

Regular Meeting of California Borough Council, July 12, 2021

President Alfano called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm

ATTENDANCE: Mr. Alfano, Mr. Bittner, Mr. Difilippo, Mr. Glab, Mrs. Gutosky, Mr. Maddiex, Mr. Mariscotti, and Mayor Stetar

ABSENCE:

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Maddiex added Bongiorno sewage module
Mrs. Gutosky added NPDES Permit invoice - \$500.00
Mrs. Gutosky added the Solicitor's bill - \$1,915.00

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments at this time

KERRY FOX – REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Mr. Fox addressed council to let them know that he was unsuccessful at retaining more money to complete the pavilion project, however he spoke with his supervisors who agreed that the borough could forego the next several years of CDBG funding and the Redevelopment Authority would put that money up front into the project. With the funding we currently have from LSA and CDBG we still need appx. \$310,000.00 to complete the project.

Motion by Mariscotti/Difilippo to borrow the CDBG funding through the Redevelopment Authority to complete the pavilion project in the amount of approximately \$310,000.00 and repay it with the next 3 or 4 years of CDBG funding duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes except Mr. Glab who voted no.

CYPHER & CYPHER – BOROUGH AUDITORS

Charlie Ruppert addressed council and went over the 2020 Borough audit. He stated the borough is in good financial standing and there were no findings. He stated right now our financial statements are what they call modified cash basis, which is cash position and they consider the escrow accounts but does not consider the long-term receivables, accounts payable and fixed assets. He stated often times if you are going for a loan often times they like to see full accrual basis which is the GASB34. He added that if the borough would like to move to full accrual accounting that Cypher & Cypher would be able to help with that. He stated the CARES act and the federal COVID grants have a threshold and if you receive more than \$750,000.00 of federal fund you will be subject to what is called a single audit which is specific to that grant and he thinks the borough is pushing at that threshold. He suggested staying under the threshold. He stated with Shirley here you guys are in great hands and she's doing a very nice job for you and that they appreciate the opportunity to be our auditors.

MINUTES

Motion by Mariscotti/Difilippo to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 10, 2021 carried with all members present stating aye.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Evans read the accounts payable and bank balances as of June 30, 2021.
Motion by Difilippo/Maddiex to accept the Treasurer's report carried with all members present stating aye.

PRESIDENT ALFANO'S REPORT

PIRMA RENEWAL – PROPERTY AND LIABILITY - \$180,792.00

Motion by Bittner/Difilippo to renew the property & liability insurance through Pennsylvania Integrated Risk Management in the amount of \$180,792.00 duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes

WORKMAN'S COMP & MUNICIPAL LIABILITY - \$80,633.00

Motion by Glab/Mariscotti to renew the Workman's comp & municipal liability insurance through Amtrust (WESCO) in the amount of \$80,633.00 duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

REBID MECHANIC STREET PLAYGROUND PROJECT

Mr. Alfano stated the Mechanic Street project came in 2 ½ times at what they had to spend, so it will need to be rebid within the parameters of the recreation authority's budget.

Motion by Maddiex/Bittner to rebid the Mechanic Street project duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

ASHELY ROTH- RIVERFEST UPDATE

Mrs. Roth stated the Riverfest will be held August 21 & 22. She stated all the entertainment is booked and they have a lot of local bands playing. She stated all the vendor spots are completely filled and the fireman's parade will kick off at 12:30 and the permits for that have all been submitted. She stated Cal U kind of threw a wrench in the mix and is allowing sophomores to move in on that Saturday so they will work with Chief McSheffrey and the borough's police department on how to re-route traffic on that day. She stated there will be Classic Car show on Sunday. She stated they are not partnering with Cal U this year so everything is falling on the Recreation Authority and in the past council has donated \$2,500.00 toward fireworks but this year it would be used as sponsorship money. She is asking council to donate that amount again this year.

Motion by Maddiex/Bittner to donate \$2,500.00 to the recreation authority for sponsorship this year. Under discussion Mr. Mariscotti asked if that would be enough. Mrs. Roth stated their sponsorship money is not as much this year because of covid and the businesses had been closed. She stated the stage costs \$6,000.00 and normally that is split with Cal U. She stated they do not make money off their vendors and we are looking into possibly changing that in the future. We look at this as an event for the community and not to build the Recreation Authority's bank accounts. She stated there will not be fireworks because in prior years we split the cost and did them on Saturday night, however this year the University will be doing fireworks on Sunday and riverfest ends at 6:00 on Sunday so it makes no sense for us to go in with fireworks being that our event will be over at 6:00. Mr. Alfano stated it would be nice if the borough could cover the state cost of \$6,000.00. Mr. Maddiex and Mr. Bittner amended their motion.

Motion by Maddiex/Bittner to donate \$6,000.00 to the Recreation Authority to be paid from the Gaming Revenue fund to cover the cost of the stage duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

NEW FLAG DONATED BY REPRESENTATIVE BUD COOK

Mr. Alfano stated Representative Bud Cook was gracious enough to donate a new flag to hand at Rotary Park.

BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – DR. MARTIN UPDATES

Dr. Martin referred council to his weekly email updates.

REROUTING OF UNIVERSITY BUSES

He stated we had a meeting at the University and most of you were present to discuss the fact that the University will be tearing down some building and relocating some classes at the Phillipsburg facility and some of council asked him to look into re-routing the buses from MMVTA onto borough streets and to include that in the loop. He checked with Mike and made some other inquiries and those are 10 ton weight limit streets and those buses do not exceed 10 ton. Also the public transit seems to have an exemption. The other thing he learned is school buses are running those streets already right now. He didn't know with the information he has now if council wanted him to reach out to the MMVTA and simply say hey the University is going to be asking for this change and council supports it. He asked council how they want him to move this forward. Mr. Glab asked him to notify them as well as the University to eliminate any confusion. Mr. Maddiex asked Dr. Martin to keep Mr. Encapera in the loop also.

CRYSTALLINE TECHNOLOGIES

Dr. Martin stated he would like to skip this item on his agenda because a representative from another company will be here tomorrow to look over what we currently have and give us a price on taking over the service agreement so if we would like to get away from Crystalline we would have an alternative. The company coming in to provide a price currently does the University.

GOOD SOUNDS UPDATE

Mr. Bittner asked Dr. Martin the status of the sound system company coming in to redo the sound system in the chambers. Dr. Martin stated they will be here on the 22nd.

PUBLIC HOUSING – MR. MADDIEX UPDATES

HOLDING TANK FOR 809 CALIFORNIA DRIVE

Motion by Maddiex/Mariscotti to approve the Holding tank agreement for 809 California Drive, pending the placement of a \$1,500.00 bond by the property owner duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes except Mr. Difilippo who voted no.

Mr. Petro stated there will be (2) 1500 gallon holding tanks and the owner will have to put up a \$1,500.00 bond.

BONGIORNO SEWAGE MODULE

Motion by Maddiex/Glab to accept the sewage facility planning module at 289 North California Drive for Mike & Robin Bongiorno which was approved by the Washington County Sewage council on June 22, 2021 duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

Mr. Petro stated this coincides with their subdivision that council approved back in May and still needs approval from the DEP.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER INSPECTIONS

Mr. Maddiex stated before the committee meeting Mike mentioned that the Borough has not had its fire extinguishers inspected and it should be done. Dr. Martin stated he will call Safety First tomorrow and get a price from them and then he'll email it to council and if they are comfortable with it he will go ahead and schedule the inspections.

Motion by Maddiex/Glab to have all the fire extinguishers inspected and brought up to date duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

RENTAL INSPECTION UPDATE

Mr. Maddiex provided council with a copy of a report compiled by Lori which shows the number of rental properties inspected as of June 8th.

PUBLIC WORKS – MR. BITTNER

Nothing to report

PUBLIC SAFETY- MR. DIFILIPPO

HIRE CHIEF OF POLICE

Motion by Difilippo/Maddiex to hire Timothy Kirsch as Police Chief as a non-civil service position with a salary of \$70,000.00, 180-day probation according to the collective bargaining agreement, 2 weeks of vacation this year and 4 every year after, and working a 40 hours week with medical benefits starting immediately duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

Mayor Stetar swore Chief Timothy Kirsch in and following Chief Kirsch introduced his two daughters, future son in law and his wife of 30 years.

FINANCE – MRS. GUTOSKY

MONTHLY BILLS

Motion by Gutosky/Maddiex to pay the monthly bills as presented duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

SOLICITOR BILLS- 3 MONTH BILL

Motion by Gutosky/Maddiex to pay and add the Solicitor's bill onto the monthly bills in the amount of \$1,914.00 with \$1,210.00 for Admin, \$396.00 for Zoning, and \$308.00 for sewage duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

BUDGET

Mrs. Gutosky stated there are some peaks and valleys but in the end we are good. She stated we need to watch the peaks which are in the SWAT category and police dept. training they have spent their entire budget this year. She stated minor equipment was over a bit in the street department- minor equipment line item. Ms. Evans stated the overage for minor equipment line item was the cab for the tractor which was approved a few years back but not purchased until this year and was not kept in that line item. She said all in all we are good and less than 50% and half way through the year and she asked the department heads to be prudent.

PUBLIC HEALTH- MR. MARISCOTTI HIRING

Mr. Mariscotti stated we have been looking at the idea of hiring a sewer dept/street dept. employee and is looking for a good job description and the collective bargaining agreement and will bring those back to council.

MR. GLAB

Nothing to report

MAYOR'S REPORT – DR. STETAR

Mayor Stetar congratulated Chief Kirsch and welcomed him to the borough.

KENNYWOOD DAY

Mayor Stetar stated Kennywood Day is July 21st and tickets will be on sell Monday and Tuesday at the fire dept. from 10 am to 6 pm.

ENGINEERS REPORT – MR. EBY

QUOTE FROM THRASHER

Ms. Evans stated Mr. Eby emailed this agreement and stated an aerial view from the interchange to Mechanic Street is needed for the Penndot permit to do the sewer project.

Motion by Mariscotti/Difilippo to approve the Thrasher quote in the amount of \$1,900.00 duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – MR. AGRAFIOTIS

Mr. Agrafiotis stated he just wanted to remind council that there is a one-year extension left on the garbage contract and if you want to extend it they need to be given a notice with in 90 days of the expiration or if you want to bid it it needs to be done.

Motion by Difilippo/Bittner to have the Solicitor send a letter to County Hauling letting them know that council is interested in the last one-year extension allowed by the contract duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes except Mrs. Gutosky who stepped out of the meeting.

TAX STATUS OF THE FORMER ST. JOSPEH CHURCH BUILDING

Mr. Agrafiotis stated he has the paperwork ready to submit to challenge the tax status of the former St. Joseph church building and he will be pursuing that in the near future.

TAX APPEALS

Mr. Agrafiotis stated the hearings for Rite Aid tax appeal and the Hotel's tax appeal have been set for August. He stated he was sent two different Rite Aid hearing notices for the same day but with different times and he will get that clarified.

WEIGHT LIMITS

Mr. Agrafiotis stated we need to have Steve or someone at Widmer review our road bond requirements in accordance with Penndot specification to do the appropriate paperwork to have our roads rebounded.

Motion by Bittner/Mariscotti to have the Widmer Engineering review our weight limits and road bond ordinance and bring them up to current regulations duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes except Mrs. Gutosky who abstained because she had stepped out of the meeting during the conversation.

OLD BUSINESS

OUTFITTING OF NEW POLICE VEHICLES

Motion by Glab/Maddiex to outfit the two new police vehicles, one with a ram bar and the other with a cage at a cost of \$2,100. After some discussion it was left up to the new Chief to decide how he would like them done. Motion was withdrawn.

NEW BUSINESS

RECOGNITION OF CITIZENS

Mrs. Roth shared that the Rutledge Institute has openings for kids age 3+ to enroll and it is free care for preschool and pre-K children.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Maddiex/Mariscotti to adjourn the meeting carried with all members present stating aye.