

April 6, 2021, Council Meeting
Minutes

The regular meeting of Clarion Borough Council was held on April 6, 2021, as advertised, in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library. President Lapinto called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmembers present were Ms. Roberts, Dr. Sanders Dédé, Mr. Aaron, Mr. MacBeth, Ms. Logue, and President Lapinto. Mr. Garbarino participated by telephone. Solicitor Marshall, Mr. Preston, Mayor Whitling, Mr. Colosimo, Chief Peck, and Secretary LaVan-Preston were also present. Mr. Sharrar and Ms. Schwabenbauer were absent.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Ms. Roberts, approving the March 2, 2021, Council Meeting, minutes. The motion carried with a vote of seven yea.

Mr. Aaron made a motion to amend the agenda to include discussion on a proposal received from USA Pool Management in regards to managing the Clarion Borough Pool.

Just for Council's information, President Lapinto reported this was only received today.

Ms. Roberts seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of seven yea.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items

President Lapinto asked Mr. Chuck Motter to please stand and that he will have 3 minutes to address Council or asked if Mr. Patrick Reed if he would prefer to speak on his behalf and if this would be okay?

Solicitor Marshall agreed that would be okay.

In discussions with Terra Works and the Borough, Mr. Reed hopes that something can be resolved with the truck traffic. Everyone understands the trucks are going through the University through 6 crosswalks that will be busy this fall and is a safety concern. Getting the trucks to those places along Grand Avenue properly and safely would be huge. Mr. Reed noted he did not come to fight with anyone about the industrial park. In fact, it would be great to have the industry there. However, safety is necessary. An 18-wheeler cannot stop on a dime. Clarion University is the largest employer in the Borough and very important to this town. Mr. Reed prefers to see the trucks to go to the industrial park from Heidrick Street and not use Wood Street to Grand Avenue. Mr. Reed feels Terra Works will eventually want to rename that street to Industrial Drive and that a red light will be needed due to all the additional truck traffic as that area expands with businesses. Also, the students from Reinhard Villages will have a harder time crossing there. Mr. Reed commented 250 trucks a day use that road to access J. M. Leasing and Kronospan and doesn't feel it's his responsibility to tell them to change their GPS's. Donna Oberlander, as the Representative for Clarion County, should be involved in some way with those businesses to get those trucks in there right so the drivers are not driving on 'no trucks' streets. Unable to speak at the last meeting, Mr. Reed handed the newspaper the

comments he intended to make and the article was a good, well-written one. All the concerns were explained, which are shared by higher ups at the University. Mr. Reed doesn't care if it is a student, Jim Crooks, or President Lapinto not paying attention those companies along Grand Avenue should want to work with the community and should be doing things right to ensure the trucks are entering and exiting properly.

President Lapinto turned it over to Chief Peck to state what the Borough has tried to do.

Chief Peck agrees Mr. Reed is right that there is an issue with big trucks accessing the Grand Avenue area. The trucks that are going to the businesses are traveling on roads where signs are up saying 'no trucks'. Chief Peck did verify what was occurring around the area and then met with PennDOT, who is going to change some signage on East Main Street to try to eliminate the drivers from turning onto Sheridan Road. PennDOT is also going to put up a sign 'To 80' along Greenville Avenue as drivers exit from Heidrick Street to indicate to out-of-town drivers how to get back to the interstate, which is where most of the truck traffic is coming from. An issue also exists at Greenville Avenue and Corbett Street with trucks using Corbett Street. Chief Peck met with the companies twice personally to try to come up with a mapping system that could be attached to the truck company's bill of lading to direct the drivers in and out the best way. PennDOT has reviewed the signage leading to interstate and also along interstate to make sure the drivers use the best exit to get to this area and believes the signage is proper and does not require any changes. In prior discussions, Chief Peck believes Mr. Reed's biggest complaint is Wood Street.

Mr. Reed doesn't think the trucks should be on any road stating 'no trucks' but agreed Wood Street in the University area is his biggest concern.

As of right now, Chief Peck reported truck traffic on that street is permitted. Unless Council makes changes, the Police Department cannot do anything unless the truck driver violates a law. Steps are being taken to try to address the problem, but it takes time and education as well.

President Lapinto referred this to the Public Safety Committee.

Mr. Aaron agreed the Committee will look into this a little more and maybe communicate with the University as well as to looking at making that area no truck traffic.

President Lapinto inquired if that would interfere with any of the University deliveries?

If Council makes it local deliveries only, Chief Peck stated his opinion is that would be a local delivery down in that area because the businesses are located there.

Mr. Preston pointed out the Borough has big trucks deliver to the Public Works Department.

Mr. Reed asked if it would be possible for all the local deliveries to enter from Heidrick Street and come up to Grand Avenue to deliver to the Borough building and Shipping and Receiving Department for the University. When trucks turn at Wendy's, they struggle making the turn onto Wood Street as the driver has to swing over into the other lane to avoid hitting the stone pillars. Mr. Reed really thinks a light is going to be needed at Greenville and Heidrick at some point.

President Lapinto stated that's not the Borough's road and would be addressed by PennDOT. The Public Safety and Mayor will look into this problem. However, President Lapinto doesn't think the Borough will be able to solve all of Mr. Reed's concerns and commends Chief Peck for all his work on this.

For a two-week period, Chief Peck informed everyone that the University Public Safety Department watched the truck traffic using this area of Wood Street from the period of 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. and there was an average of 30 trucks per week.

Mr. Reed thinks that's per day.

Chief Peck stated it was per week.

Mr. Reed doesn't believe that for a minute. Since the article has appeared in the paper, the truck traffic seems to have reduced.

Solicitor Marshall stated Council is going to address this matter and called order back to the meeting to follow the agenda.

President Lapinto reported Mr. Steve Polatty also requested to be on the agenda but is not present this evening.

ADMINISTRATION

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. Garbarino, approving the appropriations for the month of April, was carried with a vote of seven yeas.

President Lapinto stated the Treasurer's Report and Budget Analysis are in the packet for Council's review.

President Lapinto announced the second Council Meeting will be held April 20, 2021, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library, if needed.

On a motion by Dr. Sanders Dédé with a second by Ms. Logue to approve Delta Zeta Sorority's special event request for their 5K Turtle Trot to be held April 17, 2021, subject to COVID-19 Warning and following CDC guidelines in place at the time of the event. The motion carried with a vote of seven yeas.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Ms. Roberts, giving permission for Clarion County to drawdown CDBG funds for engineering in the amount of \$1,209.83 and wages for Todd Colosimo for the period of October 6, 2020, to April 3, 2021 in the amount of \$1,393.43, was carried unanimously.

President Lapinto reported next permission is necessary to complete a revision to the FFY 2018 CDBG activity description (Park Project) and asked Mr. Colosimo to briefly explain.

Mr. Colosimo commented this will align the activity description more closely to what is being done out at the park, which is the netting and softball improvements. DCED has already given permission to do this if Council approves this tonight. There will be no change with the budget.

On a motion by Mr. MacBeth with a second by Mr. Aaron to give permission to complete a revision to the FFY 2018 CDBG activity description (Park Project). The motion carried with a vote of seven yeas.

President Lapinto stated Council needs to give permission to complete CDBG time extensions and asked Mr. Colosimo for more information.

Mr. Colosimo asked Council to give permission to complete two time extensions to be submitted with the County that will then be submitted to DCED and are specifically extensions for the 2016 and 2017 CDBG years, which are both related to Main Street improvements. The material delivery is behind, and extra time to expend those funds may be necessary.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. MacBeth, giving permission to complete CDBG time extension requests as needed to support the Main Street and Park Projects, was carried with a vote of seven yeas.

BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE

Dr. Sanders Dédé stated the Blueprint Committee will be meeting, in person, on April 21, 2021, at 6 p.m. at Motel 6. On the issue of the funding grant, the Committee has tabled that for now as some of the criteria could not be met.

DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN

President Lapinto asked Mr. Crooks for a report.

Mr. Crooks stated Destination Clarion Downtown held a meeting this month, and about 35 people attended. This new communication is really appreciated. The purpose of Destination Clarion Downtown is for the beautification of the area. On Monday, 6 volunteers met at the Park to kick off the Pickup Clarion and collected garbage all around town; it's not just in the Main Street area. Mr. Crooks commented people can then submit a picture of him/herself with the bag of garbage on the Facebook page for a chance to win prizes from businesses.

Mr. Crooks announced the Committee also reached out to the bars and clubs to pick up the cigarette butts and clean up around the outside of his/her establishment. The owners were very responsive and it looks good, which is appreciated.

Mr. Crooks questioned can flowers really bring beauty and people to Downtown? Niagara on the Lake has a whole planetarium to grow their own flowers. In discussion with the individual that runs that program, this endeavor has been phenomenal. Mr. Crooks stressed Niagara on the Lake is like Disneyland on overdrive and it is just amazing. On a summer afternoon, individuals cannot even find a place to walk on the sidewalks; it's that busy. It really can make a difference. The Committee has been focusing on the purchase of planters, which each Councilmember received a copy of the picture. Two of these have been ordered on faith. The planter is 5' long and made of steel finished in black powdered metal and will not rust. The location of each has not been determined yet. However, Mr. Crooks feels these will look beautiful and asked for community support to help with the purchase. If anyone in the public would like to purchase another one, the cost is \$1,950 each. A plaque in honor or in memory of a loved one could be placed on the planter as well. Clarion Borough could really use more than two. Estimated delivery is 6 weeks. The Committee is also looking for donations for the flowers.

Mr. Crooks stated discussion on replanting trees came up as well. The Pennsylvania Conservancy has a fund for trees. Everybody is working together. Most are aware of the changes that have resulted from COVID, and the effect it had on Downtown. A beautiful Downtown will help the University, all the residents living in the Borough, and the property values for the area. Mr. Crooks stated now is the time for everyone to either be pulling or pushing the wagon. No more riders. Everyone can make a difference.

President Lapinto noticed Mike Chesterfield and his family picked up in her neighborhood last weekend and thinks this is a great idea.

Dr. Sanders Dédé questioned if Mr. Crooks reached out to the ladies who have been volunteering for years to put out the planters through town. They are stored at the Borough Public Works Building.

Mr. Crooks meant to mention that as well that the Committee will be taking over the 12 planters that Jean Mills and Joanne Vavrek planted. The Committee is in the process of getting the planters now and will be planting and placing them possibly by the benches to make the area look good.

PUBLIC WORKS

Ms. Roberts reported the Borough received some applications for hiring a full-time laborer and interviews will be scheduled within the next week or so.

Ms. Roberts reminded everyone that Spring leaf pick-up collection will be held April 26 and 27 and May 3 and 4, 2021. Everyone should place his/her leaves only at curbside, and no branches as they will damage the equipment.

Ms. Roberts announced Clean-Up Day will be held May 15, 2021, from 6:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. at the Public Works Building.

President Lapinto asked if these notices were provided to the news media?

Secretary LaVan-Preston believes it was included in the press packets and asked the reporters to advertise both.

STORMWATER AUTHORITY

Mr. Aaron stated operations are moving along pretty smoothly and the 3rd billing cycle is coming up.

Mr. Aaron asked Mr. Colosimo to give an update on the plans for this year.

Mr. Colosimo informed everyone the Authority will be helping with the four site projects included in the PA Small Water and Sewer Grant. These should all go to construction this summer. Final restoration, if not possible this year, will take place in the spring.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Aaron asked Chief Peck to explain what the server is for?

Chief Peck stated this is for the computer data base. The server needs to be upgraded.

Secretary LaVan-Preston added this was the amount included in the 2021 budget.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Dr. Dédé, giving permission to purchase the new "Informant" server in the amount of \$11,884 from Computer Support & Associates, Inc., was carried with a vote of seven yea.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. MacBeth to give permission to advertise for a full-time police officer eligibility list.

Mr. Aaron reported this was actually the full-time police officer included last year in the budget but postponed due to COVID and the lack of money.

The motion carried with a vote of seven yea.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Ms. Roberts to give permission for the Solicitor to advertise Ordinance #2021-835, an Ordinance amending the Traffic Ordinances.

Mr. Aaron explained most of these changes are related to parking meters. The pay station at the Liberty Lot no longer is functional. When it was purchased years ago, it was a demo, or beta version, and parts are no longer available. In 2019, some parking meters were removed in the residential areas. In keeping with that idea, meters will be removed from Eighth Avenue, Ninth Avenue, and Sixth Avenue and used for the Liberty Lot. Mr. Aaron also announced the diagonal parking along Center Place on the outside edge of that lot will be 'permit use only'. People that have a parking permit will be able to use that area. Enough meters were found to take care of this problem.

Secretary LaVan-Preston also reported stop signs on George Road in both directions at 8th Avenue were added.

The motion carried with a vote of seven yea.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. MacBeth to give permission to advertise for sealed bids for the 2010 police cruiser.

Mr. Aaron commented it was offered to another law enforcement agency to avoid the bidding process, but there was not much interest. The inspection ran out the last day of March. The Borough's been replacing it for 2 years now.

The motion carried with a vote of seven yea.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Ms. Logue to give permission to purchase two in-car computers from Patrol PC in the amount of \$9,048 (one paid by grant; one included in loan).

Mr. Aaron stated the Borough received a \$4,500 grant from an anonymous source.

Chief Peck added the police officers will appreciate this very much.

The motion carried with a vote of seven yea.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Ms. Logue, giving permission to purchase the lights, siren, middle console, etc., and installation of radio, computer, and camera from Valero Service Inc., in the amount of \$8,046, was carried with a vote of seven yea.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Ms. Logue to give permission to purchase the graphics from Clark Vinyl Graphics in the amount of \$1,175, which also includes the installation. The motion carried with a vote of seven yea.

Mr. Aaron stated the results of the bank proposals for 2021 Dodge Charger and equipment in the amount of \$42,252 for a term of 36 months is included in your packet. That figure includes the car and all the equipment mentioned above.

Secretary LaVan-Preston commented First United National Bank is the apparent low bidder. The car was ordered in February to be ready by May but has not been started yet. Secretary LaVan-Preston stated First United National Bank's bid is good until May 7th, so Council could wait until May to approve if that would be okay.

President Lapinto thinks the problem is a VIN number is needed in order to take the loan.

As long as the banks are willing to hold the bids, Solicitor Marshall stated the Borough will be fine.

Mr. Aaron prefers to wait to make a payment until the Borough has the vehicle. All the equipment can be ordered now to hopefully line up with the timing of the car. This is for information purposes only.

LIBRARY BOARD

Mayor Whitling informed Council Casey O'Toole has stepped down from the Library Board. Jill Spence has been voted in as new president. The Vice President spot is still open. The Board is hoping to fill the empty spot next month. Someone is very excited about joining and is interested in being the treasurer as well.

Mr. Colosimo mentioned the bids for the boiler replacement and the building renovations for the library have been published and are due on April 30th. That project is underway.

HOUSING AND ZONING

Ms. Logue commented the Housing and Zoning Report is in the packet for everyone's review.

Ms. Logue stated the Borough is still looking for an individual to serve as an alternate member on the Zoning Hearing Board. One individual has contacted the Borough, but one more is necessary. He/she should contact the Borough Office.

RECREATION

Ms. Roberts stated a letter was received from the YMCA that was included in the packet. Before turning it over to Mr. Aaron, Ms. Roberts informed everyone that the Borough has not given up on the pool unlike what is being heard throughout the community. It is true that the Y is not going to be staffing and running the pool, but no decision has been made yet. The Committee has reached out to a pool management company to look at other options. Ms. Roberts stressed it's very important that the pool stay open, and there is a place for kids and families to go throughout the summer. It's also important the public knows that Council has not made any of the comments that are circulating. Ms. Roberts asked Mr. Aaron to discuss the information on the company that the Committee has been discussing.

Mr. Aaron thinks the general notion has been if the Y can't manage it then it's done. The kids in the community and the community itself deserve better than that. If it comes to the point where the Borough can no longer operate it or afford to fix it, that's one thing. After last year,

Mr. Aaron feels this is part of Council's job to find a means of providing recreation to the public. Before spending a lot of money creating new opportunities, the Borough needs to work with what is available now. Management companies exist that operate aquatics facilities, municipal and private, all over the United States. USA Pool Management operates in every section of the State, primarily in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and the Pittsburgh areas. When first reaching out to the company, Mr. Aaron thought as soon as the location was identified the company would say 'no, we don't service that area'. However, USA Pool Management put a proposal together within a week. Usually, the company likes to have 90 days to set up, especially the first year of operation, but are willing to put the work in. Mr. Aaron commented the 32-page document explains in detail all the services they will provide. The company is very thorough and qualified in the pool management industry. Mr. Aaron pointed out some of the services as follows: advertise and recruit, interview and pre-screen, certification and onsite training, provide and hire staff, schedule, manage daily operations, payroll, support water safety, and audits. This is all performed in one contract with the company for the total price of \$26,530. The season would be from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend, 7 days a week from 1 – 7 p.m. The pool will not be shut down because of weather and would be open if someone would want to go. The Borough could receive approximately \$1,200/year discount if a 3-year commitment was agreed upon. Since there is a little bit of a time crunch with the offer, and all this is dependent on whether the pool actually will be operational, Mr. Aaron stated the Recreation Committee would like to handle negotiating the contract and executing it with at this amount.

Dr. Sanders Dédé asked if the Committee reached out to any other companies?

Mr. Aaron agreed three others were contacted but will not service this area.

Dr. Sanders Dédé prefers to see some other proposals.

Mr. Aaron commented no one else is willing to give a proposal. The companies in the Pittsburgh area were not willing to operate outside Allegheny-Butler Counties.

First of all, President Lapinto credited Mr. Aaron for researching this issue. Like Ms. Roberts mentioned, President Lapinto stated she was very upset when people assumed just because the Y was not managing the pool it would not open. The company provided a complete packet and it is well worth looking into. A representative is willing to meet with the Committee. President Lapinto likes the idea the company will find and train the lifeguards.

Mayor Whitling asked if the company will hire locally?

President Lapinto agreed. A copy was given to the Solicitor to review as well but feels this is something to pursue.

Ms. Roberts agreed.

Dr. Sanders Dédé asked if this has been to the Committee yet?

President Lapinto stated no. This just came in today.

Ms. Roberts noted the Committee has been discussing the future of the pool and if someone could be found to manage the pool. Clarion Borough cannot take on that responsibility.

President Lapinto also stressed the main question is if the pool will be operational. It sat last year without use.

Mr. MacBeth inquired what happens if the pool is not?

Secretary LaVan-Preston thinks that needs to be part of the contract that if it isn't operational it will be null and void.

Mr. Aaron agreed that would be part of the negotiations and hopes there is enough respect to at least allow the Committee to try to negotiate this agreement.

Solicitor Marshall suggested it's his understanding that the Committee can recommend and approve the contract if it's delegated the authority but believes the President or Vice President actually has to sign the contract.

Mr. Aaron pointed out the Recreation and Administration Committee are the same members.

Solicitor Marshall means one of the officers would have to sign the actual agreement not just any member.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Ms. Logue to allow the Recreation Committee to negotiate, and if it is acceptable, execute a contract with USA Pool Management as the management of the Clarion Borough Pool from Sunday of Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day of 2021 in an amount not to exceed \$26,530.

President Lapinto reported that is contingent upon Mr. Preston and the Department being able to get the pool up and operating.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea with Dr. Sanders Dédé voting no.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary LaVan-Preston had nothing to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Whitling thanked the groups and families that have gone out to clean up the town. It is greatly appreciated. Mayor Whitling encouraged everyone to continue to do this throughout the entire year not just in April, especially after ALF. Maybe residents can put a reminder in his/her calendar to go out and clean up the community.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

CITIZEN COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were none.

CORRESPONDENCE

Secretary LaVan-Preston read a memorandum to Council from Bob Bowersox in reference to Comcast Cable Franchise renewal pointing out that Comcast prices seem quite high while their channel offers have been reduced. In the heart of Big 10 country and with a great number of Penn State fans in the area, Comcast does not offer the Big 10 network in Clarion. Mr. Bowersox believes Oil City, Brookville, and DuBois has access to this network and questions if other communities can get this channel why can't Clarion? Clarion's lineup includes SEC network, a sports conference that has no geographic connections to this area. Being geographically right in the heart of the Big 10, Mr. Bowersox feels Comcast should offer that here as well as the ACC, which includes other local interests like Pitt. If Clarion Borough is serious about retaining the contract with Comcast, Mr. Bowersox urges Council to ask for Big 10 network to be included. When notifying Attorney Dan Cohen with Dr. Sanders Dédé's request last month, Secretary LaVan-Preston reported Attorney Cohen stated the municipality doesn't normally have the ability to dictate what channels are wanted but will forward this to him.

Dr. Sanders Dédé pointed out her price has not gone down either.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. MacBeth, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Linda LaVan-Preston, Borough Secretary