

Oakland Borough Council
380 State Street
Susquehanna, PA 18847
Monthly business meeting
May 13th 2021

Motions passed:

A motion to adopt the amended agenda

A motion to approve the April 15th minutes as presented

A motion to adopt the ordinance (#2021-2, Joining COG for sewer enforcement) as presented

A motion to adopt the COG fee schedule for sewage enforcement

A motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented

A motion for park maintenance expenditures to be paid out of the DPW budget

A motion to approve the bills list as presented

A motion to accept the codes report as presented

A motion to hire Tri Power Paving as the lowest bidder for the paving of East Boyden Street in the amount of \$7,712.00

A motion to allow Rhonda Parfitt to apply for the 2021 Community Block Development Grant on behalf of Oakland Borough for ADA compliant playground equipment

A motion to allow Rhonda Parfitt to apply for the CFA multimodal grant on behalf of Oakland Borough for Westfall Ave sidewalks and possibly ditch repair

A motion to hire Jason Auckland for the 2021 park maintenance season

A motion to hire LJ Rudock for the part time DPW position at \$15 per hour, part time, with a 90-day probationary period

A motion to accept the DPW report as presented

A motion to accept the community development committee report as presented

A motion to accept the finance committee report as presented

A motion to accept the parks committee report as presented

A motion to accept the volunteer committee report as presented

A motion to hire Delta Engineering for retained engineering services from present to 2023 per the proposal entered to the Borough Administrator

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:12pm.

Meeting minutes:

The council convened in executive session for personnel, contracts, and litigation from 6:15 to 7:06pm

The meeting was called to order at 7:06pm. Present were council members Valerie Senese, Debra White, Brad Krayeski, and Pat Gall; Mayor Randy Glover; and Administrator Rhonda Parfitt. Council President Gary Boughton was present for executive session but absent from the meeting, and Councilman Robert Muter arrived at 8:00pm.

Doug Arthur arrived as a member of the public at 7:15pm.

The pledge of allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed.

1. Agenda: Ms. Senese added the hiring of a DPW employee to the DPW report. Mr. Krayeski added the dump road and COG codes contract to new business.
 - a. A motion to adopt the amended agenda was made by Mr. Gall, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, and approved by unanimous vote.
2. Minutes:
 - a. A motion to approve the April 15th minutes as presented was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.
3. Public Comment
 - a. There was no public comment.
4. Receive comment on Ordinance# 2021-2 (Joining COG Sewage Enforcement)
 - a. With no comment on proposed ordinance#2021-2, a motion to adopt the ordinance as presented was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.
 - b. A motion to adopt the COG fee schedule for sewage enforcement was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.
5. Financial Reports

- a. A motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented was made by Mr. Gall, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, and approved by unanimous vote.
 - b. Ms. Parfitt noted on the bill list a complementary visit from Mirabito to check on the furnace which had not been working during the recent cold spell. The technician found that one oil tank was empty and the other one was turned off so the furnace could not draw any oil and was working off of the power venter again. The furnace was now up and running. Ms. Parfitt also asked which budget the Council would prefer for park expenditures to come out of as three rolls of landscape fabric which were purchased for placement underneath the playground mulch could be paid out of the DPW budget, the park maintenance budget, or the park operations budget. Ms. Senese stated that she would prefer for the park operations budget to be used for events and activities and the rest of Council agreed. A motion for park maintenance expenditures to be paid out of the DPW budget was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote. A motion to approve the bills list as presented was made by Mr. Gall, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, and approved by unanimous vote.
 - c. Ms. Parfitt noted that she had not emailed time sheets because she was the only employee who had been paid since the last meeting and all of her work was not listed on her time sheet but in Microsoft Teams. No motion was made to approve employee time sheets.
6. Correspondence:
- a. Ms. Parfitt noted that the Tri Boro Municipal Authority sends minutes to the Borough office every time they have a meeting and offered them to anyone who wanted to read. Ms. Senese stated that she would like a copy.
7. Codes Report: Did not receive any code complaints. The drainage on Franklin St has been resolved.
- a. A motion to accept the codes report as presented was made by Ms. White, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.
8. Police Report: There was no police report presented.
- a. There was no motion to accept the police report.
 - b. Regarding the gun which is owned by the Borough, Mayor Glover suggested that the Council offer for Susquehanna Borough to purchase the firearm for \$1500, which was the gun's most recent assessed value, and to credit that amount of money in police services hours.
Regarding the 2006 Ford Crown Victoria, Mayor Glover suggested that the Borough gift the vehicle the Susquehanna Borough, with Susquehanna paying the transfer fees. It was agreed that Susquehanna has provided free aid, and Oakland wouldn't get anything more than junk price for the car at this point. Regarding the contents of the basement, Mayor Glover and Ms. Senese were of the opinion that Chief Creamer had been given long enough to clean out the basement and that anything left in there belonged to the Borough, as the

Borough had purchased it in the first place. Council concurred and Ms. Parfitt was asked to write a letter to Susquehanna with the proposals.

9. DPW Report:

- a. Policy created between Valerie (head of streets) and Brad (head of volunteer) is as follows: Valerie is keeping a log of every time she loans her keys to Tim Senese to do Borough work and what work was performed. Both parties feel that this is working out well.
- b. Equipment: we are looking into new tires for the tractor and new tires for the truck. We are also considering replacing the tractor instead of purchasing new 2 tires. The dump truck is being taken to Cleveland's for repairs. We are considering purchasing a new dump bed. Ms. Senese stated that she is in favor of purchasing a new or good used tractor instead of tires for the existing tractor.
- c. Work performed: Landscaping fabric and mulch were laid at the playground. Tim mowed the park and the lawnmower is being stored at the Krayeski residence.
- d. Sealing: We are having difficulty finding a company that will do large-scale crack sealing but are continuing to look for options. Any input is appreciated. Mr. Krayeski stated that it was a possibility for someone to use the old tarbox to accomplish this.
- e. Sweeping: Stafursky Paving swept the Borough streets on May 12th.
- f. Projects: Four estimates have been obtained for the paving of East Boyden Street. If Council concurs, Rhonda now recommends that liquid fuels money be used for the expense. This just means that the asphalt will have to be PennDOT standard and it's a little extra paperwork for Rhonda but the price does not increase over what it would be for "regular" asphalt. The PennDOT standard is what the Conservation District likes to see because it is water porous. The four quotes are as follows:
 - i. A & S Blacktop (Binghamton)- \$16,997.00
 - ii. Tri Power Paving (Tunkhannock)- \$7,712.00
 - iii. Harris Paving (Tunkhannock)- \$9,800.00
 - iv. J. Hughes Jr. (Dickson City)- \$10,500
 1. A motion to hire Tri Power Paving as the lowest bidder for the paving of East Boyden Street in the amount of \$7,712.00 was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.

Westfall Ave sidewalks: Ms. Senese stated that Chris Maby was working with the contractor on possibly getting the asphalt smoothed out because she did not like the way the sidewalks were finished. She explained that the other side of Westfall had not been completed with sidewalks because Oakland only had \$6,000 left by the time the first side was done, so the money had been given

to Susquehanna to complete their sidewalks. Susquehanna had provided a large match to accomplish all the work that was done through the grant.

SLIDE PROJECT: A meeting with PennDOT is in the works regarding the slide project. We have been informed that the project is going out to bid in December 2021 with a 2022 construction season. Ms. Senese stated that she was hoping to finally get the Chestnut St/State Street issue resolved and would keep Council informed of how meetings went.

g. Grants: CBDG- The possibility of modifying and amending a motion passed at previous meeting to use this grant for Westfall Ave sidewalks and using it instead for ADA compliant playground equipment was discussed. It was agreed to apply for a CFA multimodal grant (up to a 30% match) to accomplish sidewalks the whole length of Westfall Ave, or as far up as grant monies would allow. Ms. Senese noted that the DCED has been waiving grant matches this year for municipalities and that there may not be any match at all.

i. A motion to allow Rhonda Parfitt to apply for the 2021 Community Block Development Grant on behalf of Oakland Borough for ADA compliant playground equipment was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.

ii. A motion to allow Rhonda Parfitt to apply for the CFA multimodal grant on behalf of Oakland Borough for Westfall Ave sidewalks and possibly ditch repair was made by Mr. Gall, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, and approved by unanimous vote.

iii. Conservation District- Ms. Senese had a meeting with conservation district representatives and Chris Maby from Delta Engineering about upper Boyden Street. It was agreed that the work needing to be done includes repairing road surface, grading, daylighting, cleaning and resurfacing ditches. Delta is putting together a scope of work and estimate for plans 3 which we will include in the grant request. Up to 10% of the grant request can be used for engineering plans. Anything above 10% we will need to pay out of one of our funds. If we are awarded the grant, this project will be completed next summer.

h. Park maintenance- Three estimates were able to be obtained for maintenance of the park for the remainder of 2021. The estimates are as follows:

i. Jason Auckland- \$135/week after bank grows in and \$55 per hour for initial clean-up

ii. Warren Avery- \$315 per week; \$750 for initial clean-up

iii. CJM Landscaping- \$230/week which includes initial clean-up

1. A motion to hire Jason Auckland for the 2021 park maintenance season was made by Ms. White, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.

i. Leaf and litter vacuum: Ms. Senese is requested that Council authorize funds to be used for purchasing a leaf and litter vacuum, plus enough money to create a box to place in the truck into which the vacuum will empty. This cost is estimated at \$10,000 on the high end. Discussion was had about how often the vacuum would be used and where the funds would come from to pay for it. Council was hesitant to approve the expenditure and Ms. Senese asked that the purchase be tabled until next month when it would be reconsidered.

i. No motion

j. A motion to hire LJ Rudock for the part time DPW position at \$15 per hour, part time, with a 90-day probationary period was made by Mr. Gall, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, and approved by unanimous vote.

k. A motion to accept the DPW report as presented was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.

10. Codes Committee: The Codes committee did not meet and we are waiting on the codification of ordinances to be drafted.

11. Community Development: Valerie Sense, Heather Krayeski, and Rhonda Parfitt met at the Borough building on May 5th. Notes are as follows:

- We are a little behind on yard-of-the-month due to issues getting donations. We agreed to order materials from Amazon which Heather will use to make yard of the month signs and Rhonda will purchase accompanying gift cards with the budget that was allowed by Council. Val obtained a document from Tom Shepstone to aid in the blight remediation department and Rhonda is going to print one copy for the community development committee to peruse.
- Westfall Project was discussed and Val believes it may be better to not use the CBDG for sidewalks any more, but to go for a bigger grant to achieve those. Chris Maby has said that he will help with the CFA Multimodal application.
- The implementation of a pocket park at the base of Westfall Ave was discussed and this is a project that the community development committee would like to see accomplished (SEE NEW BUSINESS). Also discussed was cleaning up the gateways to Oakland and different ideas for making this possible.
- State Street was discussed and Rhonda stated that she was working on a meeting with PennDOT to discuss possibilities for projects to tie into the slide project. Regarding snow removal, Val had reached out to Lanesboro to ask about the machine they use to remove snow and got details. The members present would like to see the Borough pay to remove snow from the sidewalks on State Street and Westfall as these are heavily walked streets. It is felt that this

is a health initiative, to keep people moving in the winter, but also to provide safe walking area for those without vehicles who must get to the downtown area. May 15th has been chosen as the date to overhaul the flower beds in front of the Borough building. Work will start at 9:00am.

- Veterans flags were discussed and members agreed on a design. How to proceed with advertising and payment needs to be discussed.
- The decision was made to plan a community clean-up day for the fall as this is something that will take some time and the summer is starting to get busy. This will be planned at the next meeting.
- Continued discussion was had about making the community more walkable, without the placement of sidewalks. Members present believe that placing lines on the roads may be a good alternative and encourage drivers to share the road, as roads are not just for drivers. It was discussed that many Oakland streets do not need sidewalks as they are low volume. Valerie has a PennDOT contact that may be able to come visit the Borough and give some pointers.
- Discussion was had about helping the parks committee with the community yard sale. It was agreed that if the parks committee needed help, the community development committee would be available, but at this time we do not see a need to add anything to the event as it has run smoothly in the past.
- After some more work is done at the park, the community development committee would like to begin having regular events for families and children at the park. Included in ideas were rock painting, kickball, frisbee, and movie nights. Heather would be reaching out to a contact to check on the rental of a projector and screen.
- Valerie suggested that the Community Development committee be responsible for the handing out of volunteer certificates, because we want to make sure that all volunteers get a certificate of recognition and that nobody leaves him or herself out of consideration. Also discussed was a volunteer recognition picnic.

a. A motion to accept the community development committee report was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.

12. Finance Committee Report: Committee members Valerie Senese, Gary Boughton, Robert Muter, and Rhonda Parfitt met at the Borough building from 6:00 to 8:00pm.

- The 2020 financial audit was discussed. One recommendation from the auditor that is correctable is for Ms. Parfitt to begin using the Chart of Accounts for all accounts and not just the general fund. The accounts were set up incorrectly prior to Ms. Parfitt coming to the Borough and she has just been using them as they are while all the finances are straightened out. It was agreed to start using the Chart of Accounts for the fiscal year 2022 in order to keep clean books.

- Ms. Parfitt presented a profit and loss report which the other committee members were not happy with because it didn't accurately reflect the Borough's first quarter standings due to not including the excess carryover from 2020 that was used to pay most of the first quarter bills, along with being used to purchase the new truck. Ms. Parfitt stated that she would play with Quickbooks to see if she could find a report that would better suit what the committee was looking for since the carryover had not been placed in the budget for this year. It was also discussed that in future years, the books and budget should be made to reflect a calendar year (January to December) rather than fiscal year (April to March). This will help the treasurer to better keep track of surpluses. Audits also run for a calendar year rather than fiscal year. Discussion was also had about merging all Borough accounts into one account on Quickbooks so that reports will reflect every penny that the Borough has in its coffers. Ms. Parfitt stated that she would contact the auditing firm and discuss this possibility with them, since the Borough does not employ a CPA.
- Ms. Parfitt presented a to-date print out of the balances on all Borough accounts and loans and the committee was pleased with the balances.
- Ms. Parfitt gave an update that the first month's borough mortgage payment had been made after the rate change. The rate change had allotted \$200 extra to principal rather than interest and this will only improve over the next five years as more payments are made. One of the Water Authority loans which is under the Borough's EIN will also be paid off next month. A discussion was had about upcoming projects and what the finance committee would like to afford this year and next year.
- Discussion was also had about the Federal COVID relief funding and its eligible uses. The eligible uses are very limited, but because Oakland is a bedroom community with no businesses or major infrastructure, the uses are limited even further. Ms. Senese was of the opinion that spending money on tourism (an eligible use) may be the best bet because instituting parks and green spaces and cleaning up main streets contributes to higher property values, which helps all property owners. Higher property value (not assessment) means that taxes will not increase, but when someone sells their property, they will get more money than they would have if the improvements had not been made. Members Boughton and Muiter disagreed, stating that they didn't see how their property values would be increased by a cleaned-up main street when they didn't live on the main street. Ms. Senese did not have readily available statistics but stated that she could get them, and asked the other members what their ideas were for the funding if they didn't wish to invest in tourism and blight removal. Mr. Boughton suggested grants for homeowners but Ms. Senese was concerned that the residents who did not get selected to receive aid would be upset and she would rather do something that would help all property owners rather than just a few. Mr. Muiter and Mr. Boughton agreed but had not had the chance to think of uses for the money because they didn't know what the eligible uses were.

- Separate from the COVID-19 relief funds was a discussion about purchasing a good used tractor to replace the New Holland. Also discussed was cleaning up the gateways to the Borough, as 6 they were presently grungy and unimpressive. The finance committee desires to draw new residents to the area for long-term sustainability.
- After discussing the paving of East Boyden with the one bid that had been received thus far, the finance committee recommends using Liquid Fuels funds for the project rather than Impact Fees.
- The informal agenda was not completed, but due to time constraints, the meeting was ended and the other agenda items will be picked back up at the next meeting. A motion to accept the finance committee report was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote
 - a. A motion to accept the finance committee report was made by Mr. Gall, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, and approved by unanimous vote.

13. Park committee: Removal of the bleachers was accomplished by Brett Spoor by donation. Excavation of the bank has been completed. RHL Companies, Inc. donated playground mulch and it was spread by volunteers. Garnett Excavating and Snow Removal LLC has donated 15 tons of 2B gravel and labor to distribute the gravel onto the muddy area next to the paved parking. Doug Arthur repaired fencing that had been disrupted. At least one Little League coach is holding informal practices at the field. Mr. Arthur stated that he and his son had spent 4.5 hours trimming trees around the baseball field. He also stated that he planned to remove the stumps from previously fallen trees.

a. A motion to accept the parks committee report as presented was made by Mr. Gall, seconded by Ms. White, and approved by unanimous vote.

14. Volunteer committee report: The Committee did not meet. A group of volunteers met to prep the playground for the new mulch being delivered. Fourteen hours were spent prepping and spreading the new mulch. A group of volunteers spent 2 hours at the borough building prepping the flower beds for Saturday's project. Tim Senese spent nearly 26 hours doing odd jobs for the borough ranging from mowing to sweeping the garage.

a. A motion to accept the volunteer committee report as presented was made by Mr. Gall, seconded by Ms. White, and approved by unanimous vote.

OLD BUSINESS

15. Ordinance codification: table- no change as of last meeting update

16. Streetlight replacement: table- nothing to report

17. Petition to Penelec for better electric service: Letter sent which was addressed to Penelec board as suggested at last meeting. No response to date.

18. Food Pantry: We are starting to receive donations and support from more entities. Operations are status quo.

19. Kindred Spirits: Two more clinics are scheduled this spring and then they will not be back until the fall. Over 150 cats from Oakland have been spayed or neutered, given shots, and ear tipped since the start of this program in 2019. This has prevented potentially thousands of cat births. Mr. Krayeski then inquired about hosting a rabies clinic at the same time as the cat clinics. Ms. Parfitt stated that she would check with Lauren Geiger.

20. Hiring an engineering firm to be placed on retainer: Engineering firms who entered proposals were Delta, C.P.L., and Hunt. Council has reviewed the proposals in executive session.

- a. A motion to hire Delta Engineering for retained engineering services from present to 2023 per the proposal entered to the Borough Administrator was made by Mr. Gall, seconded by Mr. Krayeski, and approved by unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS

21. The proposal for the pocket park and overlook at the base of Westfall Ave was tabled until the next meeting when a formal proposal by the community development committee could be made.

22. Dump road: Mr. Krayeski stated that he and Mr. Arthur had investigated the road to the old dump and he would like the Council to consider investing a little bit of money into making the road accessible again. A modest amount of gravel would be needed as would signage and a gate that could be locked shut. He stated that it would be a good service to provide to the residents. Council was in agreement. Ms. Parfitt asked, for insurance purposes, how they would determine who was allowed on the premises and what would be allowed to be dumped. Mr. Krayeski stated he felt the dump should only be open on a certain day at a certain time and be attended by a Borough representative, perhaps the DPW employee, who could inspect materials to be dumped and determine if they were acceptable. Council felt this was a good method.

23. Mr. Krayeski stated that correspondence had been received from COG about a potential contract with NEIC for IPMC enforcement. Mr. Krayeski reminded all present that Oakland was not the only municipality who was displeased with the current IPMC service through COG and that COG was looking for other options. The NEIC proposal included a \$500 per month retainer from COG, plus \$60 per hour to be charged for IPMC enforcement. Council felt this was outlandishly expensive and asked Mr. Krayeski to get details on how COG planned to handle the added expense of the retainer. Ms. Senese commented that this should be a reminder that the Borough needs to back its employees because it lost a \$14 per hour codes enforcer and now had to deal with much higher costs of codes enforcement.

24. With no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:12pm was made by Mr. Krayeski, seconded by Mr. Gall, and approved by unanimous vote.

****Include when Moose entered the meeting**