

A Portage Borough Council Committee of the Whole meeting was held on Monday, January 20th, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Those in attendance were:

George Wozniak David Hayes James Kissell Todd Learn
Ronald Cadwallader Brent Kinley

Absent was Ms. Bruna Kissell.

Also present were: Robert Koban; Borough Manager, Michelle Claar; Borough Secretary.

Visitors:

Ron Portash: Mainline Newspapers, Irene Huschak and Bonnie Fox representing the Portage Area Historical Society, and Jean Kinley representing Portage Summerfest Committee.

ON MOTION OF MR. KISSELL, SECONDED BY MR. LEARN, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED TO GO OUT OF ORDER ON THE AGENDA TO RECOGNIZE THE VISITORS. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. CADWALLADER, MR. HAYES, MR. KINLEY, MR. LEARN, MR. KISSELL AND MR. WOZNIAK, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Irene Huschak and Bonnie Fox presented on behalf of the Portage Area Historical Society; they are working with HGTV on a proposal for renovating the Portage Community. Irene presented 17 pictures of buildings, mostly on Main Street that are either dilapidated or in the process of being razed. Irene also presented Council with an overview of the proposal they will be submitting to HGTV to renovate the Portage Community. On the proposal, it reflects that Portage is on the National Register of Historic Places, a listing of several buildings needing renovated, the Sonman Mine Explosion, Crichton McCormick Park, and the Mainline Canal Trails that will be coming within the near future. Irene advised that the only item remaining is a video of the community that will accompany the proposal to HGTV. Irene commented that Portage was known as the Gem of the Mainline, but has lost some of its sparkle. Council thanked Irene and Bonnie for all their efforts in preparing the proposal for HGTV and obtaining funding sources to renovate the community.

Ms. Jean Kinley presented and read a letter to Council concerning the Summerfest Committee and its intentions. Ms. Kinley advised that the committee met on January 8th, 2020 and advised that Summerfest 2020 will be the last event that the Committee will plan and hold. After numerous attempts for help from the community, volunteers, school district, and other organizations to assist in the planning of the annual event, there have been no responses. The committee is getting old and tired. Ms. Kinley took the opportunity to thank the number of volunteers that have supported and assisted in the event over the past 29 years. Council thanked Ms. Kinley and the committee for their efforts and devotion through the years.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Update on Recreation Peer Committee

Mr. Koban informed Council that he is in the process of setting up a meeting with the Peer Consultant; Jean Ashley and committee members for Thursday, February 20th, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. The goal is to have ALL the members present for the first meeting. An e-mail was sent out to all committee members prior to the meeting to determine availability if they can all meet on this date. Mr. Koban will provide additional information at the February regular meeting if ALL members can attend or if it needs to be rescheduled.

B. Update on Borough Roof-No update

- C. Update on Trout Run Rehabilitation-no update.
- D. Update on PennDot Project on SR 164-Intersection of Caldwell and Main
Mr. Koban informed Council that he is working with PennDot and Mr. Wisor on the streetscape lighting designs. Mr. Koban advised that he will provide Council with samples prior to submitting to PennDot.
- E. Update on Main Street Phase II both sides of Caldwell Avenue to North Railroad
There was no update
- F. Update on Main Street Improvements Phase 3A-Caldwell to Mountain Avenue (East side)
The grant was awarded through the CFA Multimodal Transportation Fund Program in the amount of \$298,165.00. The grant contract and electronic documents have been signed and moving forward.
- G. Update on Main Street Improvements Phase 3B-Caldwell to Mountain Avenue (West side)
A grant application was submitted for grant funding through the PennDot Multimodal Transportation. The grant has not been awarded yet.
- H. Update on restrooms and Crichton McCormick Park
The project has been completed and can be removed from the agenda.
- I. Update on Sonman Avenue Bridge-12-year plan-No update
- J. Update on grant award for Crichton McCormick park through DCNR
Mr. Koban advised that DCNR sent project coordinator notifications and login information for electronic registering and authorization. Mr. Koban also informed Council that an additional \$10,000.00 was awarded by DCNR for Professional Service Costs only.
- K. Mainline Trail Feasibility Study Phase
There was no update.
- L. Update on proposal for NFS representative to research emergency access
Mr. Koban provided an overview to new council members concerning a request from Jim Laird to retain a representative with Norfolk Southern to research another emergency access road through the borough. Mr. Koban explained that Mr. Laird will share in the costs of the \$1,200.00 fee for the NFS representative. A lengthy discussion took place on the railroad track usage by the rail cars from Amfire, water lines within the right of way of NFS, alternative access via Sherman Street with gates. Mr. Koban commented that we need some answers to a lot of questions.
- ON MOTION OF MR. LEARN, SECONDED BY MR. KINLEY, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED TO SHARE THE 50/50 COST OF THE \$1,200.00 PROPOSAL (\$600.00 EA) FOR RETAINING A NORFOLK SOUTHERN REPRESENTATIVE FOR RESEARCHING ALTERNATIVE ACCESS THROUGH THE BOROUGH. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. CADWALLADER, MR. HAYES, MR. KINLEY, MR. LEARN, MR. KISSELL AND MR. WOZNIAK, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.
- M. Discussion on ATV's utilizing borough streets/alleys.
Mr. Koban suggested discussing the various issues of ATV's by getting a consensus of Council to either move forward with research or abandon the item. There was a lengthy discussion on the pro's and con's which included the following:

- Riders utilizing borough streets/alleys to access businesses and trails
- Discussion on possible permitting of ATV's within the borough
- Setting up a public meeting to obtain their input
- Additional police duties/issues
- Ordinance/regulations on locations of possible alleys/streets
- School and Water Authority access points to and from trails
- Permission from private property owners
- Respect from the riders to the community
- Working with the Allegheny Ridge Riders Association

Mr. Wozniak suggested that Council take a poll to determine additional research or interest on moving forward. Mr. Wozniak polled each member for moving forward:

Answering Yes were: Mr. Cadwallader, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Kissell, and Mr. Wozniak
 Answering No was: Mr. Learn and Mr. Kinley

Mr. Wozniak advised Mr. Hayes and Mr. Koban that he will contact Mr. Doug Wagner; with the Allegheny Ridge Riders Association, on private property owner consent and other matters.

Buildings

- A. 933 Sonman Avenue Property (Greenawalt)-There was no update.
- B. 616 Dulancey Drive (Adams)-No update.
- C. Update on junk vehicles-work in progress.
- D. 828 North Railroad (Gaunts)-No update.
- E. 720 Orchard Street (Plummers)-There was no update.
- F. 406 Caldwell Avenue (Barclay)-There was no update.
- G. 925 Main Street (Lewis)-No update.
- H. 532 Dulancey Drive (Gaunts)-No update
- I. Update on fire damage at 1010 Jefferson (Quigley) and 1012 Jefferson (Seese)

Mr. Kissell commented on the timeframe of the demolished structure located across from the Chatterbox and the fencing around the perimeters. Mr. Kissell commented that Council has set a precedence on various other owners taking responsibility to comply with the ordinance. The property is owned by Robert and Bonnie Fox. The structure will be placed on the agenda for further discussion once the address is determined.

New Business:

- A. Approval to seek loan interest rates for the 2020 Case 580SN Backhoe
 Mr. Koban informed Council that he is requesting approval to contact banks for interest rates on a loan for the 2020 Case Backhoe that was already approved in the 2020 General Fund Operating Budget. A short discussion took place with Mr. Cadwallader and Mr. Kinley providing additional information on financing, Case vs John Deere, Co-Stars purchasing, and bucket attachments. Mr. Koban advised that we will trading in the Case 621 Loader and the Kubota Tractor for an overall loan of \$49,000.00.

ON MOTION OF MR. KINLEY, SECONDED BY MR. LEARN, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED TO OBTAIN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION LOAN RATES AND TERMS FOR THE PURCHASE OF A 2020 CASE 580 SN BACKHOE THAT WAS PREVIOUSLY APPROVED IN THE 2020 GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGET. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. CADWALLADER, MR. HAYES, MR. KINLEY, MR. LEARN, MR. KISSELL AND MR. WOZNIAK, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

B. Approval to re-advertise the 2020 dates for council meetings.

Ms. Claar informed Council that she had incorrect dates for the committee meetings on the first advertisement. The committee meetings advertised for May 19th and November 23rd instead of May 18th and November 16th, 2020.

ON MOTION OF MR. CADWALLADER, SECONDED BY MR. LEARN, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED TO RE-ADVERTISE IN THE DISPATCH A REVISED 2020 COMMITTEE MEETING DATES FOR MAY 18TH AND NOVEMBER 16TH, 2020. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. CADWALLADER, MR. HAYES, MR. KINLEY, MR. LEARN, MR. KISSELL AND MR. WOZNIAK, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

C. Approval to move forward with additional research on ATV's utilizing borough Streets/alleys

Mr. Koban advised the issue was discussed earlier in the meeting and wanted to have a recorded motion of either moving forward or abandoning the issue.

ON MOTION OF MR. KISSELL, SECONDED BY MR. HAYES, COUNCIL APPROVED TO MOVE FORWARD WITH ADDITIONAL RESEARCH ON ATV'S UTILIZING BOROUGH STREETS/ALLEYS. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. CADWALLADER, MR. HAYES, MR. KISSELL AND MR. WOZNIAK. MOTION CARRIED 4-2 WITH MR. KINLEY AND MR. LEARN VOTING NEGATIVELY.

Paying of the Bills

Ms. Claar presented a copy of the bills and additional bills to be paid in written form.

ON MOTION OF MR. HAYES, SECONDED BY MR. CADWALLADER, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED TO PAY THE BILLS IN WRITTEN FORM, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,922.16. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. CADWALLADER, MR. HAYES, MR. KINLEY, MR. LEARN, MR. KISSELL, AND MR. WOZNIAK. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Good of the Borough

Mr. Wozniak commented on the large icicles that are under the Lee Street Bridge. Mr. Koban commented that the Public Works will remove them.

Mr. Wozniak commended the Public Works Department Employees for their efforts in cindering and snow plowing during the recent snow and ice storms.

Mr. Kissell advised Council that the ice rink liner was installed at Crichton McCormick on Sunday, December 15th, 2019; with the assistance of the Allegheny Ridge Riders Association and community volunteers. Mr. Kissell commented that the liner is in bad shape.

Mr. Kissell suggested ordering shirts for the three new council members. Mr. Wozniak suggested that the previous vendor has the copyright of the logo and to obtain it back from them. Mr. Cadwallader also suggested contacting Damin Printing for a quote.

Mr. Hayes informed Council that the Allegheny Ridge Riders Association is in the planning stages for a Memorial Day parade. Mr. Hayes advised that he will have Mr. Wagner contact the Summerfest committee.

Mr. Koban advised Council of a drainage issue of a property owner at the Woodland Estates that was jointly installed by Portage Borough and Portage Township in 1983. Ms. Claar had researched through 1983 minutes and documentation for the Woodland Estates and the Johnstown Housing Authority. Mr. Koban explained that there is a sink hole in their yard from the storm drainage pipe. Mr. Koban suggested having the Borough and Township work together to repair the pipe to remedy the situation and to share in the costs.

There being no further business;

ON MOTION OF MR. LEARN, SECONDED BY MR. KINLEY, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO ADJOURN. COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. CADWALLADER, MR. HAYES, MR. KINLEY, MR. LEARN, MR. KISSELL, AND MR. WOZNIAK. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

The meeting concluded at 7:34 P.M.