

Borough of Ben Avon
7101 Church Avenue, Ben Avon, Pennsylvania, 15202
Regular Meeting of Council
June 21, 2011
Minutes

Call to Order

Council President Lloyd Corder called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Council Members Present

Rob Galbraith, Michael Bett, Lloyd Corder, Richard White, Sue Weiss

Council Members Absent

Judy Konitsney

Brian Tokar

Others Present

Bob Jones, Mayor

Elizabeth Sattler, Esquire

Ed McGee, Engineer

Dale Regrut, Public Works Foreman

Carmella Hallstein, Borough Secretary

Gary Buckman, Chief; Ben Avon Volunteer Fire Department

Norbert Micklos, Chief; Ohio Township Police Department

Public Participation

Scott Keener, a member of the Tri-Borough Joint Planning Commission addressed council about way-finding signage. He stated that way-finding signage was proposed to Bellevue as a result of a need assessment conducted for the borough. Mr. Keener stated that the Joint Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2004 by Bellevue, Avalon and Ben Avon also addressed the need for this type of signage in the three boroughs. Mr. Keener stated he recently learned that Bellevue had applied for a grant on behalf of their borough, Avalon and Ben Avon to fund a study for way-finding signage. He stated that there are three different types of signage, street signs, private signs that are regulated by zoning and identity signs or way-finding signage. Mr. Keener stated that the Joint Comprehensive Plan includes five pages of steps that the boroughs can take jointly and individually to implement the signage recommendations. He stated that two of the recommendations specifically address major gateway signage and minor gateway signage. Mr. Keener stated that the Tri-Borough Joint Planning Commission is recommending that all three boroughs participate in a study for way-finding signage.

Paula Templeton of 6927 Prospect Avenue addressed council about the proposal presented at the April council meeting by Mrs. Wynnyckyj and Mrs. Siddoway to paint a mural on the Dalzell Avenue side of the fire station building. Ms. Templeton stated that she took pictures of existing murals, the fire station building and homes in Ben Avon and put a book together using these pictures. She gave copies of the book to council for their review. Ms. Templeton also presented a petition signed by 115 residents opposed to the proposed mural. She stated that she took the

petition to homes on 14 of Ben Avon's 33 streets. Ms. Templeton stated that the upkeep of the fire station building is paid for with tax dollars and she felt it was important to keep that in mind. Ms. Templeton reviewed some of the mural pictures included in her book. She stated that the mural located on the North Side has a 7 to 10 year lifespan and the mural on Ohio River Boulevard is in a sad state of repair. Ms. Templeton stated that the homes in Ben Avon are in good shape, adding that we are not urban or commercial and are not candidates for a mural, especially if the taxpayers will be paying for the upkeep. Ms. Templeton also presented two pictures of a retaining wall located on Brighton Road that is covered in graffiti. Ms. Templeton stated that she just wants to protect the town, which is probably the most residential in the area. Dr. Corder stated that for the record, Mrs. Wynnyckyj and Mrs. Siddoway are both model citizens. He stated that Mrs. Wynnyckyj has donated time and money for the borough's tree lighting ceremony and that Mrs. Siddoway has donated hundreds of hours putting together the Avon Club cookbook. Dr. Corder stated that he wants this to be a respectable atmosphere, adding that Mrs. Wynnyckyj and Mrs. Siddoway brought an idea to council that they want to explore and in his opinion, he does not know why this has blown up into the biggest waste of time. Ms. Templeton stated that she was not being disrespectful to either of these women. Ms. Templeton stated that the residents she talked to over the past three weeks are against the proposed mural and reiterated that she had just presented a petition to council signed by 115 residents opposed to mural. Dr. Corder stated that Mrs. Wynnyckyj and Mrs. Siddoway have a different perspective on the artwork, adding that they have asked to be on the agenda for the July council meeting.

Hal Deily of 155 Spruce Street addressed council about the Spruce Street wall project and thanked them for their continuing efforts to address this problem. He stated that he hoped the project would include cleaning out debris that has been in the creek since 2004.

Ted Popovich of 6606 Virginia Avenue stated that he and other members of the Neville Island Good Neighbor Committee sent a letter to County Executive Dan Onorato, inviting him to come to the community to hear resident concerns about air quality. Mr. Popovich stated that the goal is to update the Air Toxics Guidelines, which date back to the 1980's.

George Trent of 7190 Brighton Road addressed council about the administration of the borough. He stated that the public gets their information about the current meeting a week from Friday in local newspaper. Mr. Trent stated that the June council meeting minutes would not be available to the public until they are approved at the July 19 meeting, adding that the March and April minutes had not been posted to the borough's website as of the end of May. He stated that financial statements have never been posted on the website. Dr. Corder stated that a volunteer maintains the borough's website. Ms. Sattler stated that the minutes are not public record until approved by council at an advertised meeting. Mrs. Weiss stated that council meetings are open to the public and that residents can contact their elected representatives anytime for anything of importance.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Bett; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2011 council meeting.

Engineer's Report - Report given by Ed McGee, Engineer

Motion: Mr. Galbraith; Second: Mrs. Weiss; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to accept the bid from Pampena Landscaping and Construction, Inc. for \$53,090.00 for Alternate #1 for the Rostrevor Wall Reconstruction and Storm Drainage System Replacement Project.

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Galbraith; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to authorize Ed McGee to prepare specifications and advertise for bids for the Spruce Run Retaining Wall Replacement Project.

Financial Report - Report given by Richard White

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Bett; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the May 2011 financial reports as presented.

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Galbraith; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the June 2011 accounts payable reports as presented, authorizing payments of \$99,649.39 from the general fund account and \$5,499.33 from the capital improvement account.

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mrs. Weiss; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to authorize a contribution of \$750.00 to North Boroughs Fireworks for the North Boroughs Independence Day celebration and fireworks display.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Report – No Report

Administration Report – No Report

Public Works / Building and Property Report – No Report

Public Safety Report – Report given by Michael Bett, Chair

Motion: Mr. Bett; Second: Mrs. Weiss; Motion carried by voice vote to approve submitting a Letter of Intent to the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services to request technical assistance for the volunteer fire department merger/consolidation. Mr. White opposed the motion.

Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement Report - Report given by Sue Weiss, Chair

Mrs. Weiss received a property maintenance complaint about lot/block number 214-J-223, which is a vacant lot on Ohio River Boulevard. The complaint states that the grass has not been mowed this season, there is litter on the property and there are several concrete culverts on the property. Mrs. Weiss will ask Building Inspection Underwriters to inspect the property.

Public Affairs Report – Report given by Richard White, Chair

Mayor’s Report – Report given by Bob Jones, Mayor

Emergency Management Report – Report submitted by Mike Dufresne, EMC; given by Bob Jones, Mayor

Police Chief’s Report – Report given by Norbert Micklos, Chief; Ohio Township Policed Dept.

Fire Chief’s Report – Report submitted by Gary Buckman, Chief; BAVFD

Solicitor’s Report – Report given by Elizabeth Sattler, Esquire

New Business

Resolution 2011-06

Motion: Mrs. Weiss; Second: Mr. Bett; Motion carried by voice vote to adopt Resolution 2011-06, which authorizes the application for funds with the Municipal Government Efficiency Services Grant Program of Allegheny County Department of Development. Mr. White opposed the motion.

Mrs. Weiss stated that a line item for the Tri-Borough Joint Planning Commission should be included in the 2012 budget.

Old Business

None

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Galbraith; Second: Mr. White; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmella Hallstein

Borough Secretary