

CASTLE SHANNON BOROUGH MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

February 8, 2021

The February 8, 2021 meeting of the Castle Shannon Borough Council was held as a virtual meeting using Zoom Meeting technology in compliance with the disaster emergency proclamation of the Governor of Pennsylvania related to the coronavirus pandemic, including the closure of non-essential businesses, stay-at-home order and social distancing directives.

The following elected officials were present: M. Heckmann; M. Randazzo; R. Astor; N. Kovach; J. Maloney; B. Oates; D. Swisher; D. Baumgarten; E. O'Malley. The following appointed officials were present: K. Truver, Police Chief; D. Biondo, Solicitor; P. Vietmeier, Codes Official; A. Lyda, Junior Council Representative; L. Miller, Acting Manager.

The minutes of the January 25, 2021 Council Meeting were presented. Ms. Randazzo motioned to approve the minutes; Mr. Swisher seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Real Estate Tax Collector: Ms. O'Malley reported January collections of \$1,957.43 from additional assessments. Ms. O'Malley is preparing the 2021 real estate tax mailing. Mr. Heckmann thanked Ms. O'Malley for her work for the borough.

Council Committee Reports

Building & Grounds/Public Works – Mr. Maloney reported that the public works department has been very busy with winter road maintenance this year, and they are currently preparing for the next round of snow. Ms. Kovach noted a letter from a newspaper distributor and a resident that commended the public works department for keeping the roadways clear.

In addition, the crew has been completing interior painting projects at the municipal center.

Mr. Ausman discovered a sewer issue on Orr Drive that was televised and will require a repair.

Ms. Randazzo asked that the public works department be reminded that the library parking lot and sidewalks need snow removal for curbside deliveries, material pickups, and computer appointments.

Mr. Swisher discussed the rock salt agreement with SHACOG. Mr. Heckmann noted that with decreasing temperatures, rock salt may not be as effective and requested that residents be patient and use caution when driving.

Public Safety – Mr. Astor reported that the Castle Shannon Volunteer Fire Department is working on a number of projects. Mr. Sutton and Chief Reffner expressed an interest in addressing council at their next meeting in February.

Chief Truver noted with sadness the passing of Larry Swimkowsky, who was a long-time chairman of the Civil Service Commission. He was a mentor to many people on the civil service boards over the years. Mr. Swimkowsky passed away on January 31st.

Finance – Mr. Swisher reviewed the check registers for January 28th and February 5th and had no further questions.

Community Activities/Planning and Codes – Mr. Vietmeier reported that two new businesses will be presenting to the Planning Commission next week, i.e. Hummus Pittsburgh on Castle Shannon Boulevard and a pizza shop in Stoner Center.

Library – Ms. Randazzo reported that the board met last week. The library continues to offer curbside and lobby pickup, and computer sessions are very popular.

The virtual book discussion program ends this month, and there is one more month on the county-wide winter reading challenge.

Tax forms are available in the lobby of the library.

The floor replacement was completed in the children’s area and looks very nice.

Christina Walters, Children’s Librarian, is resigning effective February 13th. In addition, two part-time positions are available for library assistants.

Marilyn Jenkins, Executive Director of the Allegheny County Library Association, will be retiring this fall. Under her leadership, our libraries have truly flourished. She will be greatly missed.

MRTSA – Board members will be receiving a survey to help plan meeting agendas and priorities for the board for 2021.

Mr. Heckmann noted that COVID has been very hard on first responders. This has created stress on the organization and the paramedic professionals. The board is looking into sponsoring a fund-raiser to purchase a therapy dog for the staff.

SHACOG – Mr. Oates reported that the SHACOG Board of Directors will meet February 18th via a hybrid meeting (both virtually and in-person) at the SHACOG office.

ACBA – Ms. Kovach stated the quarterly meeting is scheduled for March 4th. The borough is currently participating in ALOM’s Public Partners Program to obtain candidates for the manager position.

Seventy-four communities were recognized in the 2020 Community Banner Program.

Manager: Mr. Heckmann discussed a sewage discharge violation on Willow Avenue that was discovered by public works during a dye test. ALCOSAN and the Allegheny County Department of Health were notified. Mr. Ausman noted that the property owners have hired a plumber to connect the properties to the sewer line.

Mr. Heckmann discussed Tax Levy Ordinance #925 which was passed for a tax neutral budget for 2021, meaning no tax increase or decrease. The ordinance contained a clerical error which has been adjusted. Mr. Astor motioned to affirm the intention of council was to pass a tax neutral budget for 2021 and authorize the appropriate officials to take the necessary action to correct the clerical error; Ms. Kovach seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

MS4: Mr. Heckmann reported that during a routine dye test for a Willow Avenue property, Public Works discovered an illicit discharge from several properties. The borough reported the results to ALCOSAN and the Allegheny County Health Department.

Mr. Heckmann and Ms. Miller are participating in ALCOSAN educational meetings for compliance items. Two manholes will be spot checked by ALCOSAN in the coming weeks. ALCOSAN transfer agreement amendments have been submitted to the solicitors for review before trunk sewers are conveyed.

Penn State University students continue to work with Ms. Miller, Mr. Vietmeier and Mr. Stanton on a proposed detention pond project in Shannon Heights.

Planning Commission: The agenda contained the minutes of the November 16, 2020 meeting.

Solicitor's Report: Mr. Biondo presented the Settlement Agreement and Release for the Schirra versus Martin's Auto Gallery versus Castle Shannon Borough case. Mr. Astor motioned to authorize the appropriate officials to execute the agreement; Ms. Swisher seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Junior Council Member: Ms. Lyda stated that the Keystone Oaks School District teachers went on strike last Monday. The strike is forced to stop on February 9th; however, they may have an opportunity to strike again later this year.

Public Comment: Annie Shaw, 528 Glen Shannon Drive – asked for an update on the urban agriculture ordinance. The draft ordinance was reviewed by the planning commission and submitted to Allegheny County Economic Development, who recommended revisions in the setbacks. The ordinance and recommendations will be reviewed by the planning commission on February 15th. If the planning commission proposes amendments to the ordinance, it will be resubmitted to the county for an additional review.

Other: Ms. Randazzo stated that the Personnel Committee met to review applications for the borough manager position. Twenty-nine applications were received. Six were selected for interviews.

Council will recess to executive session to discuss personnel items.

Ms. Randazzo motioned to adjourn; Mr. Maloney seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Approved as presented this 22nd day of February 2021.

Loretta J. Miller
Acting Manager

Mark J. Heckmann
President