

BLOSSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
April 14, 2021

Council Meeting was called to Order at 6:30 p.m. by President Jolene Hall.

Attendance: President Jolene Hall, Vice-President Jill Nickerson, Pro-Temp Tonya McNamara, Council Members: Jerome Ogden (Absent), Henry Bartlett, Tim Martin, James Rakoski, Mayor, Shane Nickerson, Borough Solicitor, Patrick Barrett, Police Chief, Josh McCurdy, Borough Manager, George D. Lloyd, Borough Secretary, Cheryl Bubacz and School Representative (Absent).

Guests: Robert Scott, Ron Warren, Nick Hults, Kelly Yungwirth and Natalie Kennedy
(*Wellsboro Gazette*)

Ron Warren: Nothing

Nick Hults: Nothing

Kelly Yungwirth: Nothing

Natalie Kennedy: Nothing

Robert Scott: Bob stated that he was there regarding his return-to-work date. He asked how much time he was allotted to speak, and the Solicitor said normally it is about 3 minutes. Bob said that he had written a short statement that he wanted to read. His statement was regarding his administrative leave for the last four (4) months, with October 7, 2020 being his last day worked prior to a scheduled vacation. Following that time, because of personal issues and years of police work, he had to seek medical help which he sought on his own. Having contacted the Chief, Josh McCurdy, Bob said he was told to take as much time as he needed to get things back together. A meeting was held on November 25, 2020 with himself, Chief McCurdy, Mayor Nickerson and Solicitor Barrett. Bob said he took from that meeting that he was currently a liability and would remain on administrative leave, with pay. Bob was advised to get a medical clearance, which he did and has done on five (5) additional times. Following the March 10, 2021 Council Meeting, he said he was advised that he was still on administrative leave. Prior to tonight's meeting, Bob said he met someone in our parking lot asking if she was in the right place for the Blossburg Borough and a "hearing to fire a police officer." Bob stated that the Borough has paid him over \$20,000 in wages and benefits since his last worked date.

No comments were made by the Council.

Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Bills, Police Report & Borough Manager's Report:

Minutes and Reports were all accepted as presented Motion of Tonya McNamara; Second Tim Martin. All in favor.

Mayor:

Over the past few months there has been interest in the purchase of the 245 Main Street Borough Hall and we should decide if we want to put the property up for auction or not. Council agreed that we should decide what we want to do with the building and how soon the Borough would have their information and property out of the building.

Police:

Scott Tanner is back working for the Borough as a part-time officer. We are waiting for MPOTEC to approve the other two (2) new part-time officers we have hired. Once they are approved, they will begin training.

Police Committee:

Nothing

Borough Manager:

Keystone Collections Group sent a letter to the TCC Leadership and Solicitor regarding extending the filing deadline for the EIT Income tax returns for 2020 to align with the Federal and State filing deadlines of May 17, 2021. Following a short meeting, the TCC Leadership accepted and authorized the extension of the filing deadline for 2020 income tax returns.

PSAB had a webinar regarding the American Rescue Plan (“ARP”) which I and the Borough Secretary listened to. This webinar discussed the ARP and how it will affect communities in Pennsylvania. Blossburg Borough is slated to receive a total of approximately \$147,000 in two equal payments, one this year and one next year as part of the ARP. While the allowed uses of the ARP distributions have not been finalized, it appears infrastructure is one of the priorities. As more information becomes available, it will be provided to Council.

Junior Council Person:

Not Present.

VIBE:

The Community Yard Sale has been set for May 8th. If you want to be placed on the Maps that will be available, please contact VIBE. Businesses have been urged to participate in the sale as well.

There was further discussion at the last meeting regarding the Hero Banners and possible replacements for those that are worn, torn, etc.

Planning Commission Report:

The Planning Commission held a Meeting on April 12th to discuss a home occupation request from Brendyn Stager who wants to move his gun parts sales to his home on Granger Street. This has been referred to the Zoning Hearing Board

The Planning Commission also received a subdivision/lot addition request for the Eugene Miller property on Old Bloss Mountain Road. The request is to take a small portion of land from his tax parcel 02-07A00-018 and add it to parcel 02-07A00-012 which he also owns. This lot addition would add an additional 0.17 acres of land to parcel 02-07A00-012.

The Planning Commission reviewed the subdivision/lot addition and have okayed it. Motion by Tim Martin, Second by Jill Nickerson to approve the subdivision/lot addition of Eugene Miller.

Zoning Hearing Board:

A meeting will be set up to review the home occupation request from Brendyn Stager.

Recreation:

The Borough crew has been working on the Pool. An advertisement for lifeguards has been placed in the PennySaver. Hope to be able to open the Pool by Memorial Day. Also working on the large pavilion, update lighting and siding. Two (2) funding request letters have been sent for funding of the sidewalk project on Water Street. Borough Secretary said that a check was received from First Citizens Community Bank for the project and another from Williamson Road Foundation.

Riverwalk: Being used heavily.

Skate Park Addition: Borough Manager and Mayor to meet to discuss the scale of the project.

Fire and Ambulance:

Minutes were received for both the Ambulance Association and the Fire Department. President Hall asked Kelly Yungwirth for a list of activities for the year, i.e., fund raisers, community service, etc.

Library:

Library is open for limited hours.

Street Committee:

Borough Manager will have a list of the streets for tar and chipping for 2021 for the May 2021 meeting.

Shade Tree Commission:

Nothing

Budget:

Nothing.

Blossburg Municipal Report:

Pilot Study at Belman Run will be finishing up by PALL. DEP is reviewing the Application for the proposed water tank at Taylor Run.

OLD BUSINESS:

Sesquicentennial Planning:

Planning is on track.

Shared Services Agreement:

Solicitor is reviewing Agreement with Counsel of the other municipalities.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. LED Streetlights: Mike Stoudt and Ted Kelchner have reviewed various areas in town to start the switch of our existing streetlights to LED. We were going to start on Main Street but have instead decided to start elsewhere. The first phase plan is to change out 24 lights, 10 on Granger Street, 3 on Lynd Street, 3 on Hannibal Street, 2 on Seymour Street, 2 on Davis Street and 1 each on Parkhurst Street, Taylor Street, Carpenter Street and Nevins Street. Once the lights are installed the Borough Manager would like Council Members to check out the lights before we go to the next area. Question was raised about the cost of the LED streetlights. There is no upfront cost to the Borough. We just continue to pay the streetlight electric bill.
 2. Southern Tioga School District Senior Day on Island Park: A letter was received from Principal Bill David regarding the School District holding a Senior Day on Island Park. This would include prom, Baccalaureate and Graduation. STSD will provide chaperones, and will monitor all events with as many mitigation efforts in place as possible and reasonable. Motion by Tim Martin, Second by Jill Nickerson to allow STSD to hold Senior Day on the Park per the letter from Mr. David. All in Favor with great support!
 3. Council Member Henry Bartlett asked if there was anything further that could be done about the property on Taylor Street which has numerous cars on the property. Chief commented that the property owner has been cited and that he has paid the fines. There is nothing in the Ordinances that requires the owner to remove the cars. Attorney Barrett asked for a copy of the Junk Ordinance to possibly initiate an action on the matter.
 4. Old Hospital: A discussion was held regarding the old hospital and its continued deterioration and the vandalism to the building. Tom Augustine was contacted by the property owners to take care of the grass cutting. A question was raised regarding if the building is in violation of any of our codes at this time. What percentage of the property is deteriorated beyond repair? Would it qualify under the Blight Program? The Mayor will talk to the property owners, AU Properties, to discuss their timeline for the building and to see about getting the building closed up to stop people from entering the building.
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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned by President Jolene Hall at 7:07 p.m. Motion by Tim Martin, Second by Henry Bartlett. All in Favor

Cheryl L. Bubacz

Cheryl L. Bubacz, Borough Secretary