

**CASTLE SHANNON BOROUGH
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

February 25, 2019

The following elected officials were present: M. Heckmann; T. Kirsch; N. Kovach; B. Oates; M. Randazzo; D. Swisher; D. Baumgarten; E. O'Malley. Council Member M. Warhold was absent. The following appointed officials were present: T. Hartswick, Borough Manager; D. Biondo, Solicitor; K. Truver, Police Chief; P. Vietmeier, Codes Official.

The minutes of the February 11, 2019 Council Meeting were presented. Ms. Randazzo motioned to approve the minutes; Mr. Swisher seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Mr. Heckmann opened the public comment section for agenda items.

Fire Chief Bill Reffner, Jason Maenz and Dan Collins attended from the Castle Shannon Volunteer Fire Department. Chief Reffner wished borough council and the borough a happy 100th year anniversary, and noted the fire department will be having their 100th anniversary next year. The fire department was extremely busy and instrumental in assisting residents in a variety of ways with the dangerous wind storm last evening. Chief Reffner discussed the more stringent financial controls that have been instituted, and noted that the department is solvent and on track. Many fire departments throughout the Commonwealth have experienced a reduction in the number of fire fighters, and a Summit Committee has been formed to evaluate activities for future programs to recruit additional fire fighter volunteers and review fundraising activities. Chief Reffner concluded affirming that MRTSA, public works, the police and fire departments all work together cooperatively to help service the residents of Castle Shannon during emergencies.

Jason Stanton of Lennon Smith Souleret Engineering and David DeJoya of McMahon & Associates – attended the meeting and described their proposal on the Active Allegheny Grant. The firm of E. Holdings will also join the team for public outreach. The plan will allow for areas around the Shannon Transit Village to connect with main street businesses, Lebanon Shop businesses, and opportunities on Myrtle Avenue such as the library, school and park. Mr. Stanton stated this is a unique opportunity for a unique project. Ms. Randazzo motioned to award the grant proposal to the Lennon, Smith, Souleret/McMahon & Associates team; Mr. Oates seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

The public comment section was closed.

Public Hearings: Sean Garin, Attorney at Law, Dinsmore & Shohl LLC presented the debt ordinance for a line of credit with Dollar Bank in the amount of \$2,200,000 to finance streetscape improvements. Mr. Heckmann opened the public hearing for comments. Being none, the public comment section was closed. Mr. Oates motioned to adopt Ordinance #918; Mr. Kirsch seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Civil Service Commission: The agenda contained the commission review for 2018.

Real Estate Tax Collector: Ms. Randazzo motioned to adopt Resolution #668 for the disposition of certain tax records; Mr. Swisher seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Council Committee Reports:

Public Relations/Communications – Mr. Heckmann stated that during this last difficult windstorm, he was heartened at the use of social media by the borough authorities and residents to communicate together.

Building & Grounds – Mr. Oates commended all three branches of public service for working together to mitigate damage from the severe weather event.

Starting in March, the public works department will be starting storm water manhole inspections.

Public Safety/Fire – Chief Truver stated that the police department has 69 Twitter followers.

Mayor Baumgarten congratulated the fire department on their great assistance to the borough. Castle Shannon is listed in the top 10 safest communities in Pennsylvania, and Mayor Baumgarten attributed this to the fire department, police department and medics. In addition, Castle Shannon is second in the state to participate in the ring/neighborhood program. Mayor Baumgarten stated he is very proud to be part of this community, and wanted to extend his thanks to the members of the fire department, the police officers, and employees of MRTSA.

Finance – Mr. Swisher reviewed check registers for February 15th, February 19th, and February 21st with no further questions. Ms. Kovach motioned to approve the check registers; Mr. Oates seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Community Activities/Planning & Codes – Ms. Kovach announced that the first event for the borough's 100th anniversary will be Castle Shannon Night at Linden Grove on Thursday, March 28th. This is an epic musical event featuring four bands: Soulfully Noted, Evan Dean Band, Cellar Blues Band, and Bastard Bearded Irishmen. Tickets are \$30 per person and include a buffet dinner from 6-8 p.m. Tickets can be purchased on Eventbrite.com.

Carl Lukitsch, 3147 McRoberts Road – stated this is his 7th time before Castle Shannon boards regarding his neighbor's blighted property condition. The home experienced a fire in September of 2015, and the property is still not renovated or livable. Mr. Lukitsch presented photographs and described loose siding banging against the house, lack of windows, trash on the garage roof, a collapsed garage door, and construction material projectiles coming onto his property. In 2018, the UCC Board of Appeals granted the homeowner an unspecified amount of time to complete renovations to attempt to keep the property on the tax rolls. Mr. Heckmann stated that council is uncomfortable with this situation and is sorry for his hardship. The following two actions will be taken: 1) Every property maintenance code violation and quality of life ordinance violation will be documented and enforced, and the homeowner will be cited; and 2) The case will be revisited by the UCC board to create accountability and a time line with milestones listed for renovations. In addition, the property can be re-evaluated for structural stability and possible condemnation status. Mayor Baumgarten continued a discussion on the lengthy time frame it takes to resolve blighted property issues through the courts.

On a positive note, Mr. Lukitsch stated he appreciates and supports the community library and stated it is one of the borough's best assets.

Library – Ms. Randazzo stated that Governor Wolf’s proposed budget provides a small increase for education, while the subsidy to the libraries are flat. Ms. Randazzo asked that the borough contact our legislators to request consideration for increasing funding to libraries.

SHACOG – The agenda contained the minutes of the board of director’s meeting of February 21, 2019. Ms. Kovach noted that many SHACOG municipality representatives are not attending the board meetings, and thanked Castle Shannon board members for their attendance. Ms. Randazzo motioned to place a full page ad in the annual dinner meeting program; Mr. Oates seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Mayor: Mayor Baumgarten received assurance that a local use of radar bill will be passed.

Solicitor: Mr. Biondo presented the Castle Court Development Agreement for A. R. Building Company. Mr. Swisher motioned to authorize the appropriate officials to execute the development agreement for Castle Court and the collateral assignment of development agreement; Ms. Kovach seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Public Comment: No comments were received; therefore the public comment section was closed.

Other: Ms. Randazzo thanked the members of the fire department for all their help to the borough residents. Mr. Oates agreed.

Ms. Kovach motioned to adjourn; Mr. Swisher seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Approved as presented this 11th day of March 2019.

Thomas C. Hartswick
Borough Manager

Mark J. Heckmann
President