

February 4, 2025, Council Meeting
Minutes

The regular meeting of Clarion Borough Council was held on February 4, 2025, 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 Ms. Whitling, Ms. Roberts, Mr. Montana, and President Lapinto. Mr. Aaron, Mr. Garbarino, and Ms. Logue were absent. Mr. Preston, Mr. Colosimo, Solicitor Marshall, Mayor Fulmer Vinson, and Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston were also present. Chief Peck was absent.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Whitling, approving the January 7, 2025, Council Meeting, minutes, was carried with a vote of five yea.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items Only

There were none.

ADMINISTRATION

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

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

President Lapinto stated the second meeting will be held on February 18, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library. If it gets canceled, everyone will be notified.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Whitling, approving The EADS Group, Inc., as Borough Engineer for 2025 at the rates indicated on the chart included in the packet, carried with a vote of five yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Montana to approve Clarion County to submit a CDBG time extension request to the PA Department of Community and Economic Development for the Clarion Borough FFY 2021 CDBG Program extending the funds spend-by date to December 31, 2025.

President Lapinto asked Mr. Colosimo to quickly explain what this means.

Mr. Colosimo stated the Borough has roughly \$8,000 left in CDBG administrative funds. Since the County's putting in a request to extend their '21 program, the Borough decided to do the same thing as it would ensure the 2021 administration funds would be available for use until the end of the year.

President Lapinto questioned what the Borough could use them for?

Mr. Colosimo voiced concerned that DCED may come up with monitoring tasks or ask for him to provide things for the Borough. Since these are administrative funds and not project funds, there is not a lot of things that the Borough can do with them.

Hearing no other questions, the motion carried with a vote of five yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Whitling, approving Wreaths Across America's special event request for Wreaths Across America Ceremony (wreath-laying and riderless horse) to be held December 13, 2025, from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m., carried with a vote of five yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Whitling to approve American Cancer Society/Relay for Life of PennWest Clarion's special event request to use sidewalks for walk from the University and from the University stadium to meet at the Memorial Park for a Survivor/Remembrance Ceremony to be held April 5, 2025, from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston verified permission was already granted by the Commissioners for use of the Park.

The motion carried unanimously.

On a motion by Ms. Whitling with a second by Ms. Roberts to approve denying the request from Carla Magrini, Clarion Borough Tax Collector, for Council to increase compensation from \$1 per item to 4% of money collected in March and April and 5% the rest of the year.

President Lapinto asked for any discussion?

Solicitor Marshall stated to make sure the record reflects Council is actually approving the denial of the request.

President Lapinto reported Council had to raise taxes by 3 mills. Ms. Magrini is asking for a percentage rather than a dollar per item. This increase would be a mill of tax. Clarion Borough just cannot do that.

The motion carried with a vote of five yea.

President Lapinto publicly thanked the Clarion Fire and Hose Company #1, other fire departments, the police department, ambulance service, and restaurants and public for assistance and donations with the fire that occurred on January 18, 2025, at the corner of 5th Avenue and Wood Street and commended them on a job well done. Unfortunately, this seems to be something Council does several times. President Lapinto thanked Mr. Preston, as Chief.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Mr. Montana stated the survey is to be completed sometime early or late spring. Results should be available by March to June. No meetings have been held.

BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE

President Lapinto commented the Blueprint Committee did try to meet this month, but, due to the weather, no one could make it. Monthly meetings are being held again rather than quarterly. President Lapinto understands the Executive Committee was able to meet though.

DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN

There was none.

PUBLIC WORKS/STORM WATER AUTHORITY

Mr. Montana relayed a message from Mike Amato, in care of his family and his father, James Amato, who live on Sunset Drive. The Amatos' would like to thank the Public Works and Police Departments for responding to an emergency situation where Mike's father fell. Mr. Montana read a thank you note from Mike Amato thanking Keaton MacBeth, Doug Preston, Chris Himes, and Eric Sharrar for their assistance on January 2nd with Officer Justin O'Neil. Mr. Amato stated these guys proved what great integrity is going above and beyond job duties, which proves why Clarion is a great place to live. Mr. Montana continued the Amato family is very grateful for their service and commitment to the citizens of Clarion Borough and Clarion County community.

On a motion by Mr. Montana with a second by Ms. Roberts, giving permission to ask Clarion Borough Stormwater Authority Board to make a motion at their next meeting to provide \$45,000 towards engineering for the TA Set-Aside Grant (2nd Avenue Project), was carried with a vote of five yea.

Mr. Montana reported the CBSA Board meets Thursday, February 13, 2025.

PUBLIC SAFETY

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Whitling, giving permission to promote Derek Holt from probationary full-time police officer to regular full-time police officer at the rate of \$26.62 per hour, effective February 6, 2025, was carried with a vote of five yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Montana to accept Andrew Turnbull's resignation letter as a part-time police officer, effective immediately. The motion carried unanimously.

LIBRARY REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson had nothing to report.

HOUSING AND ZONING

On a motion by Ms. Whitling with a second by Ms. Roberts, appointing Brenda Sanders Dédé as an alternate member on the Zoning Hearing Board for a 3-year term to expire February 4, 2028, was carried with a vote of five yea.

RECREATION

Ms. Roberts had nothing to report.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stated most of the year-end reports have been submitted and she is still working on getting things ready for the 2024 audit.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson asked everyone to be careful as a nasty storm is coming through Wednesday night early morning Thursday.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Non-Agenda Items

There were none.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Montana, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Linda LaVan-Preston, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary