

June 13, 2022

POTTSTOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANNOUNCEMENT

Borough Manager Keller explained the format for this evening's meeting, advising that the meeting is a GoTo Virtual Meeting and an in-person meeting. All persons wishing to speak during Public Comment, whether participating by GoToMeeting or telephone, must submit their name and address through chat or email at administration@pottstown.org. Requests to speak will be accepted until 7:05pm, at which time chat will be closed, and no further requests for comment will be honored. As always, Public Comment will be limited to three minutes per person.

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Pottstown Borough Council was called to order on Monday, June 13, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. as a hybrid, in-person and Go-To Meeting, with President Weand in the Chair.

INVOCATION

President Weand requested a moment of silence. He also reminded all of the 50th anniversary of Hurricane Agnes that devastated the Borough but also united the Borough in recovery efforts.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Councilor Kirkland, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2022 Council meeting as presented. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

SUBCOMITTEE REPORTS

a. Finance & Administration – President Weand advised that the General Fund revenues received are at 55% and expenses at 28%. The real estate taxes are at 28% collected and local EIT taxes at 31% received. He added that the audit should be complete this month and the Borough continues to review under-assessed properties with the School District and Portnoff collections continue. President Weand also noted that the assessment changes increased by \$452,370. There were no new LERTA applications and the ARPA expenses had no changes since last month. He added that discussion on the 215 South Washington Street property is listed on the agenda.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. EAC – There was no report.
- b. Regional Planning – Councilor Procsal advised that a discussion centered on a New Hanover Township development.
- c. Blighted Property Review Committee – Councilor Procsal noted that a bus tour is scheduled for the June meeting.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS PRESENT

- a. Deborah Spence, 153 South Roland Street – commented that she would like to open a minority owned business as a satellite office in Pottstown. She also urged Council to approve the transfer of the property at Cherry Street and Center Avenue.
- b. Bruce Madara, 543 North Adams Street – thanked Borough Manager and staff for being responsive to his concerns. He complained about the lack of response from Public Works regarding his trash concerns.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

a. PRESENTATION – AMERICAN RED CROSS

Lynn Cohen, Lisa McGee and Shawn Morris were present to outline the mission of the American Red Cross. Ms. Cohen advised that the Red Cross meets immediate needs such as food and shelter for any type of disaster. The Delaware Valley Chapter serves Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties. She also provided the statistics regarding blood donations and blood deliveries throughout the area. The Red Cross provides and teaches lifesaving skills such as first aid and CPR and also works with international partners to extend services globally and encourages opportunities for volunteers.

b. Civil Service - Motion by Councilor Lebedynsky, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to authorize the Civil Service Commission to begin the testing process for promotions of Corporal and Sergeant. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

c. David Yeck Foundation - Motion by Councilor Kirkland, seconded by Councilor Lebedynsky to authorize the Borough to accept funds from the David Yeck Foundation for a public arts program in the amount of \$20,000 and authorize Staff to work with the Committee on the War Memorial project and other art projects as approved by Borough Council. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

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d. Hometown Heroes Banners - Motion by Councilor Lindsay, seconded by Councilor Vanni to authorize the Solicitor to draft an agreement between the Borough and the Elks #814 Veterans' Committee to establish locations, dates, maintenance and duration of the request for Hometown Heroes Banners on High Street, acceptable to Borough Council.

Councilor Paules questioned the placing of flags in other locations other than High Street as requested by the committee.

President Weand confirmed that the Committee will work with the Solicitor to prepare the agreement.

Solicitor Garner added that the specifics and framework will come back to Council for approval.

Motion carried: 7 ayes.

e. 215 South Washington Street – Motion by Councilor Kirkland, seconded by Councilor Lebedynsky to approve and authorize execution of the Declaration of a Restrictive Covenant and approval of a business plan for the property located at 215 South Washington Street. Motion carried: 6 ayes, 1 nay. Councilor Paules cast the negative vote.

f. PAED – Hess Lot – Motion by Councilor Kirkland, seconded by Councilor Vanni to authorize the Solicitor to work with PAED to prepare a Cooperative Agreement between the Borough of Pottstown and Pottstown Area Economic Development for the development of the property located at 191-193 South Hanover Street, known as the Hess Lot. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

g. PAED – 327 Industrial Highway & 175 South Evans Street - Motion by Councilor Kirkland seconded by Councilor Lebedynsky to authorize the Solicitor to work with PAED to prepare a Cooperative Agreement between the Borough of Pottstown and Pottstown Area Economic Development for the development of the properties located at 327 Industrial Highway and 175 South Evans Street. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

h. Chester Smith, Borough Right of Way - Motion by Councilor Lebedynsky, seconded by Councilor Vanni to approve and authorize execution of a Release and Hold Harmless Agreement between Chester Smith and the Borough of Pottstown to allow the construction of a retaining wall on the property located at 29 West 7th Street, encroaching the Borough's right-of-way. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

i. Vacate Manatawny Street - Motion by Councilor Kirkland, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to authorize the Solicitor to prepare and advertise an ordinance to ordain and vacate a portion of Manatawny Street, between High Street and the Reading Railroad. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

j. 1000 Cherry Street and Center Avenue - Motion by Councilor Kirkland, seconded by Councilor Lebedynsky to retain the property located at 1000 Cherry Street and Center Avenue, owned by the Borough of Pottstown. Motion carried: 6 ayes, 1 nay. Councilor Paules cast the negative vote.

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k. Paving Mervine Street – Motion by Councilor Lebedynsky, seconded by Councilor Vanni to award the bid for the paving of Mervine Street to H & K Group, Inc., and approving the expenditure of \$135,500 for the Borough's cost of the project. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

l. AMBUCS Soap Box Race - Motion by Councilor Kirkland, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to grant the request of the AMBUCS to hold its Soap Box Race on June 17 and June 18, 2022, (rain date June 19) and closing Wilson Street, from Farmington Avenue to State Street, from 6:00 a.m. on June 17th to 7:00 p.m. on June 18, 2022, subject to review and approval of the Police and Fire Departments. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

m. Parks & Recreation Comedy Shows - Motion by Councilor Vanni, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to grant the request of the Parks and Recreation Department to allow alcoholic beverages at the Riverfront Park Amphitheater for the BYOB Comedy Shows, scheduled for June 17 and June 24, 2022, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., subject to review and approval of the Police and Fire Departments and in compliance with the regulations of the Liquor Control Board. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

Michael Lenhart confirmed that additional tickets are available through the Soul Joel website.

n. Wiley – Block Party – Motion by Councilor Kirkland, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to grant the request of Shonda Wiley to hold a block party and closing the 600 block of King Street on July 9, 2022 (rain date July 16th), from 1:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., subject to review and approval of the Police and Fire Departments. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

o. Community Arts – Motion by Councilor Lebedynsky, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to grant the request of the Pottstown Community Arts & Mosaic CLT to allow a chalk drawing on Chestnut Street and closing the 400 Block of Chestnut Street on July 14, 2022 (rain date July 21st) from 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m., subject to review and approval of the Police and Fire Departments. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

p. Victory Christian Life – National Night Out - Motion by Councilor Kirkland, seconded by Councilor Vanni to grant the request of the Victory Christian Life Center to hold a National Night Out event on August 2, 2022, and closing North Washington Street, between Chestnut Street and Rowan Alley, from 4:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., subject to review of the Police and Fire Departments. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

q. Spruce Street Block Party - Motion by Councilor Vanni, seconded by Councilor Lebedynsky to grant the request of Trenita Lindsay to hold a block party and closing the 900 block of Spruce Street on August 6, 2022 (rain date August 7th) from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., subject to review and approval of the Police and Fire Departments. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

Councilor Lindsay invited all to attend.

r. Zoning – 415 Laurel Street – Motion by Councilor Paules, seconded by Councilor Lebedynsky to take no action on the request of Theodore and Tara Radzinski to establish a custom Metal Workshop at the property located at 415 Laurel Street. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

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s. Zoning – Bringhurst Acquisitions, 316 North Charlotte Street - Motion by Councilor Lindsay, seconded by Councilor Vanni to authorize the Solicitor to send a letter of opposition to the Zoning Hearing Board on the variance relief request of Bringhurst Acquisitions, LLC, for the conversion of a single family residence into two 2-bedroom apartments at the property located at 316 North Charlotte Street.

President Weand commented that this is in his ward and parking is at a premium.

Motion carried: 7 ayes.

t. Land Bank Board Appointment – Motion by Councilor Lebedynsky, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to reappoint Twila Fisher to the Land Bank Board for a three-year term to expire June 11, 2025. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

u. HARB - Motion by Councilor Lebedynsky, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 758 East High Street as recommended by HARB. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

v. HARB - Motion by Councilor Lebedynsky, seconded by Councilor Vanni to ratify action of the Building Permit Officer approving Certificate of Appropriateness for the following properties:

- i. 1008 High Street
- ii. 175 North Hanover Street

Motion carried: 7 ayes.

REPORT OF BILLS – Motion by Councilor Lebedynsky, seconded by Councilor Lindsay to pay the outstanding bills in the amount of \$2,574,993.67. Motion carried: 7 ayes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Vanni commended all for the great Memorial Day parade.

Vice President Lebedynsky noted the Juneteenth holiday and the hockey finals.

Councilor Lindsay also praised the Memorial Day Parade and noted she and Councilor Vanni had the honor of riding in the new fire truck with retiring Fireman Mark Gibson. She also attended the against gun violence event.

Councilor Kirkland urged all to keep the explosion victims in their thoughts.

Mayor Henrick noted that TCN is holding weekly meetings to coordinate fundraising for the explosion victims.

President Weand reminded all of the Pottstown Rumble, the largest volleyball event in the country.

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ADJOURNMENT

President Weand adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Submitted by,

Justin M. Keller, Borough Manager