

August 3, 2021, Council Meeting
Minutes

The regular meeting of Clarion Borough Council was held on August 3, 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 Mr. Garbarino, Ms. Roberts, Mr. Aaron, Mr. MacBeth, and President Lapinto. Dr. Sanders Dédé and Ms. Logue were absent. Mr. Preston, Mayor Whitling, Mr. Sharrar, Mr. Colosimo, Chief Peck, and Secretary LaVan-Preston were also present. Solicitor Marshall and Ms. Schwabenbauer were absent.

Mayor Whitling issued the Oath of Office to Brittaney S. Gray to the position of police officer.

On a motion by Mr. MacBeth with a second by Mr. Aaron to amend the agenda to include under Administration to approve a change order extending the time of completion for Contract 2020-4 Main Street Improvements Project from April 20, 2021, to October 31, 2021. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. Garbarino, approving the July 6, 2021, Council Meeting, minutes, was carried with a vote of six yea.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items

There was none.

ADMINISTRATION

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Mr. MacBeth to approve the appropriations for the month of August. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

President Lapinto commented 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 August 17, 2021, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library, if needed.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. MacBeth, giving permission for Clarion County to drawdown CDBG funds for engineering (\$1,442.30), advertising (\$1,488.48) and wages for Todd Colosimo for the period of April 4, 2021, to July 24, 2021, (\$2,590.38) for a total amount of \$5,521.16, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Roberts to approve the United Way of Clarion County's request to amend the date of their 5K and 10K race from September 25, 2021, to October 2, 2021, , subject to COVID-19 Warning and following CDC guidelines in place at the time of the event. The motion was carried with a vote of six yea.

President Lapinto stated next is to approve the South Street Reconstruction Project for inclusion in the Borough's FFY 2021 CDBG application and verified this is a 3-year project.

Mr. Colosimo agreed this is the third year of Phase 1 for this project. Construction will begin in spring/summer of 2022. Work will start at Boundary Street coming north hopefully getting up South Sixth Avenue about 500', depending on prices.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Ms. Roberts to approve the South Sixth Avenue Reconstruction Project for inclusion in the Borough's FFY 2021 CDBG Application. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Mr. MacBeth with a second by Mr. Garbarino, approving the project portion of the FFY 2021 CDBG allocation to be \$100,000 (93.4%) and the administration portion of the FFY 2021 CDBG Allocation to be \$7,115 (6.6%), was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. MacBeth to approve The EADS Group to begin design and engineering of the South Sixth Avenue Reconstruction Project upon receipt of environmental clearance from DCED.

Mr. Colosimo added the clearance should be approximately August 16th or 17th. DCED has received the request for release of funds packet and is now waiting for the 15-day comment period to expire. At that point, the Borough will have the authority to use the grant funds, meaning EADS can start the design. Mr. Colosimo hopes to bid that in December with Council's permission.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Aaron to approve payment of \$17,735.76 to Clarion County for FFY 2015 CDBG payback.

Because of COVID, President Lapinto stated the parts were not received in a timely fashion and the contract expired. HUD would not grant an extension.

Mr. Colosimo noted he's hopeful the County will put that money back into the Borough's program for this project.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

President Lapinto commented everyone received a copy of a support letter for the County 2021 MTF Grant for Phase 2 of the Multi-Module Transportation Funding Application, which is part of the Glassworks.

Mr. Colosimo reported last year's application was not successful so this is the exact same set of improvements this year. Council would be approving two documents, Exhibit 5 for the

application consent letter, giving the Commissioners permission to go ahead and approve it since the Borough is the site owner, and the support letter, which is standard. Both were included in the packets for Council review.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. MacBeth, approving the support letter for the County 2021 MTF Grant, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Mr. MacBeth with a second by Mr. Garbarino to approve a change order extending the time of completion for Contract 2020-4 Main Street Improvements Project from April 20, 2021, to October 31, 2021. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE

Per Dr. Sanders Dédé earlier today, President Lapinto stated there was no report.

DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN

Ms. Nancy Hanna voiced excitement about the Bluegrass Festival event this weekend, which grew in scope from the initial idea. On Friday from 3-8 p.m., it will start off with 14 pop-up shops that will be located under the awning of some of existing businesses; such as, Eagle Nutrition, the building owned by Tim Scott next to it, CRBC, the Weaver and Wein's buildings, the Dance Studio, True Value, and FL Crooks. The Committee is using this to kind of incubate new businesses in Clarion and hopes that it will spark into a First Friday Event for Clarion to bring people into town Friday evenings. Ms. Hanna stated there seems to be real interest in a co-op space in some of the empty buildings throughout town. This is in the very initial, dreamy stages right now. More information can be found at the Local Clarion County Facebook page, which Ms. Hanna started. Destination Clarion Downtown has a great working relationship with the Blueprint Committee, Small Business Development Center, United Way, and C-93. United Way and C-93 are really the parent organizations for the concert. The Committee appreciates Council's support for this event.

Even though it's in the dream stages, Mr. Garbarino inquired what the co-op will look like?

Ms. Hanna reported this is all in the stage of imagination. An anchor shop will be at the front of a building with different sections rented out to different vendors that will eventually break off and start their own brick and mortar businesses. At this point, some vendors cannot afford to do that right now. Ms. Hanna thinks with COVID, everyone needs to re-imagine what business looks like. A lot of business owners do not want to stay open as frequently. This way, vendors would share the effort, support, and staff to pull together to make it work. Franklin did this quite successfully, which resulted with 6 businesses on-going because of their effort. Ms. Hanna stressed it will take a while. First Friday may be a start to get people coming in. In a meeting with the Commissioners, the suggestion to involve the Amish was made. Anyone with ideas, Ms. Hanna encouraged he/she pass them on to the Committee.

President Lapinto inquired if the Cranberry Mall has something similar to this co-op?

Ms. Jennifer Vinson agreed the old Sears stores has several antique booths and things of that set up.

Ms. Hanna stated the Committee is looking at people developing new products or new types of business for the area. It's not a matter of filling every storefront. What is necessary is for people to come in and spend time in Clarion where 5 or 6 cluster destinations are located for people to visit, including shopping, restaurants, and breweries. Ms. Hanna thinks it's very exciting what is happening at the Wein's Building. Sugar Tree opened today. Everyone needs to go in and say hello. Ms. Hanna stated the owner started her business out of a garage, didn't have any capital, and now has her own store.

Mr. Garbarino commended Ms. Hanna for her efforts.

PUBLIC WORKS

Ms. Roberts had nothing to report.

STORMWATER AUTHORITY:

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. Garbarino, appointing Bryan Smith, 120 South Third Avenue, to the vacancy on the Storm Water Authority Board with the term to expire 2026, was carried with a vote of six yea.

PUBLIC SAFETY

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. MacBeth to give permission to purchase a camera from Watchguard in the amount of \$5,435.

Chief Peck informed everyone the old one will be installed in the patrol room for the ability to do interviews. The new one will go in the new car.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. MacBeth to give permission to purchase officer firearms not to exceed \$7,500, which was a budgeted item for 2021.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

LIBRARY BOARD

Mayor Whitling had nothing to report.

HOUSING AND ZONING

Mr. Garbarino had nothing to report.

RECREATION

Ms. Roberts thanked Limestone Township Supervisors for their \$250 contribution for Paul A. Weaver Community Park.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary LaVan-Preston informed everyone the 2020 Audit has been received. An Exit Audit Meeting will be scheduled soon with the Administration Committee and Zelenkofske Axelrod.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Whitling welcomed Officer Gray to Clarion Borough and noted Clarion Borough looks forward to her service.

Officer Gray thanked Council and really appreciates the opportunity.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

President Lapinto announced the Borough did receive the American Rescue funds, which was close to \$299,000. It has been deposited into an interest-bearing account. Clarion Borough does not know what it can be used for yet. Council has a few ideas, with the bulk going towards Public Safety and storm water projects. The Borough may not know until after the 2022 budget is prepared. President Lapinto reported the money cannot be spent until it is determined the uses, because if it is an ineligible expense, the Borough will have to repay it. Once the money can be spent, Council will approve each purchase.

CITIZEN COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Elisabeth Fulmer feels that some of the money could be used for trees for clean air. When Autumn Leaf Festival actually arrives, there would be leaves for the event.

Ms. Melissa Fulton, United Way of Clarion County, thanked Council for approving the Clarion River Jam/Bluegrass Festival this weekend. Nine great bands will be coming; ½ of which are local and the rest from Pittsburgh. It will be a lot of great talent, and the sound system will be excellent. Ms. Fulton invites everyone to come and check the event out.

President Lapinto thanked Ms. Fulton for bringing this to Downtown.

Ms. Fulton reported the United Way was ready to cancel the event in March again this year due to COVID; but the PA Council of Arts asked them to come up with another idea, which was this outdoor festival. This will be the 12th year. Since C-93 already have the summer bands set up for the first weekend, Ms. Fulton worked with them to get this included.

Mr. Garbarino inquired if this was held at the Holiday Inn or Park Inn previously?

Ms. Fulton agreed and stated about 750 people attended during that weekend. When it was held there, 30 bands were invited. The bands started playing Friday afternoon and played every ½ hour at which time the band was switched out. The hotel parking lot, credit union

parking lot, and streets in the area were parked full. If the event drew that many people in March with poor weather, Ms. Fulton expects anywhere from 200-1000 people.

Mr. Garbarino asked if the diminished number of bands is due to COVID or the location?

Ms. Fulton commented the United Way chose to go with less participants. The 30 bands have always donated their time, some bands coming from Canada, North Carolina, and Ohio. Instead of using the Art Grant money for a fundraising effort, the United Way wanted to be able to give the bands a stipend for coming. Many of them lost gigs due to COVID and were unable to travel. Each band will get 1 hour to play his/her music. The United Way wanted to cut it back to show the bands that he/she are appreciated and glad that he/she are coming to the event. Many are glad to get on the stage, play, and get some cash in their hands. The hope is some will stay in town and spend some before leaving. If the weather is not good, Ms. Fulton reported the American Legion is allowing them to use the upstairs banquet room for cover. Jam stations will be throughout town so that individuals will be not so much stationary but will be moving. Concerts will be held Friday and Saturday 6-10 p.m. on 6th Avenue and Saturday 1-6 p.m. in the Gazebo; jam stations will be Friday and Saturday 1-10 p.m. in various locations throughout town; and vendors Friday 3-8 p.m. paired with local business along Main Street. Clogging demonstrations will be provided by the Wild Laurel Cloggers. The park may be the more family-friendly atmosphere as some people are not comfortable being around bars. Ms. Fulton added some of the bands will play on 6th Avenue and then move onto Mechanistic Brewing, CRBC, Fulton House, Artfunkt, and United Way to set up.

Mr. Garbarino understands the Legion is closed down for a month and a half so Ms. Fulton should reach out to them soon.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

Chief Peck thanked Council for bringing the Department up to full strength again with the hiring of Officer Gray. Also, a big thank you to the Civil Service Commission that completed a great deal of work by redoing the Rules so everything was in order and legal and then with the entire hiring process. It went really smooth, and the Commission did a great job. Chief Peck stated the members deserve a lot of credit.

Officer Gray thanked everyone very much for this opportunity.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. Garbarino, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Linda LaVan-Preston, Borough Secretary