement that this was a good idea.
20. Food Pantry: An anonymous donor had pledged to donate enough money to the food pantry to purchase a refrigerator and/or freezer, whichever the volunteers for the pantry thought was best. Ms. Senese stated that Braddock's Boutique and Fran Pisko had donated many birthday cakes complete with frosting and candles. Council discussed the possibility of using a voucher system agreement with Schneiders rather than purchasing cold items and having to keep them in a fridge. Discussion was had about people's pride and embarrassment about having to use the pantry and Ms. Senese was adamant that she did not think the vouchers were a great idea because she felt that most of the people coming to the pantry would go without before they were seen "getting hand-outs" at the grocery store. All ideas would be considered.
21. Kindred Spirits would be having three more clinics during the spring months and return in the fall. They had been having a great turnout for their clinics but Council was curious how many cats had come from Oakland because it seemed that cats were popping up again in places they had disappeared from. Ms. Parfitt stated that she would get those numbers.

22. Ms. Senese presented her idea for a canvassing committee, stating that she would like to canvass the residents to gauge their opinion of the Council and what direction they would like to see the Borough go. Ms. Parfitt mentioned that holding a Town Hall was also an option but Council thought it was something that would get out of control. No other council members were interested in doing the canvass and recommended that the Community Development Committee do it. Mr. Krayeski stated that he would think about questions to ask.
23. Ms. Senese presented an idea for the Council to hire an engineering firm to be placed on retainer. She stated that almost every time they tried to do a project, engineering fees were needed. She had spoken to one engineering firm who had told her that there would be no annual retainer and some small projects were even provided for free. Mr. Muiteer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Senese, for Ms. Parfitt to obtain proposals for engineers on retainer. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.
24. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gall, to advertise the Borough administrator position for hire. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Ms. Parfitt stated for the record that her upcoming resignation was due to changes in her personal life and that the Council had been great to work for.
25. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muiteer, to adjourn the meeting at 8:39pm. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.