

**BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN PARK
BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2020**

Council President Jim Hogg called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

James W. Hogg present
Jiang Li participated via telephone
Brian S. Malkin participated via telephone
Luke R. Myslinski..... present
John P. Parks. present
Thomas C. Schwartzmier present
Junior Council Person 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 absent/excused
Tim Phillips, Building Inspector/Zoning Officer..... present
Bill Schweitzer, Manager of Golf Course & Parks Facilities..... present

PRE-MEETING

AUDIENCE: 7

INTERVIEW CANDIDATES FOR 2020/2021 JUNIOR COUNCIL PERSON POSITION - Council interviewed three candidates for the position of Junior Council Person for the 2020/2021 school year:

1. Rachel Bina
2. Hannah Shin
3. Emma Bernardi

Council had previously interviewed Anagha (Ana) Patwari at the June 17th Pre-Meeting. After discussing all of the candidates, Council chose Emma Bernardi to fill the position for the 2020/2021 school year. A motion will be added to the July 15th regular meeting.

INTERVIEW CANDIDATES FOR THE McCANDLESS FRANKLIN PARK AMBULANCE AUTHORITY - Council interviewed three candidates for the vacant board position:

1. Thomas Stein, MD
2. Cathy Poole
3. James Bonomo

After discussing all of the candidates, Council chose James Bonomo to fill the board vacancy. A motion will be added to the July 15th regular meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING WITH PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON - Council and Mayor held their annual meeting with Blaine Lamperski, the Chairman of the Planning Commission. Mr. Lamperski reported that things are going well. Everyone on the Planning Commission is very active and there are no concerns regarding attendance. The meeting that was conducted via Zoom went very well, although there were no public comments. Discussions with Ohio Township regarding the joint Comprehensive Plan had been derailed due to COVID-19, and they will try to get it back on track. They had previously met with representatives from the DCED who provided very helpful information. Mr. Hogg noted that one of the candidates for the Ambulance Authority Board offered to assist with the Comprehensive Plan as a resident. The Planning Commission Solicitor, Alyssa Golfieri, has been great. She and Mr. Lamperski work very well together, and she always provides an explanation for the public regarding the criteria and requirements for each application. They do their best to avoid misunderstanding. They intend to rotate the chairperson position between members to keep it fresh and make sure everyone knows the position. Commission members have taken advantage of training courses and will continue to do so.

There was discussion regarding the Bellissimo Conditional Use application for firearms sales in the Settlers Walk Plan. The Planning Commission had recommended approval of the application. The Commission heard the testimony, including one email submitted in opposition of the application and one audience member in support of the application. The applicant explained that the activity will be very limited and will not cause a lot of traffic coming in and out of the plan. The applicant will have security measures and must comply with federal and state laws. The activity would be less intrusive than some other types of home occupations. The Commission had discussed possible conditions but decided to let Council impose any conditions. There was then discussion regarding other recent applications and approvals. Mr. Lamperski indicated that the Planning Commission uses the Council mandate to compel applicants to have all plans clean before they can move on to Council for consideration.

SOLAR POWER – Mr. Ebner noted that the borough has been looking at the possibility of solar power. Solbridge Energy Advisors had provided some information to help the borough determine if we want to move forward with this project. The EAC has reviewed the information and is recommending that the borough pursue solar energy, provided that it is economically feasible. Mr. Ebner has emailed Council a copy of the Solbridge proposal, along with an article regarding a current project at Mill 19 in Hazelwood Green. Solbridge is prepared to take the borough through the next step. Grey Winks and Will Brown of Solbridge were present this evening to answer questions. Mr. Ebner noted that the 30 percent tax credit expires at the end of this year. Council should decide tonight if they would like to pursue solar energy.

Mr. Will Brown noted that they had previously determined that the municipal building and the public works building could be viable candidates for a municipal solar development project. The next step would be to evaluate more bottom-line options and then present the opportunity to their network of developers/financial partners to see what kind of interest and opportunity there would be for the borough. They would then have something more concrete to present to Council for evaluation. The priority for Solbridge would be to go out and talk about the opportunity with developers and solicit some information on the borough's behalf. Solbridge would be seeking compensation from a developer/financier. Depending on how the project develops, it could happen in a number of ways. It does not make sense for Solbridge to seek compensation from the borough at this time. Solbridge is asking the borough to commit to them for a three-year period that they will be representing the borough. Mr. Brown and Mr. Winks answered questions from Council members. Mr. Junker will draft the wording for a motion to be added to the regular meeting agenda.

OLD BUSINESS - None

AGENDA REVIEW - The following July 15, 2020 regular meeting agenda items were discussed:

- **Bellissimo Conditional Use Application** – Mr. Junker went back and found the prior findings from previous applications that he reviewed with Council. He asked if Council would like to see any of the previous information, and Mr. Hogg directed Mr. Phillips to have the Findings of Fact from a previously denied application scanned and emailed to Council.

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Council members are welcome to stop in the borough office to review other items in the file. There was discussion regarding a previous application, the Bellissimo application and the procedures to be followed for the hearing and decision.

- Recognition of Fire Company Members – The recognition of three fire fighters was removed from the agenda since they could not all be in attendance on July 15th. The recognition will be moved back to the August meeting.

STAFF REPORTS:

Report by Superintendent of Public Works

Mr. Bucuren provided the following report:

- Completed berm and asphalt repair work on Haven Hill Road.
- Added a basin and extra curbs along Wexford Run Road prior to paving. There had been some previous issues with water running down driveways.
- Ordered 560 ton of salt from Morton Salt and must order 1,350 ton from American Rock Salt to meet the minimum order.
- Shields Paving has put down the binder on most of the streets.
- They are cleaning the detention ponds in the Franklin Fields Plan, and residents are commenting about the removal of trees. Mr. Bucuren noted that the DEP recommends that trees within the detention ponds be removed. Residents are not happy that some areas are being opened up in their back yards, and they are requesting that some trees be permitted to remain. Mr. Malak noted that this is part of the MS4 requirements, and he also noted that the ponds were not previously maintained. Mr. Ebner confirmed that trees must be removed if they are located within detention ponds.
- Mr. Myslinski noticed a lot of garbage in the leaf mulch pile at Blueberry Hill Park. Mr. Bucuren noted that the garbage has been placed in the bags by residents and it remains in the mulch after composting.

Report by Building Inspector/Zoning Officer

Mr. Phillips provided the following report:

- The Planning Commission will consider one application for a two-lot subdivision on Nicholson Road that spans between Franklin Park and Ohio Township. The deadline for applications is tomorrow.
- The Zoning Hearing Board will hold two hearings. One for a rear-yard deck encroachment on Markley Drive and one for a rear-yard shed encroachment on James Drive.
- Mr. Phillips had contacted Ed Thaner, the developer of the Summerfields Plan, to inquire when he would be installing the sidewalks in front of each of the lots. Mr. Thaner stated that it is the responsibility of the builder and homeowner. Mr. Phillips corrected Mr. Thaner and informed him that as the developer he is responsible for the installation. He also informed him that, if necessary, the borough could seize his financial security posted for the development and use the money to install the sidewalks.
- Staff met with Allegheny County regarding crosswalks on Brant School Road. There are currently four crosswalks that were installed for future development, which has not yet happened, and Allegheny County would have to make accessibility improvements at each location. Mr. Phillips suggested using resources to install sidewalks in that area and then the county could make the necessary improvements. It would be safer for pedestrians attending events at Soergel's. Council and staff discussed Mr. Phillips suggestion and other possible options. Council concurred to approve Allegheny County reducing the number of crosswalks in this area from a total of four down to only one crosswalk.

Report by Borough Engineer

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

- Public works did a great job cleaning out the Matterhorn Drive detention pond.
- Senate completed the preliminary design for the Matterhorn Drive Stormwater Project, and Mr. Malak provided an update.

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- Mr. Malak provided an update regarding the Karen Drive Stormwater Project with Ohio Township and noted that the initial cost estimate has been revised and reduced. The borough has an obligation to contribute toward the cost of the project.
- The paving contract may come in under budget.
- The Ramblewood Project is approximately 25 percent complete.
- Senate is continuing to finalize the design for the Dalton Drive/Nevin Drive Stormwater Project. Mr. Ebner and Mr. Malak provided an update. The borough must find funding for this project.
- Mr. Ebner and Mr. Malak provided an update on the Montgomery Road Stormwater Project.
- Senate is finalizing the design for the Municipal Building Stormwater Project. Mr. Ebner and Mr. Malak provided an update.

Report by Recreation Program Director

Mr. Brower provided the following report:

- Sports Camp was held last week with 128 participants and only one isolated incident. Eco Camp is being held this week with 48 participants. Sports Camp will be held again next week with 140 participants.
- The new mandate came out today regarding the wearing of masks. Camp participants will not be required to wear masks outside in the high heat. Parents have been informed. Procedures are in place to do things as safe as possible while providing an opportunity to the kids in the community.
- Cheerleading will be resuming with adjustments.
- Cricket is playing and they have already received a warning regarding an incident with garbage left lying in the park.
- Line Dancing will resume in two weeks.
- The Senior Lunch will resume this month with social distancing and lower attendance.
- Council and staff discussed the plans for the 4th of July fireworks.

Report by Manager of Golf Course & Parks Facilities

Mr. Schweitzer provided the following report:

- The golf course revenues for the month of June hit an all-time high of \$90,000. They are booked from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. every day. They have leased two additional carts for two months. Mr. Schweitzer has finally been able to replace the clubhouse staff that did not return this year.
- Staff has used the free sand Mr. Schweitzer was able to obtain to fill the golf course bunkers and the volleyball courts.
- People have been thanking the staff for keeping the golf course and parks bathrooms very clean.
- Installed the bases and bollards at all three entrances to Old Orchard Park. The park was treated for weeds and was fertilized.
- Put down 200 yards of playground mulch in seven playgrounds. Removed the old wood around two small playgrounds. Old swings have been replaced.
- Spread 120 yards of mulch and completed edging.
- Baseball infield diamonds have been redone with infield mix. Ingomar Franklin Park paid for the mix.
- Cut and performed maintenance on the disc golf course in Linbrook Park.
- The Old Orchard Park rain garden was cleaned out along with other detention facilities.
- The focus next week will move back to the Linbrook Park pavilion and tree work.

Report by Chief of Police

Chief Healy provided the following report:

- Officer Starko's certification number was received from the Training Commission. Both Officer Starko and Officer Mohney started with their training officers on Monday.
- The police department renovations are continuing with the locker rooms. The project is close to being completed.

PICKLEBALL COURTS IN OLD ORCHARD PARK – The posts have been installed to prohibit vehicles from driving on the walking path. Signs have been posted on the pickleball courts limiting the hours from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. The multi-use trail signs will be delivered on Monday indicating that vehicles are prohibited. Pickleball players who are caught playing before or after the specified hours are being asked to leave. Signs mentioning park use by permit will be removed.

FORMATION OF TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE AND RESIDENT MEMBERS – Mr. Ebner spoke to the McCandless Manager about their technology committee. The Manager noted that a lot of their committee's focus has been on internal IT. They do not have in-house IT, and they contract it out. They were able to save money by going with a different vendor. They utilized their committee to look at cell phone and 5G. The McCandless Manager spoke very highly of their committee and noted that as long as you find people who have expertise in the area you are looking at, they do a tremendous job. He feels comfortable giving them projects and having them run with it. Their committee is chiefly made up of residents and a liaison. The Manager offered that a couple members of their committee could meet with Council. It was discussed and suggested that a meeting be scheduled with the members of the Borough Council Technology Committee and members of the McCandless Technology Committee. The tentative date will be August 19th during the committee meeting time.

MANAGER'S REPORT DISCUSSION ITEMS

- **Northland Library Budget** – Northland Library held Zoom meetings with the managers from the municipalities that are part of the library. They also had a finance committee meeting, and Mr. Ebner is a member of the finance committee. Their intent is to hold the line on expenses and hold the line on the municipal contributions for next year. This means that the library will not be able to put money aside for capital items, but they are willing to take that hit due to the fact that everyone will experience financial issues due to COVID-19. The library received a grant to pay employees, and they may look at staff reductions next year to keep costs down.
- **McCandless Franklin Park Ambulance Authority Finances** – The Ambulance Authority would like to schedule a meeting in July with all member municipalities, possibly at the Blueberry Hill Activity Center. The Authority would advertise the public meeting, and they would make their financial presentation to all municipalities at the same time. They are proposing some major changes and will be asking every municipality to make contributions.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS & MAYOR

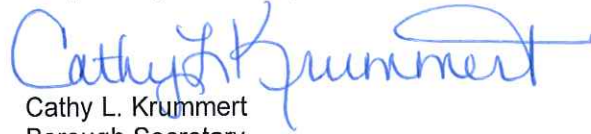
- **Mayor O'Keefe** is on the executive board of the **Pennsylvania State Mayors**. They usually have their annual conference in July, but this year the conference will be held via Zoom so the cost will be minimal.
- **Mr. Parks** noted that the **Pension Committee** meeting should be rescheduled.
- **Mr. Hogg** asked if the 30-day appeal period had expired for the **Deerfield Plan** approval. Mr. Junker indicated that the period has expired, and he has not received an appeal. He searched the court docket and confirmed no appeal was filed or listed. Mr. Hogg noted that the **Public Safety Committee** meeting will be held on July 15th, and he asked the Mayor about the start time. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Hogg wanted to make sure all Council members understood the process for preparing the **meeting agendas**. He asked Council members to let him or Cathy Krummert know by the Thursday before the meeting, if they would like to have an item included on the agenda for the meeting packet. If something comes up between the packet and meeting, Council members should send an email to Council and the Mayor to inform everyone of the topic to be discussed. Discussion items can also be brought up the night of a meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – An executive session was held to discuss potential litigation and personnel matters.

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As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy L. Krummert
Borough Secretary