

Community and Government Affairs Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 11, 2021 6:00 PM

Present: Councilpersons Ben Bell, Tim Brennan, Joe Frederick, Noni West and Larry Browne as well as Borough Manager John Davis, Borough Council President Jack O'Brien, and Mayor Ron Strouse.

The **Minutes** of the December 14, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved.

Ben would like to brainstorm as a group for a **2022 Community Christmas Tree Pick-up Program**. John explained the current tree recycling procedure, which includes a drop-off site at Public Works. The trees are then chipped and used where needed throughout the Borough. Ben explained the benefits to the Borough include recycling the trees as opposed to them going into the trash. However, John explained this would be a big undertaking for staff and a challenge to chip all of the trees. Another possibility for recycling of Christmas trees is to involve Borough community groups in fundraising, which the Rainbow Room did this past holiday season. More thought will be given to the possibilities and it will be discussed again.

Continued Support for Merchants: Planning in an Age of Shifting COVID Dynamics was discussed by Jack. This time of year tends to be a challenging time for businesses and COVID has exacerbated the issue. A new brainstorming group has been developed, including Public works, the Community and Government Affairs Committee, along with the Finance Committee to come up with new, creative ways to help Borough businesses thrive. The Borough is being more flexible with restrictions and rules and are helping businesses be more creative with things like outdoor dining.

Ben and the rest of the group discussed **Committee Priorities for 2021** and possible topics to focus on for the year. COVID will remain a priority going into this year. A Sister City program was discussed at length, and will be researched further. Noni suggested organizing more planned food drives, and working with the local food banks based on need. Mayor Strouse suggested working with the Opportunity Council on how best to assist with food drives.

New/Old Business: A food drive is planned for this Friday.

The Farmer's Market will be held again this year, and all COVID protocols will be followed. The Committee agreed to reach out to them and put together a ribbon cutting or another type of opening ceremony.

Meeting Adjourned 6:50pm

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Kramer