

May 2, 2023, Council Meeting  
Minutes

The regular meeting of the Clarion Borough Council was held on May 2, 2023, in 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, Dr. Sanders Dédé, Mr. Aaron, Mr. Montana, and President Lapinto. Ms. Schmader was absent. Mayor Fulmer Vinson, Solicitor Marshall, Mr. Colosimo, Chief Peck, Mr. Preston, and Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston were also present. Mr. Sharrar was absent.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Mr. Aaron, approving the minutes of the April 4, 2023, Council Meeting, was carried with a vote of five yea.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items Only

Mr. Danny Moore, 710 Main Street, Strattanville, representing Hope Rising Church, thanked everyone for the opportunity to speak. At the Hope Rising Church, the members truly believe he/she is better together and truly believes that Clarion is their community. Having stated that, the reason for the attendance is Hope Rising Church, in partnership with Destination Clarion Downtown, Clarion Borough, and Clarion Area Chamber of Business and Industry, is hosting an event on June 10, 2023, that will serve two purposes. The first purpose is to provide an area for all of the Clarion community to come together and be with one another. The second purpose is to do a fundraiser for the local fire department and the youth and Hope Rising missions. Mr. Moore commented the Church is trying to make this event bigger than life. There will be a lot of family activities, food trucks, cornhole tournaments, and a Chinese auction just to name a few. Mr. Moore hopes that Council will approve the request for the closure of South Sixth Avenue from Main Street to Wood Street and North Sixth Avenue from Main Street to Madison Road, and, again, thanked everyone for his/her time.

Ms. Nancy Hanna addressed Council by saying the Clarion Summer Fest is really the heart of the community and thanks everyone for listening. Summer Fest would not be possible if it were not for the wonderful committee, Jackie Griebel, Robin Fillman, Cindy Nellis, and Linda Whitling, who are all part of different aspects of making this festival happen for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. There will be outdoor events and a kids' zone that will include the whole community. Local churches are being asked to help, and Destination Clarion Downtown is very much a partner as well. Once again, Ms. Hanna reported the pop-up shops will be here. The Committee is always interested in hearing anyone's thoughts and appreciates the support.

ADMINISTRATION

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. Garbarino, approving the appropriations for the month of May, carried with a vote of six yea.

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

President Lapinto stated the second Council Meeting may be held on May 16, 2023, at 7 p.m., if there is a need, which at this time, there is not. If it is, the meeting will be held at the Clarion Borough

Offices as that is Primary Election Day.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. Garbarino to approve the Clarion Summer Fest/The Local Clarion County/Destination Clarion Downtown/Clarion River Brewery for a street closure of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Main Street to Merle Road on Saturday, June 3, 2023; Saturday, July 8, 2023, and Saturday, August 5, 2023, from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m. for live music and kids' activities.

Ms. Roberts understands there were some questions about a couple events and asked if that was worked out.

Chief Peck discussed this with Ms. Hanna, and everyone is on the same page.

Ms. Hanna agreed that Chief Peck and she discussed it line-by-line and some things were removed.

The motion carried unanimously.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Ms. Roberts to approve Destination Clarion Downtown/Hope Rising/Clarion Area Chamber of Business and Industry's request for a street closure of South 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Main Street to Wood Street and North 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Main Street to Madison Road on Saturday, June 10, 2023, from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. to raise money for the firemen.

Dr. Sanders Dédé read the promotional material and noticed it asked that all check be made out to Hope Rising. If someone wanted to make it out to the fireman directly, is that okay?

Mr. Crooks stated the reason is that Hope Rising Church affords people the possibility of a tax deduction, and individuals can list firemen in the memo part of the check.

Dr. Sanders Dédé contributes to the fire department every year when the solicitation notices are sent out and believes the fire company is also tax deductible. So, if that is the case, the check could be made directly to the fire company instead.

Mr. Preston verified the fire department is tax deductible?

Mr. Crooks was unaware of that and confirmed people can write it direct to the company.

Just to clarify, Pastor Harry pointed out all monies will be going to the fire department.

If a person wishes to write the check out directly to the fire department, Dr. Sanders Dédé thinks that needs to be clarified so everyone is aware.

President Lapinto understands that various businesses plan on holding specials to provide matching funds to the fire department and asked if maybe a centrally located fund would be a better idea.

Ms. Tracy Becker, Clarion Area Chamber of Business and Industry, commented there will definitely be an accountability of the funds donated towards the fire company. The hope was to present a 5-digit

check to the firemen after the event is held.

Even if a check were written out to the department, Dr. Sanders Dédé stated it could be added into the presentation check.

Hearing no more discussion and/or questions, the motion carried with a vote of six yea. President Lapinto informed Mr. Crooks, he cannot vote unfortunately since he is not a Councilmember.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. Garbarino to approve Clarion Area Chamber of Business and Industry's special event request for closure and usage of Grant Street behind Memorial Park, closure of South Jefferson Place next to Park, and North Jefferson Place next to Courthouse from 5 p.m. Friday, August 4, 2023, to 8 p.m. Sunday, August 6, 2023, for "BBQ Fest".

Mr. Preston and Chief Peck both informed Ms. Becker that the drive-thru for S & T Bank will need to remain open during the event.

Ms. Becker understands that and has already discussed this with the Bank.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Garbarino, adopting Resolution #2023-475, a Resolution adopting the Clarion County Hazard Mitigation Plan, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Dr. Sanders Dédé to promote Rebecca Ferringer from probationary to regular full-time Administrative/Stormwater Assistant, retroactive to April 14, 2023.

President Lapinto asked Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston for a report.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston reported Ms. Ferringer is doing a very good job in this position, fits in with everyone at the office, is very friendly, answers the phones, and helps at the window. Also, Ms. Ferringer practiced in the Yellowstone accounting to learn how to do different processes. After being shown a couple of times, Ms. Ferringer referred to her notes on how to do completed actions and just asked Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston to doublecheck it. Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston is very pleased with Ms. Ferringer and asked Mr. Colosimo for anything additional.

Mr. Colosimo seconded Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston comments and is quite impressed with Ms. Ferringer.

Mr. Aaron thirded those comments. Ms. Ferringer has been a welcoming addition, hit the ground running, and is doing a fantastic job.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

President Lapinto informed everyone the Fire Department doors bids are due May 8, 2023, at 2 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Dr. Sanders Dédé, approving Terra Works, Inc., Pay Application Number Six in the amount of \$36,609.81 for Contract 2022-2 South Sixth Avenue Reconstruction Project and to authorize Clarion County to complete a CDBG Program Drawdown and payment to Terra Works, Inc., in the amount of \$36,609.81, contingent upon submission of certified payrolls and other required documentation by Terra Works, Inc., to Clarion Borough, was carried with a vote of six yea.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Chairman Montana announced an EMS meeting with Borough Officials has been scheduled for May 23, 2023, at 7 p.m. at the Department of Public Safety Building, EOC Center, Shippenville, and encouraged all members to try to attend to find out more information.

Mr. Montana informed everyone Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston, Mr. Sharrar, and he met with Commissioner Ed Heasley and Jeff Smathers, Director of the EMS for the County and thanked God Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston and Mr. Sharrar showed up to ask many pertinent questions that he would not have thought about. To put it plain, it is going to be a nightmare and will take approximately a year to get everything together. The municipalities are being asked to foot the bill for the taxpayers as far as EMS services. Mr. Montana commented not much more can be said at this point and will take more digging.

President Lapinto reported all members of Council are invited to that meeting. The County is hosting it one night for townships and another for boroughs. After that meeting, President Lapinto was informed that only two counties in Pennsylvania can raise sales tax; Allegheny County and Philadelphia and also the efforts must start at the grass roots (boroughs/townships) due to Pennsylvania being a Commonwealth and not a State. President Lapinto thinks that was educational.

#### BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Sanders Dédé stated the bids for putting in the playground, concrete work, parking lot, and basketball courts are due next week. Once the weather is nice, the work will start. Also, the Committee will be soliciting more money to get more done.

#### DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN REPORT

Mr. Crooks appreciates the support and collaboration that occurred with the 'Let's give back to our volunteer firemen'. Receiving a call about the fire at Bob's Sub about 3:30 in the morning and having real estate in that area, Mr. Crooks went to the area. It was just really amazing to see this group of people working together. Mr. Crooks pointed out no one was panicked, everybody knew their job, and were like a well-trained machine. The firemen had scheduled breaks and knew who was and was not allowed inside the building. As horrible as it was to watch this fire and think of the Eustice family, to see the fireman in action; no one realizes what kind of job he/she does. Mr. Crooks doesn't know what Clarion would do without these volunteers. Mr. Crooks reported the businesses downtown were thinking of doing things, some already have, but, thought by joining efforts with Pastor Harry and Hope Rising, it could be a little bit bigger as a community. Hope Rising already had this cornhole competition planned to raise money for their mission program. The idea came alive as to how to collaborate so as not to compete with each other. Mr. Crooks then invited Ms. Becker and President

Lapinto in to discuss the event. Instead of donating \$1,000, everyone is hoping to raise at least \$12,000. Everyone understands that the firemen have needs. Several questions have been asked about the other fire companies that assisted that day. Mr. Crooks thinks that is awesome but wants the money to go to the Clarion firemen without any strings attached. What the firemen decide to do after that will be up to him/her. Anyone that can run a fire department that efficient, Mr. Crooks stressed can certainly decide what to do with this amount of money. Everyone in the community, other churches, organizations, and so on are encouraged to join in on this event.

Moving on to flowers, Mr. Crooks commented Ms. Nancy Womeldorf is going to be home next week, and the flowers will all be planted before Memorial Day weekend, which is very exciting.

#### PUBLIC WORKS

In the absence of Ms. Schmader, Mr. Montana reminded everyone that Clarion Borough Clean-Up Day is scheduled for Saturday, May 13, 2023, from 6 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. All items are to be taken to the Public Works Building.

On a motion by Mr. Montana with a second by Mr. Garbarino to give permission to advertise the 2023 Paving Project.

Mr. Montana reported Clarion Borough's 2023 Project will include the following areas: Option 1 will be the milling and paving of the following streets: Shady Avenue from Frampton Street to a point, 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue from Wood Street to South Street, Church Road from 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Church Road from a point – wedge curb LT to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue – wedge curb LT, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Main Street to a point, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue from a point to South Street, Center Place from Madison Road to Liberty Street, and Center Place from wedge curb LT to 120' and Option 2 will be the milling and paving of all the streets just named and the leveling with double seal coat of Robinwood Drive from Riverview Avenue to Fairview Avenue.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

#### STORM WATER AUTHORITY

Mr. Aaron informed everyone the Authority Board will be meeting June 11<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at the Library.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Aaron announced National Night Out will be held Tuesday, August 1, 2023. Plans are being made at this time.

Chief Peck added the Clarion Fire and Hose Co. No. 1 is raffling a side-by-side. Each ticket is \$20. Anyone that is in need of a ticket to help benefit that night, can stop by the Borough Office or see any local fireman for a ticket and a chance to win a side-by-side at the same time.

#### LIBRARY REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson commented last week was National Library Week and different activities were held.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson announced everyone should have received the flier for the Library's fundraiser, which hasn't been possible the last couple of years due to COVID. The library could really use the public's support this year, and every donation will be appreciated. Mayor Fulmer Vinson thanked everyone for his/her support.

#### HOUSING AND ZONING

Ms. Roberts reported the Housing and Zoning Report is in the packet for everyone's review.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Dr. Sanders Dédé to give permission for Andy Ace Montana, Owner/Broker of Ace Montana Realty, to place 2 or 3 small café table and chair settings in front of the office at 613 Main Street to be put out each morning and removed each evening during the Spring, Summer, and Fall months of each year.

Mr. Aaron inquired if it will be 2 or 3?

Mr. Montana explained it depends on exactly how much room it takes up. However, since the Public Works Department placed the flat bench in front of Shirey's True Value, it gives more space for tables there. Mr. Montana feels it could help out Michelle's Café and his building won't look so bear. Also, this is the sunny side of the street, and people passing through could sit as well. Mr. Montana thinks it will be a nice addition to Main Street.

Mr. Aaron added it would be a nice place for Mr. Montana to sit down with clients, too.

President Lapinto informed Mr. Montana he will not be able to vote.

The motion carried with a vote of five yea, with Mr. Montana abstaining.

#### RECREATION

Ms. Roberts stated the Borough is working on replacing the picnic shelter/pavilion at Paul A. Weaver Community Park. Mr. Colosimo is getting the specifications as to what exactly needs to be done. The foundation may potentially need to be redone, but it is not certain at this time. The Committee is also considering putting electric in so that people will have it, if it's necessary. Ms. Roberts commented this was included in the 2023 Budget and is a much-needed project.

#### SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stated the financial consultant, Mr. Samuel Lynch, Jr., picked up the documentation and is currently working on the 2022 audit financial statements. Also, Mr. Lynch came up last Thursday to meet with Ms. Ferringier to get some financial information for the Clarion Borough Stormwater Authority to begin work on their audit papers.

#### MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson echoed everyone's comments on thanking the outstanding job the fire department, police department, and all the surrounding first responders did on Easter to help out with the fire. Everyone is very much appreciated.

#### OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

#### NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

#### CITIZEN COMMENTS: Non-Agenda Items

Ms. Elisabeth Fulmer stated trees.

Mr. Jim Averill, 1226 Liberty Street, requested Council to pay particular attention to this EMS problem. In DuBois, the ambulance service has a brand-new building, all brand-new ambulances, and do not have much of a personnel problem. Mr. Averill is not so sure that Clarion should be following a model from Pittsburgh when there is a model right over the hill to look at. The money just doesn't add up. Repeating his comment from last month, Mr. Averill stated throwing money at something doesn't always solve the problem. A real hard look needs to be given on this EMS situation. Having 20 years of experience in a fire department, Mr. Averill commented everyone laughed at him for purchasing a quarter million dollars fire truck until the day it saved 2 lives. Mr. Averill stressed take a look at what the problem is and address it.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

On a motion by Mr. Aaron with a second by Mr. Garbarino, the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

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Linda LaVan-Preston, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary