

January 7, 2025, Council Meeting  
Minutes

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

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Whitling, approving the December 3, 2024, Council Meeting, minutes, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Logue to approve the December 17, 2024, Council Meeting, minutes. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items Only

As requested, Tim Stitt, Stitt's Nursery and Landscaping, Inc., in re complaints from Borough Maintenance Staff about snow placement was included on the agenda but was not present.

Mr. Mark Hartle, 63 East 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, questioned who decides when the 24-hour clock starts on the sidewalks snow removal ordinance?

President Lapinto stated, currently, it is the Chief. It is 24-hours after it stops snowing, which it hasn't stopped at this point.

Mr. Hartle realizes that it hasn't stopped. Understanding that Scott Sharrar, the previous zoning/code enforcement officer, enforced this before, Mr. Hartle inquired how Mr. Sharrar would that just because it stopped at his house that it also stopped snowing where Mr. Hartle lived?

Chief Peck commented it's a block away.

Mr. Hartle feels that is irrelevant and added that motorists have driven by the Pizza Pub and by the time they traveled to the other side of town it is no longer snowing and vice versa.

President Lapinto stated that could happen but referred this to the Solicitor.

Solicitor Marshall pointed out this is a period for Public Comments: Agenda Items Only. Council isn't required to answer hypothetical questions about their ordinances. If Mr. Hartle would like to address Council and state what his concerns are regarding that ordinance, they can get back to him with answers.

Mr. Hartle thought questions were permissible during this time and it is an agenda item.

Solicitor Marshall stated it is a public comment period, but Council doesn't have to answer any questions.

Mr. Hartle reported that is fine but is just making a point that the ordinance is probably unenforceable. If Mr. Sharrar were still in charge, Mr. Hartle doesn't believe he would be able to stay up for 24 hours.

Chief Peck stated the Department uses common sense.

Ms. Roberts doesn't think that the Borough has ever given out a ticket without probable cause and added that the Borough is very lenient on waiting for multiple days before anything is sent out. The Borough's main goal is to make sure the citizens are able to walk safely.

Mr. Hartle understands that and feels that's great.

If Mr. Hartle would get a citation, Ms. Logue thinks he could argue that point before the magistrate at the time of the hearing.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston commented the property owner is mailed a ticket for the violation. If it goes unpaid or no one responds to it, it goes up to the magistrate level.

President Lapinto stressed the Borough is not out there to get anyone.

Ms. Roberts stated no one has a stop watch set either.

Mr. Hartle understands that and stated that is the point he is trying to make, it's almost unenforceable.

#### ADMINISTRATION

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Logue, approving the appropriations for the month of January, was carried with a vote of six yea.

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

President Lapinto announced the second meeting will be held on January 21, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library, if necessary.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Roberts, approving Resolution #2025-504, approving the proposal from S & T Bank for the 2025 Tax Anticipation Note in the amount of \$300,000 at a rate of 5.00% interest, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Whitling to appoint Susquehanna Accounting & Consulting Solutions, Inc., as the Borough's Financial Consultant for 2025 at the rate of \$195. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

President Lapinto reminded everyone Zelenkofske Axelrod, LLC will complete 2024 Audit at the price of \$11,500, which was approved at the November 6, 2024, Council Meeting.

President Lapinto stated next is a request from Carla Magrini, Clarion Borough Tax Collector, for Council to consider increasing compensation from \$1 per item to 4% of money collected in March and April and 5% the rest of the year. Action must be take prior to February 15, 2025, and would be for the following taxing year. This will be discussed at committee meetings this month. President Lapinto commented there is no way that Council can pay percentage on the money collected as that would probably take a mill of taxes. Council had to raise taxes this year.

#### EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Mr. Montana had nothing to report. The EMS surveys are supposed to be out in the spring, and nothing will be known until then.

#### BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE

President Lapinto thinks there is a meeting this month.

Ms. Logue doesn't know for sure and stated the park is still closed until spring.

#### DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN

There was none.

#### PUBLIC WORKS/STORM WATER AUTHORITY

Mr. Montana commented the Public Works Report is in the packet for everyone's review.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Mr. Garbarino, reappointing Andrew Montana to a 5-year term on the Storm Water Authority Board to expired January 20230, was carried with a vote of six yea.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Roberts had nothing to report.

#### LIBRARY REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson had nothing to report.

#### HOUSING AND ZONING

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Mr. Garbarino, giving permission to advertise for Zoning Officer/Code Enforcement Officer with a rate to be determined later, was carried with a vote of six yea.

Ms. Logue announced if anyone is interested in being an alternate on the Zoning Hearing Board to contact the Borough Office.

Ms. Logue reminded residents and business owners that they must remove snow/ice from their sidewalk within 24 hours of the last snow fall.

#### RECREATION

Ms. Roberts had nothing to report.

#### SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stated she will be working on all the year-end reports, working between the two years, and getting things ready for the 2024 audit.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston received an email from the Clarion Forest and Jefferson Counties Boroughs Association that the next meeting will be held February 19, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in Brockway. The guest speaker will be from PennVEST. Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston will extend an invitation to the Clarion Borough Storm Water Authority Board in case anyone wishes to attend due to the topic.

President Lapinto received a copy of the Liquid Fuels Audit for the period of 2022-2023 with no audit findings and thanked Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston for the good work. Putting all the information together to be audited is a lot of work.

#### MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson received an email from the Pennsylvania State Mayors Association informing everyone that International Holocaust Remembrance Day is 1-27-2025. There will be quite a few activities going on throughout the Commonwealth. Like it was done in 2020, a resolution will be adopted. Mayor Fulmer Vinson stated it is a very important date to keep in mind.

#### OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

#### NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

#### CITIZEN COMMENTS: Non-Agenda Items

Chief Peck announced this year the Police Officers wanted to participate in the 'No Shave November' and donated \$1 a day not to shave. As a group, \$240 was collected. Chief Peck reported the money is always donated to a good cause and this year, the Department decided to donate it to the Alley Cats, who do a great job in making the town look great. The officers are proud to make the job a little easier. Chief Peck presented the check to representatives of the Alley Cats.

Ms. Sharon Guth, Alley Cats, voiced appreciation for the police department thinking of their group. It is very much appreciated.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Roberts, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

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Linda LaVan-Preston, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary