

Borough Council Work Session

July 19, 2021

The monthly Work Session meeting of Souderton Borough Council, held on the above date, was called to order by President Brian K. Goshow at 7:00 p.m. Council President Brian Goshow noted that this meeting is being recorded and will be available to view through the Borough website. The Borough Council Work Session meeting was attended by the following members and staff:

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| President Brian K. Goshow | Mayor John R. Reynolds |
| Councillor Donna Rogers | |
| Councillor Ned Leight | |
| Councillor Richard Godshall | Borough Manager P. Michael Coll |
| Councillor Daniel Yocum | |
| Councillor Daryl Littlefield | Police Chief Brian A. Newhall (Zoom) |
| Councillor Edward Huber | Public Works Director Steven R. Coll |

PRESENTATION

Greg Ede, CPA with Styer Associates attended the work session to provide Borough Council with a summary of the Audit Report and General Purpose Financial Statements for the 2020 calendar year. Greg Ede noted that this is another clean audit opinion and the Borough’s assets exceeded liabilities. Cash reserves grew to 12% as compared to only 6% in the previous year. The overall goal is to have 20% in reserve. Both pension plans are fully funded, the Non-Uniformed Pension Plan is 123% funded and the Police Pension Plan is 118% funded. Both pension plans experienced strong market earnings which helped to drive up assets. Sewer Fund revenue is strong, partly due to sale of capacity for new connections. There is an overall operating loss reported in the financial statements attributable to depreciation expense which is a non-cash expense.

POLICE COMMITTEE

Police Chief Brian Newhall joined the meeting through Zoom. Chief Newhall summarized his monthly report that was previously distributed to Borough Council.

A letter was received concerning a recent crash at the intersection of N. School Lane and Central Avenue with a request to consider a 4 way stop restriction at this intersection. Upon review of crash history at this intersection there were two significant crash incidents at this intersection, both involving driver error and poor driving. This intersection is marked and is fairly visible. Chief Newhall recommended a slight modification to the existing pavement markings at this intersection as a first step in addressing the resident concern.

Chief Newhall further discussed the intersection at N. School lane and Chestnut

Street which has also be an intersection of concern. Recent developer paving removed some of the pavement markings, which need to be replaced. The topography of the roadway makes sense to continue the 2 way stop at this intersection, with improved pavement markings.

Souderton Borough Council received a previous letter requesting consideration to install a 4 way stop restriction at the intersection of E. Summit Street and N. Second Street. Upon review and further evaluation, this is a rather busy intersection with restricted visibility due to the amount of street parking along E. Summit Street. This is also a primary intersection used by the Perseverance Volunteer Fire Company to respond to calls. Given these characteristics, a 4 way stop restriction is warranted for consideration at this intersection. Borough Council will formally consider this recommendation at the August Borough Council meeting.

Chief Newhall noted that he is joining the work session through Zoom given his attendance at the PA Chiefs Association Conference. He received a report that the body cameras have been delivered and he expects that they will go into service relatively shortly.

HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

Public Works Director Steven Coll reported that street sweeping has been completed throughout the Borough. He will attempt to continue spot sweeping throughout the summer to try and control some weed growth.

Crews completed some sign maintenance and are working to re-paint the pavement markings at the Noble Street and E. Broad Street intersection according to the PennDOT permit requirements. Crews will install some reflective barriers to better control traffic to follow the designated intersection pattern. The Borough Engineer will be asked to develop conceptual plans to install a permanent streetscape following a master plan that was developed through a prior study.

Crews installed the hanging flower baskets in the downtown business district. There is an issue with the irrigation system that we are working to repair. The Borough has contracted a power washing company to assist with graffiti removal in various spots. They worked at the pool, pavilion and will work at the Chestnut Street underpass and Summit Street bridge.

Park maintenance and mowing continues. Our summer help employee has accepted a full time job elsewhere, so we will be down an employee through the rest of the summer. Our part time employee and a full time employee will be completing the balance of mowing. Crews spend an average of two hours each morning at the pool cleaning and disinfecting the bathhouses, clearing trash, vacuuming the pools and other routine pool maintenance.

Crews replaced a collapsed section of storm drainage pipe on N. Second Street. Paving will be completed around some recent curb projects. Preparations are being made to complete a storm drainage project at W. Chestnut Street and Hunsberger Lane. A new section of storm drainage piping will be installed to collect water at the intersection and along the alley going into the West Street park to address erosion issues. A section of gabion baskets will also be replaced along the stream bank in the West Street Park. At the request of the Indian Valley Boys and Girls Club, the skate board park equipment will be removed and stored. Use of the skate board park has dropped off significantly and the Boys and Girls Club desires to re-purpose this space.

Borough Manager Michael Coll reviewed the conceptual plans for the new Public Works Facility on Cherry Lane. The committee met with our consultants to discuss two scenarios that they developed for initial consideration. The committee preferred the scenario that retains the existing block garage to be restored and utilized for additional cold storage. A separate salt storage building will be situated on the same side to the rear of the lot. The new main building will be somewhat centrally located and is sized to address the existing equipment and employee needs with room for some expansion. The Borough Manager is considering a federal loan program to be utilized in conjunction with the RACP grant to implement this project. Borough Council discussed preparations to eventually market the Second Street property for sale, preferably for residential development. A suggestion was made to consider completing a Phase 1 Environmental Study on the site prior to listing.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Borough Manager reported that the Borough Solicitor and Borough Engineer are working on the development and implementation of the development and improvement escrow agreements for Towne Gate Commons Phase 2B1.

The Borough Engineer has recently completed an inspection of the Berkeley Court Phase 2A development for the purpose of closing out the construction phase and implementing the 18 month maintenance period. The Borough Engineer was asked to re-evaluate the trees and some of the landscaping requirements in light of the recent resident comments.

Councillor Richard Godshall recommended considering steps to aggressively market the Freight Building for lease. The general site work is certainly affecting interest in the building and the Borough may need to reconsider some of the interior fit out expenses. Further consideration and discussion will be given to marketing the building this fall.

SANITATION COMMITTEE

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported that the Solid waste Collection Contract

has been advertised for bids. Bids will be due on Monday, August 23, at which time they will be opened and reviewed. Formal consideration of the bids will be scheduled for the September Borough Council meeting.

Formal consideration of the Sanitary Sewer ordinance will be delayed until the September Borough Council meeting. There were a few revisions to be made to the draft ordinance.

RECREATION COMMITTEE

Borough Council reviewed and discussed swimming pool operations for the first half of the season. Membership sales were strong nearly meeting the initial budget estimates. Membership sales also reflected restricted access to the pool through daily admissions. Revenue from daily admissions is much lower than anticipated. Bennington Pool Service, like most other pools, experienced difficulty in attracting lifeguards. The Borough Office is devoting a significant amount of time with the sale of memberships and daily admission passes. The current restriction on daily admissions from Monday through Friday seems to be favored by the members, but it was noted that the size of patron use during the weekends is noticeably down. Additional revenue from expanded daily sales, rentals and swim lessons will need to be considered in the off season.

Borough Manager Michael Coll reviewed the status of improvements at the Souderton Community Park. The Montgomery County Conservation District has issued the NPDES permit for the project, however Concert Sundaes and the fall Main Streets Art Jam will require deferment of the parking lot and storm drainage improvements until later this fall. Crews will focus on completing improvements to the concert lawn area and band shell. The monument stone has been delivered and is expected to be installed shortly. The next committee meeting will be held at 4:00 pm on Wednesday, July 28, 2021.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported that he is frustrated with the lack of progress on the improvements to the Municipal Building. The project is no further along than his report nearly 6 months ago. Given the lack of progress he is losing confidence with the current architect. President Goshaw will discuss the matter with the architect to give priority to the project.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Borough Manager Michael Coll presented Borough Council with the recent concept plans for the Chestnut Street Parking lot improvement project. Most notably representatives from Souderton Connects requested consideration in extended the project to create a terraced seating area adjacent to Downtown Scoops. This project extension will

require approval from the adjoining property owners to close off access to this alley right of way. The Borough currently provides access to these properties through the parking lot. The Borough Engineer will continue to refine the plans, which must also be approved by Montgomery County Planning Commission prior to bidding the project.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported that the Borough has completed the required application to receive up to \$741,267 in federal American Rescue Plan Act COVID relief funds. The funds will funnel through the Pennsylvania DCED. The Borough Manager noted that the funds are restricted to specific expenditures, such as storm water improvements and waste water treatment improvements.

The Borough Manager distributed the Budget Comparison reports through June 30, 2021 for Borough Council to review.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Michael Coll, Secretary