

Oakland Borough Council
380 State Street
Susquehanna, PA 18847
Regular meeting minutes
November 10, 2020

The regular meeting of the Oakland Borough Council was called to order at 7:03pm, with Council President announcing that the Council had convened in executive session from 6:50 to 7:02 for purpose of personnel and contracts. Present were council members Gary Boughton, Valerie Senese, Debra White, Robert Muter, and Patrick Gall; Solicitor John Martin; and Secretary Rhonda Parfitt. Mayor Randy Glover and councilmen Brad Krayeski and Ron Beavan were absent.

Also in attendance was Doug Arthur as a resident and member of the public.

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

Ms. Senese wished to add a discussion about a riparian buffer under the Community Development Committee report and discussion about the police contract under the Finance Committee report. Ms. Senese then made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gall, to adopt the amended agenda. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Muter made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gall, to accept the resignation of councilman Ron Beavan. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Ms. Senese stated that the Council would look for an individual to fill the seat and would appoint an individual at the next meeting.

Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muter, to accept the October 21, 2020 minutes as presented. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muter, to accept the treasurer's report and bill list. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Due to Mr. Krayeski's absence, there was no codes report.

Due to Chief Creamer and the Mayor's absence, there was no police report.

Due to Mayor Glover's absence, there was no streets report, but Ms. Senese requested that the Council agree to make a policy regarding change orders occurring in the middle of a project. She stated that the Pierson St and 3rd Ave project had accumulated two change orders: one was due to the pitch of the road at the top of Pierson Street and one was due to a broken pipe inside a catch basin. The change orders meant that the cost of the project was increased by \$7,700. Ms. Senese stated that in the future, she would be more comfortable with having a policy so that one person isn't solely responsible for committing to the expenditure of funds. After some discussion, Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muter, to create a policy that a project manager, in order to complete a change order, must get the permission of two council

members plus the treasurer to make sure funds are available. The project manager can be one of the two council members involved. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Ms. Senese then stated that the Pierson Street and 3rd Ave project would be completed the following day. The conservation district was going to come look at the project and sign off on its completion. Because of the two change orders that had occurred, Courtney Braunns was going to have to get the project approved at the board meeting the following week before payment could be issued. Ms. Senese stated that Mr. Garnett could not wait that long and did not feel that he should have to and requested that the Council approve payment to him and wait to be reimbursed by the Conservation District. Ms. Parfitt stated that the Borough could afford to front the money for the project. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gall, that upon the approval of the project by soil and conservation, the Borough would remit payment to Mr. Garnett and wait for reimbursement. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

There was no codes committee report.

Ms. Senese stated that she had a meeting with Penn State Extension and Soil and Conservation as she was working on an environmental grant for Susquehanna Borough. In the process of planning, it was realized that Susquehanna Borough may not be the best candidate due to some limitations on their side of the bridge. Ms. Senese had been speaking to soil and conservation regarding tree planting in Oakland, so they asked if Oakland may be interested in a riparian buffer instead of working with Susquehanna Borough. Ms. Senese stated that she and Ms. White had previously discussed creating a pocket park somewhere on the hill and thinning out the trees for park users to view the beauty of the area. Ms. Senese stated that Oakland may be interested and wondered what the Council felt. Mr. Muiter inquired about cost. Ms. Senese stated that it would be free and the project had a small budget as they would be using master gardener and master watershed volunteers to complete the project. Ms. Senese thought it was a possibility to use this project as a match for something larger. It was unanimously agreed that there were no downsides to going through with the program. Mr. Muiter made a motion, seconded by Ms. Senese, to enter into the environmental agreement that would include free trees. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Ms. White stated that she would like to incorporate the existing garden club from the SCDA, or perhaps create a garden club in Oakland.

There was some discussion about the police contract with Susquehanna Borough, as Chief Creamer had turned down the offer made to him by the Council. Discussion included number of hours needed. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Boughton, to offer a contract to Susquehanna Borough for 10 hours per week of coverage. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. It was agreed among Council that there would be a budget for overflow hours should they be needed. Mr. Muiter stated that the details of the contract would still need to be ironed out if Susquehanna would agree to the 10 hours. Ms. Senese then presented the proposed budget for 2021. This budget included a full time Borough Administrator. The park was funded sufficiently with upkeep costs and an operating fund. Codes remained

approximately the same with a slight increase. It was understood that codes would continue to be done on a complaint-only basis. Ms. Senese commented that she felt the same amount of codes work had been done as in previous years, but that it was accomplished for approximately \$13,000 less. She reminded Council of the Blight Remediation Grant that was outstanding and noted how it would be helpful with the codes issues in the Borough. The codes budget also included \$2,000 for solicitor fees in the case of a problem. Mr. Muiteer wished to address the solicitor budget, which included four hours' worth of work every month. He stated that he liked having the solicitor present but wondered if there would ever come a time that the Council was comfortable not having him there. Ms. Senese stated that at a previous meeting when the DCED Regional Advisor was present, the Council had asked him if a solicitor should be present at meetings and the advisor agreed. She also stated that there had been countless times where the solicitor had been able to offer advice in the middle of a meeting that had kept the Council from making errors. Mr. Martin stated that he would stick to the budget as it was presented, unless there was an unforeseen legal issue that required more hours. He pointed out that as the meetings become shorter and more professional, the Council will save money on solicitor fees. He also stated that Ms. Parfitt had become able to type some legal documents that she would send to him for review and he did not charge for things like that. Ms. Senese asked how everyone felt about the budget. Mr. Muiteer stated that he liked the full-time administrator but wondered if they should advertise the position for formality's sake. Ms. Senese and Mr. Martin stated that every employer has the legal right to change an existing employee's job description and to compensate them accordingly. Ms. Senese also pointed out that Ms. Parfitt was more than qualified as she knew the Borough well, had a financial background before working at the Borough, and had recently begun accomplishing paralegal work. Ms. Senese stated that the administrator position would allow the Council to provide more services for less money than in previous years. Ms. Parfitt also pointed out that this budget also provided enough money to have a separate treasurer because it was a shared goal to separate the two administrative positions. The money was there when the Council found a qualified individual or company to perform the treasurer duties. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gall, to approve the option 2 proposed budget for the fiscal year 2021. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Mr. Boughton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muiteer, to advertise the budget in accordance with Title 8 requirements. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Arthur had no report for the parks committee but stated that there were nearly 100 kids that had attended the Halloween Parade. This was the most number of children who had ever attended. The Council enthusiastically commended Mr. Arthur for all of his efforts in giving the kids something to look forward to in this hard year. Mr. Arthur stated that all the credit was for the donors and the judges. Donors had been very generous. Mr. Boughton stated that he had only heard positive things about the park event and expressed his thanks. The surveillance cameras for the park were still underway as Ms. Parfitt was in communication with the DCED regarding funding under the StMP grant. Mr. Arthur stated that someone should contact Adams Cable and see if wifi could be installed at the park for the use of the cameras, but also for

people to use once the concession stand was up and running and the shed was being rented out for events. Ms. Senese commented that she thought it was a great idea. She also stated that she had seen grants for mobile hotspots in PA and wondered if that might be an option.

Ms. Senese presented a food pantry report, stating that they had served so many people in the months of October and November that the pantry was nearly out of food. She recommended that Dawn Roth, Mr. Arthur's sister, and Ruth Lynch, Ms. Parfitt's mother, both be approved to volunteer in the pantry as they were both known to be compassionate people and were also deemed trustworthy to have access to the Borough building. Muiteer asked where the keypad lock was for the door. Ms. Parfitt stated that she had ordered the wrong kind of lock in error and needed to order a keypad lock that included a deadbolt. Mr. Muiteer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Senese, to place the interior keypad lock on the pantry door and order a new lock for the front door. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muiteer, to give access to the Borough building to Dawn Roth and Ruth Lynch for the purpose of serving the food pantry. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Next on the agenda, Mr. Muiteer provided paperwork and details regarding the AGILITY program through PennDOT. There did not have to be a specific project in mind when the agreement was signed, but once the agreement was signed, it was in effect for five years. He explained that the agreement was not created for large projects, but more insignificant ones. A resolution would have to be passed in order to sign the agreement with PennDOT. Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gall, to approve Resolution 2020-11. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

With no public comment, Ms. Senese made a motion, seconded by Mr. Muiteer, to adjourn the meeting at 7:50pm. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.