

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

PUBLIC MEETING held via GoToMeeting video/teleconference

PRESENT: Tina Sokolowski, Council Vice-President  
Robert Stokley, Senior Council Member  
Anita Barton, Council Member  
James Griffin, Council Member  
Jane Flanagan, Council Member  
Karen Tutino, Council Member  
Yaniv Aronson, Mayor

ALSO PRESENT: Stephanie Cecco, Borough Manager  
Michael E. Peters, Borough Solicitor

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Public Meeting of the Conshohocken Borough Council duly advertised, was held remotely using the GoToMeeting platform. Tina Sokolowski, Council Vice President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**PRAYER FOR COUNCIL**

Ms. Tutino read a Prayer for Council.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Sokolowski thanked everyone for attending the virtual Council meeting. She reviewed the meeting logistics and participation instructions.

**PRESENTATIONS**

**a.) Inauguration Day Community Message, Mayor Aronson**

Mayor Aronson read an Inauguration Day Message.

**b.) Recognition of 32 Years of Service, Ralph Gambale, Public Services**

Ray Sokolowski, Executive Director of Operations, recognized Ralph Gambale for his 32 years of service in the Public Services Department. He thanked Ralph for this dedication and contribution to the Borough, and wished him well in retirement.

**c.) Recognition of Fire Stipend Recipients of 2020**

Mr. Sokolowski recognized the members of the Fire Department who were awarded a stipend for successful participation in the Fire Stipend Program.

**LAND USE, PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ORDINANCES**

**a.) Consider granting conditional use approval for 400 West Elm Street**

Mr. Peters opened the public hearing for the conditional use application for 400 West Elm Street. He stated that the applicant is seeking conditional use approval to permit a multifamily residential development in the SP-3 Zoning District. He read the proposed conditions of approval.

**Mr. Griffin made a motion to approve the conditional use application for 400 West Elm Street to be memorialized in a formal written decision with conditions, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

**b.) Consider adopting Ordinance 01-2021 Residential Overlay District Ordinance Amendment**

Mr. Peters opened the public hearing for the Residential Overlay Ordinance Amendment. He reminded Council that the proposed ordinance would amend the Borough's Zoning Ordinance by repealing Part 19-B Residential Overlay District in its entirety, which previously permitted certain residential use in the Limited Industrial District.

**Ms. Tutino made a motion to adopt Ordinance 01-2021 repealing the Residential Overlay District and amending the Zoning Ordinance, seconded by Ms. Flanagan. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

**c.) Consider authorizing advertisement of Ordinance 02-2021 SP-4 District Sign Standards Ordinance Amendment**

Mr. Peters asked Council to consider authorizing advertisement of the proposed ordinance. The ordinance would permit certain allowable building signage for buildings in the SP-4 Zoning District of 180 feet, or greater in height, and where 95% of the building is allocated to a single principal user.. He discussed next steps in the process prior to Council's consideration of adoption.

**Ms. Tutino made a motion to authorize advertisement of Ordinance 02-2021 amending the SP-4 District Sign Standards, seconded by Mr. Griffin. (Leonard absent)**

#### CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Sokolowski read and reviewed the items included on the consent agenda.

- a.) Approve and adopt the December 2 and December 16 Regular Meeting Minutes
- b.) Approve the December-ending Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable in the amount of \$642,551.84

**Mr. Griffin made a motion to approve and adopt the December 2 and December 16 Regular Meeting Minutes, second by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

**Ms. Tutino a motion to approve the December-ending Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable in the amount of \$642,551.84, seconded by Ms. Flanagan. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

#### NEW BUSINESS

- a.) Consider approving tuition reimbursements for Detective Walter and Officer Bahn

**Mr. Griffin made a motion to approve tuition reimbursements for Detective Walter and Officer Bahn, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

- b.) Consider approving the zoning escrow release for 1023 Fayette Street in the amount of \$586.34

**Ms. Tutino made a motion to approve the zoning escrow release for 1023 Fayette Street in the amount of \$586.34, seconded by Ms. Flanagan. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

- c.) Consider accepting the resignation of a Mary Wood Park Commission member

**Ms. Flanagan made a motion to accept the resignation of Jennifer McCracken from the Mary Wood Park Commission, seconded by Ms. Tutino. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

- d.) Consider approving the first and final escrow release for demolition for Matson Mill in the amount of \$152,333.50

**Ms. Barton made a motion to approve the first and final escrow release for demolition for Matson Mill in the amount of \$152,333.50, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

An additional item was added to the agenda. Mr. Peters explained that Administration received a request from a resident for a reasonable accommodation to permit a driveway/parking area located within the front yard of the property. He shared that Administration has reviewed the request, completed a site evaluation and is prepared to grant the reasonable accommodation request subject to certain conditions. Mr. Peters reviewed the conditions.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a.) Consider authorizing advertisement of the Sewer Authority RFB

Ms. Cecco stated that Borough Council has been analyzing all internal and external operations and assets of the Borough, which includes the Sewer Authority. She shared that the Borough is seeking methods by which to fund an infrastructure improvement project, which is expected to cost around \$30 million. She explained that funding sources for infrastructure projects are limited given the additional constraints on resources due to COVID-19. Ms. Cecco explained that the Borough is exploring options to fund the project, which includes the sale of a Borough asset and raising taxes. She stated that issuing an RFB is the next step in determining the value of the asset.

**Ms. Tutino made a motion to authorize advertisement of the Sewer Authority RFB, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

- b.) Consider authorizing advertisement of Ordinance 03-2021 requiring the Borough of Conshohocken Authority to convey the Sewer Authority to the Borough

**Ms. Barton made a motion to authorize advertisement of Ordinance 03-2021 requiring the Borough of Conshohocken Authority to convey the Sewer Authority to the Borough, seconded by Ms. Tutino. The motion carried 6-0. (Leonard absent)**

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Brittany Rogers, Executive Assistant to the Borough Manager, read written public comment submitted via email.

Lisa Lilick, 804 Forrest Street, discussed concerns related to the sale of the Sewer Authority specifically rate increases. She asked Council to consider mailing notices to residents with information about the sale exploration process.

Shawn Bergey, 109 Forrest Street, recommended that informational notices about the potential sale of the Sewer Authority be mailed to Borough residents. He shared concerns about rate increases and inquired about what alternative funding strategies Council has considered.

Anna Marie Travagline, 139 West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, objected to the sale of the Borough Sewer Authority. She explained that companies like Aqua and Pennsylvania American Water would eliminate reasonable rates with inflated rates for profit.

Matt Winarski, 356 East 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, stated that if the Sewer Authority is sold, he is concerned that rates will increase significantly after the fixed rate period ends. He urged Council to consider all other options before voting on this matter.

Walt Harnett, Commander of VFW Conshohocken Post 1074, invited Council to celebrate the VFW's 88<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on February 2, 2021.

#### **COUNCIL AND MAYOR MATTERS**

Mr. Stokley asked if any Borough representatives have received the COVID-19 vaccination. Ms. Cecco responded that a percentage of emergency services personnel have been vaccinated.

Ms. Flanagan encouraged everyone to proactively register for a COVID-19 vaccine.

Ms. Barton shared that she is hoping for peace and unity in America.

Mr. Griffin identified an issue with parking meters on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

Mayor Aronson announced that the County is conducting an Indoguration Photo Contest to celebrate Major Biden, the first shelter dog of the White House. He encouraged Montgomery County residents to submit photos of their dogs to participate in the contest.

Superintendent Metz confirmed that he is aware of an existing issue with parking meters on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and working on a solution.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 PM.

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Stephanie Cecco,  
Borough Secretary