

MINUTES Bloomfield Borough Council October 1, 2019

Bloomfield Borough Council met this evening in regular session in the Bloomfield Borough Council Chambers with the following Council members present:, James A. Woods, President Malinda C. Anderson, Vice President John J. Patterson V, Eric S. Berger, Alex M. Bender, and Karl L. Cless.

Also present: Secretary Danielle Shope, Assistant Secretary Kathleen Miller, Borough Employee Damon Hartman, Mayor Arlis Krammes, HRG Borough Engineer Michael T. Postick, Solicitor Richard Wagner, Bloomfield Borough Planning Commission Melanie Rowlands, BEO Harry Nazzaro, NavTech representative Lisa Fraker, residents Peggy and Herb Robb, Robin Dum, and High School Civics student Lukas Bogusch.

President Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MEETING OPENING

Recording of the Meeting – President Anderson advised the attendees that the meeting was being recorded by the Council for the accuracy of the minutes and stated that side conversations should be conducted in the hallway so as to not disrupt the meeting or its recording and reminded everyone that talking when someone else is speaking also disrupts the meeting and affects the recording. President Anderson further requested that those individuals in the audience desiring to speak during Public Comment identify themselves prior to speaking and they have 3 minutes to present their concern. Individuals have 10 minutes to present their concern if they are on the agenda. President Anderson stated that Council will not deviate from the agenda and any questions should be addressed during the appropriate portion of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes – Councilman Cless made a motion, seconded by Councilman Berger, to approve the September 3, 2019 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Financial Report – Councilman Woods made a motion, seconded by Councilman Berger, to approve the financial report for September 2019 as presented. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Lisa Fraker introduced herself as one of the owners of the pump station (i.e. Lot 30) with Mr. Watson. Ms. Fraker was not quite sure what she was there for except to hand out information concerning Lot 30. Mr. Roger Watson had given her this information to distribute to Council about what he is proposing. President Anderson said she was not clear about about the proposal. Ms. Fraker stated Mr. Watson gave her the information about what he is proposing and Mr. Watson has drawn everything out for the proposal of deeding it over. President Anderson stated Council knew nothing about this particular plan and it is the first they are hearing about this particular plan. Councilman Woods wanted to know if this discussion was about New Bloomfield receiving all of Lot 30. Ms. Fraker answered: “I don’t believe so”. Councilman Woods stated he is not interested in taking over Lot 30 unless the Borough gets all of Lot 30 because of possible expansion and room for getting in and out plus whether the pump station needs repairs, etc. Councilman Cless asked to see what was being offered because he took it upon himself to speak with Mr. Watson and asked Mr. Watson to come up with an alternative plan to see if it would be something Council

might consider. President Anderson stated that while this discussion may or may not have happened between Mr. Cless and Mr. Watson, this is the rest of Council's first opportunity hearing that he has even made an alternate proposal. She stated they are not opposed to seeing what the proposal is, but Council knew nothing about this. Ms. Fraker presented the plans she had to Councilman Cless and surrounding Council members. Solicitor Wagner asked Ms. Fraker, "Is this a subdivision plan?" Ms. Fraker replied, "A proposed, yes." Mr. Wagner, "A subdivision plan proposal?" Ms. Fraker, "I believe so, I just have everything written down with different colored highlights." Mr. Wagner stated, "Then, it has to go through proper channels." President Anderson asked if it had been through the Planning Commission to which Melanie Rowlands, Planning Commission chair, replied "No".

Councilman Cless vocalized that he asked Mr. Watson for suggestions that Council could talk about and that he promised his constituents in his area that something would be done with this issue before he went off Council because there are going to be problems with that pump station if the Borough does not take ownership. President Anderson stated Council has never negated that fact.

President Anderson deferred to Solicitor Wagner. Mr. Wagner stated "if it is in fact a subdivision proposal they have the right to do that, but there is a process that has to be followed and it must go to the Planning Commission, copies to Tri County for the County to review and all that comes to the Borough for the purposes of digesting all the information determining whether they are going to approve the proposed plan." Ms. Fraker presented the plan with discussion. Borough Engineer Mr. Postick watched on as she discussed the plan. Ms. Rowlands also joined discussion.

President Anderson stated, "From our legal counsel the plans were not submitted through the Planning Commission so let's let them go through the proper channels because Council cannot approve something that hasn't gone through the proper channels." Councilman Cless vehemently remarked that Mr. Watson is worried about going through the proper channels and being denied. Ms. Rowlands told Ms. Fraker, "The Planning Commission can put this on the agenda which is the last Monday in October at 7:00 p.m. here and they will expect an application which is properly filled out fully and properly signed by all the owners with the fees submitted." Ms. Rowlands remarked, "We do want to know the details of what is proposed because Mr. Watson has a habit of submitting things, which he now involved five different lots there and all the changes and there are a whole lot of dots and dashes, and its sort of a "smoke and mirrors" thing and we want words to go with it."

Solicitor Wagner stated again, "I asked if this was submission of a subdivision plan and the applicant stated twice that yes it is. If that is the case they haven't followed proper channels. On the other hand if they are suggesting it is a sketch plan, then the applicant has to state on the record that it is a "sketch plan" and it is ideas they want to kick around with Borough Council and Council can do that or hand it down to the Planning Commission to get some thoughts there." Mr. Postick then stated, "If he (Mr. Watson) wants to see if something is viable before spending a lot of time and money that's understandable because that's the purpose of a sketch plan, you make it as small and simple as possible."

President Anderson then asked Ms. Fraker again, "So to be clear, this is a sketch plan?" Ms. Fraker replied "Correct." Ms. Rowlands stated they are still more than happy to have it be on the Planning Commission schedule.

President Anderson told Ms. Fraker to let Mr. Watson know about the date of the Planning Commission meeting because it was not fair to be thrown this and asked to make a decision. Ms. Fraker stated they were asked to come before Council by Councilman Cless, but the rest of Council did not know this fact. Mr. Cless vocalized there is no reason for Mr. Watson to pay a fee just to see if this sketch is viable. Ms. Rowlands agreed with Mr. Cless.

President Anderson along with Mr. Postick's comments stated this was a proposal concerning Lot 30. Mr. Postick suggested an informal meeting with Mr. Watson be held. Ms. Fraker will have copies made. President Anderson wants copies so all Council members can look at the proposal so if they decide to do an informal review before the next scheduled Council meeting they can have more than one plan. Mr. Postick stated they are not accepting this as a sketch plan yet.

ENFORCEMENT

Solicitor's Report – Solicitor Wagner stated the petition filed for the reduction of Council is waiting for a hearing date. He would like to have at least two council members present at the hearing plus the secretary, so she can present evidence of the number of meetings where the Council has not had a full complement of members and a history of when people have been elected and then resigned etc.

Mr. Wagner also mentioned (in general) that the Borough will file a lien on a certain property in town, but the issue is that the property is owned by two folks who are deceased and no one opened up an estate. Of record there is about \$375,000 of debt against that property and the assessment of that property is \$125,000. The lien will be filed and there is a sheriff's sale set up for the end of the month in the hope that through this process the Borough can retrieve some of the lien money back, if not the whole thing.

Enforcement Committee Report – Councilman Berger stated he has been working with the school and PennDOT. The Borough bought one pedestrian crossing sign and the school bought one. One sign is at the crossing at High and Chestnut Streets, and one is at Chestnut and Main Streets. They are working with the positioning of the signs. He is also working with PennDOT and they are going to provide the Borough with traffic speed signs. These signs will let drivers know how fast they are going. PennDOT will move the signs around town as the Borough sees fit. This is at no cost to the Borough. They are working on trying to get traffic to slow down through town. He contacted several businesses about reminding their drivers to slow down going through town.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Krammes mentioned receiving a letter from the VFW requesting a monetary donation for wreaths to be placed on Veterans' graves at Fort Indiantown Gap. Councilman Woods made the motion to donate \$200, seconded by Councilman Berger. Motion carried.

Mayor Krammes also commented on the yellow tape at Gerald Morrison's sidewalk. The tape was put out to show pedestrians a step up in the concrete. This is the owner's responsibility to fix the sidewalk. Mayor Krammes will speak to Mr. Morrison about this issue.

Mayor Krammes stated there were three parking tickets issued. Two have been paid and one was voided.

Borough Enforcement Officer's Report - BEO Nazzaro reported last month was relatively quiet. He spent many hours patrolling the night before the Street Fair keeping an eye on stands and before it started getting illegally parked cars moved. He had to run license plates to locate vehicle owners who were parked contrary to signs. There was a bad issue with ball field attendees parking illegally the day of the Street Fair. He issued five warnings for grass and miscellaneous Codes issues. He attended a landlord quarterly meeting at Join Hands and presented to the multiple landlords attending common code violations, municipalities expectations and ways they could help us keep the Borough looking nice. He told them effective communication and the periodic checking of properties was the key to avoiding many of these issues. This information was well received. He attended Court for the illegal dumping citation issued by PSP from July 5, 2019. He took another vandalism complaint on West McClure Street and completed an incident report. He responded to Frank Bailor burning and completed an incident report. He was told of an issue with juveniles throwing a baseball through a shed wall. The owner did contact PSP and filed a report. The Dog Warden and Humane Society are continuing to issue citations and investigate the problem property on West High Street. BEO Nazzaro's incident report will be on file.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Announcements and Correspondence – President Anderson reminded everyone about the mandatory budget meeting on October 21 and 22, 2019.

President Anderson stated they received a letter from Carroll Elementary PTO asking for a donation to their school for a fundraising event called Gallop for Gold. Since this event is particular to an entity in Carroll Township she asked for thoughts. Councilman Berger stated no since it is not in the Borough. There was no motion for approval, so the issue is deemed dead.

Water Authority Report - Mr. Albright was not present, but President Anderson reported on his behalf that the Bloomfield Borough Water Authority is extending an invitation for a ground breaking ceremony to take place on October 22, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. for Well 3 at 208 East Main Street on Jeanne Fry Lane. Please RSVP to Mr. Scheffy or the Borough Office by October 18, 2019.

Planning Commission Report – Ms. Rowlands had no official requests in front of the Planning Commission. They will be submitting, for the budgeting process, recommended updated fees related to zoning and SALDO before October 21, 2019. They will also be submitting documents updating zoning chapters which Council can approve or make corrections to.

Zoning/Permit Officer's Report - Mr. Albright was not present so no report.

Administrative Committee Report – Councilman Cless met with Tater Built Fence Company to clarify all facets of the ball field fence installation and submit a check for 50% of the quote. Materials were ordered and the installation date was tentatively scheduled for November 5, 2019. He replaced floor tile in the lower level ladies restroom and also repaired faucets in the Diakon Office. He prepared documents for a Right-to-Know request from John Berthold regarding zoning and building code regulations at Perry Village. The information is required by HUD. Mr. Cless also researched the purchase of a borough seal for Council Chambers. It would be thirty inches in diameter. He asked for a discussion from Council Members regarding Council's involvement in this purchase. If Council is not interested in purchasing the seal he will do so himself. The seal will cost \$675. Mr. Cless had to pay for the proof up front. Councilman Berger made the motion to reimburse Councilman Cless the \$675, seconded by Councilman Woods. Motion carried.

President Anderson stated the certificate recognizing Colonel Holman's picture donations will be completed for the December meeting also.

FEMA/PEMA Report - Councilman Cless had nothing to report.

PCBA/COG – Mr. Albright was absent so there was no report.

President Anderson stated the Tri County Planning Commission is requesting a representative to them and these nominations are due November 1, 2019. But since several members will be leaving Council this year, it would not be prudent to nominate anyone until the November 5, 2019 meeting. Councilman Woods moved to table this until November 5, 2019, seconded by Councilman Berger. Motion carried.

Capital Tax Collection Bureau Report – Councilman Cless reported the next meeting is scheduled for October 16, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

AESTHETICS

Aesthetics Committee Report – Councilman Woods reported he and Mayor Krammes attended a meeting at the VFW about the Veterans Day parade in New Bloomfield. They need to have the right side of the Square cordoned off by 4:00 p.m. on that Friday to get their staging equipment in there. These parking spots will have to be roped off by Thursday evening. Mr. Hartman will place cones and signs out. Bleachers will be donated by Mr. Fred Thebes and Mr. Rick Lamb said he could haul them. Mayor Krammes will deal with this issue. Representative Mark Keller donated four new flags for the Square. The Borough purchased six half round flag bunting. Mr. Keller will purchase one and the Chamber purchased two. This leaves three left to pay for however Senator DiSanto donated \$75 which can be used to pay for these. The Borough only ended up paying only \$45-\$50 for the six of these half rounds.

December 1, 2019 is the Christmas tree lighting. Mr. Balthaser will provide the 20 foot Concolor tree to the cost of \$80. Mr. Woods will help Mr. Hartman set up the tree. President Anderson asked for a tree invoice for Borough records. Miss Elsie Berger will help with the lighting of the tree. Reverend Martz will perform the ceremony. Girl and Boy Scouts will be present. Young Voices and Musically Yours will perform the entertainment. Decorated boxes are needed for the “presents” under the tree.

The mums have been placed around the Square.

FINANCE, INSURANCE, AND SAFETY

Finance, Insurance & Safety Report – Vice President Patterson had no report.

Grants – No report.

Personnel Committee Report- Councilman Bender had no report.

RIGHTS OF WAY & UTILITIES

Rights of Way & Utilities Committee Report - Vice President Patterson deferred to Mr. Postick. He is working on installing the speed signs. The Borough can install speed bumps but there are many tricky issues with these especially when it snows.

Mr. Postick, Mr. Damon Hartman and Vice President Patterson began work on the Capital Improvement Plan for the Borough. This is to earmark Borough projects and how to budget for them. Vice President Patterson would like any other projects Council members would like to see placed in this plan into him or the office by the October budget meeting or the November or December meetings.

ADA Sidewalks – HRG Mike Postick reported the ADA ramp bids were received. The low bid of \$54,900 cannot be accepted because all the necessary documents were not provided, so the next bid was \$57,825. This is for three intersections (Chestnut and Main, Barnett Woods and Main, Barnett Street and Main) and nine ramps. Vice President Patterson made the motion to conditionally accept this bid for the ADA ramps pending Mr. Postick’s reviews and that everything is ok, seconded by Councilman Berger. Motion carried. The bid was submitted by Matthews Construction Company. HRG will notify the homeowners affected. Discussion followed. Councilman Cless signed a Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) awareness letter NavTech received for the Fire Company that had to be sent back to PennDOT.

CLOSING COMMENTS

There being no further business, upon motion by Councilman Woods, seconded by Vice President Patterson, the meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m. The next meeting is Tuesday, November 5, 2019 for a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Miller, Assistant Secretary