

Clifton Heights Borough Council
February 16, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes

Council Members Attending:

Leona Papale, Council President
Mark Campbell, Council Vice President
Harris Resnick, Councilman
Mike Humphreys, Councilman
Louis Cabrelli, Councilman
Destiny Borelli, Councilwoman
Timothy O'Hara, Councilman
Karen Peterson, Councilwoman

Officials Attending:

Joseph Lombardo, Mayor
John Perfetti, Borough Manager
Timothy Rockenbach, Chief of Police
James Kneass, Fire Chief
John Gould, Code Enforcement
Francis J. Catania, Borough Solicitor, by phone
J.P. Kelly, Borough Engineer
Cynthia Leitzell, Borough Financial Advisor

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance:

Borough Council President Leona Papale presided over the meeting and called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Lombardo offered an opening prayer.

Police Department Promotion/Swearing-In:

Mayor Lombardo presided over the swearing in ceremony of Daniel Ford as sergeant.

Congratulations were offered.

Roll Call:

President Papale took a roll call of Council members in attendance. All council members were present.

Meeting Minutes:

The meeting minutes were approved with no edits.

Public Comment:

No opening public comment.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Joe Lombardo noted that there was still not too much going on in the community not just because of COVID but also because of the weather. He thanked the Highway Department for their hard work during the storms. He said that James and his crew did a great job like they always do, and reiterated his gratitude for them keeping the streets clean and safe for residents.

Manager's Report:

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that the Borough will be having a civil service commission testing for new applicants to the police department on Saturday, February 27, 2021 at 9am at the Fire House for the physical and agility, with the 2nd session at 1pm at Borough Hall.

Borough Manager Perfetti noted that through the good years of the police department through the years, the Estate of Lee Masli has donated \$5,000 to the Police Department's vest fund. Borough Manager Perfetti thanked Chief Rockenbach, the Mayor and Borough Council for their community involvement and good community relationships for allowing a donation like this to be possible.

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that Sergeant Jack Chappelle had his last day on January 30, 2021 as the Borough's senior sergeant, and as they did at their last meeting, they wish him all the best.

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that the Borough would be losing another Sergeant as Sergeant Tom Wooding would be leaving the Borough for another department in Chester County and his separation date would be February 25th, 2021. He said that they wished Sergeant Wooding and his family the very best.

Borough Manager Perfetti delivered the financial statements to Councilmembers and told them they were due back by May 1st, but he would like them back as soon as possible.

Borough Manager Perfetti said that he was happy to announce that through their recycling program grant, they were able to receive \$44,528 towards the purchase price of the highway truck. The total for the truck was approximately \$72,400, so the grant monies are applied to that total. He thanked the Engineer and his whole staff for getting that grant up and running.

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that the Zoning Hearing Board met a couple of weeks ago. He said that they went through an orientation with the Solicitor that included role playing and after they worked through the scenarios presented, they selected Skip Barnes as their chairman. He said that the Mayor and Borough Council are here to assist the Zoning Hearing Board with whatever they may need.

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that the Planning Board also met in the last couple of weeks and have a new chair as well, Mr. Ted Archer.

Borough Manager Perfetti said that the Borough's Tax Collector, Jane Tumolo, did advise that the Borough tax bills went out. He thanked her for her hard work during the pandemic and all of the other difficulties that have been part of the past year.

Borough Manager Perfetti said that as a public service announcement any and all petitions were able to be circulated starting today and would have to be filed by March 9th.

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that Sergeant Ford, who was ceremoniously sworn in as sergeant at tonight's meeting, was formally sworn in by the Mayor on February 5, 2021.

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that the Borough received thank you letters from the Moran and O'Hara families who both recently lost family members and the Borough had sent condolences.

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that the Mayor executed an Executive Order for the snow from about 3 weeks ago in the event that any emergency funds are released, the Borough would be in order to receive them.

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that during their Executive Session they received an update on the Upper Darby School District and an update on the PENNDOT studies. He said that Council members will see in their packets the outline from the Clifton Heights PAL and Boys' Club who are working to get their annual carnival back up and running. He said that packet includes an outline from the State and how Houghton would operate with the current restrictions. He said that the CDC would provide a set of guidelines on or before April 4th that would outline how they could proceed with the carnival.

A motion was made by Vice President Campbell to accept the Borough Manager's Report as presented; seconded by Councilman Resnick; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Catania presented the Solicitor's Report.

Solicitor Catania reported that there was a meeting with Judge Dozor and the School District where they continued the discussions with the School District in the hopes of resolving the issues about the fields through the negotiation process. He said that there will be School Board members at the next meeting, but they continue to have that dialogue. He said that for the time being all of the current litigation is on hold as the Judge presides over their conversations. He said that will be continuing and he would expect that they would have another meeting in the next 30 days.

Solicitor Catania reported that people should be getting their tax bills now, and as a result of the countywide reassessment, they will be able to see how that reassessment affected both their

County and local taxes. He said that the Borough has filed approximately 10 tax assessment appeals. He said that they are larger properties that the Borough thinks were undervalued. He said that Borough residents appealed approximately 5 assessments, so the Borough has approximately 15 tax assessment appeals open. He said that he does not believe that the School District has filed any tax assessment appeals.

Solicitor Catania said that one of the cable providers in the Borough, RCN, is going under a corporate reorganization. The corporation that has a direct contract with the Borough for its cable services is a subsidiary and the parent is going through a reorganization. He said that he looked through the documents, and they are swapping out one group of owners for another. He said that there is no real reason that the Borough would oppose the transition, so it would be appropriate for the Borough to vote that they have no objection to the corporate reorganization; their contract would remain intact.

A motion was made by Councilman Humphreys to keep the RCN contract intact and vote that the Borough has no objection to RCN's corporate reorganization; seconded by Councilwoman Peterson; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

A motion was made by Councilman Resnick to accept the Solicitor's Report as presented; seconded by Councilman Cabrelli; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee: Vice President Campbell said that all of the financial reports were in Council's packets. He urged everyone to review them and follow up with any questions.

A motion was made by Vice President Campbell to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented and pay the bills; seconded by Councilwoman Peterson; and carried unanimously by a roll call vote of 8-0. (Resnick – yes, Cabrelli – yes, Humphreys – yes, O'Hara – yes, Borelli – yes, Campbell – yes, Peterson – yes, Papale – yes.)

Public Health & Safety Committee: Councilman Humphreys said to keep wearing masks, social distancing and staying home if sick.

Police Report:

A motion was made by Councilman Humphreys to accept the Police Report as presented; seconded by Vice President Campbell; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Fire Report:

A motion was made by Councilman Humphreys to accept the Fire Report as presented; seconded by Vice President Campbell; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Infrastructure & Public Works Committee:

Engineer's Report

Borough Engineer Kelly presented the report.

Mr. Kelly reported that attached to his report was a resolution to apply for County Aid, a resolution that is passed each year with the funds typically being used for the Road Program.

A motion was made by Councilman Resnick to adopt Resolution 21-02, submitting their annual application for County funds, which is typically used for the Borough's Road Program; seconded by Councilman Humphreys; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Mr. Kelly reported that documents and plans have been submitted to OHCD for the CDBG project for Garchinsky Park. The plans have been submitted for review and approval and the Borough has been authorized to receive bids. Providing Council agrees, the Borough Engineer will finalize the bidding documents. He said that this has been previously authorized and doesn't necessarily need any action tonight, he was just bringing it to the attention of Council.

President Papale said that they are good with the process moving forward.

Mr. Kelly said that the applicant for 570 E. Baltimore Pike, R2K, has submitted new land development plans for this site. He said that the new application is a request to develop one pad site, while the original application had 2 pad sites. The new application is 1 building divided into 5 different tenant spaces. He said he will review the application and provide comments to Council for their consideration. He said that the original application from October 2019 had 2 pad sites. The 1st pad site from 2019 had the same footprint of what was is being presented with this application, but it was for only 3 tenants, and the 2nd pad site was for a restaurant; so the new application is for 5 tenants with the same footprint, so the tenant space is smaller. The site improvements, other than the 2nd pad restaurant site, remain the same from the 1st application.

President Papale asked if he was aware of any tenants that had been discussed.

Mr. Kelly said that he was not aware of any specific tenants, and he would imagine that if any had been lined up from the 1st application, they would have to be reexamined since the size of the tenant space had changed. He said that he could ask but he did not know.

Mayor Lombardo said that he could ask the owners as he has a business relationship with the owners of that property.

Mr. Kelly said that Chapter 94 Sewage Planning Facilities, they have completed the annual Chapter 94 reports and will submit to the necessary authorities by the end of the month. He said that is an annual report that is done this same time every year.

A motion was made by Councilman Resnick to accept the Engineer's Report as presented; seconded by Councilman Cabrelli; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Mayor Lombardo said that he wanted to mention something because trash and recycling falls under this committee. He said that the trash and recycling hauler takes a beating on social media from the community, and a lot of it is warranted. He said that during the recent large winter storm, the trash hauler was working 2 days behind schedule as a result, and they did an amazing job working through that after the storm and ensuring that all of the trash was picked up by Friday. He said that he wanted to publicly thank them for their work through that storm.

President Papale thanked him for his comments.

Vice President Campbell said that he did receive a call from a Borough resident who ran into that problem and couldn't get his trash picked up and they got a call into the Highway Department and within 2 hours, that trash was picked up, and he just wanted to thank the Highway Department for stepping up to assist in that situation where their trucks were better equipped for the situation at hand.

Recreation and Historical Committee: President Papale reported that calendars had been mailed out. Anyone who has not received a copy can reach out to the Borough. She noted that the Mayor had already discussed the carnival and they would certainly follow up on that in the coming months.

Economic Development Committee: Councilwoman Peterson had nothing in addition to what the Borough Engineer reported on. She said they would have meetings coming up.

Law & Ordinances Committee:

Code Enforcement Report:

John Gould presented the Code Enforcement report.

Mr. Gould reported that they would have 3 Zoning Hearing Board meetings coming up, and he anticipated having a date for these in the next 2 weeks. He said that the 1st application would be for the Clifton Heights Plaza, the former Kmart site. They would be seeking variances for parking, signage and sidewalks

along East Baltimore Ave. The 2nd application would be for 401 S. Springfield Rd., the building opposite Cooke's Tavern which previously housed Shear Cutting Salon. The new owner is looking to change the salon into studio apartments and is looking to get a variance to do that. The 3rd applicant is Rockbourne Investments, 4 Rockbourne Rd, which is looking to expand the educational use in that building.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Borelli to accept the Code Enforcement report as presented; seconded by Councilman Resnick; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Environment Committee: Councilman Cabrelli said that he has been in contact with the Arbor Foundation and a few nurseries, and he will continue to follow up on those contacts as the weather improves. He said that if they are looking to add anything to Borough properties, they could feel free to share their ideas or pictures with him so that they could work on anything.

Communications Committee: Councilman O'Hara had nothing to report.

Old Business

President Papale said that Mary Dougherty and Bonnie Callahan both brought up about a street sign missing from Springfield Rd. and Oak Ave. during public comment at last month's meeting. She said that Borough Manager Perfetti said that they would look into it at the meeting.

Borough Manager Perfetti reported that the sign was put up the very next day.

President Papale thanked him and reiterated that phone calls could have things like that addressed much quicker.

President Papale said that she hoped this would be the last time she would have to ask this question.

Mr. Kelly said that Chester Ave. has been patched. He said that it doesn't look good, but there is nothing that they can do additional until the plants open up. He said that there is no mud or deterioration, it's just a patch in the road that is not attractive.

President Papale asked if this meant it was satisfied.

Mr. Kelly said that it was satisfied but if AQUA refused to fix the patch, he would include it in the Road Program as a patch done at minimum cost that would look much better.

New Business

Vice President Campbell asked if the Borough could dedicate a page of the minutes to Sergeant Jack Chappelle and his 30 years of service to the Borough of Clifton Heights.

Closing Public Comment:

Jim Kneass, 107 S. Church Street, said that Lee Masli also left the Fire Company \$3,500 and the Clifton Heights Ambulance Association \$3,500, so he wanted to thank her for that. He said that he wanted to thank the Borough's dedicated volunteers. He thanked the Highway Department for the work clearing the streets. He said that some of the volunteers have been practically living in the fire house during these storms, so the response times are down from 5-6 minutes to 2 minutes. He thanked those volunteers for their commitment. He noted that it is the Fire Company's 125th anniversary. He said that the 2 original fire companies were started in 1896 and merged into the 1 fire company in 1956, so it has been 125 years of continued volunteer fire service to the Borough. He said that they are hoping to be able have some special events this year, in spite of COVID.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Councilman Peterson to adjourn; seconded by Councilwoman Borelli; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly A. Duffy
Clifton Heights Borough Secretary

This page of the minutes is respectfully dedicated to Police Sergeant Jack Chappelle in honor of his retirement after 30 years of steadfast service to the Borough of Clifton Heights.