

July 1, 2025, Council Meeting
Minutes

The regular meeting of Clarion Borough Council was held on July 1, 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. Preston, Mr. Colosimo, Mayor Fulmer Vinson, Chief Peck, Mr. Wolf, and Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston were also present. Solicitor Marshall was absent.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Garbarino, approving the June 3, 2025, Council Meeting, minutes, was carried with a vote of five yea with President Lapinto abstaining as she was absent.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Agenda Items Only

There was none.

ADMINISTRATION

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Whitling, approving the appropriations for the month of July, 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 for everyone's review.

President Lapinto commented the second meeting will be held on July 15, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library, if necessary. Currently, there is no need.

President Lapinto reminded everyone the August Council Meeting will be held Wednesday, August 6, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library, due to National Night Out, her favorite event.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Logue, giving permission for Linda LaVan-Preston to attend Pennsylvania Association of Municipal Administrators' (PAMA's) 66th annual conference at the Wind Creek Hotel in Bethlehem, August 10-13, 2025, at an approximate cost of \$934.70 (conference registration, \$410; room reservations, \$524.70), was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Logue to give permission to purchase office equipment from Clarion Office Equipment in an amount not to exceed \$2,800. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Garbarino to approve the proposal from Computer Support for three computers at the cost of \$3,327 (does not include labor).

President Lapinto asked Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston to explain this one and the following item, relating to computers.

Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston reported the three computers were budgeted for 2025, and will be for Chief Peck, Ms. Julie Dunlap,, and herself. Chief Peck and Ms. Dunlap's current computers will be given more memory and transferred to the patrol room. Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary LaVan-Preston's current computer will be revamped and used as a spare. As for the proposal from Computer Support for Windows IoT Enterprise License, this is to update all the in-car computers. By October, Windows 10 is to be replaced by Windows 11; however, the computers will not handle Windows 11. This license will basically extend Windows 10 up until the year 2032. The cost is a one-time fee of \$1,645 for all five computers, which is a lot cheaper than buying a new one for each car.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Garbarino to approve the proposal from Computer Support for Windows IoT Enterprise License for the patrol cars at the cost of \$1,645 (does not include labor). The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Whitling, approving Immaculate Conception Church's special event request for road closure of Weaver Place from Main Street to Liberty Street and Madison Road from McDonald's Exit to Eighth Avenue for their Parish Picnic to be held August 3, 2025 (annual request), carried with a vote of six yea.

President Lapinto stated this next request is from Passages for the purpose of putting red sand in the cracks of the sidewalk to bring attention to child trafficking.

Mayor Fulmer Vinson added it is also to signify people who are kind of lost in the cracks of the system. For everyone's information, the sand is biodegradable and safe. It will not hurt the environment.

Ms. Roberts noted it is non-toxic.

President Lapinto reported the Commissioners already approved this request.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Whitling to approve Passages, Inc.'s special event request for The Red Sand Project to be held Tuesday, July 30, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. and to use the sidewalks on Main Street and Fifth Avenue around the front and side of the Veteran's Park and Courthouse. The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

For informational purposes, President Lapinto informed everyone that Clarion Borough was once an entitlement community. While Mr. Colosimo spent extensive time trying to challenge the 2020 Census figures, the Borough lost the entitlement, which was approximately \$100,000-

125,000 each year. President Lapinto asked for a motion for the Borough to request the County for some of their CDBG money.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Logue, approving the Paul A. Weaver Community Park Playground Improvements Project for submission to Clarion County's FFY 2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Project and solicit public comments on the project, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Logue with a second by Ms. Roberts to approve an amendment to the Community Development Block Grant Consulting Engineering Services Agreement with The EADS Group, Inc., adding Kristen Johnson as a project engineer for the delivery of professional services under the agreement.

President Lapinto asked Mr. Colosimo how much money the Borough has left in CDBG for administrative purposes?

Mr. Colosimo stated about \$8,700.

President Lapinto reported the Borough will use this money to fund these engineering fees.

By approving this motion, Ms. Logue verified the Borough is just adding Ms. Johnson, as she is a new hire with The EADS Group.

Mr. Colosimo agreed and voiced this is being done out of an abundance of caution. The agreement in place now has a list of principal delivery people for services and a rate chart as to what the Borough is locked into. Ms. Johnson is not listed by name in that agreement, which this motion will do.

The motion carried with a vote of six yea.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY COMMITTEE

Mr. Montana had nothing to report.

BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE

President Lapinto participated in the fourth conference call with the Federal Home Loan Bank in Pittsburgh, who are the individuals that fund the Blueprint Communities status. Several communities were picked, some in Pennsylvania, some in Delaware, and some in West Virginia, where the Bank will be putting a video together to show the accomplishments of the designation. President Lapinto stated representatives will be coming to Clarion on August 21st to the park to meet with the original members of the Blueprint Committee, which were Tom McConnell, Brenda Sanders Dédé, Eric Funk, Sr., and herself. In discussions with some members like Ms. Logue, President Lapinto stressed everybody thinks all the Blueprint Committee did is the park, but that is not true. The designation of being a Blueprint Community put businesses that are applying for a loan to go to the top of the list. Accomplishments are, as follows, a business opened in Clarion

Borough (this was first), a senior hi-rise being developed on Fifth Avenue, the Housing Authority received points when submitting for grants, and the biggest success story is grants were given out to individuals who were entrepreneurs. President Lapinto pointed out Nancy Hanna, who was present at the meeting, received seed money for Summer Fest. Not everybody realizes what this designation does for the community. President Lapinto encouraged businesses to goggle federalhomebank/blueprintcommunity, and all the information will come up.

DESTINATION CLARION DOWNTOWN

Before starting, Mr. Jim Crooks, asked his sister, Nancy Hanna, to share what's coming up this weekend for Summer Fest.

Ms. Hanna thanked everybody for helping Summer Fest grow. The police put out the bags, Council has worked with the Committee on the fees for the pop-ups, and businesses have really grown and are coming back to this event month-after-month. For this upcoming weekend, there are close to 20 pop-ups, maybe more, but the event is really doing well. To keep it simple, Ms. Hanna explained the event is the first Saturday of June, July, and August. Saturday, July 5th, feature will be homegrown. Ms. Hanna stated the Committee wants to celebrate everything about the town and have as many people activate in the community to be a part of Summer Fest. The Historical Society will do a walking tour around town and then a roundtable conversation on local history. Ms. Hanna announced this will be the first time ever for a songwriter's contest. Music rights' are very expensive, so the Committee came up with the idea of 'why not original music'. Whoever wins the event will receive \$500. So, the musicians will play on the street during the day, the Committee will pick the top 8-10, who will perform at night at Mechanistic. Currently, 12 people have signed up for the competition. Ms. Hanna reported there will be two judges, one from Las Angeles and one from New York, both professionals with a family connection to Clarion. Jenn Vandermeer, the director of the United Way, is helping with the songwriter's contest. Ms. Hanna voiced how thrilling this is to have everybody in the community joining in to do little pieces of these Summer Fest events. There will be a touch-a-truck, involving the fireman, the policemen, and EMT, which will hopefully inspire and plant a seed in the young children to want to be in one of those professions in the future. And, last, Ms. Hanna informed the July event celebrates home cooking. Last year, it was ham loaf. This year, Rebecca Aharra, the director at the Clarion Free Library, came up with Whoopie Pies. Every year, the contest is going to be based on something from Western Pennsylvania. This event will be held at the library. Ms. Hanna hopes that everyone can see that this event is growing and morphing more each year. The Committee is trying to find connections with the community, history, and arts. Ms. Hanna, again, thanked Council for their support.

President Lapinto will be helping out with her favorite people at 6th Avenue and Main Street on Saturday.

Ms. Hanna noted President Lapinto has been amazing and is their Ace in the Hole.

Mr. Crooks heard Mr. Garbarino makes amazing Whoopie Pies.

Mr. Garbarino stated that was a secret and a longtime family recipe.

As a side note, President Lapinto never tasted ham loaf until last year.

Mr. Crooks started by saying everybody knows the amazing job the Alley Cats are doing around town with the flowers. Even with all the rain, the flowers are really taking root and it looks amazing.

Mr. Crooks reported Destination Clarion Downtown is looking down the road to Christmas decorations. Last year, money was raised and 8 new wreaths were purchased, which extended the wreaths down the street. However, as many as 20 wreaths need replaced. When wreaths need replaced, Mr. Crooks pointed out it's not just the wreath but also the lights, bulbs, and bows. These wreaths are 4 foot. Instead of begging for money, which the Committee will still do, a Bingo Bonanza, Christmas in July, will be held on July 25th at the American Legion Social Room at 5:30 p.m. Local businesses are giving prizes. A big Christmas tree will be set up with all kinds of money gifts and Christmas gifts that will be wrapped for winners to select a prize. Mr. Crooks stated Ms. Hanna has volunteered to do an Ugly Christmas Hat Contest to stay with the theme of the parade being an Ugly Christmas Sweater for that night. Mr. Crooks showed everyone the poster that will be seen around town and asked for everyone's support, the police officers, the maintenance employees, and community members, to get involved in this bingo event by coming and/or spreading the word. Whatever money is raised will be spent on decorations.

PUBLIC WORKS/STORM WATER AUTHORITY

Mr. Montana announced anyone interested in completing the vacant term on the Clarion Borough Stormwater Authority to expire the first Monday in January 2028 to contact the Borough Office.

Mr. Montana stressed the drop-off location at the Public Works Facility is only for Clarion Borough residents' use. Contractors are not allowed to use it and must haul all debris outside the Borough.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Roberts announced National Night Out will be held Tuesday, August 5, 2025, from 6-9 p.m. on Main Street.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Mr. Garbarino, accepting the retirement letter from William R. Scheckler Sr., effective August 9, 2025, with regrets, was carried with a vote of six yea.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts with a second by Ms. Logue, giving permission to request Civil Service Commission to advertise to create a full-time police officer eligibility list, was carried with a vote of six yea.

LIBRARY REPORT

On behalf of the Board, Mayor Fulmer Vinson gave a big shout out to the Friends of the Library for their fabulous Guest Bartender Event held at Mechanistic, for all the people that participated, tipped, and enjoyed the event. Mayor Fulmer Vinson also thanked Sparrow Books for their Adult Book Fair and Michelle's Café for providing a fabulous location. People were lined up outside, and Mayor Fulmer Vinson loves to see all this support from these events for the library. It's wonderful.

President Lapinto congratulated Ms. Logue being the highest winner for the most donations at the bartender event.

Ms. Logue commented it was nice and was very fortunate that so many wanted to give so many donations. It was really a great event. Ms. Logue raised over \$2,500 but, overall, the total was over \$7,000, which is really great.

HOUSING AND ZONING

Ms. Logue had nothing to report.

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 is looking forward to all these wonderful events coming up, the two Summer Fests and National Night Out. Also, Mayor Fulmer Vinson commented it is wonderful that the I Love Clarion is back to the stadium and looks forward to the fireworks in the Borough again.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

President Lapinto informed everyone the Borough received a grant from America250PA in the amount of \$5,000, which the Borough will match with another \$5,000. Earlier this year, in discussion with some other people, President Lapinto thought the Borough should do something for the 250th Birthday of the United States of America. After asking Jackie Griebel for help in finding a grant, which she did, and it was very competitive. President Lapinto asked Mr. Crooks, Ms. Hanna, and Mr. Eric Funk Jr. to brainstorm to come up with something that would be more than a 1-day event; in other words, something permanent. Mr. Colosimo then prepared the grant, which Ms. Hanna was very involved and helpful in its preparation. President Lapinto voiced excitement when the news was received that Clarion Borough was awarded. The grant will be a historical mural. President Lapinto asked the following people to help with the creation of the mural: Melanie Parker, the historian; Reverend Jacobson and his son, Karl, for artistic; and, the

gentleman that was instrumental for the mural on the old CVS Building. With the help of those individuals, Jake Bauer, and Mr. Funk Jr., this is going to move forward. President Lapinto thanked Mr. Colosimo and give him the credit on receiving this grant and Ms. Hanna for her great help. Mr. Colosimo was also the one that prepared the grant for Blueprint. Anyone wishing to help out with this endeavor are more than welcome to be on the committee.

Mr. Crooks asked if President Lapinto was going to say where it will be going yet?

President Lapinto prefers to hold off for now, but it is a good place and will be very visible.

Mr. Hanna stated Mr. Colosimo is the one that did the great job on the grant. Mr. Colosimo had such a big heart to his pitch that was so authentic and genuine.

Mr. Colosimo thanked Ms. Hanna for her help.

President Lapinto believes there were 400 other applications; it was very competitive. This is kudos to the Borough for securing the grant.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Non-Agenda Items

There was none.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

On a motion by Mr. Montana with a second by Mr. Garbarino, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Linda LaVan-Preston, Chief Administrative Officer/Borough Secretary