

April 20, 2020
7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of Doylestown Borough Council was held on the above date and time via a Zoom Rooms meeting, with the following members present: Council President Jack O'Brien, Vice President Noni West, and Council Members Ben Bell, Tim Brennan, Larry Browne, Joe Flood, Joe Frederick, Jennifer Jarret, and Wendy Margolis. Also present were Junior Councilperson Alec Maraska, Mayor Ron Strouse, Borough Manager John Davis, Borough Solicitor Ernest Closser, Borough Engineer Jim Dougherty, Planning/Public Works Director/Deputy Borough Manager Phil Ehlinger, Director of Building and Zoning Karyn Hyland, Finance Director Caroline Brinker, and Water Director Chris Norris. Central Bucks Regional Police Department Police Chief Karl Knott was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. O'Brien called for a motion to approve the **March 16, 2020 Council Meeting Minutes**. (West-Margolis) The vote was called and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Mr. O'Brien then called for a motion to approve the **April 7, 2020 Council Special Meeting**. (West-Jarret). The vote was called and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Mr. Davis asked, for the accuracy of the minutes, that when a Council Member motions or seconds a motion, to please identify him/herself.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Strouse stated that his reports are normally positive in nature in terms of what is going on in the community, but unfortunately that's not the case recently due to the pandemic. He said that in compliance with the stay-at-home orders, planned Earth Day celebration events have been canceled. However, he asked that everyone try to participate in a virtual celebration with Earth Day environmental leaders. The Mayor said we continue to look forward in the future to new conservation initiatives by local businesses, our EAC, and members of Borough Council, including efforts to limit the use of single-use plastics.

The Mayor said that while in the midst of this pandemic, it is unclear how to move forward, but the determination to do so is there. He said we need to collectively support a science-based approach as to when it is safe to reopen our businesses. Mayor Strouse said that as a community with a larger than average percentage of seniors, we all need to "work through this together".

Mayor Strouse said that our local businesses have less resilience than businesses with corporate structures and finances, and despite limited and declining municipal government resources, we have the responsibility to help. Our cultural institutions will also need our support. In addition, he said we have a role to play in re-envisioning and reinvigorating the numerous community events which draw thousands of people to our town that have been canceled.

The Mayor said that as we continue to fight COVID-19, we need to rededicate ourselves to best health practices and show determination to have a vibrant community on the other side of the crisis. He said that he and members of Borough Council are all volunteers who are committed to making Doylestown an extraordinary community.

PUBLIC SAFETY - Mr. Frederick: No report.

PUBLIC WORKS AND ADMINISTRATION - Mr. Flood

1. 2020-2021 Road Materials Bid. Mr. Flood reported that bids were publicly opened and read on February 25, 2020 by the Bucks County Consortium for the purchase of road materials for the 2020-2021 season. (A tabulation of the three most purchased materials was provided.) He said that based on those materials, the low bidder is Eureka. Mr. Flood noted that last year's bid was also obtained from Eureka.

Mr. Flood said that the Committee reviewed the bids and is recommending the award to Eureka Stone Quarry, Inc. He said that if Council wished to follow the recommendation, it could do so by making a motion, conditioned upon receipt of a properly executed performance bond and compliance with the bid specifications. (Flood-Frederick) With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

At this point, Mr. Flood stated he just wanted to recognize everyone who is working so hard - our police, our volunteer firefighters, Borough Staff, and our Public Works Department, who have to work through the pandemic to keep everybody safe and we do appreciate them.

Mr. Flood asked Mr. Ehlinger for any comments he had. Mr. Ehlinger stated that Public Works has been running two separately contained crews for the last month, which has been going very well. He said they had one crew recently in quarantine due to a spouse being presumed positive, but they got through that with no else getting sick. He said the hope is to be back in full force in the coming weeks.

Mr. Ehlinger stated that the park project has taken a hiatus because of the reduced manpower with the two sequestered crews, but they hope to get that going again in the next couple of weeks. He reported that the department has been doing street sweeping and the streets have never looked better because they've been able to do curb to curb since the streets have been empty. Lastly, Mr. Ehlinger reported that branch pickup, which is by reservation only, is starting on April 27. He said so far, several hundred people have signed up, so that service is being well utilized.

Mr. O'Brien thanked Mr. Flood for his kind words regarding Staff and everything they've done during this pandemic.

COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS - Mr. Bell

Mr. Bell stated that the committee did not meet this month, but they are working closely with Council leadership with the Mayor and Borough Manager to work with community event organizers to resolve these events that the Mayor referred to in his report. He said that

unfortunately, some events already have been canceled this year, but they are working with organizers of other events who are looking at ways of postponing and reevaluating the safety situation for new dates. Mr. Bell said they are hoping to preserve many of the events that help make life rich in Doylestown Borough and for those events that can't be preserved, they'll be back next year.

ZONING AND PLANNING - Mr. Brennan

1. **HARB Certificates of Appropriateness.** Mr. Brennan said that in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Historic and Architectural Review Board did not hold its regular monthly meeting on March 26, 2020. He said that the following applications were submitted for review and have been distributed to the HARB for consideration. Mr. Brennan said that Borough Staff, in conjunction with feedback received from individual HARB members, makes the following recommendations: Sign Applications: 1) 19 West Court Street, Court Street Taphouse; and 2) 72 North Main Street, Salus Hydratem. Staff recommends approval of both sign applications as submitted. Building Applications: 1) 1 Scout Way, for windows and siding - Staff recommends that the scope be approved as submitted with the condition that the siding be Borel or smooth Hardie Plank; 2) 100 South Main Street, for roof and gutters, AgWork Properties - Staff recommends that the scope be approved as submitted with the condition that the metal ridge cap be retained; 3) 81 Cottage Street, for a porch - Staff recommends approval as submitted.

Mr. Brennan said that if Council is in agreement with the recommendations, it may approve issuance of the certificates by motion. (Brennan-Frederick) With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

ENVIRONMENT AND RECREATION - Ms. Margolis

1. **Consideration of Resolution No. 2020-2, Authorizing Submission of Doylestown Borough/Heritage Conservancy DCNR Park Grant.** Ms. Margolis stated this resolution authorizes the submission of a grant application to DCNR for the construction of Broad Street Gateway Park. She said the completed application will be supplied to Council upon completion. Ms. Margolis said that if Council wished to authorize the grant submission, it could do so by a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2020-2. (Margolis-West) With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Margolis then encouraged everyone to find a way to celebrate Earth Day virtually. She knew Penn Environment and other some other organizations are having virtual events. Ms. Margolis said it's the 50th anniversary and it's worth giving a nod to our poor earth. She hoped that everybody and the earth will heal.

WATER UTILITY - Ms. Jarret

Ms. Jarret said the committee did not meet. She said spoke with Water Director Chris Norris today and he confirmed he had nothing to be addressed.

FINANCE/PENSION - Ms. West

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2020-3, Extending The Late Payment of Taxes.** Ms. West stated that Resolution No. 2020-3, delays the penalty accrual deadline for municipal real estate tax for the year 2020 to July 31, 2020. She said the resolution follows similar action by the County of Bucks and would align our Municipal Real Estate Tax with the County Real Estate Tax.

Ms. West said that if Council wished to adopt Resolution No. 2020-3, it could do so by motion. (West-Margolis)

Mr. O'Brien said initially, this was a 30-day extension from June 30, which would make it July 30. He asked if this has been resolved because he wants to make sure we are in alignment with the County since we use similar software and this could cause confusion. Mr. Davis confirmed that the actual penalty begins on July 31, which is correct. Tax Collector Michele Crunkleton said it does align with the County.

With no further comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

2. **Finance Report.** Ms. West called upon Ms. Brinker, who reported that the total of all funds expended was \$980,417.48. Motion to approve the Finance Report. (West-Jarret) With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

PERSONNEL - Mr. O'Brien: None.

PROFESSIONALS' REPORTS

Engineer's Report - Mr. Dougherty: No report.

Solicitor's Report - Mr. Closser reported that the Governor did sign Senate Bill 814, which specifically deals with virtual meetings during the emergency, and it is now a law. He said among other things, they are preparing a summary of the various provisions relevant to the Borough which will be provided to Mr. Davis .

Central Bucks Regional Police Department (CBRPD) Activities Report. Chief Knott was not present. However, the monthly activity report previously provided to Council showed there were 1006 incidents in the Borough in March 2020, and year-to-date, the Department spent \$1,472,298.59 and were at 24.45% of their yearly budget.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Flood said he knows that the Memorial Day Parade has been canceled, but we put it out to the public that there would be some type of ceremony. He asked if there's any update on that. Mr. Davis replied that there is a conference call scheduled with the Parade Committee on Friday morning. He said when the parade was canceled, it was left that we would try to build something around the two flag raisings and the ceremony at the cemetery, and find some way to make it available to the public through live streaming or television. The Parade Marshal has since talked with Veterans and hopefully he'll come back with some feedback from them. Mr. Davis hoped that by early next week they'll have some framework as to what is being considered as a replacement for the parade.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:25 p.m., Mr. O'Brien entertained a motion to adjourn. (Margolis-Flood). The vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

John H. Davis
Borough Manager

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