

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, April 6, 2016

PUBLIC MEETING

PRESENT: James Griffin, Council President
Karen Tutino, Council Vice-President
Robert Stokley, Senior Council Member
Anita Barton, Council Member
Tina Sokolowski, Council Member
Colleen Leonard, Council Member
Jane Flanagan, Council Member
Robert Frost, Mayor

ALSO PRESENT: Richard J. Manfredi, Borough Manager
Michael J. Savona, Borough Solicitor

CALL TO ORDER

The Public Meeting of the Conshohocken Borough Council duly advertised, was held at Conshohocken Borough Hall, 400 Fayette Street, Conshohocken, Pa. Mr. James Griffin, Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Manfredi announced on behalf of Mr. Griffin that there would be an Executive Session after the meeting on a legal matter, a real estate matter and a personnel matter.

PRESENTATIONS

a.) Interviews to fill Planning Commission vacancy.

Mr. Manfredi explained that there would be two interviews to fill an unexpired term on the Planning Commission that evening although three had been originally scheduled. Mr. Manfredi then announced that Ms. Elizabeth Schreiner and Mr. Andrew Goduto were both present for their interviews.

Mr. Griffin requested that Ms. Tutino begin Ms. Schreiner's interview. Ms. Tutino and the other Council members asked Ms. Schreiner various questions about her background, interest in the position, and knowledge about the commission. Ms. Schreiner responded to Council's questions by explaining details on her ties to other Conshohocken-based groups, her personal and professional background, and her willingness to learn the roles and responsibilities of a Planning Commission member. After Council had completed Ms. Schreiner's interview, Mr. Griffin asked Ms. Schreiner if she had any questions for the Council and she asked for confirmation that Council would be voting to fill the vacancy in two weeks, which Mr. Manfredi confirmed. Council thanked Ms. Schreiner for her time.

Mr. Goduto was then seated for his interview and Ms. Tutino began by asking him to share his background, interests and any other information that would be helpful to Council. Mr. Goduto expressed his desire to give back to the community and that he is

now able to do so because of where he is at in his career and that he is currently involved with three committees in Phoenixville where he works. Ms. Tutino then invited other members of Council to ask Mr. Goduto any questions that they had for him and they asked about his best skill set and ability to read plans. After the interview concluded, Council explained to Mr. Goduto their expectation to vote in two weeks and that there may be one final interview as part of their next meeting before they voted. Council thanked Mr. Goduto for his time and Mr. Griffin moved on to Council Business.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

Mr. Manfredi announced that there was no business scheduled.

MANAGER MATTERS

Mr. Manfredi introduced Mr. Alvin Williams, retired NBA player and founder of the Academy of Hoops basketball program for boys and girls ages seven to sixteen, to share information about the program and how he envisions bringing it to the residents of Conshohocken. Mr. Williams explained that the program would teach children fundamental skills needed for basketball and that he would like to partner with the Borough to offer trainings, camps, and a summer league as early as June of this year. After he explained the offerings, Council asked both him and Ms. Stephanie Cecco, Director of Recreation Services and Parks, questions about whether the academy planned to offer classes for children with special needs, how residents would be informed about the offerings and whether the Borough would be entering into an agreement with the academy. Ms. Stephanie Cecco explained that, by partnering with the academy to add these programs, the Borough could become a hub for basketball. Council expressed their support of the program and thanked Mr. Williams for sharing.

Mr. Manfredi continued his matters by sharing updates on the new website and Borough-television channels scheduled to launch, an upcoming cable franchise agreement with Verizon and the Inside Out program with the Philadelphia Museum. He also updated Council on the upcoming Open House for Borough Hall and Council discussed possible locations for the donated Native American wood carving at the Borough Hall. Mr. Manfredi mentioned several projects that would need to be bid to finalize the Borough Hall including security gates that are planned for the parking lot. Mr. Stokley expressed concern about restricting the parking because he would like it to be available to residents if needed and a discussion about the need for additional parking in the Borough ensued. Ms. Sokolowski made a recommendation for Council to revisit the Comprehensive Plan and to start planning a way to address the parking issue. In response, Mr. Manfredi shared that an internal parking analysis for the Borough would be forthcoming.

Mr. Manfredi then introduced Mr. Paul Hughes, Borough Engineer, to share images of possible treatments for the A-Field wall replacement project. Ms. Flanagan inquired about the durability of both options and Ms. Leonard asked questions about the finished wall height and if it could include patterns or columns to make it match the appearance of the homes in the neighborhood; Mr. Hughes replied that the height would be approximately eight feet and that it could be designed with patterns. Mr. Manfredi asked Council if they were prepared to choose the final treatment that evening or if they preferred to proceed at a later date. Ms. Leonard expressed her wish to share the options with residents of her ward before making a decision and it was determined that she would be given the opportunity to do so before it was voted upon at a future meeting.

Mr. Manfredi then invited Mr. Paul Hughes and Ms. Chris Stetler, Community Development and Zoning Officer, to share details about the Montco 2040 Implementation Grant program. Mr. Hughes shared a Power Point presentation on the program and explained how the funds would be used to make needed improvements to Sutcliffe Park including improving drainage issues, improving path connections, and adding rain gardens and parking island landscaping.

Following the presentation, Mr. Manfredi shared that there is an agreement for parking with Keystone at First Avenue that the Borough pays \$1,500.00 a month for public access to the facility from 6:00 PM to 6:00 AM; he would like Council to consider if they would like to continue the agreement, end it, or make changes to the terms. Mr. Savona explained the history of the agreement and, in response, Ms. Sokolowski inquired how the public would be stopped from using the lot in the event that the Borough did terminate the agreement. Mr. Savona explained that it could be gated because it is private property.

Mr. Manfredi concluded his matters by sharing a letter from Mr. Leo Costello detailing his decision to step down as Fire Chief to the Borough and Council thanked him for his service.

LEGAL MATTERS

There were no legal matters shared.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

Mayor Frost shared that he learned about the pending House Bill 340 and how it will affect executive sessions. He had spoken with Mr. Savona about it and Mr. Savona shared that the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs has made a recommendation that Boroughs that would not like to see the Bill passed adopt resolutions in opposition to it to share with the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs who would compile them and forward them to Harrisburg. Council consented to adopt such a resolution at the next meeting.

Mr. Stokley shared a request to have a block party at Jones Street on June 5th to raise funds for a sick child in the Borough. He added that the nearby businesses are in support and would like Borough permission to apply for special licensing to hold the event as planned. Council consented to the event.

Mr. Stokley also reminded Council of the resident in his ward that requested that streetlights be repaired and watch children signs installed in his block and asked for an update on the work. Mr. Manfredi replied that the sign would be installed shortly and the streetlights would be fixed as well and reminded Council of the work order system and how to share resident requests for processing.

Mr. Stokley asked for signs on Lenape Lane to remind people to pick up after their animals. Mr. Buek, Public Works Superintendent, agreed to look at where they would go and to assist.

Mr. Stokley shared a plan for the train station from eleven years ago and expressed the need to make improvements to it.

Mr. Griffin asked about the fence at Sutcliffe and the one in front of Concrete Services. Mr. Manfredi explained that the Borough would be crafting a letter to the business and that a change to the parking ordinance would be needed. The Sutcliffe fence would also be addressed and replaced.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Rosemary Northcutt shared that the Council has granted several waivers for off-street parking recently and that they should consider the effect that it has on the parking situation. She also expressed that green space should be preserved and that adding parking lots in place of pocket parks would not maintain the Conshohocken that she knows and loves.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Manfredi,
Borough Secretary