**CASTLE SHANNON BOROUGH**

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

January 23, 2023

The following elected officials were present J. Maloney; R. Astor; N. Kovach; W. Oates; M. Randazzo; D. Swisher (via Zoom); D. Baumgarten; E. O’Malley. Council President M. Heckmann was absent. The following appointed officials were present: K. Stringent, Borough Manager; K. Truver, Police Chief; P. Vietmeier, Codes Official; D. Biondo, Solicitor. Junior Council Member C. Aziner was absent.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the January 9, 2023 council meeting were presented. Mr. Astor motioned to approve the minutes. Ms. Randazzo seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

The meeting was turned over to Chief Truver for a special recognition. Chief Truver described a life-saving event on December 28th at the Ice Castle where a patron was unconscious and in cardiac arrest. Two good Samaritans were on scene and were recognized for their quick response in starting CPR on the patient - Erick Rigby and Michael Vignovich. Police officers arrived and continued CPR. The paramedics arrived shortly thereafter and were able to get a pulse on the patient who became conscious and was able to speak before being transported.

MRTSA Chief Worth attended the council meeting to recognize Police Officer Christine Platt and Police Officer Jeffrey Recker for another life saved in the borough. Chief Worth also commended Paramedic Doug Widmer and Emergency Medical Technician Patricia Davies, the MRTSA personnel who responded. Chief Worth added that the borough should be very proud of our police department and fire department for their work and support of MRTSA.

Council applauded the civilians who started CPR, the two Castle Shannon Police Officers who responded, and the two paramedics for their quick response in this life-saving emergency. The emergency responders and bystanders will be recognized by the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association at a future MRTSA meeting.

**Public Comment – Agenda Items:**

Paul Salvayon, President of the CSRC – addressed council regarding the agenda item for a motion to establish a façade committee of borough council to make recommendations regarding a main street façade program. The CSRC had a façade program grant through Keystone Communities designation that expired. Less than eight projects were funded through the grant. Mr. Salvayon stated that this type of program should be grant funded and not paid from borough taxes. Mr. Salvayon would like to have better communication and cooperation between the borough and CSRC for programs. Mr. Maloney stated that no money is being allocated for a façade program, and the intent is to form a committee to explore options. Mr. Biondo added that forming a committee is an initial effort to determine what type of program is feasible and available. Marv Levin, President of the CSRC Design Committee, asked if CSRC will be part of the committee. Mr. Biondo responded saying that a committee of council would normally be council members only, who could request information and input from the CSRC. The committee would then make recommendations to all of council.

Mr. Astor stated the purpose of the committee would be to explore what requirements are necessary, if there are restrictions prohibiting the borough from participating in this type of activity, to seeking funding, and working with the local business community towards the benefit of enhancing the overall appearance of the downtown area or all the business districts. Then moving forward seeking interest and input from business owners and other community groups to put those plans in action. To date, no money has been allocated.

Mr. Salvayon stated that the CSRC is able and willing to assist council. Ms. Kovach questioned budget line items for approximately $50,000. Ms. Stringent answered the funds are for civic group contributions and donations. Mr. Levin said that the CSRC wants to be part of a façade program and wants to work with borough council. He added that we are all here for the betterment of Castle Shannon. Ms. Kovach stated that the CSRC is the non-profit arm of the borough. A discussion continued on prior fund-raising activities of the CSRC and donations for community day.

Council agreed to table the agenda item for a motion to establish a façade committee of borough council.

The public comment section was closed.

**Civil Service Commission:** The agenda contained the 2022 Annual Report.

**Real Estate Tax Collector:** Ms. O’Malley reported December collections of $75,338.38. Total collections were $3,939,231.80 which is a 96% collection rate.

Ms. O’Malley presented Resolution #722 to dispose of all 2015-2016 borough tax duplicates (office copies), tax certifications, records of borough tax deposits, monthly reports, correspondence, deed transfer records, delinquent tax collection lists, and exoneration certificates issued to the tax collector. Mr. Astor motioned to adopt Resolution #722. Ms. Randazzo seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Ms. O’Malley presented the 2022 list of delinquent taxpayers. Total outstanding is $89,173.04, which is $15,000 less than 2021. Ms. Kovach motioned to exonerate Ms. O’Malley for the 2022 uncollected taxes and turn the list over to the borough’s liened tax collector. Mr. Astor seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

**Council Committee Reports**

**Buildings & Grounds/Public Works** – Mr. Maloney reported that the public works department did a great job during the recent snow event.

The pickup truck that was ordered in 2021 will be received later this week.

**Public Safety/Fire** – Bob Sutton, President of CSVFD – reported on the goals and visions of the Castle Shannon Volunteer Fire Department for 2023. The fire department is always working to increase the firefighting force. One of the tools to achieve this goal is the development and production of a recruitment video. The department is working with a producer with the hopes of having this video ready for viewing by the end of February. With the help of Chief Reffner and several members of the department, the project is two-thirds completed. Bob Astor (as liaison between the police department, fire department and council) has provided a short endorsement.

The carnival committee is in the planning stages of expanding the carnival from three to four days – July 26th to July 29th. An outside vendor will be providing amusement rides. The goal is to continue to have an event without over-burdening the fire department members. Jeremy Emph, Carnival Chairman, is working with Ms. Stringent for community day inclusion with this event.

The CSVFD is working on a major capital improvement project by replacing the HVAC system in the Firemen’s Hall. One portion of the system is over 40 years old.

The department is currently in the process of upgrading the fire station lighting from fluorescent lamps to LED. This project includes the Firemen’s Hall, engine room, chief’s office, and training center. The parking lot lights have also been changed over to LED.

Mr. Sutton concluded by noting that the borough’s glass recycling bin in the CSVFD parking lot is well utilized.

Fire Chief William Reffner – stated that the written annual report is being finalized. Chief Reffner gave a brief update on 2022 activities. The fire department responded to 275 incidents. Average response time was 5 minutes 43 seconds. Eighteen firefighters completed over 1850 hours of training including national, state, county, local and in-house programs. Programs included basic rescue, hazmat, structural fires (both residential and high-rise commercial buildings), hose line advancement, etc. Unfortunately, no new members were recruited in 2022.

For 2023, the CSVFD responded to fourteen incidents. Two new firefighting members joined; one has Firefighter II certification.

The department is on track to receive a new engine in April of 2024.

CSVFD officers are working on trying to narrow the squad for more efficiency with response time.

January’s fire schools included first fire school with video shoots of climbing ladders, advancing the hosing, and using the aerial. Also, rapid intervention training was conducted for saving a firefighter in a structure.

**Finance** – Mr. Swisher reviewed the check registers for December 31, 2022 and January 20,2023. Mr. Swisher questioned a duplicate expenditure in the employee benefits account. Ms. Miller answered that the retired employee received one check for health insurance reimbursement for 2022. Ms. Kovach motioned to pay the bill list. Mr. Astor seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

**Community Activities/Planning and Codes** – Mr. Vietmeier announced that the UCC Board of Appeals will meet on February 15th at 7:00 p.m. regarding Polished Nail Studio & Spa.

**Library –** Ms. Randazzo urged residents to review the library website for upcoming programs. The borough’s website also has links to the library’s website under the Residents tab.

Friends of the Library used book sale will be held March 15th to March 18th.

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be February 2nd.

**SHACOG** – Mr. Oates attended the board meeting at Baldwin Township. Joint Police Testing will be held April 29th. The vehicle bid for 2023 resulted in no availability for new vehicles to be received in this year. The majority of the board discussion was held on the joint waste bid. Automated pickup is being planned with hybrid locations for specific areas. Glass recycling is expected to enter the recycling stream in the next cycle of contracts.

**ACBA** – The annual banquet is scheduled for February 4th at the Rivers Casino. Ms. Kovach, Ms. Miller, Mayor Baumgarten, Chief Truver and Mr. Astor plan to attend.

**ALOM** – Ms. Kovach, Mr. Astor, Mr. Salvayon attended the legislative reception held on January 19th.

**Police Pension/Non-Uniformed Pension:** Ms. Stringent reported that the borough concluded the state audit of the pension plans for 2018-2021. Ms. Stringent thanked Ms. Miller for her work on the arduous process and for keeping immaculate records. There were no findings on either audit.

**Manager:** Ms. Stringent presented four resolutions authorizing the transfer agreement and related documents, instruments, and agreements with ALCOSAN and the transfer to ALCOSAN of certain sewer system assets (trunk lines) as identified within said resolutions. Resolution #723 is the Sleepy Hollow trunk line. Resolution #724 is the Castle Shannon Boulevard trunk line. Resolution #725 is the James Street trunk line. Resolution #726 is the Connor Road trunk line. Mr. Oates motioned to adopt Resolutions #723, #724, #725 and #726. Ms. Kovach seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Ms. Stringent described a vehicle accident on Willow Avenue in 2022 and subsequent residential concerns regarding traffic expressed at a council meeting. As a result, the borough contracted with Trans Associates, who conducted an assessment of the warning signage, pavement markings, site distance, curb speed and crash data. The study area consisted of Willow Avenue and Castle Shannon Blvd., Willow Avenue and Vermont, Willow Avenue and Hastie, and Willow Avenue and Smith Street. Chief Truver stated that he agrees with most of the report’s recommendations; however, some are impractical, and he gave his concerns to the borough manager. The following recommendations will be prepared in a future ordinance for council’s approval: 1) Add a stop sign at Willow & Smith; 2) Signal at the intersections with existing stop signs to always stop or signal that cross-traffic does not stop; 3) Additional advisory speed signs, chevrons, and updating signage to comply with PennDOT’s traffic manual.

**Mayor’s Report:** Mayor Baumgarten commented that the police local use of radar bill has no future.

Mayor Baumgarten also commented that 300 people will die today from fentanyl overdoses from drugs crossing the border from Mexico.

**Solicitor:** Mr. Biondo advised that the borough received a notice of appeal from a zoning matter regarding 900 Sleepy Hollow Road.

**Keystone Oaks**: Mr. Vietmeier attended the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association District 1 Orchestra Festival Concert and noted several participating members from Keystone Oaks High School: William Eibeck, Music Director of Keystone Oaks; Caleb Anderson on horn; and Benjamin Burke played trombone.

**Public Comment:** Marv Levin, Corbett Drive – was disappointed that council made a decision to relocate soldier banners from the downtown area and purchase different banners that delineate the business district. Ms. Stringent advised that the current soldier banners will not fit on the new light poles. Soldier banners will continue to be installed in other areas of the borough. Mr. Levin stated that CSRC began the first soldier banner program in the South Hills area and believes the borough should purchase brackets to make the banners fit. Ms. Kovach stated that council did not vote to remove the soldier banners from the downtown area. Ms. Stringent advised that council did vote to purchase the lamp posts and saw photos of the main street banners. Mr. Levin said that the CSRC was not advised that the soldier banners would not be displayed in the downtown area. Ms. Kovach stated that soldier banners are displayed from Memorial Day to Veteran’s Day, which leaves an opportunity for other banners to be displayed in the winter. Mr. Salvayon suggested that the soldier banners could be remade to the lamp posts’ specifications; and CSRC would be able to fund the purchase and request donations for this endeavor. Council will take this issue under advisement.

Glenn Lackey, Blossom Hill Road – stated that he would like to see archery hunting approved in the borough. As President of White-Tailed Disabled Hunting, Mr. Lackey takes wounded warriors, veterans, and disabled children archery hunting in Bethel Park. All hunters are certified, and safety is their first concern. Recently, Mr. Lackey noticed that a property in Castle Shannon where he had permission to hunt was now posted for no hunting. Chief Truver stated that a resident contacted the police department with concerns about hunting on this property close to neighboring homes, and the property owner was contacted. Subsequently, the owner decided against allowing future hunts. Mr. Lackey said he has removed his tree stand.

Robert Simms, Willow Avenue – would like to review the recommendations of the traffic calming recommendations for Willow Avenue before going to ordinance. Ms. Stringent answered that all of the recommendations are public documents. The ordinance can be posted on the borough’s website and will be part of the meeting packet for borough council.

Mr. Heckmann closed the public comment section.

**Other Business**: Ms. Stringent advised that PA American Water will be doing extensive water line repair/replacement in the borough on Glen Shannon Drive, Kerry Hill Drive, Hoodridge Derive, Baldwin Street, James Street, Willow Avenue, Corbett Drive, and Greenridge Road. Information is posted on the borough’s website. In addition, Columbia Gas will be working on Willow Avenue in April.

Ms. Kovach questioned when Poplar Avenue road restoration would occur. Ms. Stringent was assured that this road was first on the list. Ms. Randazzo thanked Ms. Stringent for connecting with PA American Water regarding road restoration on Poplar Avenue.

Ms. Stringent noted that the borough’s website under quick links has an E-newsletter sign up. This is an initiative by Victoria Copenheaver, Community Engagement Coordinator.

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

Approved as presented this 13th day of February 2023.

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Katie M. Stringent Mark J. Heckmann

Borough Manager Council President