

February 9, 2022

ANNOUNCEMENT

Borough Manager Keller explained the format for this evening's meeting, advising that the meeting is a public in-person and a GoTo Meeting and available on-line as well. Public comments are being accepted through email and chat prior to 7:00 p.m. and will be announced to all. Comments are limited to 300 words to be in compliance with Council's three-minute rule and participants shall be identified accordingly.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

The February 9, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Weand.

ATTENDANCE

Councilors present were Ryan Procsal, Lisa Vanni (virtual), Donald Lebedynsky, Trenita Lindsay, Dan Weand, Michael Paules (virtual) and Joseph Kirkland (virtual.) Also present were Borough Manager Justin Keller, Mayor Stephanie Henrick, Solicitor Charles Garner (virtual) and Borough Secretary Virginia Takach.

INVOCATION

President Weand requested a moment of silence and announced the passing of former Councilman James Smale. He noted that Mr. Smale served on Borough Council from January 1986 to December 1994 and was Council President from 1990 to 1993. Jim also was a firefighter with Good Will Fire Company and head of the Pottstown Fire Police. He also served on the Civil Service Commission from 1995 to the present and a volunteer for numerous events throughout the Borough.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Infrastructure – Councilor Lebedynsky noted that the report was in the packets.
- b. Transportation – There was no meeting.
- c. Efficient Methods Committee – Councilor Lebedynsky stated that the Committee has been working with the Public Works Department on trash collections, potholes and Mascaro complaints. He advised that less than 2% of the trash complaints involve Mascaro with less than 100 complaints in four months. A list will be presented for the next meeting.
- d. Ordinance Review Committee – Councilor Procsal advised that a discussion took place regarding properties with no alley access.
- e. Economic Development – Ms. Lee-Clark reported that the majority of the PAED Board toured Eastwood Company, the American Keg Facility and ETC, Inc. She explained that Eastwood services classic car enthusiasts, the American Keg is partnered with a German Company

February 9, 2022

and is the only stainless steel keg facility in America and ETC provides turbine wash for large contracts with Boeing. She outlined the goals and progress of these Pottstown employers, especially during the Pandemic. Ms. Lee-Clark also urged citizens to contact her or PAED with any social media concerns they may have. Ms. Lee-Clark also provided an explanation for certain businesses that have recently closed in the downtown, noting staffing issues, the absence of a business plan and discrepancies between the owners and tenants.

BOARDS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Land Bank – Ms. Lee-Clark advised that the Board reorganized with Deb Penrod as Chair, Lisa Vanni, Vice Chair and Twila Fisher as Secretary. She added that the Land Bank Solicitor and the Borough Solicitor are working on a sales agreement for the Borough property, 707 Hamilton Street.

b. Human Relations Commission – Ms. Levensgood advised that February is Black History Month honoring the achievements of African Americans. She noted that there was no quorum for the last meeting and the next meeting is March 8th.

c. Library – Ms. Hylton advised that an event is scheduled for May 12th, 7:00 p.m. celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Library. She also provided an update on activities and fundraising at the Library.

d. Ricketts Community Center – Councilor Kirkland referred to the report distributed and noted that the Center recently hosted a successful blood drive. He added that there are 19 new members, totally 455.

e. Pottstown School District – Councilor Lindsay was unable to attend the last meeting.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Henrick highlighted the events she recently attended. She noted that she met with Haverford Trust Company to discuss the economic market. She added that at the Pension Board Meetings, it was reported that the plans are on tract. The Mayor added that she also attended several committee meetings, including three Love Your Block meetings, with \$10,000 in mini-grant funding. Mayor Henrick also noted that she attended Jim Smale's funeral service and was reminded that she promised Jim a siren and will discuss with the Chief. She reminded all of the upcoming *Schreck the Musical* sponsored by the Pottstown Foundation for Education and urged all to participate in the March Meals on Wheels event. Mayor Henrick questioned the Solicitor in the process of forming an Airport Authority.

Solicitor Garner responded that he would send information to her and Council and list for discussion at a future meeting.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Keller reported that Staff is working with the County to address the conditions of the Borough bridges over the Norfolk Southern line and to have listed on the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), a 12-year plan and seek funding allocations. He is also working with

February 9, 2022

Traffic Planning & Design for the Moser Road Bridge and will be funded through Liquid Fuel funds. Mr. Keller reported that the Car Shows will resume in the spring with discussions of live music in Smith Family Plaza. He also reported that 18 new ornamental street lights have been obtained through a CDBG grant. Mr. Keller also provided an update on the BASF proposal for the property located at 860 Cross Street for a Borough park. He explained the outline and requested that Council consider a waiver of the formal Land Development Plan as it will eventually be a Borough park.

Mr. Keller advised that he should have an update on the progress of the King Street Bridge by next month, with expectation to open for traffic in the spring. He would then discuss a ribbon cutting ceremony with Council. He also explained the repair of potholes throughout the Borough and noted that several roadways are state-owned and are overseen by PennDOT and can be addressed by calling 1-800-fixroad.

Mr. Keller provided 10 individual renderings for the proposed Armato Way sign. It was the consensus of Council to allow the Armato's to make the final decision.

Mayor Henrick questioned the rehabilitation of the Sundstrom field and the use of the \$125, 000 grant money for fields in a flood zone.

Mr. Keller responded that this is the funding received earmarked for the repairs to Sundstrom Field with the bid to be awarded on Monday evening and cannot be redirected to another project.

MONTCO 2040 GRANT

Michael Lenhart, Director Parks and Recreation provided the presentation that will be used during the public input meeting scheduled for February 17th to obtain comments regarding the Park system and ongoing projects. He also explained the grant money available for bridge reconstruction and embankment erosion. He advised that 200 tons of stones were provided from the King Street Bridge project, free of charge for the embankment. Staff is requesting authorization to submit an application to the Montco 2040 grant in the amount of \$200,000 for the Riverfront Streambank Stabilization and Bridge Restoration Project.

PARKS & RECREATION LEASE AGREEMENT, 71 WEST HIGH STREET

Mr. Lenhart also outlined the proposed lease agreement with Rachel Newby d/b/a New-Bee Ranch to lease a portion of the property located at 71 West High Street. The Mini-Golf will be operating an abbreviated schedule over the summer and wishes to enter into a lease agreement with Rachel Newby to use the concession stand to utilize the space to process honey and organic vegetables with a monthly rent of \$350 for a short-term lease.

215 SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET – ACT 90

Mr. Keller explained the request of the owners of the property located at 215 South Washington Street, the former Plating Works property, for a waiver of the regulations under Act 90. The owner is requesting a waiver of Act 90 in order for the construction of a new roof on the property. There are outstanding taxes due on the property for which Council has already granted conditional tax relief. Staff is recommending that a waiver of Act 90 be granted to prevent additional degradation

February 9, 2022

of the property. Mr. Keller added that the owner has agreed to not sell the property for the next two years and will pay the taxes on the property beginning January 1, 2022.

President Weand advised that these matters will be listed on the regular agenda.

LAND BANK POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Mr. Keller referred to the Policies and Procedures adopted by the Land Bank Board and noted that any time changes are made to the Land Bank, they should come before Council and requested Council's review and approval.

SALES AGREEMENT – 707 HAMILTON STREET

Solicitor Garner explained the Borough's acquisition of the property located at 707 Hamilton Street, which is in need of significant rehabilitation. He is working with the Land Bank Solicitor for a tri-party agreement for the Borough to convey the property to the Land Bank, who in turn would convey to Genesis Housing for rehabilitation.

RESOLUTION – DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

Mr. Keller noted that this is an annual task of destroying records as per Municipal records Manual and requested the resolution be adopted.

These items will be listed for consideration on Monday's agenda.

AMTRAK AGREEMENT

Mr. Keller advised that Amtrak has approached the Borough and proposed a Thruway Bus stop in Pottstown for transportation from Reading to Philadelphia. He added that Amtrak is considering Lot #1, the former Reading Lot. He also referred to the proposed bus schedule and noted that Amtrak plans to engage a private bus coach service for a period of two years. Mr. Keller added that the bus service would have no interference with plans for future rail service. He requested Council's consideration in authorizing the Solicitor to prepare an agreement with Amtrak.

President Weand commented that this does not negate rail service, simply a step towards it and allows Amtrak to test the need for rail service. This will be listed for Monday evening.

JANSSEN SETTLEMENT PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Solicitor Garner explained the request of the Montgomery County Solicitor for municipalities to join in the Settlement of the Janssen Opioid Settlement agreement. There is no money involved, only to support the proposed settlement with manufacturers and distributors of opioids.

PARKS AND RECREATION HALF MARATHON – April 16, 2022 TIBURON ENDURANCE 5K RACE, May 21, 2022

Mr. Keller referred to the road closure requests for upcoming events and recommended approval, subject to the police and fire departments review

February 9, 2022

BID AWARDS

Mr. Keller advised that several bids were opened on February 3rd and 4th and recommendations will be provided prior to Monday's meeting.

SALE OF BOROUGH PARKS EQUIPMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Mr. Keller referred to the bid tabulation for various Parks and Recreation vehicles and equipment, which should net approximately \$29,000.

UPCOMING BOARD VACANCY

President Weand advised that one letter of interest was received from Jim Derr, requesting to be reappointed to the Planning Commission.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS PRESENT

- a. Tom Winterbottom, 262 King Street – questioned the location of the Amtrak location.

Mr. Keller responded that it is the former Reading Lot, South Hanover Street and will provide additional information when it comes available.

- b. Deborah Spencer, 373 E Main St, Colledgeville - questioned how many presentations Genesis had to give to acquire property from the Land Bank.

Mr. Keller advised that he would contact Ms. Spencer with a response.

COUNCILORS' GENERAL DISCUSSION

Councilor Lindsay expressed sympathy to the family of friends of Jim Smale.

Councilor Lebedynsky noted that he and friends have been frequenting the High Street and area restaurants.

Councilor Vanni added that she is pleased that progress is being made for the 42 Walnut Street Arch. She also thanked Ms. Lee-Clark for explaining why some businesses have recently failed or simply closed. Councilor Vanni also urged her fellow-Councilors to participate in the Meals on wheels event. She also recommended using Drainmen for any plumbing needs.

Councilor Procsal commended those involved with the series of videos on You-Tube featuring areas of Pottstown.

Mayor Henrick commented that she has been getting a lot of complaints regarding trash on High Street.

Mr. Keller advised that he is working on plans to address this issue with property owners, with details to follow.

February 9, 2022

President Weand commented that it is only 38 days until spring and to 7:00 p.m. sunsets.

ADJOURNMENT

President Weand adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.