

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK

MINUTES OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Date: July 9, 2012

Time: 7:30 P.M.

Location: Municipal Building

1. Roll Call

Present: Council Members Allen, Dixon, Gibbons, Hannan, Harrison, McLean, Moury, O'Brien and Pape.

Also Present: Mayor Morton; William Spagnol, Manager; Robert McTiernan, Solicitor; Judith Miller, Assistant Manager; Robert M. Cygrymus, Director of Community Services; Police Lt. David Rogan; Gerard Duke, Municipal Planner; Mark Romito, Finance Director; Mike Smith, Environmental Engineer; Jean Statler, Municipal Engineer

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Chair Announcement

Executive Session of Council was conducted on Monday, June 25, 2012 to discuss Police and personnel issues.

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Reports of Officials

4. Library Director's Report

Library Director, Christine McIntosh, stated that the Bethel Park Public Library provides services to inform, inspire and enrich the community.

Ms. McIntosh said the State budget passed with level funding for public libraries for the 2012-13 fiscal year rather than the 5% cut originally proposed by the Governor.

She then discussed fundraising. Scoop Night at Bruster's will be held on Thursday, July 19, 2012 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Library staff will be on hand to

make your ice cream desserts. Also, there will be Premiere Designs Jewelry fundraiser on Wednesday, August 8, 2012 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and again from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Proceeds from all fundraising activities support the programs and services of the Library.

Ms. McIntosh said the Library is very busy with e-reading devices. Circulation of materials is up 15% for the year. Downloadable e-books, e-video and e-audio are still a small but growing segment of circulation. Patron traffic has increased 4% for the year and the number of patrons utilizing wireless network has increased 43%. She said that people utilize wireless network in the courtyard as well as parked in the parking lot.

For more information on this policy or any of the programs and services offered by the Library, visit website at www.bethelparklibrary.org

5. Police Chief's Report

Lt. David Rogan announced that the next Crime Watch Meeting will be held on Monday, August 20, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bethel Park Community Center.

Lt. Rogan then announced that the Police Department will play a softball game against the Fire Department on Community Day, Saturday, September 8, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. at Purkey Field. There will be a 50-50 raffle with proceeds benefiting the Bethel Park Community Foundation.

On Sunday, July 15, 2012, the Police Department will participate in the Fourth Annual Rev 'Em Up For Kids Car Cruise at South Park from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. They will be offering free ID cards for children near the Allegheny County Police Horse Stables. The Bethel Park Fire Department will also be on hand. The event is hosted by Pasta Too and benefits Bethel Park Youth Football Association.

He also mentioned that the next Drug Enforcement Drug Take Back Program has been scheduled for Saturday, September 29, 2012 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at two locations, the Bethel Park Community Center and the Highmark Direct Building, 1175 North Highland Road. You can bring all expired or unwanted medications to be disposed of properly.

Mr. Moury said that he'd like to remind everyone that the Pasta Too Rev 'Em Up For Kids Car Cruise will be held at the South Park Fairgrounds on Sunday, July 15 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. There will be a concert by Johnny Angel and the Halos at mid-afternoon.

6. Fire Chief's Report

Chief Dave Gerber gave the fire report for the month of June. He congratulated Third Lt. Tom Kelton and his wife on the birth of their first son on the Fourth of July. Chief Gerber said that the Fire Department's second donation request letter has been sent out to resident and asks that everyone be generous. More

information on how to donate can be viewed on their website at www.bethelparkvfc.com

Also, he mentioned that Bingo continues at the Brightwood Station every Saturday evening beginning at 7:00 p.m.

He reminded everyone to be careful with recreational fires. The fires must be contained in some type of fire pit. With the dry weather conditions, he urges residents to take care in extinguishing the fires and cigarettes.

Chief Gerber announced that the fire company just received a new ISO rating. ISO comes in once every ten years to rate the fire department, the water system and the dispatch services. This inspection rated the fire company as a Class 4, improving from Class 5. This rating will help home owners' insurance rates. He said he will provide more information on this rating as he receives it.

Mr. Moury gave more information on the ISO rating. The Municipal insurance carrier said the rating will go into effect in October. An article on this rating will appear in the upcoming issue of the Chronicles. Residents can notify their insurance companies about this rating as it should affect their insurance rates. He then thanked the fire department, the Police dispatch, and the water company for their commitment and dedication to emergency service personnel.

Mr. Harrison reminded the community that the key word in the fire company is volunteer. They rely on voluntary contributions from the citizens. Also, he spoke with Nora Helfrich from Tri Community South EMS and promised to mention that, unlike the fire company, EMS takes subscriptions and is always willing to accept donations. The key to this is that that the fire company always responds, as they do not first check to see if you have a subscription or have made a donation. There is a lot of talk in the medical world about freeloaders. He asks that the residents not be freeloaders with the volunteer fire company or Tri Community. He said as a Council member, he has never received a complaint about EMS or the fire company.

7. Mayor's Report

The Mayor announced the 90+ Club birthdays for July. He then spoke about Community Day. Community Day will be held at the High School Campus on Saturday, September 8, 2012. He then said "Go Buccos"!

8. Approval of Minutes

Regular Council Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2012.

Motion by Mr. Allen and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to approve the Regular Council Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2012. Motion Carried 9 – 0.

9. Bills and Payrolls

Motion by Mr. Allen and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to approve the Bills and Payrolls for the Municipality per Bill List #070912 in the amount of \$1,139,737.57. Motion Carried 9 - 0.

10. Residents' Comments (non-agenda items only)

None

GENERAL POLICY AND FINANCE

11. Citizens' Comments – General Policy and Finance Items

None

12. General Policy and Finance Items

Employment – Police Officer

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mr. Allen to hire Colby J. Grubich as a Police Officer for the Bethel Park Police Department, to commence duty on a date agreeable to Police Chief John Mackey, with a probationary period of twelve (12) months, at the appropriate starting salary. Motion Carried 9 – 0.

13. Employment – Police Officer

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mr. Allen to hire Craig W. Smeltz as a Police Officer for the Bethel Park Police Department, to commence duty on a date agreeable to Police Chief John Mackey, with a probationary period of twelve (12) months, at the appropriate starting salary. Motion Carried 9 – 0.

Mr. Moury said that these new hires will replace two recently retired police officers. He then thanked the Civil Service Commission - Jim Barozzini, Carl Denson and Dave McCulloch, who oversaw the hiring process. Council appreciates the time and effort they put in.

14. Agreement for Sewage Billing & Collection Services

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mr. Allen to approve the agreement with Jordan Tax Service, Inc., to provide Sewer Billing and Collection Services effective at the conclusion of the Municipality's current agreement with Pennsylvania American Water Company. Motion Carried 9 – 0.

Mr. Harrison asked Finance Director Mark Romito to discuss this item for clarification.

Mr. Romito commented that we have not been given a choice in this matter. For the last five years, the sewage billing appeared on the Pennsylvania American Water Company bill in conjunction with the water bill. The water company informed us that they will no longer provide this service. This is not just for

Bethel Park, but for many communities in the areas. For the past six months, the Municipality considered different options by reviewing several vendors' proposals. The agreement tonight before Council, if approved, would authorize Jordan Tax Service to begin when the water company stops in October of this year. Jordan Tax Service will send out monthly sewer bills that will come as a separate bill. Residents will still receive a monthly water bill from Pennsylvania American Water Company for water charges only. A bill for sewer charges will come from Jordan Tax Service in an 8-1/2 x 11 format in a business size envelope on a monthly basis, no longer in a postcard format that they provided in prior years. They will offer several different payment arrangements such as automatic deductions from checking accounts, on-line payments, and the orange drop-off boxes in the Municipality's lower parking lot and at Jordan Tax Service's Bethel Park office which are available 24 hours a day. Additionally, Jordan is going to offer the option for people to sign up for e-billing service where you could receive a bill via e-mail each month. That will be a savings to the Municipality to keep sewer rates lower because no postage or paper will be involved. There will be an insert in your first bill with instructions on how to register for e-billing service. Information will also appear on the Municipality's website. This will all begin in October if approved by Council.

Mr. Harrison mentioned that it takes a couple of months once you start the process to get your bills on line. Again, this will save the Municipality money as well as to residents and he encourages everyone to use this system.

Mr. Dixon asked if Mr. Romito mentioned that the billing is monthly.

Mr. Romito responded that this will be monthly, on a very similar timeline as the water company bills.

Mr. Moury said that this information will be outlined in the August edition of the Bethel Park Chronicles.

Mr. Hannan made an appeal to residents, due to the hot weather and high temperatures we have been experiencing for the last couple of weeks, to be kind enough to check in on neighbors, especially senior citizens, to see if they are doing okay and are getting the attention that they need.

Mr. Hannan spoke about his experience with his Assessment Appeal Hearing with Allegheny County. He said if anyone has not yet had their appeals hearing and want to talk about what goes on, please contact him so he could give you insight and suggestions on how to prepare yourself for the psychological aspects of the appeals process. He said it is an interesting process and it is ongoing. They have approximately 80,000 residential hearings to do. He said if you get upset with the process, call your School Board Members as they are the people who hired the lawyers to come to the assessment hearing on their behalf.

Mr. Harrison addressed the fact that soon the Bethel Park professional staff will submit to Council the proposed 2013 Budget. He says he has a message to the professional staff and a message to the citizens. The message to staff is that they

initially suggested a 57.3 increase taxes for 2012. One member of Council said they did that knowing that Council would reduce that value. Mr. Harrison said the School District, over many years, employed the technique of suggesting a rather large increase then reduce it and the attitude seems to be, look what we did for you. He objects to that procedure. The final increase for the Bethel Park real estate taxes for 2012 was 11.5% compared to the 57.3% and he heard of no talk of a Municipal bankruptcy action. He said his appeal to staff is to sharpen their pencils, present to Council the minimum budget proposal to fund municipal services at the present level. To the public, he said he'd like to thank them for their effort to control the real estate tax increase, their efforts on the petition and their attendance at four meetings to express their opinions because he believes it had a large impact on the final number for the increase. His message to the public is that he will keep everyone informed on what is going on and that if you have comments to make, please come to see Council the second Monday of every month. Also, there will be a mandatory budget hearing. He said he hopes Council can get through the upcoming budget year without having the turmoil we had before, but he thinks it was necessary.

Mr. Moury responded by saying that he hopes Mr. Harrison takes the time to read the budget this year. He said he thinks it's nice that he gives the announcement, but he unfortunately has done nothing over the last few years of making suggestions to cut the budget. The tax petition committee had two opportunities to submit signatures but they did not. He said he thinks Council was responsive to the numbers and information they were given and made what he thought was a sensible decision, so for Mr. Harrison to make no suggestions, he finds it laughable that he encourages public to come. He hopes Mr. Harrison takes the time this year to read the budget.

PLANNING AND ZONING ITEMS

15. Planning and Zoning Items

None

Mr. Dixon provided an update to residents of the Locust Road, Kevin Drive, Lawrence Drive area and the neighborhood who has seen significant traffic impact from the reconstruction of the Broughton Road/Baptist Road intersection. A meeting was held last month and he wanted to tell everyone that they are working on the response to the comments and input received from those residents. He said they have not been forgotten. The summary is near completion and are awaiting a response from the traffic engineer from all the data. He said Council will be in touch with a response as soon as they can.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE ITEMS

16. Health, Safety and Welfare Items

None

Mr. McLean mentioned that the Tower Concert Series begins on Sunday, July 15, 2012 at the Community Center and will continue for the next six Sundays. The concerts are sponsored by the Community Foundation, they are free and very entertaining. He welcomes everyone to come out.

Mr. Harrison said that the times he has attended, it is very crowded, so come early if you want to secure a seat.

Mr. Moury asked Lt. Rogan to remind the Police Department to post No Parking signs on the lower end of Park Avenue as we have in the past. He encourages people to use the upper and lower lot. Please stay away from parking in the neighborhood.

PUBLIC WORKS AND MAINTENANCE ITEMS


17. Public Works and Maintenance Items

None

Mr. O'Brien said the Veterans' Memorial Committee is going on with their salute to the services and this month is American's Birthday, so he encourages everyone to come and view the flags at the memorial. They will be up until the end of July.

18. Adjournment

Motion and second to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.



Manager