

Palmyra Borough Council Meeting
Thursday November 12, 2020
7:00 PM

President Shearer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers of the Palmyra Municipal Center, located at 325 S. Railroad St. Other Council members in attendance included Don Barry, Josh Holl, Tom Miller, Jane Quairoli, Joe Templin and James Tesche. Also, in attendance were Borough Manager Roger Powl, Assistant Borough Manager Brenda Pera, Mayor Fred Carpenter and Police Chief Andrew Winters.

Public Comment Period #1

- William Garber, 725 N Grant St, spoke in opposition of the waiver requests on the agenda. He asked Council to vote against the waivers. He also inquired about the speed study that was conducted on East Ridge Road.

Chief Winters provided the following information on the speed study:

- The study was conducted in the 200blk East Ridge Rd and 100 blk of East Ridge Road for 8 days
- 12,176 cars going eastbound and 13,140 cars going westbound for a total of 25,316 vehicles or an average of 3,165 per day.
- Eastbound: 1.56% were driving over 46 mph. Top speed was 74 mph.
- Westbound: 1.10% were driving over 46 mph. Top speed was 56 mph.

Consent Calendar

- a. Approve the minutes of the October 22, 2020 Borough Council meeting.
- b. Approve payment of all bills listed on the October 2020 Detailed Check Listing Report.

Motion: To approve the consent calendar. Motion by Jane Quairoli, second by Jim Tesche. Motion passed.

Action & Discussion Items

- a. East Ridge Road Subdivision (Chimel Property) – Waiver Requests: Claudia Shank, Esq of McNees, Wallace & Nurick, LLC; Bob Riahi of Millfield Construction, and Bill Swiernik of David Miller Associates were present. Mr. Swiernik explained the waivers being requested and offered some thoughts supporting the waiver requests. Mr. Swiernik explained that reducing the road width from 34-feet to 28-feet and restricting parking on one side will: 1) reduce overall impervious surface coverage of the development which will aid in stormwater management; 2) reduces the cost of future asphalt road maintenance for the Borough, and; 3) acts as a traffic calming measure since narrow roads tend to produce lower vehicle speeds. He also explained that the new connection to E, Ridge Road at N. Lincoln Street will require submission and approval of a PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permit since E. Ridge Road is a State-owned road. Therefore, they are asking that the safe stopping & sight distance requirements from PennDOT for such an intersection be used instead of utilizing the Borough's sight distance triangle requirements, which would establish an undue hardship on the neighboring property to the west at 127E. Ridge Road. Mr. Swiernik also explained that the waivers were presented to the Palmyra Planning Commission at their October 28, 2020 meeting and the Planning Commission made a recommendation to Borough Council to approve both waiver requests with conditions suggested by the Borough Engineer, which are acceptable to Millfield.

1. Section 318-26.J – Minimum Street Width (34-feet):

Motion: To approve the waiver request for Section 318-26.J to allow for a minimum 28-foot street width, conditioned upon a traffic & engineering study for parking restrictions being provided. Motion by Tom Miller, second by Jane Quairoli. Motion passed by a 6-1 vote with Beth Shearer voting against the motion.

2. Section 318-26.L.6 – Clear Sight Triangle:

Motion: To approve the waiver request for Section 318-26.L.6 to allow for clear sight distance triangles to be configured based on the stopping sight distance required

by PennDOT, conditioned upon the clear sight triangle area within the proposed right-of-way being reserved. Motion by Jane Quairolì, second by Tom Miller. Motion passed with a 4-3 vote with Don Barry, Beth Shearer, and Josh Holl voting against the motion.

b. Bid Award - Janitorial Services Contract:

Motion: To authorize the Borough Manager to execute a contract with Green Commercial Cleaning, Inc. 125 Pickwick Circle, Palmyra, PA 17078 as follows:

- *\$22,740 for daily cleaning service at the Municipal Center*
- *\$325.00 for once per year cleaning of the interior and exterior windows.*
- *\$1,200.00 for once per year VCT flooring refinishing (stripping and waxing)*
- *\$1,200.00 for cleaning the bathrooms at Memorial Park every Monday from April to November.*

Motion by Josh Holl, second by Jane Quairolì. Motion passed.

- c. 2021 Budget Presentation & Discussion: Mr. Powl presented a worst-case scenario draft preliminary budget including all the expense requests from the various Borough departments and Council for the budget year 2021. Mr. Powl highlighted the forecasted beginning and ending balances for each of the Borough's funds and explained that the projected \$264,155 shortfall in the General Fund would necessitate a .53-mill tax increase. However, several items were still outstanding that could have an impact on the final budget. For example, the bids for 2021 street paving will be opened on November 19th and the bid results could reduce the overall tax increase. Mr. Powl explained that the quarterly sewer & refuse rates were adequate to cover next year's expenses so, no adjustment is needed. Council discussed continuing this meeting to Monday November 16th to discuss the budget further.

Reports

- a. President's Report: President Shearer did not have a report.

b. Financial Report:

1. Financial Statement: Mr. Powl provided a copy of the October 31, 2020 Financial Statement.
2. Delinquent Sewer & Refuse Account Report: Ms. Pera provided a copy of the October 2020 report.

- c. Fire Department: New Building Loan Rate Modification Opportunity – Mr. Powl reached out to PFM Financial Advisors to determine if refinancing or renegotiating the building loan would be possible given the current historic low interest rates. Jonestown Bank & Trust has offered a fixed loan rate of 1.35% for the next five years then, the original terms of the loan would resume with a maximum ceiling rate of 4.5%. Mr. Powl indicated that the required Resolution and documents for the modification will be ready for review and action at the November 24th meeting.

- d. Police Department: Chief Winters asked for the following motion –

1. Officer Bucsi Probation Period:

Motion: To officially remove Officer Frank J. Bucsi from probationary status effective November 18, 2020 and to retain him as a full-time Police Officer for the Borough of Palmyra Police Department. Motion by Beth Shearer, second by Don Barry. Motion passed.

- e. Planning Commission - Subdivision & Land Development Plans: Mr. Powl provided a set of draft minutes from the Planning Commission to highlight the discussion on the previously discussed waivers for the Chimel property development.

f. Public Works Department:

1. Superintendent's Monthly Report: Mr. Powl provided a copy of the October 2020 report.

2. Borough Properties: There was nothing new to report on the properties.
 - a. Municipal Building – 325 S. Railroad Street: Front doors – repair status update:
 - b. Public Works Department – 910 E. Broad Street:
 - c. Vacant Lot – 40 E. Front Street:
 - d. Vacant Lot – Northeast corner of the intersection of N. Lingle Ave and W. Main Street
 - e. Vacant Lot (Shaffer-Erb Tract) – south side 900 Block East Cherry Street
3. Parks: (Heritage Park, Palmyra Memorial Park, and Southeast Park) There was nothing new to report.
4. Refuse & Recycling:
 - a. Palmyra Area School District recycling issue: Mr. Powl reached out to the Business Manager, Darcy Brenner-Smith, to inquire about the status of their recycling issue. The school district put the recycling services out for bid, which are due December 3rd.
5. Sewer System: There was nothing new to report.
6. Sinkholes:
 - a. 223 S. Locust Street: (PASD failed injection well) There was nothing new to report.
7. Stormwater Management:
 - a. 300 Block E. Cherry St & 100 Block S. Grant St Detention Basin & Road Restoration Project: Project contract close-out status remains the same as the contractor has not returned to complete the few remaining punch list items.
 - b. Phase A Stormwater Management System: (north of railroad tracks - west of N. Grant St.): Monday November 9th meeting with the Hershey Co. Mr. Powl indicated that the meeting went very well. The Hershey Company now understands that the project is not about a wetland, but rather a municipal stormwater facility which DEP would allow to be reconfigured in the future should Hershey choose to purchase back some of the Ridge Road Park lands for expansion of their distribution facility located just to the west.
 - c. DEP Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Permit: RETTEW has submitted the Borough's Annual report to DEP as required.
8. Street & Alley Maintenance: There was nothing new to report.
9. Traffic Signals:
 - a. Mr. Powl reported that the flashing red beacons have been installed on top of the stop sign posts at E. Cherry St & S. Forge Rd. However, they are designed to only flash dusk to dawn.
- g. Solicitor's Report: Solicitor Cleary responded to a letter dated 10/26/2020 from attorney Daryl J. Gerber concerning conduct of the single-bag trash program.
- h. Zoning & Codes Enforcement: Mr. Powl provided a copy of the October 2020 report. He also reported the results of the following Zoning Hearing Board hearings conducted on November 9th:
 - a. 61 N. Prince Street – Jacobs Telecom / AT&T: (continued from October 12th)
 - Granted a Special Exception under Section 380-64.1 to allow for the placement of a commercial communications antenna in the right-of-way of the Highway Commercial (HC) District.
 - Granted a Variance of Section 380.64.1(E)(4) to allow for a utility pole/tower height of 45-feet versus the 40-feet permitted.

- b. 739 Locust Alley – Jacobs Telecom / AT&T: (continued from October 12th)
 - Granted a Special Exception under Section 380-64.1 to allow for the placement of a commercial communications antenna in the right-of-way of the Highway Commercial (HC) District.
 - Granted a Variance of Section 380.64.1(E)(4) to allow for a utility pole/tower height of 45-feet versus the 40-feet permitted.
- c. 620 E. Arch Street – Eric & Beth Eckert Hoy:
 - Granted a Variance of Section 380-15.G (Area & Design Requirements) for the 3,800 sq' min lot area for duplex dwelling units to create three new lots 3,203sq'; 3,278sq', and; 3,574sq'
- i. Borough Manager's Report:
 1. Personnel – Administration – Retain Full-Time Employee:

Motion: *To officially remove Kari L. Herr from probationary status effective November 8, 2020 and to retain her as full-time employees for the Borough of Palmyra Administration Department and increase her salary to \$18.15 per hour. Motion by Tom Miller, second by Beth Shearer. Motion passed.*

Communications

- a. Mr. Powl provided a copy of the Lebanon County Solid Waste Management Plan – 2020 Minor Revision.

Other Business

There no other business.

Public Comment Period #2

- Dave McCloskey, 212 E. Ridge Road, asked for future public comment periods to be after the developers of the Chimel property make a presentation. He also inquired about Kramer Way paving.
- William Garber, 725 N. Grant St, raised an issue with an email he received from the developer. He complained that it was very morose. He commented that he isn't against the development but wants the developer to get it right from the beginning.

Motion to Continue the meeting

Motion to continue the meeting to November 16th at 6 PM for the purposes of discussing the budget in further detail. Motion by Josh Holl, second by James Tesche. The meeting was suspended at 9:13 PM.

President Shearer reconvened the meeting on Monday, November 16, 2020 at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers of the Palmyra Municipal Center, located at 325 S. Railroad St. Other Council members in attendance included Don Barry, Tom Miller, Jane Quairoli, Joe Templin and Josh Holl, who attended via Zoom. James Tesche joined the meeting at 6:21 PM. Also, in attendance were Borough Manager Roger Powl, Assistant Borough Manager Brenda Pera, and Police Chief Andrew Winters. Mayor Fred Carpenter was absent from the meeting.

2021 Budget Discussion

Council discussed the need for reducing, if not eliminating, the need for a tax increase. The discussion led to the subject of employee salaries. Mr. Powl advised Council that 2021 will be a 27-pay period year due to the way in which the holidays fall. This increases payroll for the next budget by one pay period.

He presented various options ranging from a pay freeze of all employees to an adjustment in salaries for the Public Works Department and Assistant Borough Manager. The adjustment would be like the adjustment provided to the Administration Department and Police starting salaries a few years ago. The request is to allow the positions to be more competitive in attracting experienced employees. Council agreed with the adjustment for the Public Works Department and Assistant Borough Manager but asked for Mr. Powl to stretch the increase over two years to reduce the impact in the 2021 budget. Council also

made the decision to show the adjustment increase for the Public Works Superintendent position in the Budget but only award the Public Works Superintendent with the standard 2.5% salary increase in the payroll system for 2021.

Mr. Powl also reminded Council that the 2021 paving bids are to be opened on November 19, 2020. It is hoped that the bid results might be lower than anticipated due to the price of oil. Mr. Powl will make the adjustment in the budget before presenting the Preliminary Budget on November 24th.

Mr. Powl also mentioned that the reconfiguration of the fire department loan will save funds over the next five years of the loan. The \$25,000 legal costs of the reconfiguration will be shared equally by the Borough and North Londonderry Township and will be “out of pocket” expenses that will need to be budgeted for in 2021. The final savings will be reflected in the preliminary budget and should help reduce any tax increase necessary.

Announcement

President Shearer announced that Borough Council will conduct its next public meetings on Tuesday, November 24, 2020, and Thursday, December 10, 2020 beginning at 7:00 PM.

Motion to Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Jane Quairolì, second by James Tesche. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger E. Powl
Borough Manager