

Canonsburg Borough Council Virtual Voting Meeting
Monday, August 10th, 2020
6:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bell at 6:31 pm.

Moment of Silence called by Mr. Bell.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Mr. Eric Chandler - Absent

Mr. John Severine - Present

Mrs. Tina Bails - Present

Mr. Edward P. Yorke- Present

Mr. Richard Russo- Present

Mr. Harold Bowman - Present

Mr. Richard Bell, President - Present

Others Present: Borough Manager Denise Lesnock, Mayor David Rhome, KLH Engineer Veronica Bennett, Solicitor Joseph Dalfonso, Public Works Director Tom Lawrence, Police Chief Alex Coghill

Absent: None.

GUESTS:

Mr. Bell introduced Steve Cypher and Lukas Rayle, Borough Auditors, to the meeting to present the 2019 audit report to council. Mr. Cypher started the presentation with an explanation of the process of the annual audit. Mr Cypher explained that there was a General Fund funds balance of around \$616,000 at the end of the year which is about \$98,000 more than last year. Mr. Cypher then presented the fund balances in the other Borough accounts and explained that that is smart for the Borough to have a healthy balance in case of emergencies, with 2020 showing that

anything can happen with the COVID-19 pandemic that is happening. The audit shows that the Borough brought in about \$296,000 more in revenue than expected, mostly coming from Earned Income Tax, departmental earnings and intergovernmental revenue. Mr. Cypher also explained that expenditure totals came in less than budgeted and Real Estate taxes came in where it was expected to but that the garbage fund is severely underfunded due to the collection agency not collecting delinquent bills.

Mr. Rayle explained both pension plans are overfunded and in very good shape, Mr. Cypher mentioned other pension funds in the state and national level are struggling to fund their pensions, but the Borough's pensions are doing very well. Mr. Cypher complimented Ms. Lesnock and her staff for their work doing the audit process and council should be very pleased and appreciate the opportunity to be Canonsburg's auditors.

Mr. Russo inquired about the garbage billing concerns and the growing delinquency over the years. Mr. Russo also inquired about the balances carrying over the last 5 years and asked if going into the budget process for 2021 if council should consider, since the budget revenue has been exceeded year after year, that that may happen again the following year as well and will provide the Borough a "cushion" of extra revenue. Both Mr. Rayle and Mr. Cypher stated that there is no way to say for certain that the next year's audit will show the same results, taking into consideration that 2020 came with the Coronavirus pandemic that caused economic issues across the country. Mr. Russo then inquired about the balances across all of the Borough accounts, stating there is almost 2 million dollars across all of the accounts and no long-term debt and asked if an investment of some sort would be a good idea. Discussion was held about what each of the accounts can be used for. Mr. Cypher suggested that council discuss what is in the best interest of the Borough in regard to spending excess revenue, but that Canonsburg is in a much better position than most.

Mr. Yorke stated that no one has a crystal ball and that anything could happen at any time and that it's smart to be cautious. Mr. Chandler thanked the auditors and is happy to learn the financial state of the Borough. Mr. Bell stated that he appreciates the opinion of the auditors and

the work they do for the Borough, Mr. Bell also stated that he appreciated Ms. Lesnock and her staff with the work that they do. All of council thanked Ms. Lesnock. Ms. Lesnock replied that she would like to thank all of the departments for staying in budget.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Bell stated that he is happy about the audit report and that all the work being done with development is putting the Borough in a good position. Mr. Bell reported that the ARC building should be ready to move in by October or November and will bring about 56 employees into the area and that Scarmazzi Homes has been constructing a new building on Pike Street where the former Zoom building was located.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Rhome reported:

1. Thanked Ms. Lesnock for her continued work with the budget and the continuing teamwork.
2. Updated Mr. Yorke about a lighting issue that was brought up previously, Mayor Rhome is working with Lum's Electric to figure out a solution.
3. Met with a new parking kiosk company with Mr. Severine, a contract with this new company has been typed up and needs to be signed and returned to begin the process of a 60-day trial. The new kiosk will be similar to the previous one. Mr. Bell explained that he was in Pittsburgh recently and had to use an app on his phone to pay for parking and that it was a very easy process.
4. Multiple calls and letters from residents complimenting the Police Department's officers on their good work and going above and beyond the call of duty.

5. Making the section of street on East Pike Street between McMurray Cleaners and Little Caesars a no parking area for safety reasons, after clearing up all hurdles with the affected residents. Councilmen Severine and Russo have been in touch with the residents and would like to invite them to join a council meeting to hear their opinions.
6. First Street Speeding issue – The police department has set up an active patrol of the area and have written citations and given out warnings to those who have been pulled over for speeding.
7. Monthly Police and Parking reports of July 2020 are in the meeting packets, there have been over 500 calls to the 911 center.
8. One sided parking on Chartiers Avenue – Mayor Rhome has been working with Mr. Bowman and Mr. Severine and would like to paint lines like what has been done on Duquesne Avenue.
9. Part time Parking Enforcement Officer will be in the following day to begin and start administrative tasks needed to start the position. A second candidate is lined up to be interviewed in the upcoming week.
10. A streetlight audit has been performed and a list of burnt-out lights have been compiled and will be sent to West Penn Power.
11. Saturday, August 15th, there will be a Document Shredding event in the Borough parking lot from 9:30-11:30.
12. Brody's Furniture is going out of business, Mr. Brody donated all the leftover furniture to the Fire Department which will be auctioned off on August 22nd at 10:00 AM with proceeds going to the Fire Department.
13. Mayor Rhome presented the Diversity and Inclusion Recognition Task Force mission statement and asked that council review the document and decide if it can be signed by Borough Council as a whole.
14. The police and parking department has been working on modernizing how processes are done in both departments.

Mrs. Bails stated that Mayor Rhome had previously asked that council observe the speed bumps installed at the Canon House and commented that she liked them and asked about the process to get them installed elsewhere. Mayor Rhome replied that he spoke to the company that installs them and was told that they will do the work as soon as possible but things have backed up with the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Severine commented that Peters Township took out their speed bumps while they repave the road but will be reinstalled. Discussion was held at length about removable speed bumps, the issue of the bumps in winter for snow removal and the state specifications/laws that must be followed. Mr. Russo stated that speeding is a constant issue all over Canonsburg and needs to be enforced for the safety of the community.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Ms. Bennett reported on the following:

1. Zoning Ordinance draft is near completion, the next step is to send the draft to the solicitor, Mr. Dalfonso, and then back to the committee to finalize it before it is sent to the planning commission.
2. Ridge Avenue Curb Replacement – Mr. Lawrence helped in getting in contact with PennDot who got into contact with Ms. Bennett to review the HOP requirements needed to receive permits and gave some leeway with the project. Ms. Bennett hopes to get the permit within 30 to 45 days.
3. Milling and Resurfacing Program was awarded at the July 2020 meeting to Independent Enterprises, Ms. Bennett received the signed contracts tonight from Ms. Lesnock and will get them to Independent and hopes to schedule the pre-construction meeting within the next two weeks. Once a notice to proceed is issued, they will have 60 days to begin.
4. MS4 Program – Worked with Mr. Russo to review the MS4 Program, which is a stormwater management program. Ms. Bennett went into detail about all the issues that can come from stormwater, how they can be resolved and how the program can help the

Park.

Mr. Severine asked about the winery on North Jefferson that was having flooding issues in the basement and stated that they have not had any flooding issues as of lately.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Dalfonso reported on the following:

1. Met with Code Officer to review the recodification which is about 80% completed, there a few things that need to be reviewed with Ms. Bennett and Chief Coghill before it comes to council.
2. Draft of the noise ordinance has been completed; this is regarding local bars being cited by Liquor Control Enforcement for noise violations. A petition needs to be filed with the Liquor Control Board to designate an area in the Borough to be exempt from the enforcement of Liquor Control citations and put enforcement in the hands of the police and code enforcement. A resolution must also be passed and a map showing the exempted area. Mr. Dalfonso stated that he believes this would tie in well with the zoning ordinance/map update and would like to work with the zoning committee to designate the area for exemption.
3. Reviewed the speed bump issue, PennDot specifications must be followed and the speed limit for the roads with speed limits must be 15 mph or liquid fuels funding will be lost for that road.
4. Had meeting with Redevelopment Authority of Washington County and Code Enforcement involving dilapidated buildings in the area, one being the bookstore, and the possibility of adding the property to the land bank but there is over a million dollars in liens, Mr. Fox from the Redevelopment Authority suggested to take a "wait and see" approach. Mr. Russo explained that the Land Bank tried to purchase the property at a judicial sale, but the owner paid a percentage of the liened taxes that saved it from being sold. The other building discussed is the Eagles building, the Redevelopment Authority is

researching whether it can be demolished by CDBG monies but may not qualify because it is not in jeopardy of collapsing. Mr. Fox will research estimates on the cost of demolition.

5. Attended the August 6th Planning Commission meeting for the First Street Senior Lofts project, there are two motions on the agenda to vote on later in the evening to approve the commission's recommendation to approve the minor subdivision and the final plan.
6. Assisted Ms. Lesnock with Right to Know Requests, including one from the Cecil Township Municipal Authority who received their requested information earlier in the day.
7. Update on two matters for executive session regarding litigation and personnel.

Mr. Russo inquired about an update about a tree issue on Hillcrest Drive, the concerned resident provided Mr. Russo with a map showing that it is a utility right of way and would like to know what the next steps would be. Mr. Dalfonso asked what type of utility and asked to review the map. Mr. Lawrence stated that he did not believe it was a Borough right of way.

Mr. Chandler presented a rendering of the First Street Senior Lofts that was provided at the Planning Commission meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. **Administration and Finance:** Mrs. Bails reported that she and Mr. Yorke reviewed the bills with Ms. Lesnock and stated that everything was in order. Mr. Yorke reported that he spoke to Ms. Lesnock and there will be a meeting set up to discuss parking permits. Discussion was held about the totals shown on the parking permit reports and the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic caused a dent in parking totals this year. Mr. Bell called the meeting back to order and explained to Mr. Severine that the parking issues of the moment are in the process of being taken care of with a parking committee.

Mr. Yorke inquired whether or not it is needed for council members to receive every report as a

paper document and asked if it was possible to cut on the amount of paper being used to make council meeting packets or send the documents electronically. Mr. Bell suggested that Mr. Yorke work with Ms. Lesnock on a better solution.

Motion to approve Canonsburg Borough bills

Mrs. Bails made a motion to pay the bills. Seconded by Mr. Yorke

No questions on the motion.

Roll Call:

Mr. Bowman-Yes

Mr. Yorke - Yes

Mr. Russo - Yes

Mrs. Bails - Yes

Mr. Severine - Yes

Mr. Chandler - Yes

Mr. Bell - Yes

7 Yes. 0 No. 0 Absent. Motion Carries.

2. **Code** – Mr. Severine asked Mr. Dalfonso what the status was on the ordinance allowing Code Enforcement to tag cars parked on public roads that were out of inspection and registration. Mr. Dalfonso explained that our current ordinance states the automobile must have an expired inspection and registration to be cited but state law stated that it only needs to be at least one expired tag so the ordinance would need to be updated to state standards. Further discussion was held about abandoned/junk vehicles along public roads and what constitutes an immobile vehicle. Mr. Dalfonso stated that he has junk vehicle ordinances that he used for other municipalities that could be adopted for Canonsburg. Mr. Bell complimented Code Officer, Josh Smith, for his hard work in that position.

3. **Public Works** - Mr. Bowman presented the July 2020 Public Works report.

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

The Canonsburg Volunteer Fire Department in the month of July 2020 responded to 20 calls

consisting of:

3 Fire Calls

1 Hazardous Condition Calls

1 Good Intent Calls

7 Service Calls

1 False Alarms

2 Rescue Calls

1 Special Incident Call

5 Alarm Calls

Average 10 firefighters per call, 35 minutes per call. \$350,000 in damage.

Mr. Severine asked Mr. Bowman about installing a sign at the corner of Highland and Second Street making a section of the road a no parking zone. Mr. Bell stated it was not listed on the agenda to be voted on but to work on the wording and it will be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Lawrence reported on current and upcoming road projects.

Mr. Bell stated that he received phone calls from churches and non-profits regarding the large fire inspection fees and suggests looking into lowering fees for non-profits. Further discussion was held about fire inspection fees and how the fees are calculated.

5. **Facilities** – Mr. Russo reported that the directories for the building have been ordered. Mr. Russo then inquired as to when the caution tape blocking off the Borough building stairwells will be removed. Ms. Lesnock explained it was put up to limit the amount of areas that need to be cleaning and disinfected throughout the day.

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

1. The concrete slab for the new pavilion has been laid and is now curing, the rest of the building should be ready by mid-September for the dedication to the VFW 191.
2. Mr. Russo applied to receive \$10,000 from the Borough Park Fund to Friends of the Park as a match for the pavilion, the solicitor previously explained that this will have to be approved at the September meeting as it was not an advertised voting item on the agenda

for tonight's meeting.

3. Park Board will be applying for an LSA grant to assist in purchasing items needed for the new pavilion. The previous request for a DCED grant match of \$10,000 is now void as the Park was not approved for the grant.
4. The softball concession stand has been power washed and will be painted
5. The Crosbie House has been newly renovated.
6. Discussion was held about the signs that were installed throughout the park, after further review it was decided that the lettering was too difficult to read and will be fixed accordingly.
7. A lot of complaints about garbage in the park, although Public Works does a very good job of collecting trash in the park, there have been ongoing issues with copious amounts of litter being left at the skatepark. Mrs. Bails spoke to Mayor Rhome about community service participants going to the park to clean litter.
8. A lot of park projects have been completed. The East End Playground looks fantastic and the park board would like to add more things to the park.
9. The cameras have been installed at the new pavilion and at the Pickleball Court.
10. The Pickleball Court parking lot is scheduled to be paved during the Milling and Surfacing Project.

Mr. Severine commented that the Concert in the Park on August 9th went very well and about 75-80 people attended and social distancing practices were in place.

Mr. Lawrence reported that a couple years ago the skatepark was shut down due to the littering problems and that the last few Mondays public works employees discovered that the skatepark was destroyed. Mrs. Bails suggested putting up signs stating that if the littering continues that the skatepark will be shut down. Mr. Severine suggested that a police officer visit the skatepark to speak to the people using the skatepark about keeping the area clean.

7. **Re-Development** - Mr. Chandler reported on the following:

1. The steering committee has continued to meet on a weekly basis. The emphasis of the meetings has mostly been about parking and Mrs. Scarmazzi will be doing research into making more parking in the Borough and will present her findings at the next committee meeting.
2. The new Director of Economic Development, Lisa Scarmazzi, attended the July meeting and introduced herself to council.
3. Discussion about the costs of demolishing the Eagles property on North Central Avenue.
4. There has been interest by someone who would like to purchase and develop the Greenside Avenue property that is owned by the Borough, Mr. Chandler asked council their opinions on selling the property. Further discussion was held about the possibilities of what could be put on that property and council members agreed that they would be open to possibly selling the property. Mrs. Bails asked Mr. Chandler if a particular property had been purchased by the land bank, to which Mr. Chandler replied that it had along with a second property.
5. Starting up a Blighted Property Task Force which would include members of council, code enforcement, the solicitor, building inspector and local people in the community. Mr. Chandler has been in touch with representatives from the Local Government Academy who have interns that can walk through the borough, begin an index of addresses and research the histories of each property. The Washington County Land Bank also has interns who can do the same service.

8. **Sewer Authority:** Mr. Yorke reported on the following:

1. Attended the Sewer Authority meetings and believes that the business is being run in an effective manner and has nothing but good things to say about the members of the authority.

Mr. Severine suggested that the Sewer Authority meeting minutes be posted on the Borough website as he has been approached by residents who would like to have access to them, Mr. Dalfonso explained that it is the decision of the Sewer Authority whether or

not they would like for their meeting minutes to be provided on the Borough website.

VOTING ITEMS:

1. Motion to approve July 13th, 2020 Borough Council Meeting Minutes of Canonsburg Borough Council.

Mr. Yorke made a motion to approve July 13th, 2020 Borough Council Meeting Minutes of Canonsburg Borough Council. Seconded by Mrs. Bails.

No questions on the motion.

7 Yes. 0 No. 0 Absent. Motion Carries.

2. Motion to approve Ordinance #1345 (Providing for the adoption of the provisions of the neighborhood blight reclamation and revitalization Act 53).

Mrs. Bails made a motion to approve Ordinance #1345 (Providing for the adoption of the provisions of the neighborhood blight reclamation and revitalization Act 53). Seconded by Mr. Chandler.

No questions on the motion.

7 Yes, 0 No. 0 Absent. All in favor. Motion carries.

3. Motion to approve Resolution #04-2020 (Municipal Winter Traffic Services Agreement for fiscal years 2020-2025).

Mr. Chandler made a motion to approve Resolution #04-2020 (Municipal Winter Traffic Services Agreement for fiscal years 2020-2025). Seconded by Mr. Russo.

No questions on the motion.

Roll Call:

Mr. Bowman-Yes

Mr. Yorke - Yes

Mr. Russo - Yes

Mrs. Bails - Yes

Mr. Severine - Yes

Mr. Chandler - Yes

Mr. Bell - Yes

7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent. All in favor. Motion carries.

4. Motion to approve the First Street Consolidation plan with the condition of satisfying any Borough comments as recommended by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Yorke made a motion to approve the First Street Consolidation plan with the condition of satisfying any Borough comments as recommended by the Planning Commission. Seconded by Mrs. Bails.

No questions on the motion.

7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent. All in favor. Motion carries.

5. Motion to approve the Canonsburg Senior Lofts with the condition of satisfying all engineering and Borough comments as recommended by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Yorke made a motion to approve the Canonsburg Senior Lofts with the condition of satisfying all engineering and Borough comments as recommended by the Planning Commission. Seconded by Mr. Chandler.

7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent. Motion carries.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Town Park Pool House – A meeting needs to be rescheduled.
2. Zoning Map Revisions – Discussed earlier, near completion.
3. Garbage Rates – Discussed earlier in the meeting with auditors, a meeting needs to be scheduled with the garbage committee.
4. Garbage bill collection – Mr. Russo mentioned that garbage rates should not be raised

because the garbage bill collection agency is not collecting the bills and going after those residents who owe the Borough large amounts of unpaid garbage bill balances.

Discussion was held about the large amount of unpaid balances and going out for bid to hire a new billing agency. Mr. Dalfonso suggested that someone make a motion to put out an RFP for garbage billing collections.

Motion to place Canonsburg Borough’s garbage fee collection and garbage delinquency collection out for a Request for Proposal.

Mr Russo made a motion to place Canonsburg Borough’s garbage fee collection and garbage delinquency collection out for a Request for Proposal. Seconded by Mr Severine.

No questions on the motion.

Roll Call:

Mr. Bowman-Yes

Mr. Yorke - Yes

Mr. Russo - Yes

Mrs. Bails - Yes

Mr. Severine - Yes

Mr. Chandler - Yes

Mr. Bell - Yes

7 Yes, 0 No. 0 Absent. All in favor. Motion carries.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS VIA ZOOM:

“Missy” stated that the elevators and railings in the Borough Building are cleaned everyday and asked if the picnic benches in the park can be chained down so that they cannot be moved down

to the skatepark in the future.

Joe Graff asked if there is a loitering ordinance because there is a loitering issue at the Rite Aid Plaza across from the Borough Building that occurs on a consistent basis that leave garbage all over the property. Mr. Severine reported that the Code Officer recently went to Big Fellas/McGrogan's and spoke to them about the issues that have been frequently presented to the Borough and to follow up with the Mr. Smith.

Mr. Yorke asked if any action needed to be taken on the Mayor's Diversity and Inclusion Recognition Task Force Mission Statement. Chief Coghill explained that the task force would like the permission to sign the statement as Borough Council as a whole. Chief Coghill will report that to Mayor Rhome.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Executive Session began at 9:17 PM.

No actions will be taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Mr. Chandler to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 PM. Seconded by Mrs. Bails.

All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM. Executive Session began at 9:18 PM.

Submitted by:

Callie Munch