

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, September 1, 2021

PUBLIC MEETING held via GoToMeeting video/teleconference

PRESENT: Colleen Leonard, Council President
Tina Sokolowski, Council Vice-President
Robert Stokley, Senior Council Member
Anita Barton, Council Member
Kathleen Kingsley, Council Member
James Griffin, Council Member
Karen Tutino, Council Member
Yaniv Aronson, Mayor

ALSO PRESENT: Stephanie Cecco, Borough Manager
Michael E. Peters, Borough Solicitor

CALL TO ORDER

The Public Meeting of the Conshohocken Borough Council duly advertised, was held remotely using the GoToMeeting platform. Colleen Leonard, Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Leonard thanked everyone for attending the virtual Council meeting. She reviewed the meeting logistics and participation instructions. She announced that Council held Executive Session prior to the regularly scheduled meeting on legal matters.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

LAND USE MATTERS, PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ORDINANCES

a.) Discussion on an ordinance amendment to establish animal control regulations

Mr. Peters stated that the ordinance amends the Borough's animal control regulations by adding new, and clarifying old, rules and regulations relating to animal control within the Borough. He explained that the ordinance prohibits off-leash animals and the feeding of feral cats. He reviewed proposed regulations specific to animal waste, noise control and the keeping of chickens. Mr. Peters discussed the proposed enforcement provisions, which included an animal control officer, as well as violation and penalty provisions. He explained that the ordinance authorizes private actions for enforcement of the ordinance provisions.

Ms. Cecco stated that the draft ordinance amendment addresses comments and concerns from the public as it relates to animal control within the Borough.

Mr. Peters clarified that the ordinance prohibits roosters, not chickens. He explained that the ordinance establishes regulations for keeping chickens, including the number and type of chickens, and standards for housing chickens. Ms. Leonard asked what would happen to the existing roosters within the Borough if the proposed ordinance was enacted. Mr. Griffin suggested adding a grandfather clause. Mr. Peters confirmed that the grandfather clause would not pertain to feral cat colonies.

Mr. Peters reviewed what residents can do, per the provisions of the ordinance amendment, if stray or feral cats are on their property. Mayor Aronson asked what type of animal control program would be used for managing feral and stray cats. Mr. Peters briefly discussed various animal control programs. He explained that a program would need to be established in a policy that is separate from the ordinance.

b.) Discussion on an amendment to the Borough Solicitation Ordinance

Mr. Peters stated that a legal review of the Borough's solicitation ordinance was completed. He provided an overview of the recommended revisions related to the limits on the hours/days of solicitation, the limit on the number of solicitation licenses and the fingerprinting process.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

a.) Conduct interviews for Board and Commission vacancies

Ms. Leonard introduced Aparna Chhibber who was present to interview for the Sewer Authority Board and the Dog Park Advisory Committee. With regard to the Sewer Authority, Ms. Chhibber shared that she is interested in contributing and supporting the long-term sustainable growth and development of the Borough. She discussed how she would go about learning about the overall operation of the Sewer

Authority, if appointed. With regard to the Dog Park Advisory Committee, Ms. Chhibber shared that she has attended a few Committee meetings and is eager to support its initiatives.

Ms. Leonard introduced Matt Hoffman who was present to interview for the Sewer Authority Board. Mr. Hoffman discussed his volunteer and leadership experience with organizations within Conshohocken. He also discussed how his professional background as a product manager for industrial and wastewater accounts provides him with an understanding of sewer treatment facilities and operations. He discussed how he would go about learning about the overall operation of the Sewer Authority, if appointed.

MANAGER MATTERS

a.) Consider accepting resignations of a Dog Park Advisory Committee member and an EAC member

Ms. Barton made a motion to accept the resignation of Chelsea Woicekowski from the Dog Park Advisory Committee and to accept the resignation of Kurtis Miller from the EAC, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion carried 7-0.

b.) Consider approving Resolution 2021-21 approving an extension of the local disaster emergency

Ms. Tutino made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-21 approving an extension of the local disaster emergency to December 1, 2021, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion carried 7-0.

c.) Consider approving Resolution 2021-22 authorizing and ratifying the emergency expenditure of funds for repairs to the storm sewer system

Ms. Cecco shared that a portion of the Borough's storm sewer system and roadway collapsed on Poplar Street, between Washington Street and East Elm Street. She explained that the Borough utilized emergency funds and services to address the emergency infrastructure repair. Ms. Cecco recognized Borough elected officials for their focus on infrastructure, specifically creating an infrastructure plan and exploring funding options for infrastructure repairs. Ms. Barton asked if the Borough could utilize grants for the repairs to the storm sewer system and roadway. Ms. Cecco responded that a due to the emergency nature of this incident, grant funds are not an option.

Mr. Griffin made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-22 authorizing and ratifying the emergency expenditure of funds for repairs to the storm sewer system and road on Poplar Street, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 7-0.

d.) Consider approving Resolution 2021-23 authorizing the sale of a ladder truck on Municibid

Ms. Cecco explained that Borough Administration, in conjunction with the Washington Fire Company, are requesting Council's authorization to sell the 1999 Ladder 55 Truck on Municibid at a minimum bid of \$80,000.00.

Ms. Sokolowski made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-23 authorizing the sale of the 1999 Ladder 55 Truck on Municibid at a minimum bid of \$80,000.00, seconded by Ms. Kingsley. The motion carried 7-0.

e.) Consider approving St. Mark's special event request to hold an outdoor church service and block party

Ms. Cecco shared that St. Mark's Church would like to hold an outdoor worship service and block party on September 12, 2021. She explained that the church is requesting the closure of East 5th Avenue in front of the church from Fayette Street to Harry Street from 8:00am to 2:00pm.

Ms. Tutino made a motion to approve St. Mark's special event request to hold an outdoor church service and block party on September 12, 2021, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion carried 7-0.

f.) Discussion on the Borough's 2022 Minimum Municipal Obligations (MMO)

Ms. Cecco explained that the Borough is required to annually satisfy Minimum Municipal Obligations (MMO) for its pension plans. She reviewed the financial requirement for the Police, Fire and Non-Unformed pension plans. She explained the MMO values will be included in the FY2022 budget.

DEPARTMENT MATTERS

There were no department matters.

LEGAL MATTERS

a.) Consider approving decision with findings of fact and conclusions of law for the 450 Colwell Lane conditional use application

Mr. Peters stated that Borough Council recently granted conditional use approval to permit a modern multifamily housing development consisting of 48 condominium units for the property located at 450 Colwell Lane. He explained that since the development would not be built for several years, he asked Council to memorialize the approval by approving the decision with findings of fact and conclusions of law for the 450 Colwell Lane conditional use application.

Ms. Sokolowski made a motion to approve the decision with findings of fact and conclusions of law for the 450 Colwell Lane conditional use application, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 7-0.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

Mayor Aronson shared that Destination Conshohocken hosted Bingo at the VFW and raised \$1,000.00 for the Colonial Neighborhood Council. He thanked the Conshohocken Fire Department for hosting a successful Sprinkler Night event at Sutcliffe Park. He encouraged all residents to sign up for the Borough's Code Red notification service to stay informed and receive updates about the storm.

Ms. Barton recognized our first responders as they prepare for Storm Ida.

Mr. Griffin wished everyone safety through Storm Ida.

Ms. Barton recognized the Emergency Management team as they prepare for Storm Ida.

Ray Sokowloski, Executive Director of Operations, provided an update on storm predications as well as information on storm preparedness and resources. He announced that the Conshohocken Fire Department received the AFG (Assistance to Firefighters) Grant in the amount of \$347,000.00 for recruitment, retention, and equipment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Brittany Rogers, Executive Assistant to the Borough Manager, stated no written public comment was received.

Seth Piechowski, 335 Spring Mill Avenue, voiced his excitement about the animal control ordinance, stating that the proposed ordinance would put Conshohocken in line with municipalities in the surrounding area. He urged Council to reconsider adding a grandfather clause for roosters, citing concerns related to enforcement and noise.

David Todd, 333 Spring Mill Avenue, recognized Council for running an efficient meeting. He thanked Council for considering an animal control ordinance that, in his opinion, would reduce animal related nuisances and improve neighbor relations.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Cecco,
Borough Secretary