

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, December 1, 2021

PUBLIC MEETING

PRESENT: Colleen Leonard, Council President
Tina Sokolowski, Council Vice-President
Robert Stokley, Senior Council Member
Anita Barton, Council Member
Kathleen Kingsley, Council Member
James Griffin, 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 at the Conshohocken Borough Hall, 400 Fayette Street, Conshohocken, PA. Ms. Leonard, Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Leonard announced that an Executive Session was held immediately prior to the regularly scheduled public meeting on legal and property matters.

PRESENTATIONS

a.) General Obligation Notes Refinancing Options, Chris Gibbons, Concord Public Financial Advisors

Ms. Leonard introduced Chris Gibbons to present refinancing options for the Borough's General Obligation Notes which provided funding for the construction of Borough Hall. Mr. Gibbons reviewed the current rates and interest rate caps compared to the proposed caps received through a bank financing Request for Proposals (RFP). He explained that, based on the proposals received, the Borough could reduce the annual budgeted debt service costs by approximately \$173,800.00 per year. He provided a brief overview of the RFP results and reviewed the fixed and variable rate proposals for Phoenixville Federal Bank & Trust and Truist Bank.

Ms. Cecco discussed timeline and next steps in the RFP process to refinance the Borough's General Obligation Notes. She asked Council to consider authorizing advertisement of a borrowing ordinance to refinance the Borough's General Obligation Notes with Phoenixville Federal Bank & Trust for Tax Exempt Series of 2022 and with Truist Bank for Taxable Series of 2022.

Ms. Barton made a motion to authorize advertisement of a borrowing ordinance to refinance the Borough's General Obligation Notes with Phoenixville Federal Bank & Trust for Tax Exempt Series of 2022 and with Truist Bank for Taxable Series of 2022, seconded by Ms. Sokolowski. The motion carried 7-0.

b.) 2021 Police Department Update Presentation, George Metz, Police Chief

George Metz provided a status update on the Police Department and presented findings from a Police Assessment Report with included specific recommendations for the department on staffing, deployment, and other relevant issues.

LAND USE MATTERS, PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ORDINANCES

a.) Discussion on an ordinance amendment to establish animal control regulations

Mr. Peters shared that the proposed animal control ordinance has been revised based on feedback from the Borough's residents. He explained that the revised ordinance prohibits off-leash animals within the Borough ordinance and contains restrictions regarding the removal of animal waste and noise. He stated that the section related to the keeping of chickens has been removed in its entirety. Mr. Peters explained that the ordinance prohibits the feeding of feral cats only if that feeding causes a nuisance. He stated that the ordinance establishes an Animal Control Officer. He discussed violation and penalty provisions, including private actions for enforcement.

Ms. Leonard called for public comment on the revisions to the proposed animal control ordinance.

Dianne Piccone, 821 Harry Street, asked Borough Council to postpone a vote on the proposed animal control ordinance until she provides a proposal on the provisions related to feral cats pertaining to a trap-neuter-release alternative.

b.) Discussion on an ordinance amendment to establish to-go parking spaces within the Borough

Mr. Peters stated that Borough Council established certain temporary and/or experimental parking regulations in the Borough creating certain 15 minute “to-go orders only” parking zones in the Borough. He explained that following evaluation of the temporary parking regulations, the Parking Task Force and Borough Administration are recommending that Council consider making those parking regulations permanent by adopting an ordinance amendment. He reviewed the proposed ordinance which would establish three (3) 15-minute “to-go” parking spaces on Fayette Street between East Second Avenue and East Third Avenue; four (4) 15 minute “to-go” parking spaces on Fayette Street Between East First and East Second Avenue; and one (1) 15 minute “to-go” parking space on East first Avenue.

c.) Discussion on an ordinance amendment to clarify fire services personnel

Mr. Peters explained that the proposed ordinance amendment clarifies the organizational structure of the Borough’s fire department, including the chain of command. He added that the ordinance addresses and/or adds positions and establishes responsibilities and compensation for each position.

d.) Discussion on an amendment to the Borough’s Solid Waste Ordinance

Mr. Peters explained that the proposed ordinance amends the Borough’s solid waste and recycling regulations as necessary to reflect the Borough’s current solid waste and recycling practices.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

a.) Conduct interviews for Board and Commission reappointments

Ms. Leonard introduced Holly Holst who was present to interview for reappointment to the Vacancy Board. Ms. Holst discussed the role and importance of the Vacancy Board. She expressed her interest in continuing to serve on the Board to ensure that Borough business can continue without delay in the event of a vacancy on Borough Council.

Ms. Leonard introduced Rick Barton who was present to interview for reappointment to the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB). Mr. Barton discussed how his professional experience as a zoning offer and his personal background as a resident of Conshohocken drives his continued interest in the ZHB. He also discussed how various aspects of zoning has evolved over the years. He requested that Borough Council consider filling the current vacancy, appointing a Zoning Hearing Board Alternate, and amending the zoning ordinance to make accessory dwelling units more attainable.

b.) Conduct an interview for the Environmental Advisory Council

Ms. Leonard introduced Richard Kosich who was present to interview for a vacancy on the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC). Mr. Kosich discussed his interest in renewable energy and promoting programs and plans to protect and improve the Borough’s environment. He stated that he would like to get involved with EAC’s Green Business Recognition Program. He discussed his involvement with the EAC as a Friend of the EAC. He also discussed strengths of the Borough which included geographic location and strategic development.

MANAGER MATTERS

a.) Discussion on the 2022 meeting schedules for Borough Council and Boards & Commissions

Ms. Cecco reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for Borough Council, which included meetings on the first and third Wednesday of each month and two (2) special budget meetings in September and November. She added that the schedule includes a Reorganization Meeting in January and no Work Sessions in January and July. She reviewed proposed meeting schedules for Boards and Commissions. Ms. Cecco asked Council to consider approving and authorizing advertisement of the proposed 2022 meeting schedules at the Voting Meeting in December.

b.) Consider approving a tuition reimbursement for Officer Glasgow

Ms. Cecco stated that education reimbursement is a provision of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Ms. Tutino made a motion to approve a tuition reimbursement for Officer Glasgow, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 7-0.

c.) Consider approving 538 Spring Mill Avenue financial security escrow release no. 3 (final) in the amount of \$6,754.50

Ms. Leonard made a motion to approve 538 Spring Mill Avenue financial security escrow release no. 3 in the amount of \$6,754.50, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion carried 7-0.

d.) Consider approving 701 Jones Street financial security escrow release no. 6 in the amount of \$1,500.00

Mr. Griffin made a motion to approve 701 Jones Street financial security escrow release no. 6 in the amount of \$1,500.00, seconded by Ms. Tutino. The motion carried 7-0.

e.) Consider approving SORA West financial security escrow release no. 8 in the amount of \$285,385.85

Ms. Barton made a motion to approve SORA West financial security escrow release no. 8 in the amount of \$285,385.85, seconded by Mr. Griffin. Mr. Stokley recused himself. The motion carried 6-0.

DEPARTMENT MATTERS

There were no department matters.

LEGAL MATTERS

There were no legal matters.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

Mayor Aronson discussed and shared pictures from the Christmas Tree Lighting and Menorah Lighting ceremonies. He shared details about the Holiday House Decorating Contest.

Mr. Stokley thanked Chief Metz for his presentation on the Police Department.

Ms. Barton recognized the success of the Menorah Lighting Ceremony. She also recognized the Conshohocken Police Department for the services and assistance that they provide to the community.

Ms. Sokolowski shared that the Sewer Authority received the 2021 Class I Safety Award for 1700 days without loss due to a work-related injury.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Walt Hartnett of the VFW Post discussed the Hometown Heroes Banner Program and the condition of the Veteran's Memorial at 2nd Avenue and Fayette Street.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Cecco,
Borough Secretary