

BLOSSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
May 12, 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, 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, Nick Hults, Cheryl Wilbur (Lions Club) and Natalie Kennedy
(*Wellsboro Gazette*)

Robert Scott: Nothing

Nick Hults: Nothing

Natalie Kennedy: Nothing

Cheryl Wilbur (Membership Team Coordinator for Lions Club International): Cheryl came to discuss starting a Lions Club in Blossburg. She explained what the Lions Clubs do and how they can help communities. There is a drive on now to start new clubs and the start-up fees are being waived right now. To start a Club there needs to be at least 20 individuals and the \$35.00 per member fee is being waived at this time. She asked if she could set up a meeting for interested individuals to come and discuss a possible Club in Blossburg. The Council agreed and authorized a meeting to be held in town. More information will be presented at the meeting.

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

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

Mayor:

There has been a lot of discussion lately on social media about the Arbon Cemetery. The overseeing of the Cemetery was transferred from the Odd Fellows to the Borough sometime ago. There is money in a trust account at First Citizens and the interest/dividends of the trust are transferred into the checking account. The Cemetery has received shut-in royalties which has helped the finances, however, the annual cost for upkeep of the Cemetery is between \$12,000 and \$16,000. The current balance of the Cemetery Checking account is \$49,271.10

Mayor met with a gentleman who fixes stones and they walked around the Cemetery. They believe there to be approximately 100 headstones that need to be righted and/or fixed. Some of the stones have been there for more than 100 years and many did not have footers poured before the stones were set. They were simply set on the ground. Most of the stones that are tipped over, etc., are due to the ground heaving. The cost for a 2' x 1' footer runs about \$235.00. There is not enough money in the checking account to fix all of the bases that need to be fixed.

There is not a perpetual care fund for the Cemetery. Based on the records that the Borough has computerized, it appears that in the 1950s or 1960s the perpetual care payments stopped due to non-payment.

There will be a work-bee at the Cemetery on May 13, 2021 to start sprucing up the Cemetery. Borough Secretary will put together a list of the stones that need to be fixed and contact family members to notify them or for possible donations for repairs.

Additionally, the Cemetery is very wet. The Borough Manager and our Engineer will be looking at the area to see what can be done to divert the water. A question was raised about using Act 13 money to fix the drainage at the Cemetery. We will have to look into that to see if Act 13 is an option to cover the drainage problem.

The Mayor and the Chief of Police will be supervising some of the individuals who vandalized the Old Hospital while they clean up the mess that they made. The owners of the Old Hospital are trying to get funding at this time to do the renovations needed to open the facility.

Police:

The two (2) part-time officers have received their MPOTEC approval and have started their training and are doing well.

Police Committee:

Nothing

Borough Manager:

Nothing at this time

Junior Council Person:

Not Present.

VIBE:

The Community Yard Sale seemed to be very successful despite the weather. Currently working on the Fall Festival and t-shirts for the Island Park 150.

Planning Commission Report:

No Meeting

Zoning Hearing Board:

A meeting has been set for May 25, 2021 for the home occupation request from Brendyn Stager.

Recreation:

Park looks great! Bracelets for the pool are now available. The large pavilion has been cleaned-up and the gentleman that was looking at the cemetery, also looked at the pavilion for a quote on repairing the cinderblocks/siding. The cost for the stonework was estimated at \$1,130.

Riverwalk:

Councilman Jerome Ogden reminded the Borough Manager that the path needs to have a stone topping put on it. He also raised concern about the flooding that happens when the river gets high at the point of Johnson creek and Tioga River. Borough Manager will check to see if he can install some rip-rap along Johnson Creek to keep the water away from the walking trail.

Skate Park Addition: There is a good plan in the works and will stay within budget.

Fire and Ambulance:

Minutes were received from the Ambulance Association, but not the Fire Department. A list of their annual activities/events was provided to the Council for review. Motion by Jill Nickerson, Second by Tim Martin that the list of activities be accepted as presented. All in Favor.

Library:

Library is open for limited hours. The mason also looked at the steps at the Library which need to be repaired and he will provide a quote for the repairs.

Street Committee:

Borough Manager stated that the tar and chipping for 2021, being approximately one-mile of road, will cost approximately \$41,000. Motion by Tonya McNamara, Second by Henry Bartlett to go forward with the 2021 tax and chipping. All in Favor.

The Mayor asked if there is anyway to make Hannibal Street from Davis Street to Ruah Street smoother for the Fall Festival Soap Box Derby race. Borough Manager will discuss this with Lisowski Excavating and see what can be done.

Shade Tree Commission:

Nothing

Budget:

Nothing.

Blossburg Municipal Report:

The Taylor Run One-Million Gallon water tank is currently being designed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Sesquicentennial Planning:

After much discussion, the celebration will be limited to Friday evening August 27, 2021. With the High School Football and the Small Fry Football schedules still up in the air, the Island may be too crowded with additional traffic for a Saturday event on the Park. Currently plans are to have Main Street shut down from 4:00 pm to 10:00 pm on Friday. A car cruise in will be on Main Street as well as food vendors, games, music, a community picture and a cupcake toast.

Shared Services Agreement:

Solicitor is reviewing Agreement with Counsel of the other municipalities.

LED Streetlights: We are currently waiting for Penelec to start replacing the lights as discussed at the April meeting.

American Rescue Plan: We know that the funds being distributed to the Townships and Boroughs from the American Rescue Plan can be used for infrastructure, and that it cannot be simply invested. We are still waiting for additional information.

Sale of 245 Main Street: Attorney Barrett has prepared a Resolution authorizing the Auction of the old Borough Hall located at 245 Main Street. The Council needs to determine (1) if they want to sell the building and (2) what the reserve price will be for the Borough Hall. Council asked the Borough Manager how long it will take to get the building emptied or sell the building with the furniture and fixtures. Motion by Jill Nickerson, Second Tonya McNamara. All in Favor.

Old Hospital: Addressed in Mayor's Report.

KCC Building & School: Nothing at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned by President Jolene Hall at 7:27 p.m. Motion by Tim Martin, Second by Jim Rakoski. All in Favor

/s/ Cheryl L. Bubacz

Cheryl L. Bubacz, Borough Secretary