

## **Canonsburg Borough Council Meeting**

Monday, August 12th, 2019

6:30 PM

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bell at 6:30 pm.

**Moment of Silence** called by Mr. Bell.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

#### **Roll Call:**

Mr. Eric Chandler - Present

Mr. John Severine - Absent

Mrs. Tina Bails - Present

Mr. Joe McGarry, Vice President - Present

Mrs. Fran Coleman - Present

Mr. Harold Bowman - Present

Mr. Richard Bell, President- Present

**Others Present:** Borough Manager Denise Lesnock, KLH Engineer Veronica Bennett, Public Works Director Tom Lawrence and Mayor David Rhome.

### **GUESTS:**

None

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

1. George Loutsion, 308 Hutchinson Avenue, regarding a property he owns with his business partner at 10 North Jefferson Avenue. They were working with a potential tenant to rent the space and a council member, who was absent tonight, launched a campaign to keep the tenant out. The councilman went to neighboring businesses and gave them false information. The tenant had went to a zoning hearing board meeting and was approved to run her business out of the property and a neighboring business has threatened to file a lawsuit against Mr. Loutsion and the Borough. Mr. Loutsion stated that Mr. Severine went to Jeffrey's Drug Store, Kusturiss, Wolf and Kusturiss, The Bar Association and the Frank Sarris Library and spoke to the owners about the potential new business that was to go in near them. Due to the threat of a lawsuit, Mr. Loutsion and his partner decided not to rent the building to the tenant. Mr. Bell stated that this has been a common issue over the last few years and that council needs a formal written complaint from Mr. Loutsion. Mr. Bell said that the ethics commission has been contacted and council was told they were not allowed to censor Mr. Severine but that if there is a written formal complaint, something can be started. Mr. Bell explained the role of council in their committees. Mr. Loutsion explained he has put a lot of money into this property and wants to do it for the good of the community and that the tenant has a very organized plan for the building. Mr. Chandler asked if the potential tenant was approved as a "special exception" for pet services but not for overnight boarding to which Mr. Loutsion agreed and stated she hoped to receive permission for overnight services once it was shown that the dogs would be left indoors and that the building would be soundproofed. Ms. Lesnock stated that once we appoint a new solicitor, she will bring this matter to him along with Mr. Loutsions written complaint. Along with the issues they had with Mr Severine, they also had issues with the costly, unneeded drawings that the former zoning officer required. Mr. Loutsion stated that they had originally planned to split the building in half with a wall to have two office spaces. Mr. Lucas, the former zoning officer, came to inspect the building before the closed on the purchase and they spoke about the intentions for the building. Mr. Lucas informed him that he would need to get engineered drawings, afterwards he contacted the building inspector, Harold Ivery,

and explained his plans. Mr Loutsion states that he invited Mr. Ivery to come to the building to inform him of any drawings he would need for the project and claims that Mr. Ivery said “if Troy said you need them, then that’s what you need to do.” Mr. Loutsion stated that he hired an engineer who basically took his drawing and put his seal on it for \$8,000, meanwhile down the street Mr. Close, owner of The Bar Association, was doing the same work to his building but wasn’t required to do the same steps. Mr. Loutsion states that after Harold Ivery came to to the building, he was told he never needed engineered drawings and could get a permit that same day. Mr. Bell stated that instead of trying to handle it all tonight, he would like to set up a meeting with him. Discussion was held about all businesses being consistent in receiving permits and making sure there is no preferential treatment in the future. Mr. Chandler apologized on behalf of council and code enforcement for what he went through and hopes to work together in the future.

2. Kathy Fontana, 220 North Jefferson Avenue, presented council with plans to start a garden club in Canonsburg that would plant and tend to flowers in the borough, Ms. Fontana explained that a Penn State Master Gardener helped with the drawings and that plaques can be purchased as a fundraiser. Ms. Fontana also stated that she called PennDot to speak with them about the overgrowth of weeds by the BP and PennDot agreed to take care of those areas and they are also interested in working on the area by the electronic sign by the Pizza Hut. Mr. Bell said a committee can be formed to help and to stay in touch in the future to go over plans. Discussion was held about the trees in the area and replacing the pine tree in the front of the borough building.

Mr. Bell announced that the meeting will be out of order to vote on a matter regarding personnel.

**Motion to approve hiring Blake Tomsic as Zoning Officer with an additional \$5,000 paid for the position.**

Mr. Bowman made a motion to approve hiring Blake Tomsic as Zoning officer with an additional \$5,000 paid for the position. Seconded by Mr.Coleman.

No questions on the motion.

**Roll Call:**

Mr. Bowman-Yes

Mrs. Coleman-Yes

Mr. McGarry-Yes

Mrs. Bails-Yes

Mr. Severine-Absent

Mr. Chandler-Yes

Mr. Bell-Yes

6 Yes. 0 No. 1 Absent. Motion Carries.

Mr. Bell complimented Mrs. Tomsic with her work so far at the Borough and is confident that the problems discussed before will no longer happen with her in the position.

**Motion to approve hiring Clifford Jones as Fire Inspector.**

Mr. McGarry made a motion to approve hiring Clifford Jones as Fire Inspector. Seconded by Mrs. Bails.

No questions on the motion.

**Roll Call:**

Mr. Bowman-Yes

Mrs. Coleman-Yes

Mr. McGarry-Yes

Mrs. Bails-Yes  
Mr. Severine-Absent  
Mr. Chandler-No  
Mr. Bell-Yes  
5 Yes. 1 No. 1 Absent. Motion Carries.

**PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS:**

1. Volunteer work has been picking up lately and thanked groups for their work in the community.

**ENGINEER'S REPORT:**

Ms. Bennett reported on the following:

1. Paving Project - All contracts are signed and having a preconstruction meeting on Friday, a schedule will be provided.
2. CCTV Project - All contracts are signed, waiting to hear back about schedule - will receive within the next few weeks.
3. College Street Culvert - Should be completed by the first week of September.

Mr. Bell asked Ms. Bennett about the issue on Jefferson Avenue regarding Little Joe's Market. A meeting will be scheduled when a new solicitor is in place to explain to the owner what her options are regarding a stormwater issue at the property.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT:**

None.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Rhome reported the following:

1. Monthly reports of the police and parking enforcement for the month of July.
2. 400 Block of Franklin Avenue - Mayor explained the idea of changing the direction of traffic on Franklin Avenue due to public safety concerns including a telephone pole and bushes that obstruct the view of the drivers.
3. Smithfield and Greenside Avenue - Discussed painting curbs yellow for emergency vehicle access.
4. East Pitt Street/North Central Avenue - Asked that Tom Lawrence paint the four corners with yellow paint for emergency vehicle access, Mr. Lawrence replied that the job is complete and asked that it be looked over. The Mayor asked about erecting a sign at the corner of East Pitt and North Central saying "No parking here to corner".
5. Light at Canon Apartments - Letter needs sent to housing authority requesting a light shield be attached to the pole.
6. 200 Hooks Lane - Put up a "Hearing Impaired Sign" for child in the area.
7. Chartier's Cleaners - Put a parking meter in front of business that is now "C May Interiors" on West Pike Street
8. ALICE Program - Officer Fetcko and Chief Coghill have been participating in a program about Active Shooter Response Training
9. Tactical Shoot - Chief Coghill set up a tactical shoot for all of the Canonsburg Police officers at the fire range.
10. 111 Elm Street - Handicapped parking spot to be voted on tonight.
11. Parking Kiosks - Held a meeting with Bridgeville parking authority who highly recommended a company that provides parking kiosks. The company will provide Canonsburg a demo machine. Mr Chandler stated that he works downtown and has used the parking kiosks and explained how quick and easy they are to use.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. **Administration and Finance:** Mrs. Coleman stated she reviewed bills and invoices and approve paying bills.

### **Motion to approve Canonsburg Borough bills.**

Mrs. Coleman made a motion to pay the bills. Seconded by Mr. McGarry.

No questions on the motion.

### **Roll Call:**

Mr. Bowman-Yes

Mrs. Coleman-Yes

Mr. McGarry-Yes

Mrs. Bails-Yes

Mr. Severine- Absent

Mr. Chandler-Yes

Mr. Bell-Yes

6 Yes. 0 No. 1 Absent. Motion Carries.

### **2. Code - Absent**

3. **Public Works-** Mr. McGarry presented the report from Public Works for the month of July. Mr. Lawrence reported that the Adams Avenue water project is complete. The road paving project is ready to begin.

### **4. Public Safety-** Mr. Bowman reported the following:

The Canonsburg Volunteer Fire Department in the month of July 2019 responded to 24 calls consisting of:

4 Hazardous Condition Calls

2 Good Intent Calls

2 Fire Calls

7 Service Calls

7 False Alarms

1 Special Intent

1 Rescue Call

Average 7 firefighters per call, 36.5 minutes per call. \$100,000 in damage.

Mr. McGarry inquired about the amount of false alarms to which the Mayor explained that a business's alarm continued to go off a few times, the alarm company was contacted and that the alarms continued to go off. He further explained that if it continued that the business would be cited as per borough ordinance.

### **5. Facilities-** Mr. Bell stated a meeting needed to be scheduled for the new pool building.

### **6. Parks and Recreation -** Mrs. Bails reported on the following:

1. Park Bylaws - Will be approved at the September meeting
2. Pickleball Sign - In process of being printed and installed.
3. Pickleball Event - Prizes were given out and Bill Schmidt made an appearance
4. Joint Meeting - The Park Board and Friends of the Park had a joint meeting, it was decided that there will be a liaison between the two groups who can not be a leader of either organization and cannot be a member of both boards concurrently. Ms. Bails reported that the president of the park board, Terri Startare resigned and is now president of Friends of the Park as of September. A new member of the Park Board will be presented to voted on.
5. Handicap swing has been installed.
6. Four new cameras will be installed at the park, Ms. Bails asked Mr. Lawrence to climb a pole for one of the cameras to fix the signal.
7. Camp Splash has concluded, there were about 60 participants this year and had a very good season.
8. The Park Board is waiting to hear back about the grant
9. The new pool slide should be installed next week.

10. There is a waterfall near the Woodland Heights playground that the park board would like to clean up.

Mr. Lawrence wanted to add that at the Pickleball dedication ceremony, he and his Public Works crew were thanks for their hard work. He wanted to put on record that his regular and summer employees put in a lot of work and wanted to recognize each of them for that.

Mr. Lawrence reported that the main pump at the pool went down, Lum's Electric came up to check the connections and it turned out to be the wires that were burned. It is currently back up and running and Mr. Lawrence suggests that council consider purchasing a second in case of emergencies.

### **7. Re-Development:**

Mr. Chandler reported on the following:

1. Land Bank - Meeting needs to be set up
2. Washington Area Business Incubator - Those who want to start or extend their business are still welcome to turn in applications

### **VOTING ITEMS:**

#### **1. Motion to approve the July 8, 2019 meeting minutes of Canonsburg Borough Council Meeting (with correction made).**

Mr. McGarry made a motion to approve the July 8, 2019 meeting minutes of Canonsburg Council Meeting (with corrections made). Seconded by Mrs. Bails.

No questions on the motion.

All in favor. Motion Carries.

#### **2. Motion to approve changing or cancelling Council Agenda Meeting date in September due to Labor Day.**

Mr. McGarry made a motion to approve changing or cancelling Council Agenda Meeting date in September due to Labor Day and having one meeting on September 9th. Seconded by Mr. Chandler.

No questions on the motion.

All in favor. Motion Carries.

#### **3. Motion to approve appointing a new Solicitor.**

Mr. Chandler made a motion to appoint Dodaro, Matta and Cambast as the Borough Solicitor. Seconded by Mr. McGarry.

#### **Roll Call:**

Mr. Bowman-Yes

Mrs. Coleman-Yes

Mr. McGarry-Yes

Mrs. Bails-Yes

Mr. Severine- Absent

Mr. Chandler-Yes

Mr. Bell-Yes

6 Yes. 0 No. 1 Absent. Motion Carries.

#### **4. Hire Blake Tomsic as Zoning Officer (voted on earlier in the meeting)**

#### **5. Hire Clifford Jones as Fire Inspector (voted on earlier in the meeting)**

#### **6. Motion to approve a handicapped parking sign at 111 Elm Street.**

Mr. McGarry made a motion to approve a handicapped parking sign at 111 Elm Street. Seconded by Mrs. Bails.

No questions on the motion.

All in favor. Motion Carries.

**7. Motion to allow the Canonsburg Garden Club to plant and maintain gardens in the publicly owned space called the “hellstrip”.**

Mr. Chandler made a motion to allow the Canonsburg Garden Club to plant and maintain gardens in the publicly owned space called the “hellstrip”, Seconded by Mr. McGarry.

No questions on the motion.

All in favor. Motion carries.

**8. Motion to allow a sign at the Pickleball Courts at Town Park showing scheduled club times and rules.**

Mr. McGarry made a motion to allow a sign at the Pickleball Courts at Town Parking showing scheduled club times and rules. Seconded by Mrs. Bails.

No questions on the motion.

All in favor. Motion carries.

**9. Motion to approve a sign at 200 Hooks Lane for a hearing impaired child.**

Mr. McGarry made a motion to approve a sign at 200 Hooks Lane for a hearing impaired child. Seconded by Mrs. Bails.

No questions on the motion.

All in favor. Motion carries.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. UP Church parking lot contract - Will discuss in executive session
2. Town Park pool house - Research the need of a party room/community room and what the size would be, set up a meeting to look at plans.
3. Zoning Map Revisions - Set up a meeting to discuss

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Lisa Scarmazzi from the Canonsburg Christmas Committee announced that things are going very well and have raised \$46,000. There are contracts in place for lighting for buildings and trees. Sarris Candies will pay the cost to light the tree on Adam’s Avenue. The decorating committee has been meeting weekly to discuss decorating business fronts. There is a fundraising campaign that involves businesses decorating their own gingerbread houses which will be placed near Rite Aid to be voted on, there are currently 14 entries. The committee hopes to involve the community more by asking area grade schools to have students write essays about what Christmas in Canonsburg means to them, the winner will count down the lighting of the tree. Canonsburg Christmas currently has 2,000 fans on Facebook. The Washington Chamber will be including the celebration in their newspaper and radio buys. The Senior Citizen’s center will be involved and making the area a “candy cane land” and have a Santa to take pictures with, there will be a place for children to make Christmas cards to send to the military. Discussion was held about having another event for the day after Thanksgiving.

George Loutsion wanted to update council about the coffee shop on Pike Street. The grant has not come through but the Canonsburg UP Church gave a donation which will help buy the windows and doors for the front of the building. The All Saints Greek Orthodox Church’s monthly Gyro Thursday will be donating all proceeds from the August 22nd event to the coffee shop.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Executive Session held from 8:15 PM to 9:10 PM.

Mr. Bell extended an invitation to council from the Oktoberfest and Christmas committee to help in some way at the events.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Mrs. Bails to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 pm. Seconded by Mr. McGarry.  
All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Submitted by:  
Callie Munch