

Oakland Borough Council
General Business Meeting
380 State Street
Susquehanna, PA 18847
September 14,2023

Announcement: Oakland Borough Council went into an executive session before the General Business meeting on August 10, 2023 at 6:15 p.m. for contractual, personnel, and litigation purposes. Meeting ended at 6:55 p.m.

Attendance: President Valerie Senese, Robert Muiter, Brad Krayeski, Patrick Gall, Administrator Jennifer Bixby, Treasurer/ Asst. Administrator Rhonda Parfitt, Mayor Randy Glover came late to meeting,

Absent: Solicitor John Martin

Meeting Was Called to Order at 7:00 p.m. by President Valerie Senese

Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence was observed. Robert Muiter said a few words in honor of the passing of Vice-President, former President Gary Boughton. Mr. Muiter said a few words in remembrance of Vice-President Gary Boughton's passing in the month of August. Mr. Boughton lived all his life as a resident of Oakland Borough, a personal friend to many, a very generous servant to his community, 18 years of instrumental years on Council, one major one was saving the park from being sold, and he donated a picture of Oakland Borough to the Borough. Mr. Muiter encouraged all present to carry on Mr. Boughton's legacy to their community.

THIS MEETING IT WAS ANNOUNCED IT WA BEING RECORDED

1. Agenda:
 - A. Motion by Robert Muiter, 2nd by Patrick Gall to adopt the agenda.
All in favor, motion carried.
2. Motion by Robert Muiter, 2nd by Brad Krayeski to approve the August 10, 2023 minutes as presented.
All in favor, motion carried.
3. President Valerie Senese opened public comment at 7:04 p.m.
 - A. Ms. Teena Gall at 5899 High Street, Susquehanna, PA 18847 had stated she has a few to discuss for Council:

1. Ms. Gall requested to know why there was still a portable toilet at the Borough and stated it was time the sewer issues to be fixed.
 2. Ms. Gall stated the ditches in Oakland Borough are beyond repair. The ditches need to be repaired. Ms. Gall stated that the ditches in Oakland Borough can not handle the downpours of rain that we have experienced lately.
 3. Ms. Gall stated that the area on the agenda as "The Pond" is a contaminated swamp and always will be a swamp.
- Ms. Senese thanked Ms. Gall for her public comment.

- B. Mary Weaver at 163 Third Avenue, Susquehanna, PA. 18847 questioned Council about a time frame for the trailer that was demolished during the last storm for cleanup. Ms. Weaver stated there is debris and installation blown all over the road. Ms. Senese thanked Ms. Weaver for her public comment and will have someone follow up with her or assess the situation.
- C. Douglas Arthur at 5157 Prospect Street, Susquehanna, PA 18847 questioned Council if they are going to send a letter to the person up on the corner of Walnut Street to remove the branches off the sidewalk. The sidewalk is totally blocked.
- D. A member of the public stated that it is his constitution right not to give his name and address. Ms. Senese stated she understood that he didn't want to sign the sign in sheet. But if he wanted his public comment to be submitted to public record, he needed to state his name and address for the record. To be properly documented and legally he must state his name and address and if he is an Oakland resident so that he would be able to say that he stated his concern. The member of the public stated he is not a resident of Oakland Borough as of yet. Ms. Senese thanked him for his answer. Asked the member to please state his name and address. The member stated his name was John. Ms. Senese asked him for a last name. John directed to the staff that Ms. Bixby knew what his last name was and how to spell it. Ms. Senese explained he could not direct to the staff. John stated he is standing on his first amendment rights of speech. He was not telling the staff member what to do, but she knows how to spell his name. Ms. Senese stated sir just for the rules of public comment please just give us his name and address to be recorded to the public comment. John stated his 4th amendment right is that he doesn't have to give his name. President Senese stated that this is a law passed down from the state with training. President Senese also explained that to document his concern in a legally bound meeting book that is signed and certified he must state his name and address. Oakland Borough would like to address his concern, but without his name and address the Council will not be able to. John approached the Council table. John threw an envelope on the table and walked away stating read this. r Chief Officer Creamer approached John and asked him to please step outside as he was not allowed to approach the Council table. Chief Officer Creamer exchanged words with the property owner repeatedly requesting the property owner to step outside and the

individual repeatedly refused. At this time President Senese offered a 15-minute recess to allow the situation to be resolved. Ms. Senese recessed the meeting at 7:13 p.m. When Chief Officer Creamer did not return inside within the 15-minutes President Senese continued the meeting again at 7:30 p.m. and stated the meeting is being recorded. Public comment was closed at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Krayeski requested that the sunshine act be stated. Ms. Senese stated the sunshine act 706 to the public.

Sunshine Act 706 states: Minutes of meetings, public records and recording of meetings. Written minutes shall be kept of all open meetings of agencies. The minutes shall include: (1) The date, time and place of the meeting. (2) The names of members present. (3) The substance of all official actions and a record by individual member of the roll call votes taken. (4) The names of all citizens who appeared officially and the subject of their testimony. Ms. Senese stated she was sorry for the inconvenience and continued with the meeting.

4. Community Development Committee Report:

- A. There were no meeting minutes to submit to record.
- B. Chairperson Heather Krayeski was unavailable for the meeting. There was no verbal report given.

5. Financial Reports:

- A. Ms. Parfitt stated she included on the report the CD's and was added to the total of assets. Motion by Patrick Gall, 2nd by Brad Krayeski to approve August Treasurer's Report as presented.
All in favor, motion carried.
- B. Ms. Parfitt explained Chis Miller's bills of total of \$5,010.00 (five thousand and ten dollars) that was presented from the storm damage. Ms. Parfitt explained that Ms. Bixby has been in contact with EMA and if Oakland Borough was considered a disaster that we should be reimbursed for these bills. Motion by Robert Muiter, 2nd by Patrick Gall to approve August's Bill List as presented.
All in favor, motion carried.

6. Correspondence:

- A. Ms. Senese let the Council members and public aware of the Dam Celebration September 18, 2023 from 5-7 p.m. at the Ira Reynolds Park.
- B. Ms. Senese let the Council members aware of the Invitation to Powell's Open House September 21, 2023 from 10 am to 3 pm.
- C. Ms. Senese let Council members and public aware of the Susquehanna Christian Community Church celebrating 100 years September 24, 2023 at 12:00 noon with a BBQ picnic following.
- D. Ms. Senese let the Council members aware of the Contactor & Loggers Workshop on October 5, 2023 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Ms. Senese asked Mr. Muiter as Pro Tem to please take over meeting as she excused herself. Mr. Muiter resumed meeting. Ms. Senese came back and resumed meeting.

7. Codes Report:

A. Verbal report was given by Brad Krayeski.

1. Roy Williams Code Enforcer and Officer Creamer had handled the situation on Pierson St. over the demolition and burning. The demolition permit is good for 180 days to answer the question from public comment. Codes will assess the situation again as the residents were to obtain a dumpster. Ms. Weaver was content to know that the Codes Department was aware and involved in the situation.

2. Still waiting to hear if Penn DOT accepted our Parking ordinance for lower Westfall Ave. Ms. Bixby explained she spoke with Patrick from KSG and he didn't see a problem with our ordinance. He submitted it to Penn DOT and is waiting to hear from them.

3. COG has interviews on September 19, 2023 for the code enforcement position. Mr. Williams will go with Mr. Krayeski to ask questions and to get a feel on the candidates for the position.

B. Tabled from June 8, 2023. Unkept properties. Mr. Krayeski would like it tabled till Oakland Borough has a new code enforcer so that we would start fresh with the new person.

8. Police Report:

A. Verbal report given by Mayor Glover for Chief Officer Creamer. Mayor Glover informed Council there was 39 hours for August patrolling. There was patrolling, 1 mental problem, criminal mischief, child offence, harassment, neighbor dispute, 2 suspicious person, trespasser, fire/harassment, animal with dog warden, 2 noise/disorder conduct, theft and burning smell. Council reviewed the hours and log sheet. This will be submitted to record.

9. DPW Report:

A. A Verbal report given by Randy Glover, Head of DPW.

1. The ditch on upper Boyden Street had been cleaned and repaired from the storm.

2. The ditch on High Street had been cleaned and repaired.

3. Next will be River Road. Mr. Glover stated all the catch basins were plugged and the road is in much need of attention.

B. Mr. Glover asked if there were any bids for a tractor from the ad. Ms. Bixby stated there was no sealed bids came in from the ad.

Ms. Senese stated that Ms. Bixby received a bid with the person for the tractor that Mr. Glover was looking at. Mr. Glover stated that the year was wrong it is a 2021 not a 2023 but the hours used was still 15 (fifteen). If Oakland Borough wants to pay

outright the price will be \$20,000.00 (twenty thousand dollars) not \$20,999.00 (twenty thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine dollars.)

Ms. Senese stated that the RFP and ad advertisement went out without response.

Ms. Senese asked if Council would like to move upon this. The specifications are as follows: Year 2021 Bobcat, model # CT2025, used condition, 4WD, 24.5 horsepower, loader and bucket included, quick attach front bracket, hydrostatic 3 pt. 540 PTO, open ROPS. Mr. Krayeski offered to haul the tractor from Towanda, PA to save on delivery fees. Mayor Glover requested that the Council purchase the necessary fuel for the trip. Council agreed and was thankful for Mr. Krayeski's offer.

Motion by Brad Krayeski, 2nd by Patrick Gall to purchase the tractor.

All in favor, motion carried.

- C. Mr. Glover would like the Salt Dogg advertised again. Ms. Bixby will advertise it again on Municibid.

10. Finance Committee Report:

- A. There were no meeting minutes to submit to record.
- B. A Verbal report given by Robert Muter.
 - 1. There was no finance meeting. The budget for 2024 will be presented at the October meeting.

11. Parks Committee Report:

- A. There are no meeting minutes to submit to record.
- B. Ms. Senese gave a verbal report in the absence of Mr. Boughton.
- C. Ms. Senese stated that there was a clean up day at the park to remove the fencing and a few other things to get the park ready for renovation in the spring. The fencing was scraped and the proceeds went to the parks account. Chris Miller and another contractor donated their services and equipment that day. Along with the DPW workers coming in on a Saturday, and some volunteers who donated their time. It was all accomplished within 3 (three) hours' time. Ms. Bixby has been keeping record of donated services.
- D. Internet for security cameras at the park was installed on August 17, 2023 by Adams Cable. The cameras should be up and running in no time.
- E. Ms. Senese requested the Council to consider naming the baseball field after the full renovations to "Gary Boughton Memorial Field" as Mr. Boughton had an essential role in protecting the field and the park over the years. Ms. Senese felt that Mr. Boughton held the line over the years while former council members wanted it sold for housing. Without his determination that would not be a park in existence.
- F. Tree thinning at lower end park will be tabled at this time.

12. Food Pantry:

- A. Ms. Bixby stated the food pantry had the yearly inspection on August 30, 2023 and passed with flying colors. The food pantry is running well. Ms. Parfitt explained to

Council that checks had been ordered for the food pantry and there has been a little change with ordering with Weinberg. Weinberg is under a new contract and some of the food will be sold at a whole sale price. Ms. Bixby requested that there would be 2 (two) signatures on the checks for accountability of the account.

13. Grant Update:

- A. Ms. Senese gave a verbal report.
- B. Ms. Senese stated that the engineering firm hired to perform the work for the DCNR grant at the park was unable to be employed for a few reasons. A different firm who had entered a bid would be selected at the next council meeting.
- C. Playground equipment was installed the week of August 14,2023. Ms. Senese stated that there have been a few hang-ups with installing the CDBG grant funded of the pour and place. The installing company stated to the administrator the installation will be completed on September 19, 2023.
- D. Ms. Senese stated that the CFA and CDBG funded sidewalks along Westfall Avenue are behind schedule due to PennDOT permitting and not likely be completed before winter as originally hoped.
- E. Ms. Senese stated by recommendation of an appointed committee to accept the bid from Woodland Design to complete the DCED-funded Comprehensive plan shared with Susquehanna Depot Borough. Each borough will pay about \$2,500.00 (two thousand five hundred dollars) each out of a \$50,000.00 (fifty thousand dollar) total cost.
Motion by Brad Kraveski, 2nd by Robert Muiter to accept Woodland Design for the Comprehensive Plan.
All in favor, motion carried.
- F. Ms. Senese discussed forming a Committee for the DCED-funded for an Employee Handbook. The committee consist of Ms. Bixby, Robert Muiter and Brad Kraveski to work on the DCED-funded Employee Handbook.
- G. Ms. Senese informed Council the CDBG grant entered to provide a match to the DCNR grant, was denied for unknown reasons. There are always more applications than there are funds, so this expected some years.

14. Old/ Tabled Business:

- A. The Pond tabled at this time.
- B. Ms. Senese shared with council that Russ Klapatch had returned to check on the first spraying of the knott weed. Some of the sections were dying. Mr. Klapatch will keep an eye on it to see if a second spraying will be needed here at the Borough Building and at the park.
- C. Ms. Senese explained that for new computers and cameras the new pricing will be reviewed in the finance committee meeting.

15. New Business:

- A. Ms. Senese stated that the Council will advertise for the vacant Council seat which will on be needed for the rest of 2023 due to the upcoming election. The plan is to have the seat filled at the October meeting.
- B. Motion by Brad Krayeski, 2nd by Robert Muiter to retain Howard Rothenberg to utilize his services.
All in favor, motion carried.
- C. Chief Officer Creamer came in during the meeting with the upset property owner and asked to speak on his behalf. Ms. Senese agreed. Ms. Senese opened the public comment again at 8:14 p.m.
Chief Officer John Creamer, Susquehanna Borough stated he would be talking on behalf of John Amirault property owner of 169 State Street, Susquehanna, PA 18847. Frist, Mr. Amirault wanted to know if Council was aware that he had been sent a noticed from the Borough Administrator for a code issue. Secondly, Mr. Amirault wanted to inform Council that he had reported a trespasser to Chief Officer Creamer during the month of July when he had detected tire track on his property. Thirdly, Mr. Amirault wanted to know if there were 3 (three) other violations that was issued on the same day that he was, as the administrator told him that there had been. Mr. Krayeski stated that as he had discussed on the phone with Mr. Amirault the notice of violation had been sent out by his own direction, and the Borough had followed up with an apology letter to Mr. Amirault as the notice of violation should have simply been a letter on Borough's letterhead explaining he was in violation of the Borough ordinance. Mr. Krayeski also stated that it had already been explained to Mr. Amirault that there was a total of 3 (three) violations issued on that same day, but there could have been more issued on different days of that week.
Ms. Senese closed public comment at 8:17 p.m.

Adjournment:

Motion by Patrick Gall, 2nd by Brad Krayeski to adjourn the meeting. The meeting ended at 8:17 p.m.