

August 7, 2024, Council Meeting  
Minutes

The regular meeting of Clarion Borough Council was held on August 7, 2024, 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. Logue, Ms. Roberts, Ms. Schmader, and President Lapinto. Messrs. Averil and Aaron were absent. Solicitor Marshall, Mr. Sharrar, Chief Peck, Mr. Colosimo, Mr. Preston, Mayor Fulmer Vinson, and Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston were also present.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Logue to approve the July 2, 2024, Council Meeting, minutes. The motion carried with a vote of five yea.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items

Ms. Elisabeth Fulmer, 21 South Seventh Avenue, noticed on the agenda that there will not be recycling in the Borough anymore and inquired if it is because the population dropped below the minimum?

President Lapinto stated that was correct.

Ms. Fulmer asked if other alternatives have been looked into instead of Waste Management?

President Lapinto commented yes and called on Ms. Logue to discuss more.

Ms. Logue informed everybody that the Borough advertised for bids and received two, which almost doubled in price. Since Clarion Borough falls required under the population threshold and does not receive enough grant funding to help with the service, this is the reason to reject the bids. The price jumped up to \$60,000.

President Lapinto reported the current cost is a little over \$39,000.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston added not only did the price go up, but the companies were not going to collect all the items that are currently being collected.

Ms. Fulmer asked again if any other alternatives were looked into? Perhaps, there could be other recycling centers in the Borough that residents could use.

Mr. Sharrar reached out to both companies that supplied a bid to see if they could offer other alternatives. One company suggested a dumpster could be placed in the Borough; however, the only problem is if there is one piece of garbage in the dumpster, it is contaminated and everything will be thrown away.

Ms. Fulmer understands that would be a problem if it was unsupervised.

Mr. Sharrar stated citizens may take their recyclables to the Waste Management's Transfer Station, which is located in Shippenville.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston pointed out Waste Management is a collector for Clarion County. Residents would just have to haul it over on their own.

Even if the Borough were to pay for a dumpster for residents to throw their recyclables in, Mr. Sharrar repeated one piece of garbage will contaminate it.

Ms. Fulmer know other communities can manage and deal with it and wonders why Clarion isn't and asked if it's because nobody cares?

President Lapinto stressed that is not true. Council has been talking about recycling for a long time. Clarion Borough is only 25% taxable. If recycling were to remain, it would require another mill of tax or more.

Ms. Fulmer asked where the recycling millage will go now if it is eliminated?

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stated Council will probably reduce the millage from that fund and put it into General Fund, which has been scraping by the last couple of years anyways. This was a very tough decision for every Councilmember. Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston reported the Boy Scouts were asked about possibly putting a dumpster somewhere, but that didn't pan out either.

Ms. Logue commented it's the cost.

Ms. Fulmer sees that the Borough will continue to collect yard waste.

President Lapinto agreed.

Mr. Jim Crooks thinks it would be interesting to know how many Borough residents would be willing to pay more for recycling and feels Council would be surprised. A lot of people feel that recycling is an important service just like street lighting and the library. If recycling is eliminated, their garbage is going to increase.

President Lapinto feels a lot of residents are recycling everything.

Mr. Sharrar reiterated what Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston mentioned that both proposals are basically cutting in half what materials will be accepted. So, the price will be more, and the acceptable items will be less. It was going to cost more to haul white goods to their transfer station. Glass and aluminum will be taken, but all materials are to be cleaned. Cardboard wasn't going to be collected, because it gets contaminated if it gets wet. Mr. Sharrar added the Committee spent about 6 months on how to handle recycling.

Ms. Fulmer inquired if the money will still be necessary since there will be no more recycling?

In the past, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston pointed out that the General Fund has had to provide funds to other funds, such as recycling, as the millage wasn't aligned correctly. Council changed the millage rates accordingly. Last year, Council realized that the recycling contract would be up at the end of 2024 and that it would be a hard decision to face. Council choose to advertise to see what a new recycling proposal would cost to see if it would be feasible to do. Once the bids were received and almost doubled the current price, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston commented alternate ways were looked into. Waste Management is an option for all Clarion County residents, but the materials need driven to their transfer station. Residents could contact Waste Management for information. Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston wondered if the Clarion County Commissioners would be able to do a county-wide recycling program.

Mr. Sharrar reminded everyone Clarion Borough was the only municipality in the County that had to have a program. Franklin and Oil City are the closest entities that must recycle.

Mr. Ron Wilshire, exploreClarion reporter and former Councilmember, recalls the Borough was mandated to have curbside pickup. Council looked into other ways to achieve recycling in the Borough, such as using the Boy Scouts or having a volunteer group collect it. However, the Borough was informed it had to provide curbside recycling. The decision was made to eventually pay for it by a tax. One of the garbage companies even offered to sort through the garbage, pick out the recyclable items, but DEP would not allow that. Mr. Wilshire believes Clarion Township was required curbside but never did it.

President Lapinto agreed but understood that the distance between houses in the township is why they never did recycling.

Over the years, Mr. Wilshire believes the market that buys recyclables just fell and now there is a problem as to where to put it.

Ms. Fulmer understands there are two different sides.

Mr. Crooks informed Council people just feel they are being a good citizen to help the environment by recycling and makes people feel good.

President Lapinto heard there is a problem recycling bar glass.

Mr. Sharrar isn't sure about that, but businesses are required to recycle.

Mr. Garbarino commented the bars do recycle.

Again, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stressed that Council seriously looked into having dumpsters dropped off at the Maintenance Building. Without it

being supervised, everyone will use. Also, if it is contaminated, it will defeat the purpose. The Borough does turn in statistics for each year and receives grant money, but it's \$3,500 or less.

Ms. Fulmer thinks there is a need to do a better job of educating everybody, not only the consumers and the residents, but the collectors,

Mr. Sharrar reported fliers are mailed with all rentals each year so that residents know what is permitted to be recycled. Most people think that if it's plastic, it's recyclable. However, that is not the case.

Ms. Fulmer voiced how sorry she is to see that end.

President Lapinto stressed it was not a decision Council made lightly.

While in the past, Ms. Fulmer heard Council ask how to get out of recycling and now this is a way to do it and congratulated Council.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stated Council was serious, which is why the advertisement for bids for proposals was placed as well as tabling action last month to see if alternatives ways could be found. If there was some way to make it work, Council would go with it.

Ms. Fulmer stressed citizens should have a chance to voice how valuable this service is and agree to pay for it.

Mr. Wilshire feels that Council could have stopped the services much earlier as the population was down due to Covid. Council did try by continuing on with the program.

President Lapinto agreed.

#### ADMINISTRATION

On a motion by Ms. Schmader with a second by Ms. Roberts, approving the appropriations for the month of August, was carried with a vote of five yea.

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

President Lapinto announced the second meeting will be held on August 20, 2024, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library. If it is not necessary, everyone will be notified it will be canceled.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Logue to approve the Clarion County Coalition for Suicide Prevention's special event request for their annual walk to be held on September 4, 2024, from 3-8 p.m. The motion carried with a vote of five yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Schmader, approving the United Way of Clarion County's special event request for their 5K and 10K race to be held on September 28, 2024, from 8-10 a.m., was carried with a vote of four yea with Mr. Garbarino abstaining as he is on the board.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Schmader to approve Peak Pyro by Kellners LLC's special event request for a fireworks display for PennWest Clarion "Welcome Weekend Student Celebration" to be held on Sunday, August 25, 2024, from 9-9:30 p.m.

Mr. Garbarino asked where the fireworks will be put off?

Mr. Preston commented in the parking lot above the dorms on Wood Street.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston commented Mr. Shawn Houk, representing PennWest Clarion, is present this evening and was instrumental in having the company submit the request. The certificate of insurance is all in place.

The motion carried with a vote of five yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Schmader, approving the award of Clarion Borough Contract 2024-2 Clarion Free Library Sewage Lateral Repair Project to Olson Services, Brookville, Pennsylvania for the lump sum amount of \$4,075, was carried with a vote of five yea.

#### EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

President Lapinto commented Ms. Logue, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston, and she will attend the Clarion County Convention, where a speaker from Harrisburg will address the EMS situation.

#### BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE

President Lapinto stated there was no report.

#### DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN

Mr. Crooks commented Destination Clarion Downtown would like to continue the Christmas decorations from 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues, which will include approximately 14 additional Christmas wreaths, bulbs, lights, and bows.

Mr. Preston believes the light poles all have electric but will double check.

If so, Mr. Crooks hopes to raise about \$2,000 and will check with the businesses in that area for possible contributions. A letter will be sent to each one. Anyone that wishes to contribute may send payment to Destination Clarion Downtown at PO Box 487, Clarion, or drop it off at Crooks' Clothing.

President Lapinto noted the last meeting was very well attended.

Mr. Crooks agreed. Also, the weekends with the pop-ups during Summer Fest have really been well attended and created a lot of traffic on Main Street. A lot of the pop-ups completely sold out. Mr. Crooks thinks this generates a lot of great energy. The marble event was amazing.

President Lapinto stated the marbles were beautiful. It was a very popular event.

#### PUBLIC WORKS/STORM WATER AUTHORITY

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Garbarino to give permission to send a letter to CBSA requesting reimbursement for the Borough's match and other costs not eligible for reimbursement for the PA Small Sewer and Water Grant in the total of \$79,247.78.

Ms. Fulmer asked who CBSA is?

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stated Clarion Borough Stormwater Authority.

The motion carried with a vote of five yea.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Roberts announced National Night Out unfortunately was cancelled due to the weather but will be rescheduled in the future.

Ms. Schmader heard a rumor that it is going to be Tuesday.

Chief Peck reported that is not the case and has a call into PennDOT to set up a make-up day. In order to hold this event on Main Street, a permit is required from them.

In the packet, Ms. Roberts stated everyone received a copy of the proposed Noise Ordinance and asked all Councilmembers to review it. If anyone has any comments or questions, he/she is encouraged to forward them to Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston. The Committee would like to give permission at the September meeting for the Solicitor to advertise it with adoption at the October Council Meeting.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Logue to give permission to hire Kelly Laughlin and Kathleen Strop as part-time meter enforcement officers at the rate of \$12/hour up to 29 hours per week. The motion carried with a vote of five yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Logue, accepting the resignation from T. Lance Theiss as a part-time police officer, effective July 31, 2024, carried with a vote of five yea.

#### LIBRARY REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson thanked Johnny on the Spot for great work in getting the gutters cleaned out to try to buy some more time while waiting on the appropriations to be decided. The

Borough's application moved on to the next level. Mayor Fulmer Vinson hopes it continues to do so as the library needs a new roof.

### HOUSING AND ZONING

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Mr. Garbarino, rejecting the Recycling Bid Proposals received from Tri-County Industries, Inc., and Waste Management, was carried with a vote of five yea.

Ms. Logue announced the final recycling pick up will be on Wednesday, December 18, 2024.

Ms. Logue reported Waste Management accepts recycling in Clarion County at their transfer station located in Shippenville. Interested Borough residents should reach out to them for information.

Ms. Logue reported the leaf/grass/brush/limb drop-off program will remain.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston commented a request was received from George Alexander, Whiskey Row, LLC, asking Council to vacate a portion of Ridge Road. However, Mr. Alexander reached out today asking Council to hold off until he checks into something else.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Schmader, giving permission for the County Seat Restaurant to add 2 bistro tables in front of their building located at 531 Main Street to be put out each morning and removed each evening, was carried with a vote of five yea.

### RECREATION

Ms. Roberts had nothing to report.

Mr. Preston commented the Department began to tear down the pavilion at Paul A. Weaver Community Park and should be completed by tomorrow. Then new construction can begin.

### SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston commented the auditors have reached out with the information to pull in order to get ready for testing to begin in September. The audit should be completed by the end of September.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston thanked everyone that was involved with the Peace Run event that was held on Monday in the Clarion County Veterans Memorial Park and feels it was successful.

President Lapinto recalled years ago that the audit had to be done by March, and it's almost the end of the year.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston commented DCED does send a postcard by October if the audit isn't received but it hasn't been a problem. There is a family situation with the financial consultant and also a scheduling issue with the auditors. However, it will be done by the end of September.

#### MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson thanked everyone involved with Summer Fest this year and thought all three weekends were great. It is wonderful to see people out and about in the morning.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson agreed that the Peace Run was really a nice event and it was great being a part of it. Since it was a Monday afternoon, it was hard to get a lot of people there, but the group that was there enjoyed it.

#### OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

#### NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

#### CITIZEN COMMENTS: Non-Agenda Items

Ms. Elisabeth Fulmer, 21 South Seventh Avenue, stated trees.

President Lapinto saw a picture posted of the Courthouse at one time and thought of Ms. Fulmer as there were beautiful trees all around it.

Ms. Fulmer thinks it looks bare by the Courthouse and noted too many trees are coming down.

#### CORRESPONDENCE:

There was none.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Garbarino, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

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Linda LaVan-Preston, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary