

MINUTES OF THE CORNWALL BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2022, AT 6:30 P.M.
IN THE CORNWALL BOROUGH GARAGE

Council President Bruce Harris called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENT

Council President Bruce Harris, Council Vice President Bruce Conrad, Council Pro Tem Ron Ricard, John Karinch, Thomas Burton, Beth Yocum and Mayor Mark Thomas

ALSO PRESENT

Borough Manager Cody Rhoads, Highway Superintendent Tom Smith, Police Chief Brett Hopkins and Borough Engineer Chad Smith

ABSENT

Al Brandt

PUBLIC

Meeting attendance sheet is attached hereto

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Thomas spoke about the tragedy that befell the Lebanon City Police Department and stated that some of borough's officers have been picking up shifts in the city to help. Mayor Thomas asked that the community keep the family of Lt. Lebo and the injured officers in their thoughts.

PUBLIC COMMENT – WATER & SEWER

No comments.

WATER & SEWER BUSINESS

REPORTS

John Karinch made the motion, seconded by Bruce Conrad, to approve the water and sewer reports. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cathy Jackson, 310 Spring Hill Lane, asked if there was any update to the zoning issues in Spring Hill Acres. Mr. Harris stated that the solicitor is working on changes to the ordinance. Ms. Jackson asked if those would be available for public inspection. Mr. Harris stated that they would be.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

John Karinch made the motion, seconded by Bruce Conrad, to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2022 council meeting. Motion passed.

REPORTS

Mr. Ricard asked how scams listed in the police report were reported. Chief Hopkins stated those are calls from residents stating that certain organizations or individuals contacted them to transfer money.

Bruce Conrad made the motion, seconded by John Karinch, to approve the reports. Motion passed.

Mr. Harris read the budget report for March 2022.

OLD BUSINESS

ROUTE 419 SPEED LIMIT

Mr. Harris stated that the borough, in conjunction with West Cornwall, sent a letter to PennDOT asking for a uniform speed limit of 35 MPH on Route 419 until it got to the 25 MPH limit at the school. PennDOT denied the request.

Mr. Ricard said he was disappointed and wondered if there was an appeal process. Mr. Harris felt that unless the standards that PennDOT used would change, there was little recourse to ask them to reconsider.

NEW BUSINESS

ADOPT ORDINANCE 2022-1 – FEEDING OF FERAL CATS

Jen Wentzel, 125 Furnace Street, spoke about the community program that works to trap, neuter and release cats in Cornwall and surrounding communities. Ms. Wentzel stated that as of April 1st, 183 cats were altered, vaccinated, or released with a majority of those coming from Cornwall. They've also removed 131 kittens that were adopted into homes. Ms. Wentzel asked council to amend the ordinance to allow for the feeding of cats solely for the purpose of trapping, neutering, vaccinating, and releasing them.

Nick Moehlman, 159 Tice Lane, spoke about his experience with feral cats and passed out a letter that he had written when the issue originally surfaced.

Dustin Boger, 126 Walker Street, stated that the ordinance was originally enacted after the issues at his property. Mr. Boger said his house and property no longer smell of cat urine, which it did even though he did not own any. He also stated he no longer must replace his outdoor furniture every year because it was being destroyed by the cats. He appreciated Ms. Wentzel's efforts but felt it was unwise to amend the ordinance.

Mr. Harris mentioned the possibility of the borough contributing to the program in next year's budget.

Mr. Burton asked how the numbers in Cornwall compare to West Cornwall and South Lebanon. Ms. Wentzel could not give a definitive answer. She mentioned they are doing TNR right now on Rexmont Road that is just over the borough line in South Lebanon.

There was discussion about what recourse people would have if it became an issue again. The ordinance is still in place and enforcement can continue if people are not following the rules.

Ron Ricard made the motion, seconded by John Karinch, to adopt Ordinance 2022-1. Motion passed.

AUTHORIZE TRANSFER OF BANKING SERVICES TO JBT AND FCCB

Mr. Rhoads stated the finance committee has been discussing changing banking institutions and felt it would be prudent to use more than one establishment. The recommendation was to move the borough accounts to JBT and the water and sewer accounts to FCCB.

Ron Ricard made the motion, seconded by John Karinch, to authorize the transfer of banking services to JBT and FCCB. Motion passed.

ROUTE 72 AND ZINN'S MILL ROAD INTERSECTION

Mr. Rhoads spoke with Jon Fitzkee of the County Planning Department about the intersection. Mr. Fitzkee investigated the matter and said that surprisingly, the intersection is performing above expectations. PennDOT is planning a resurfacing project for Route 72 through the borough in late 2023 or early 2024. They were made aware of the safety concerns and will implement any improvements at that time if they deem it necessary.

AUTHORIZE TRANSFER OF DOCUMENTS TO HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Conrad stated that there are documents that are not necessarily borough documents but would be considered historical records. The historical committee felt it would be better if they had those records in their possession.

Mr. Burton asked if any thought was given to scanning all the documents. Mr. Conrad said there was not, but it can be investigated.

John Karinch made the motion, seconded by Beth Yocum, to authorize the transfer of the documents to the historical committee. Motion passed.

AUTHORIZE BIDS FOR 2022 PAVING PROJECTS

The highway committee is proposing to pave Ash Lane (from Beech to Hemlock), Holly Lane (Aspen to Aspen) and Beech Drive (Ash to Holly). Mr. Harris stated that some bids across the county are coming in much higher than expected due to the rising cost of oil.

Mr. Ricard asked if these projects could be pushed off if necessary. Tom Smith said they could be if prices are too high, but he would suggest bidding them and seeing the results. He does not want to let them go too long because they will further deteriorate, and it will end up costing more.

Ron Ricard made the motion, seconded by Bruce Conrad, to authorize soliciting bids for the 2022 paving projects. Motion passed.

AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES FROM THE RECREATION FUND

Council discussed expending funds for a variety of recreational options including protective capping for the fences at the three fields, a batting cage at Minersville, minor repairs/power washing of the hockey rink, resurfacing the tennis courts and adding pickleball courts.

There was a discussion about the current recreation fee of \$1,250 being one of the lowest in the county and the possibility of increasing that fee soon.

Jeff Bamberger, 113 Pine Street, asked about the pavilion by the creek. He said that it used to be heavily used for the playground program but is almost inaccessible now. The school owns the pavilion, so the borough does not have any say in restoring it.

Greg Roussey, 123 Pine Street, suggested getting public input if there is a comprehensive park and recreation plan done.

John Karinch made the motion, seconded by Bruce Conrad, to authorize the expenditures from the recreation fund as presented. Motion passed.

Mr. Conrad commended Tom Smith and the highway crew for all the work they do in preparing the ballfields.

AUTHORIZE ENGINEER TO REVIEW FEMA FLOOD MAPS

Mr. Karinch stated the most recent FEMA flood map for Cornwall Borough was not accurate. He would like the engineer to review the numbers.

John Karinch made the motion, seconded by Bruce Conrad, to authorize the engineer to review the flood maps. Motion passed.

CONSIDER ADOPTING RESOLUTION 2022-5 – SUPPORT FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE REQUIREMENT IN THE BOROUGH CODE

Mr. Harris explained that any borough with three or more full-time police officers are required to have a civil service commission. Second class townships are not required to have a civil service commission. The commission is one extra hoop boroughs must jump through to hire a new officer. Mr. Harris felt there was no need for the commission in today's climate.

Chief Hopkins stated that the civil service requirement is outdated and a detriment. Townships still go through the vetting process before hiring but boroughs must test the applicants.

John Karinch made the motion, seconded by Bruce Conrad, to adopt Resolution 2022-5 to support the elimination of the civil service requirement in the borough code. Motion passed.

POLICE PISTOL RANGE – LETTER OF SUPPORT

Chief Hopkins stated that the GRLA has a couple acres of land that they have offered to donate for a pistol range for the police forces in the county. There would be no cost to the municipalities.

John Karinch made the motion, seconded by Ron Ricard, to write a letter of support for the pistol range. Motion passed.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Tom Smith said that the new dump truck arrived last week. It was ordered in March of 2021.

Mr. Conrad reminded the residents about the comments for webpage being due in September. Mr. Conrad also asked about looking into an electronic sign for the borough.

The borough council's next meetings will be held at Sacred Heart on May 9th and the Methodist Church on June 13th.

There will be a shredder event at the GLRA this summer. Mr. Harris asked Mr. Rhoads to investigate the cost to have an event in the borough.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, John Karinch made the motion, seconded by Bruce Conrad, to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m. Motion passed.

Cody Rhoads
Secretary