

**CASTLE SHANNON BOROUGH
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

December 11, 2023

The following elected officials were present: N. Kovach, D. Swisher; K. Brannon; W. Oates; M. Randazzo; D. Seiler; D. Baumgarten; E. O'Malley. The following appointed officials were present: M. Foote, Borough Manager; D. Biondo, Borough Solicitor; K. Truver, Police Chief; P. Vietmeier, Code Official; J. Stanton, Borough Engineer.

Public Notice: Ms. Kovach announced that council met in executive session this evening at 6:00 pm for the purpose of collecting information or educating agency members about an issue.

Public Comment – Agenda Items: Ms. Kovach opened the public comment for agenda items. Being none, the public comment section was closed.

Minutes: The minutes of the November 27, 2023 council meeting were presented. Mr. Brannon motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Swisher seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Administration: Mr. Foote noted that two holidays occur on Mondays for the 2024 meeting schedule – Memorial Day May 27th and Veterans Day November 11th. Council has agreed to eliminate May 27th from the meeting schedule and retain the November 11th meeting. Mr. Swisher motioned to approve the 2024 meeting schedule and authorize the borough manager to advertise same. Mr. Oates seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Mr. Foote reported that council has received a request for a letter of support from the Pittsburgh Regional Transit as they apply to the Federal Transit Administration for \$100 million in grant funding to replace 53 light rail vehicles. The grant also includes funding for acquiring parts and tools for maintenance, investing in complimentary infrastructure improvements, and workforce development activities. Mr. Swisher motioned to authorize the borough manager to submit a letter of support to the Federal Transit Administration on behalf of the PRT. Mr. Seiler seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

The borough has received the 2024 Engineering Services Agreement with Lennon, Smith, Souleret Engineering Inc. Mr. Swisher motioned to authorize the borough manager to execute the 2024 Engineering Services Agreement. Mr. Oates seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Civil Service Commission: Chief Truver reported that the commission met on December 4th and are recommending five changes to the Civil Service Rules. Chief Truver reviewed each of the changes. Mr. Brannon motioned to accept revisions to the Civil Service Rules as recommended to council by the Civil Service Commission. Mr. Seiler seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Real Estate Tax Collector: Ms. O'Malley reported November collections of \$5,466.00. This brings the total year-to-date collection to \$3,803,280.67, which is a 95% collection rate.

Council Committee Reports

Building & Ground/Public Works – Mr. Stanton gave an update on the utility infrastructure contract for lower Hamilton Park. The contractor did not complete the work in accordance with

the confines of the contract. The borough filed a claim with the contractor's bonding company. The bonding company contacted a third-party contractor, Shallenberger Construction to complete the work. A tender agreement has been reached, and the contractor will submit a revised schedule with a notice to proceed in the next week. The utility work is scheduled to be completed by the end of April 2024 along with the retaining wall to expand parking. After that time, the other vendors for the turf, fencing, lights, and trails will commence work for approximately two months; and the project will conclude with the paving portion of the project. Ms. Kovach questioned if the contractors could work at the same time. Mr. Stanton answered potentially on some tasks depending on when the storm and sanitary relocations occur.

Mr. Stanton discussed progress on upper Hamilton Park. The splash pad preparation and utility extensions contractor has mobilized last week and started construction. Proposals were received for trails and concrete work on the exterior of the splash pad. The pricing was competitive, and awards will be granted in January 2024. This project is slightly ahead of schedule.

Mr. Swisher added that the public may not have been aware that because of litigation with the lower Hamilton project, the borough could not proceed.

Public Safety/Fire: Chief Truver announced that Castle Shannon Boulevard is scheduled to reopen on Wednesday.

PA American Water will begin work on Greenridge from Connor Road to Vermont. Scheduled start date is December 12th. The main line will be replaced in the middle of the road. Completion date for this phase is January 12, 2024. New service line installation to residences and paving/restoration will follow.

The gas company is working on Willow Avenue between St. Anne Street and Baldwin Street. Temporary restoration was completed on the street by Connor Road. Chief Truver is hoping that temporary restoration can be continued between Rockwood and St. Anne Street.

Finance: Mr. Swisher reviewed the check registers for December 1st and December 8th and had no further questions. Mr. Swisher motioned to pay all outstanding bills and invoices. Mr. Oates seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Mr. Foote stated that staff is recommending that council adopt the proposed 2024 budget. Mr. Foote confirmed that the budget was properly advertised. Mr. Swisher motioned to adopt the 2024 budget. Mr. Brannon seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Mr. Oates motioned to adopt Ordinance #936 fixing and levying the tax rate on real estate in the borough for the calendar year 2024. Mr. Seiler seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Planning & Codes – Mr. Vietmeier announced that the commission will meet on December 18th regarding Crimson Lotus Gallery on Grove Road.

Library – Ms. Randazzo announced that the Board of Trustees met on December 4th and December 7th. The board worked on the library's strategic plan. Ms. Randazzo thanked Ms. Myrah for assisting the trustees and for attending this evening's council meeting.

The library is hosting a “Welcome Winter Party” on December 19th from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. Crafts, music, hot chocolate, and cookies are planned. Families can register to reserve a spot to create a graham cracker gingerbread house to take home.

ACBA/ALOM – Ms. Kovach and Mr. Foote will be attending the general membership meeting on December 14th.

Mayor’s Report: Mayor Baumgarten took this opportunity to recognize Marian Randazzo, as this is her last council meeting as a council member. The mayor has known Ms. Randazzo for many years through her work on the Keystone Oaks School Board and as a council member for Castle Shannon. Ms. Randazzo has always worked for the best interests of the students while on the school board and for the best interests of the residents while on council. Mayor Baumgarten stated he could not find a greater person or finer citizen who served the community for so many years. Ms. Randazzo has worked very hard for the library which is the crown jewel of this community. Mayor Baumgarten added that she will be missed.

At this time, the public gave Ms. Randazzo a standing ovation. Ms. Randazzo thanked the mayor for his kind comments and thanked everyone that she worked with throughout the years. Ms. Randazzo stated that it has been an honor and a privilege to work for the community. Ms. Randazzo stated that public service is done for the service and not for anything in return other than seeing some fruits of your labor make things better in the community. That is what she has tried to do. She has worked with many amazing people through the years that remain friends. Seeing the students happy and the residents happy has been very rewarding.

Ms. Kovach commented everyone on council does the best they can for the community. Ms. Randazzo wished everyone the best and hopes that Castle Shannon can keep moving forward. Ms. Kovach also thanked Ms. Randazzo for her service to Castle Shannon.

Public Comment – Non-agenda Items: Mr. Swisher also thanked Ms. Randazzo for her many years of public service, both on the school board and on borough council. Mr. Swisher added that Ms. Randazzo has been a close friend and a great colleague, and she will be missed.

Bryan Gigliotti, Poplar Avenue – also thanked Ms. Randazzo for making decisions with her heart for the community.

Mr. Gigliotti complimented Ms. Myrah on the library’s programming. Mrs. Gigliotti has enjoyed the craft programs, and Mr. Gigliotti recently participated in the craft and vendor show. He plans to participate next year, and thanked Ms. Myrah for promoting the event.

The Castle Shannon Youth Association has several new board members. Registrations will start January 1st. Mr. Gigliotti noted that CSYA has a great relationship with borough council and attributes that to the people involved on both boards and their willingness to work together.

Mr. Gigliotti will serve as director for the 2024 Summer Recreation Program and will start planning for the program at Riehl Park. Ms. Kovach suggested having the program at Myrtle Avenue Elementary School; however, Mr. Gigliotti believes that Riehl Park has more amenities and field space for activities. Mayor Baumgarten questioned how the neighbors have reacted to the program at Riehl Park. Mr. Gigliotti answered he has received positive feedback from neighbors saying that they like hearing the music and the sound of the children having fun.

Mr. Gigliotti stated that he attended Light-Up Night and believes the fire department does a really nice job; however, he feels it would be amazing if the business district was included. Ms. Kovach agreed and noted that Whitehall had low level fireworks at their event.

Nancy Dempsey, Willow Avenue – reported that the roadway from Vermont to Rockwood has not been temporarily fixed by the gas company from their construction project. The gas company left a sign post base in her front yard which impedes her from walking in the grass in the evening. She would like this removed.

Ms. Dempsey stated that her trash can meets the requirements by Waste Management and asked if her trash could be picked up in her current can. Mr. Foote answered that he understands that the new carts must be used or trash will not be picked up; however, he will contact Waste Management to confirm.

Ms. Dempsey received a notice for putting trash out early. Both Ms. Dempsey and her husband were volunteering for the Holiday Giving Program when this occurred. Ms. Dempsey stated that it is ridiculous that the borough is paying an employee to drive around and take pictures of houses with garbage out. Ms. Dempsey believes that the timing for putting trash to the curb should be changed. Mr. Swisher and Ms. Kovach stated that the timing issue is being reviewed.

The public comment section was closed.

New Business: Nothing to report.

Ms. Kovach wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Ms. Randazzo motioned to adjourn. Mr. Oates seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

Approved as presented this 8th day of January 2024.

C. Michael Foote
Borough Manager

Nancy Kovach
Council President