

**BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN PARK
BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2020**

Council President Jim Hogg called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

James W. Hogg present
Jiang Li participated via telephone
Brian S. Malkin participated via telephone
John P. Parks. present
Thomas C. Schwartzmier present
Ward 2 Council member vacant
Junior Councilperson Nathan Gierczynski present
Mayor Dennis E. O'Keefe present

ENGINEER:

Michael Malak, Senate Engineering Company present

SOLICITOR:

Robert Max Junker, Babst Calland present

STAFF:

Zach Brower, Recreation Program Director present
Gary Bucuren, Superintendent of Public Works present
Rege Ebner, Borough Manager present
Walt Healy, Police Chief present
Cathy Krummert, Borough Secretary present
Tim Phillips, Building Inspector/Zoning Officer present
Bill Schweitzer, Manager of Golf Course & Parks Facilities present

AUDIENCE: 2

ANNUAL MEETING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (EAC) CHAIR - Council and Mayor held their annual meeting with Mr. Jim Porcelli, the Chairman of the EAC. Mr. Porcelli reported that the EAC had a good year. Council allowed them to engage the services of the Allegheny Land Trust for a study of the short and long-term planning for Acorn Park. The EAC would like to engage as many residents as possible to use as volunteers and use an educational process to show how wonderful the park can be. They organized a tour of the Waste Management facility on Neville Island, and put an article in the newsletter. The EAC discussed advancing recycling in the borough as much as they can. They realized recently that because of the contamination produced by broken glass in the recycling materials, a good portion of the recycling is garbage. The current contract has a one-year mutual option extension that must be accomplished by August 1st. They visited Linbrook Park in January and reviewed the proposed plans. They made suggestions regarding plants and different areas where the material may be impervious for better drainage. The EAC had a virtual meeting with Solbridge Energy Advisors that was very informative. The EAC wholeheartedly supports the solar endeavor to the extent that it is economically reasonable and feasible. They hope that it would be visible and make a statement to the residents that the borough is interested in solar energy, and we encourage residents to consider it also. Mr. Ebner spoke to Solbridge Energy, and they are putting together a proposal for what the next step would look like. Their recommendation is to focus on the municipal building and public works building and possibly reach out to the fire company to see if they would like to be a part of this as well. The borough would need to look into financing options. Mr. Porcelli noted that the EAC also discussed the spotted lantern fly with the goal of making recommendations to Council and to the residents regarding what they can do now to minimize the propagation of the spotted lantern fly in southwestern Pennsylvania. The EAC is talking with a resident regarding her proposal for a memorial garden, and they encouraged her to publicize her cause and build up interest and support. Mr. Ebner noted that the EAC is a real asset to the community and all members contribute. Mr. Parks stated that in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Porcelli and EAC member Stephanie Gundling donated needed materials to the fire company in response to a plea for donations. It was very much appreciated.

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REVIEW OF BOROUGH PENSION PLANS – Mr. Jason Staley of Schneider Downs provided investment reports and reviewed the performance of the General Employees' and Police Pension Plans for the period ended May 26, 2020. He noted that the country is undergoing a lot of unrest and uncertainty at the present time. Mr. Staley reviewed the market reactions to the COVID-19 pandemic and how the allocations were changed as a result. The performance for the General Employees' Plan is up 10.2 percent for the quarter and it is down 3.2 percent for the year. The Police Plan is up 10.7 percent for the quarter and down 3.15 percent for the year. Mr. Staley answered Council's questions.

OLD BUSINESS - None

AGENDA REVIEW -The following June 17, 2020 regular meeting agenda items were discussed:

- Scholarships – Mr. Gierczynski will announce the names of the scholarship winners at the June meeting, and the scholarships will be awarded at the July meeting.
- Emergency Declaration – Mr. Junker asked Council if they wanted to consider a motion to end the Emergency Declaration. Mr. Hogg indicated that Council may consider adding the motion to the July agenda.
- Garbage/Recycling Contract – Mr. Ebner indicated that Council may need to add a motion to authorize a one-year extension of the current contract.
- Public Comment – Mr. Hogg noted that public comment sections were added after specific motions.

STAFF REPORTS:

Report by Manager of Golf Course & Parks Facilities

Mr. Schweitzer provided the following report:

- Golf Course
 - May was one of the best for revenues. The play has been excellent.
 - Mr. Schweitzer discussed the rules for the COVID-19 yellow and green phases of reopening. He will open up the course for leagues next week and will have them self-govern their league play. Staff members are disinfecting the golf carts after each use. The vending area may open next week once we are in the green phase. Customers can use the pavilion if they practice social distancing.
 - The junior team golf program has started, and they are limiting the number of family members that can follow along with the junior groups.
 - There have only been a few minor issues at the golf course, and additional staff has been hired.
 - Mr. Schweitzer noted that he gets requests for active duty military discounts at the golf course. Council discussed and approved.
- Parks
 - All parks bathrooms, volleyball courts, tennis courts and basketball courts are now open and are being used heavily. They are grooming infields this week and baseball wants to start practice on Monday following Little League guidance for COVID-19 protocols.
 - A disinfecting sprayer was purchased to spray the Maple Grove Pavilion tables every morning and the Activity Center after each rental. The playgrounds will not be sanitized, and it will be up to parents to bring their own sanitizer. The lacrosse field is ready for use, and the pickleball court is being used heavily.
 - Mr. Ebner received noise complaints regarding the pickleball court in Old Orchard Park. Someone also called to express concern that coyotes are back in Old Orchard Park. Mr. Schweitzer suggested cutting down some high vegetation areas to keep the coyotes from making dens in the park, but not everyone was in favor of doing so. Mr. Ebner will contact the Game Commission to see if they can provide some guidance, and he will report back to Council.

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- They are getting the playgrounds ready to open this Friday when Allegheny County moves into the green phase of reopening. Mr. Brower is suggesting that upper Linbrook remain closed until lacrosse and cricket provide him with their plans for practicing and playing.
- They will be mulching all facilities.
- Mr. Schweitzer would like to fill the full-time parks position if possible. Mr. Ebner suggested putting the hiring on hold at this time. Mr. Schweitzer left the meeting at this time.

Report by Recreation Program Director

Mr. Brower provided the following report:

- Now that we are moving to the green phase of reopening, the Maple Grove Pavilion rentals will resume as of the 3rd week of June, and Mr. Brower will be bringing back the Facility Supervisors for the Activity Center.
- He is working on a new contract acknowledgment with renters listing the COVID-19 green phase reopening restrictions that allow no more than 100 attendees in the Activity Center. Renters will risk forfeiting their security deposit if they do not follow the guidelines. Renters will be required to spray sanitize tables and chairs before they leave the facility, and additional time will be provided as needed. Mr. Brower is still receiving some cancelations for the summer months and full refunds are being issued.
- Sports and Eco Camps are almost full. All registrants are being informed of the rules and safety protocols. Full refunds will be issued for those who are not comfortable sending their children to camp.
- Mr. Brower was asked if the municipal building parking lot could be used to host food trucks once a week for residents to stop by and purchase food. Mr. Junker noted that they must follow the requirements in the solicitation ordinance and obtain a permit.
- There was discussion regarding the fireworks display on July 4th, and it was suggested that the fireworks be set off in Blueberry Hill Park to maintain control rather than trying to move to another location as previously suggested. Access would be limited to the Nicholson Road entrance, and the park would be closed when all parking spots are full. Chief Healy noted that vehicles are not permitted to stop on the bridges to watch the fireworks.
- Discussion continued regarding the noise complaints about the pickleball court in Old Orchard Park. Mr. Ebner stated that this is the only pickleball court in the borough. It was also noted that many people from all over the area have been using the Old Orchard pickleball court since courts have been closed in other municipalities. Mr. Hogg noted that the borough will be putting in additional courts in Blueberry Hill Park either this year or next year and that should offload some play. In addition, courts in other municipalities are reopening and that should also offload some play. Mr. Brower left the meeting at this time.

Report by Building Inspector/Zoning Officer

Mr. Phillips provided the following report:

- The Planning Commission will consider a conditional use application for firearm sales and also revisions to the Franklin Elementary renovation plans. Mr. Phillips summarized the proposed stormwater revisions, and noted that they will come before the Planning Commission on June 16th and then on to Council on June 17th. Everything is in order for the approval of the stormwater revisions.
- The Zoning Hearing Board will consider three applications for a deck, a shed, and a patio.
- Mr. Phillips has issued many permits for sheds, decks and fences, but not many for new homes.
- The Primrose Day Care conditional use and land development applications are in compliance with all requirements. There was some discussion about the location and access.
- The Bliss Land Development and Subdivision – Mr. Malak noted that after the ninth submission, the plan is in order, although they will still require some modifications. There was some discussion about the stormwater for the plan and the street name. It was noted that the Washington Lane residents support the revised plan.

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- The Robert Luffy Plan of Lots is a six-lot subdivision on Sturbridge Drive. There will be no infrastructure, and they will not have a development agreement or bond. The plan is clean and ready for approval.
- The Jason Wolfe Plan is a lot line revision between McAleer Road and Brimfield Drive. They have a few things that must be addressed through the process. No new lots are being created. Mr. Phillips left the meeting at this time.

Report by Superintendent of Public Works

Mr. Bucuren provided the following report:

- Public Works employees started their summer work schedule and will work four 10-hour days from 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday.
- The restoration work on White Oak Court was finished, and they have received no comments from the residents. Mr. Bucuren was asked to reach out to the residents to follow up.
- Downspout and electrical repairs were made to the municipal building
- Curb, basin and underdrain work has been completed on all streets that are scheduled to be paved this year.
- The gasoline tanks are being repaired, cleaned and painted in preparation for an inspection next week. They are also cleaning up the area around the tanks.
- Additional curb work throughout the borough is being completed.
- They are getting set up to start cleaning out detention ponds and will start on Wexford Run Road near Matterhorn Drive.
- They will start monitoring catch basins and establish a plan to rebuild the catch basins throughout the borough.
- Mr. Bucuren met with Mr. Schweitzer to discuss paving the cart paths at the golf course next week.
- They reinstalled the stop sign on King John Drive that had been knocked down. Mr. Junker checked the Borough Code to determine the proper location for the sign.
- Mr. Hogg asked Mr. Bucuren to reach out to Allegheny County to get an update on the Brandt School Road work.

Report by Solicitor

Council had previously received Mr. Junker's written report. Mr. Junker reviewed the following items:

- He responded to a Right to Know request today regarding a house that is involved in litigation.
- The courts are starting to reopen in Allegheny County.
- He has prepared a response to the attorney for the Hartman Farms Plan that will be mailed this week. The plan was originally approved in 2012, and the letter informs the developer and attorney that the plan must be completed.

STORMWATER ORDINANCE – Mr. Hogg stated that at last month's work session he had mentioned that the borough stormwater ordinance had been updated in December. He had suggested that if any member of Council was interested in making changes to the ordinance, they should request a copy of the ordinance for review. Mr. Hogg now asked if any member of Council had reviewed the ordinance and had any suggested changes. Hearing no response, Mr. Hogg indicated that he would remove this item from his list of discussion items for the future.

Report by Borough Engineer

Council had previously received Mr. Malak's written report. Mr. Malak reviewed the following items:

- Stormwater Management Projects – Mr. Malak reviewed proposed design plans to address stormwater issues in the following areas of the borough:
 - Dalton/Nevin Drive Area Stormwater Improvements Project
 - Wexford Run Watershed
 - Montgomery Road Watershed
- Shields Asphalt Paving indicated that the earliest they could start the paving projects would be the week of June 15th at the earliest.
- A pre-construction meeting for the Ramblewood Curb & Gutter Replacement Project will be held tomorrow with the contractor, Baiano Construction. No estimated start date has been provided. Mr. Malak and Mr. Bucuren left the meeting at this time.

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Report by Chief of Police

Chief Healy provided the following report:

- The contractor started the police locker room demolition today.
- On Monday, the Chief received thank you cards from residents to thank the police department for what they do.
- The Chief discussed the recent death of George Floyd, a black man in Minneapolis, caused by a police officer during an arrest. The Chief then reviewed the borough police department procedures and informed Council that our police department policies would not allow this to happen in the borough.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – Mr. Hogg discussed the proposed meeting schedule and upcoming nine interviews for the Junior Council Person position and McCandless Franklin Park Ambulance Authority Board. Council discussed and decided to advertise a 5:00 p.m. start time for the July 1st work session meeting. Council will also meet with the Planning Commission Chair that evening.

MANAGER’S REPORT DISCUSSION ITEMS

- COVID-19 Pandemic, Financial Impact to Borough – Mr. Ebner provided a spreadsheet listing possible options to offset revenue losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Ebner does not believe that we need to take any major action at this time, but some projects could be delayed. We will continue monthly tracking and make decisions throughout the year. The mid-year budget review will be held during the August work session.
- Garbage/Recycling Contract Extension – Staff is recommending that Council authorize a one-year extension of the current garbage and recycling contract through December 31, 2021. A motion will be added to the June regular meeting agenda. Waste Management has already provided notice to the borough that they are requesting to remove the collection of glass from the list of accepted recycling materials. The borough would ask that Waste Management notify the residents of this change.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Mayor O’Keefe stated that after current events, he had written a note to all officers expressing his appreciation for how they do their job. He also thanked Chief Healy. Chief Healy briefly discussed the recent lawful protests and unlawful rioting in the City of Pittsburgh as a result of the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, and he distinguished the difference between rioters and protestors.
- Mr. Malkin suggested that Council consider opening up the work sessions for residents to listen in whether they attend in person or not.
- Dr. Li indicated that the Council Technology Committee met this evening, and it was suggested that the borough create a citizen technology committee. Dr. Li would like to reach out and find residents with this type of knowledge and background who would be willing to participate. This matter will be discussed further at the July work session. Mr. Junker will look into the process of creating such a committee and will report back to Council.
- Mr. Schwartzmier indicated that he had shared the information regarding the citizen technology committee created in McCandless, but he does not necessarily see the total need for it in the borough. The committee could look into the issues with cell service in the borough, but he would also like to investigate if there would be ongoing matters for the committee to address before Borough Council makes a final decision.

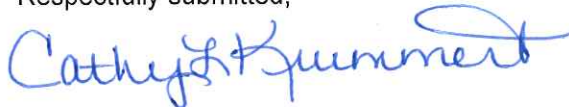
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- Mr. Parks stated that the Technology Committee also decided that they will continue to look at a cloud-based solution for both a virtual server as well as software programming. In the meantime, the committee is recommending that we keep the existing server, knowing that it is inadequate for our storage needs, and we will need to supplement it. They will continue to pursue a five-year plan for completely new software that will allow us to be totally cloud based. This will be a positive thing from a budget standpoint because the servers were incorporated within the 2020 budget.
- Mr. Hogg and Mr. Ebner received an email asking again that the new Deerfield Estates Plan not use Laurel Drive as a street name within their plan. They will respond that the borough will work with Maronda Homes to encourage them to choose a different street name. National Night Out has officially been moved from August to October. Council should discuss and decide at the July work session if they want to move the date of the borough's Night Out event. Allegheny County is moving into the green phase of COVID-19 reopening on Friday, and the borough should send out an update including that the playgrounds and the Activity Center will reopen; Festival in the Park has been canceled; fireworks have been rescheduled on July 4th; the borough meeting room will reopen for borough groups/organizations to meet; and the borough offices will be open (visitors will be limited to the vestibule area) until the proper safety protections can be put in place for employees.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – An executive session was held to discuss police department staffing.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 12:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy L. Krummert
Borough Secretary