

May 6, 2025, Council Meeting
Minutes

The regular meeting of Clarion Borough Council was held on May 6, 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. Mr. Himes, Mr. Colosimo, Mayor Fulmer Vinson, Chief Peck, Mr. Wolf, Solicitor Marshall, and Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston were also present. Mr. Preston was absent.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Garbarino, approving the April 1, 2025, Council Meeting, minutes, was carried with a vote of six yea.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items Only

Ms. Nancy Womeldorf, on behalf of the Clarion Alley Cats, reported the Capital Campaign has begun and Clarion Printing prepared a map, which Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston stated a rough draft was included in the packet. This map indicates where the planters are currently (very heavy by Fifth Avenue and only one by Ace Hardware) and placements of new ones. The locations are numbered as to the order the Alley Cats would like them placed. After meeting with Terra Works last week, Ms. Womeldorf believes the Clarion Alley Cats have enough donations for two, which would be placed in front of the Haskell House and Husted's Plumbing. Also, the Alley Cats discussed possibly not having the planters be as high as 24", which the Public Works Department indicated 18" would be okay. This way there will be high and shorter ones. The Alley Cats are waiting on the prices, but this is the goal they are working towards. Ms. Womeldorf announced there is a Capital Campaign Committee, which Sharon Guth, Marianne Whitmer, Matt Lerch, Doug Bills, and she are working with the Clarion County Economic Development Corporation so that all donations can run through their 501c3. The money will be then transferred to the Clarion Alley Cats.

President Lapinto asked Ms. Womeldorf to explain to Council the upcoming event.

Ms. Womeldorf reported the Alley Cats are holding an event at the Haskell House on June 6, 2025. One hundred tickets will be sold at \$40 and can be purchased from someone or through a QR Code. The Haskell House has donated their venue and many local restaurants, Daddy's, County Seat, Michelle's, and Hollenbaugh's to name a few, are donating food. Ms. Lydia Crooks will be playing music for everyone present. Ms. Womeldorf commented Jane Blooms will be bringing flowers for people to create a bouquet. The event is to raise funds and get the message out to the public on what Clarion Alley Cats are trying to do.

When everyone met at the office to discuss the upcoming season and the event, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston asked if the Alley Cats wanted permission to place the planters in advance of the event.

Since the price is not available yet, Ms. Womeldorf thinks it's very optimistic that anything will happen in the next 3 weeks. Ms. Womeldorf asked if permission is necessary since the map is the same as what was submitted last year by Eric Funk for a grant, which was not approved.

President Lapinto believes the locations were already approved for the grant.

Mr. Colosimo agreed.

Ms. Womeldorf stressed none of the trees will be removed unless it would die. The planters will be placed in the spots. One location may require the cement to be cut slightly.

Mr. Colosimo verified the project area is from Fifth to Seventh Avenues?

Ms. Womeldorf agreed. The last four planters would take them down in front of the Chamber Office.

Ms. Logue asked Mr. Colosimo if he will look at them when they are installed?

Mr. Colosimo agreed.

Ms. Womeldorf informed Council that Mr. Colosimo attend the meeting last week as well.

Mr. Colosimo pointed out the planters will not be poured in-place but will be built to the same standards as the poured in place planters. The Borough wants the same quality of box planter. These ones will be a pre-cast version, and if it was ever necessary to move them, that would be possible.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson proclaimed May 1-23, 2025, as Remake Learning Days Northwest PA and encouraged all citizens to not only take pride in recognizing that time period but also that it is a festival of special importance and worthy to all citizens of Clarion, Pennsylvania. Ms. Kelsi Boyles, Education Program Specialist Riverview Intermediate Unit #6, along with a group of representatives, were present to accept the proclamation.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson stated a lot of work went into organizing this and it looks amazing. Handouts are available on the table.

Ms. Boyles announced some events have already occurred at the Clarion Elementary School and will be in the upcoming weeks. Some of the people present with her this evening are parent-teacher ambassadors.

ADMINISTRATION

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Mr. Garbarino, approving the appropriations, with the exception of Susquehanna Accounting and Consulting for more review, for the month of May, was carried with a vote of six yea.

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

President Lapinto stated the second meeting will be held on May 21, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library, if necessary. Currently, there is no need.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Roberts, approving the United Way of Clarion County's special event request for their 5K and 10K Race to be held on September 27, 2025, from 7 a.m. until 12 p.m., was carried with a vote of five yea with Mr. Garbarino abstaining as he is a member of the Board.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Mr. Garbarino to table appointing Sam Lynch, Jr., as the Borough's Financial Consultant at the rate of \$195/hour plus travel expenses, contingent on obtaining insurance coverage (general liability and professional services policies in the amount of \$1 million). The motion carried unanimously.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Whitling to approve Resolution #2025-505, authorizing the submission of a grant application to America250PA in the amount of \$5,000 for the purposes of creating a public mural and committing \$5,000 in Clarion Borough funds, or fifty percent of the final project cost, as matching funds for the mural project.

President Lapinto thought the Borough needed to do something for the birthday and asked Mr. Colosimo to look into the grant opportunity to see try to get it for a mural. President Lapinto feels it would be great for the community.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

President Lapinto asked Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston for an update on the RFP's for professional service to provide Borough pension plans.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston informed everyone six proposals were received. The short list was to be created by Monday, May 5th; however, no one has had an opportunity to review them at this point. Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston sent each one an email that more time is needed. Once everybody is ready, the companies will be notified as to the next steps.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Mr. Montana commented there was nothing new no report. A meeting has not been scheduled for this month, and the survey for the DECE study are still not completed at this point.

BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE

Ms. Logue was unable to attend the last meeting.

President Lapinto attended and there was just a lot of discussion about the park. The Committee is also applying for the America250PA grant for a flagpole. There has not been an announcement as to when the second half of the park, the pickleball and basketball courts, will be open.

Ms. Logue stated the grand opening date is still not determined at this time. It will have to be ready by June 7th, as a pickleball tournament is scheduled for that day.

President Lapinto noted one of the issues is the courts have not been sealed yet as the weather has to be a certain temperature, and it has not been warm enough.

Mr. Garbarino commented there is still no clarity on who's going to manage the park?

Ms. Logue confirmed that was correct.

DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN

Ms. Whitling reported the Committee is working on a fundraiser for Christmas decorations for downtown. It will be held on July 25th at the American Legion, and the theme will be Christmas in July. There will be raffles, games, and bingo.

Ms. Logue inquired if there is an ugly sweater theme?

Ms. Whitling commented there are a lot of ideas, one being an ugly baseball cap instead since it's summer.

According to Mr. Jim Crooks, President Lapinto understands that there is an organization that names the best 14 communities in the State of Pennsylvania, and Clarion was listed on it. Also, Mechanistic was mentioned in it as well. Unfortunately, President Lapinto couldn't open the email attachment, but Mr. Crooks is very proud of it.

PUBLIC WORKS/STORM WATER AUTHORITY

On a motion by Mr. Montana with a second by Ms. Logue to give permission to advertise the 2025 Paving Project, with the milling and paving of the following streets: North 6th Avenue from Main Street to Liberty Street; Dietz Place from Main Street to Merle Road; Dietz Place from Wood Street to dead end; Weaver Place from Wood Street to South Street; and, Madison Road from 5th Avenue to Sixth Avenue. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Roberts reported the Public Safety Committee met with University officials in April to discuss the crosswalk on Greenville Avenue. The Foundation has agreed to purchase the signs to put up in that area. It will be up to them if they will be lighted or not. There will be more visibility there.

LIBRARY REPORT

Anyone interested in the Summer Reading Program, Mayor Fulmer Vinson informed them to watch the Library's Facebook page to register. It should be up soon.

HOUSING AND ZONING

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Whitling to promote Joseff Wolf from probationary to regular full-time Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer, retroactive to April 19, 2025.

Ms. Logue stated Mr. Wolf has been doing a really great job.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

President Lapinto congratulated and welcomed Mr. Wolf aboard.

RECREATION

Ms. Roberts had nothing to report.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston had nothing to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Fulmer Vinson: Nothing particular, but I am looking forward to all these amazing things this summer from all the flowers coming back and the summer fest. It will be great.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Non-Agenda Items

CORRESPONDENCE

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston read a thank you note from the Clarion Alley Cats for Council's donation of \$750, which will allow them to purchase and maintain the flowers and planters on Main Street. The Clarion Alley Cats appreciate Council's continued support and thoughtfulness, which is making a difference.

On a motion by Mr. Garbarino with a second by Ms. Roberts, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Linda LaVan-Preston, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary