

Borough of Ben Avon
7101 Church Avenue, Ben Avon, Pennsylvania 15202
Pre-Council Meeting – June 5, 2018
Minutes

Call to Order

President, Jennifer Bett, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Council Members Present

Jennifer Bett
Earl Bohn
Michele Boyd
Henry Casale
Megan Dolan

Council Members Absent

David Stoeckle
Ken Opiery

Others Present

Rozlyn Berty, Resident
Judge Robert Gallo (Ret.) ALCOSAN
Kimberly Slate-Wood, Manager of Municipal Relations and Outreach, ALCOSAN
Ashley Shook, ALCOSAN
Theresa Patsch, Borough Secretary

Public Participation

Rozlyn Berty, 213 Dalzell Avenue, voiced her concerns over a neighboring Air BnB property operating over the last four to six months. Mrs. Berty is concerned with disclosure to the neighbors who could be affected, parking on the street, sanitation from excessive trash and potential for noise from guest and parties.

Financial

No report given.

Administration

Earl Bohn reported he has contacted the BIU Regional Manager to meet and review their agreement with a focus on identifying rentals for inspection when ownership changes as well as annual inspection of rental properties.

Mr. Bohn also discussed an invoice received from the Tri-Boro Joint Planning Committee concerning charges for a property in Avalon. Some members of the JPC have called the charges into question as to whether Avalon should alone be responsible for that invoice. Mr. Bohn will continue to follow and report his findings.

Henry Casale spoke with Dan Cohen concerning the Verizon agreement which automatically renewed and the Borough is bound for the next three years. Comcast agreement will be up for renewal in 2019, and Mr. Casale would like to know if he should encourage Mr. Cohen to submit a proposal. All agreed to have a proposal submitted.

Public Affairs / Communications

Jennifer Bett is hoping the new website will be live in the near future. Ms. Bett was working to find applications to allow notifications simultaneously broadcast to all social media platforms, but hopes that we will be able to update systems further down the road. For now, Ms. Bett will focus on activating the new website prior to the June council meeting.

Jennifer Bett reported that some discussion will be necessary concerning the social media policy. With the advancement of our presence on Facebook, Twitter and the Ben Avon Website, parameters should be set concerning the content and frequency of posts and sharing of information. Earl Bohn thought that perhaps our solicitor might need to advise on this subject.

Public Safety/Code Enforcement

Earl Bohn reported that David Stoeckle took the lead on the complaint of overgrowth blocking the sidewalk at 176 Ridge Avenue. A letter will post Wednesday, June 6, addressed to the homeowner.

Public Works

No report given.

Quaker Valley COG

Megan Dolan gave an overview of the COG's mapping software and its use for local government. Ms. Dolan said a meeting scheduled June 6 will brainstorm increasing revenue for the QVCOG in order to bridge the gap between revenue and expenses. There is nothing specific in the works concerning a dues increase at this time.

New Business

ALCOSAN

ALCOSAN representatives Judge Robert Gallo (Ret) and Kimberly Slater Wood, Manager of Municipal Relations and Outreach, addressed council on upcoming and continuing initiatives. Printed marketing mediums are available in the Borough office promoting camps, the storm drain stenciling program, scholastic outreach and the Clean Water Assistance Fund.

Air BNB

Earl Bohn reported that Solicitor Ann Sweeney is currently reviewing the ordinances forwarded by the Tri-Boro Joint Planning Committee for application in Ben Avon Borough. There are currently three known short-term rentals in the Borough. Henry Casale inquired whether they should be subject to an occupancy tax.

Protocol for resident complaints/follow-up

Michele Boyd and Earl Bohn discussed the ongoing effort to address a procedure for resident complaints and concerns. A number of calls and visits occur daily at the Borough office and

while the Public Works Supervisor can address many, there are those that need to escalate to council members or code enforcement. In order to eliminate any confusion as to who will report to the resident, it was requested that some form of procedure be in place going forward. Jennifer Bett also suggested that the most pressing complaints be brought to the attention of the Council at the Pre-council work meetings.

Garbage/Recycle Pick Up During Road Construction

Jennifer Bett will contact the Waste Management representative for the Borough to follow what steps can be taken to ensure trash pick-up through the roadwork season.

Dropbox File Sharing

Jennifer Bett reported that the Borough office will begin using the file sharing program, Dropbox. Once the Borough Secretary has established the folders in Dropbox, Council members will be invited to participate.

Solicitor Invoices

Earl Bohn scheduled a meeting with Bonnie Brimmeier to discuss any concerns in regards to invoicing. Following that meeting, Ms. Brimmeier suggested a meeting with council representatives and Ms. Sweeney to address any questions.

Old Business

Public Safety Announcement

Mayor Melanie Holcomb recently received a request from a resident concerning social media reports of a local trespasser in Ben Avon. The resident asked for input from the Council or Mayor on what she recommended now that vacation season is upon us. Mayor Holcomb responded with a posting on Facebook, and encouraged all residents to “See Something, Say Something,” and reach out to Ohio Township Police immediately with concerns.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Patsch
Ben Avon Borough Secretary