

Borough Council Work Session

May 16, 2022

The monthly Work Session meeting of Souderton Borough Council, held in the rear Conference Room of the Souderton Municipal Building on the above date, was called to order by President Tracy Burke at 7:00 p.m. The Borough Council Work Session was attended by the following members and staff:

President Tracy W. Burke
Vice-President Edward Huber
Councillor Matthew J. DiNenna
Councillor Daryl W. Littlefield
Councillor Julie A. Munden
Councillor Donna M. Rogers
Councillor Matthew R. Sholly
Councillor Richard M. Walczak
Councillor Courtnee L. Wampole

Mayor Daniel L. Yocum

Borough Manager P. Michael Coll
Police Chief Brian A. Newhall
Public Works Director Steven R. Coll

POLICE ITEMS

Police Chief Brian Newhall reported that the department is very busy, averaging an arrest each day. Calls are increasing particularly for mutual aid and general public service. Area municipalities are experiencing a significant increase in calls for reported dog bites. The Borough has a fairly dated Dog Ordinance and there are also State Laws concerning dogs. The main issue is that a dog may be on a lease, but the owner is unable to control the animal resulting in injury. The matter will be referred to the Borough Solicitor for further review and comment.

The 2008 Chevy Tahoe has been listed for sale under Municibid. The highest offer was \$2,200. Borough Council accepted the purchase offer and authorized the Chief to finalize the sale.

Police Chief Newhall circulated sample copies of Noise Ordinance regulations utilized by other municipalities. Committee members can review the material and create bullet points to build the body of an ordinance to be developed by the Borough Solicitor. Noise complaints are becoming a significant challenge for the department to address.

Considerable discussion was held on the One Way traffic restriction that has been posted for S. School Lane to alleviate safety concerns with student drop off and pickup from EMC Elementary School. The one way traffic regulation is confusing since it is only in force during school days. The school is not consistently assisting with the placement of barricades. More permanent signage would be beneficial. Borough Council agreed with a suggestion to hold another stakeholder meeting with school district representatives and residents over the summer to review the One way Traffic restriction and to prepare any

modifications for the beginning of the school year in September.

HIGHWAY ITEMS

Public Works Director Steven Coll summarized public works activities for the month. Most of the work was in the Community Park. The storm drainage improvements have been completed, the new main pathway has been excavated, electrical and utility services have been installed through the new parking lot. Installation of the Belgium block curb in the new parking lot has been scheduled for the end of the month. Once the curb is installed the new parking lot will be paved with a base course.

Seifert Excavating was contracted to repair and stone a number of alleys throughout the Borough. Most of the stone alleys have now been repaired.

The Borough purchased a vacuum trailer from Telford Borough earlier in the year. The equipment was recently used to clean a number of clogged storm drain inlets. The equipment performed very well.

CKS Engineers assisted the Borough in receiving approval of the Cherry Lane development from the Franconia Township Zoning Hearing Board and Franconia Township Planning Commission. The development plans are now before the Franconia Township Board of Supervisors for formal approval. Borough Council discussed a recommendation to move forward with the marketing of the front parcel of the Cherry Lane property for sale or lease to generate additional revenue to help move the construction of the new Public Works facility. The Borough will have to commit to completion of the site work to facilitate the sale or lease of this front parcel. Committee members will discuss the project with commercial realtors to ascertain interest and potential value of the lot.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll reviewed a proposal to develop a Geographical Information System (GIS) for Souderton Borough, mapping the sanitary sewer collection system and the storm drainage systems. The Borough does not have a GIS system, relying on research through paper maps, plans and general knowledge. The initial investment will start at approximately \$16,000. Borough Council agreed with the overall need for this system, but suggested soliciting other quotations.

Mayor Daniel Yocum noted the recent partnership agreement between the Souderton Ambulance Association and the Volunteer Medical Corp, suggesting that we should monitor and allow the service agreement between the organizations to evolve.

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported on the advertisement for the secretarial/receptionist position in the Borough office. The position will be advertised as a full time

position. We hope to fill the vacancy in early June.

Councillor Julie Munden reported that she has been in conversation with the Souderton High School for candidates to fill the Junior Councillor position. The school indicated that they are working on a few recommendations. The candidates may be high school seniors. The term of the next Junior Councillor will start with the September Borough Council meeting.

Borough Council agreed with a recommendation to re-appoint Ed Huber to serve another five year term as a member of the Souderton Planning Commission. This appointment will be scheduled for the June Borough Council meeting.

DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported that Brass Collar Brewing Company has signed the Letter of Intent to lease the Freight Building and provided the deposit. The Borough Solicitor prepared a draft lease agreement for SEPTA review and execution. We made arrangements with a general contractor to assist the Borough with the interior fit out. Goods Plumbing, Heating and A/C has determined the size of the HVAC system and ordered some of the equipment, noting that the equipment has a 20 week delivery time. We will be meeting with the tenants to coordinate the final interior design and finishes. Site work is expected to begin in July, with the completion of the concrete platform to the Freight Building.

The Souderton Planning Commission will be reviewing an amended land development plan for the construction of a five unit townhouse development on the vacant parcel at Second Street and Reliance Road. Depending on the recommendation of the Planning Commission, this plan may come before Borough Council at their June 6 meeting.

Borough Council reviewed a proposal from Souderton Connects to move the holiday tree to the fountain area of the Uninvest Bank. Souderton Connects recommended the purchase of an artificial tree. The proposal was tabled with no further recommendation.

SANITATION ITEMS

No items were discussed.

RECREATION ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported on preparations for the opening of the Souderton Community Swimming Pool over the Memorial Day weekend. Bennington Pools assisted the Borough with acid washing and pressure washing the competition pool

to remove the staining. It was determined that the plaster is sound enough to make it through this summer season. We will evaluate the cost to plaster the pool this fall. Borough forces repaired some loose and missing tile and repaired the joints. Membership sales are underway. The Borough will pick up additional expense to have an employee at the pool to oversee swim lessons and the use of the party room.

Borough Council discussed progress on the Community Park renovation project. The Park renovation Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, May 18th beginning at 4:00 pm.

PROPERTY ITEMS

The Municipal Building renovation Committee met with the architects on Friday, May 13th to review the final floor plan and to review the cost estimate for the project. The Committee and staff approved the floor plan for both the police and administrative sides of the Municipal Building. The Conference Room was enlarged and located adjacent to Council Chambers. The bathrooms were moved to an expanded rear addition to the building. The total project has been estimated at \$3,800,000. Committee members asked the architects to reconsider the planned work on the canopy which is estimated at over \$500,000. Renovations to the exterior of the building were also questioned at slightly over \$700,000. Interior renovations to both the administrative and police offices is around \$1,000,000 which seems to be reasonable. The \$740,000 in federal ARPA funding will go towards the renovation of the police department. The Borough manager suggested consideration in moving forward with the basement renovations and rear addition. The space will be needed for storage to accommodate the interior renovations. Breaking the project down into more manageable phases over multiple budget years might be a better financial approach for the project. After much discussion, Borough Council supported a recommendation to authorize the architects to move forward with plans and construction specifications to move forward with the basement renovations and rear addition, valued at \$1,500,000. The Borough will need to consider a loan of \$2,000,000 to proceed with the project, leaving approximately \$4,000,000 in borrowing capacity for the public works facility project.

Borough Manager Michael Coll discussed the challenge experienced by Northbound to maintain the canvass panels that enclose the side patio area. The patio area is significant to the restaurant for seating. Northbound invested nearly \$40,000 in the canvass system. We are exploring an alternate design to enclose the patio with garage doors and fixed glass panels that will hold up and perform much better in winter and windy weather conditions. The overall cost is estimated at \$85,000. Borough Council supported the approach but expressed concern with the overall cost. Borough Council suggested more discussion with the tenant over cost sharing.

President Tracy Burke discussed repairs to the Hillside Cemetery wall along

Second Street. He has met with a number of masonry contractors for opinions to professionally address the wall. Many suggest that the wall should be salvaged but costs range widely. All of the masonry contractors suggested that the wall has a historic value that should be preserved. The best quote that was received is from J & J, LLC Restoration Masonry. Tracy Burke viewed a number of their restoration projects in the area. The price to repair and re-point the wall is \$48,900.00. They will be available to start the project in the fall if approved and scheduled now. The Hillside Cemetery as a balance of approximately \$107,000 in perpetual care funds. The contractor is asking for a third of the cost at time of mobilization, one third in the middle of the project and the balance due when the project is fully completed. After much discussion, Borough Council approved the quotation of J & J, LLC Restorative Masonry to repair the Hillside Cemetery wall and to fund the entire expense out of the Hillside Cemetery perpetual care funds.

FINANCE ITEMS

Borough Council discussed potential financing options for the Municipal Building and Public Works Facility projects. The Borough Manager will be submitting an initial application for funding through the USDA for the Public Works facility project. The pre-application will be in the loan amount of \$4,000,000. There is a State RACP grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the Public Works Facility project. The Borough Manager will discuss a phased approach with the architects for this project as well.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Michael Coll, Secretary