

Borough of Crafton
Council Meeting
Thursday, January 14, 2021.

*(Meeting was held via Zoom Webinar and can be viewed by going to
www.craftonborough.com/council-meeting-videos)*

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Levasseur called to order the Discussion Meeting of the Crafton Borough Council, Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 7:15 PM.

2. FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mr. Levasseur.

3. ROLL CALL

Interim Manager Sample recorded six (6) members of Council, present as follows: Mr. Alo, Mr. Amendola, Mr. Crouse, Mr. Levasseur, Ms. Perry, and Mr. Saba. Also present were Mayor Bloom, Engineer Minsterman and Solicitor Korbel. Absent was Mr. Crown.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #1: It was moved and seconded (*Perry/Saba*) to approve the January 14, 2021 Consent Agenda (Including the Meeting Minutes dated December 14, 2020 and December 28, 2020, and the Bill List dated January 14, 2021)

MOTION #1 carries by a Unanimous Vote (6-0).

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mr. Alo stated there are no citizens requesting to speak at this time.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Levasseur gave an update on the COVID-19 vaccine schedule and noted that updates will be posted to the website. He thanked everyone for accommodating the meeting move from Mondays to Thursdays and added that the Planning Commission will still be meeting on Tuesdays.

7. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Bloom had no report for this evening.

8. ENGINEER'S REPORT

Engineer Minsterman gave an update on the Traffic Signals and noted that there are a few remaining items that need to be completed prior to removal of the old poles and added that there are a few punchlist items that will be completed in the spring.

Mr. Saba inquired about the design on the push button. Interim Manager Sample noted that the push buttons are extended due to the ADA requirements.

Engineer Minsterman noted that the Engineers office is working with Interim Manager Sample on the 2021 Road Paving Program.

9. SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Korbel announced that there will be an executive session following the meeting to discuss litigation and real estate matters.

10. MANAGER'S REPORT

Interim Manager Sample noted that the Bond process is on track and that the ratings are expected to be in by Wednesday.

11. ACTION ITEMS

A) COG Delegates

MOTION #2: It was moved and seconded (*Perry/Crouse*) to appoint Coletta Perry as the Borough's Primary Delegate and Phillip Levasseur as the Borough's Alternate Delegate to the Char-West Council of Governments.

MOTION #2 carries by a Unanimous Vote (6-0).

B) CDBG Year 47

Interim Manager Sample stated that the Borough's will receive \$23,000 of this year's share of the CDBG grant funds. He noted that Crafton had applied for two projects, the 1528 Barr Avenue demolition, and the drainage project on Duncan Avenue. Interim Manager Sample added that the County had deemed Crafton ineligible for the demolition funds, leaving only the Duncan drainage project (total cost of \$31,000) at a cost of \$8000.00 to the Borough.

MOTION #3: It was moved and seconded (*Alo/Crouse*) to select the Duncan Avenue Drainage Improvements Project for funding for the CDBG Year 47 Funding Cycle.

Mr. Levasseur opened the floor to public comment.

No citizens requested to comment.

MOTION #3 carries by a Unanimous Vote (6-0).

C) Real Estate Tax Refunds

MOTION #4: It was moved and seconded (*Saba/Alo*) to ratify the payment of the 2019 Batch #3 and 2020 Batch #1 Real Estate Tax Refunds in the amount of \$6,905.75 as prepared and requested by Jordan Tax Service, Inc.

MOTION #4 carries by a Unanimous Vote (6-0).

12. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A) Project Updates (Manager and Engineer)

Interim Manager Sample stated that he is working with the Engineer to have the upcoming construction project specifications and documents ready to go out for bid soon.

B) Safety Protocols During COVID-19 Pandemic

Interim Manager Sample announced that the federal government protections for Employees that are infected, or have immediate family members infected, with COVID-19, have expired as of the end of 2020, and noted that most local municipalities are extending these protections through to the new year. He recommended that Council follow the surrounding communities and continue this procedure for the Borough's Employees.

Solicitor Korbel stated that these protections are being proposed under the new federal administration and gave a summary of funding that could be available to reimburse municipalities for these expenses.

Council continued discussion regarding establishing an employee protection policy and agreed to hold the vote until the end of month meeting.

C) 2021 Road Paving Program

Interim Manager Sample spoke regarding the preliminary road paving program list and noted that there is approximately \$335,000 in the road tax fund and added that there is a plan to create a 5-year paving program using software that will rate each street off the state of each roadway.

Mayor bloom inquired about the brick portion of Parke Street. He also asked about sections of Crafton Boulevard & Emerson, N. Emily Street, etc., where pavement was opened for line repairs and never permanently repaired.

Interim Manager Sample noted that this section of Parke Street will be included in the brick reconstruction portion of the Bond proceeds. He also noted that he will research the Street Opening permits in those areas and see what is outstanding and get a plan to complete in the spring.

Mr. Levasseur also added that the N. Emily Street opening is for work in conjunction with the N. Emily Street & Johnston Street Sewer Repair and will be addressed when the final construction is completed.

Council continued discussion on various street repairs and brick reconstruction and where the Road Tax Funds will be used.

Mr. Amendola inquired about the responsibility of the sidewalks and curbs and noted that it is his understanding that the Homeowner is responsibility and inquired about the liability of the Borough.

Mr. Levasseur noted that it is a decision of Council to repair curbs when necessary as they are part of the storm water drainage system and added that if it is damage caused by the Homeowner then they would be responsible to repair. Mr. Levasseur also noted that sidewalks and curbs can be replaced by the Borough when it is conjunction with a complete road reconstruction, and they are not ADA compliant.

D) Crafton and Ingram Rezoning Grant

Interim Manager Sample spoke regarding the Crafton and Ingram Joint Rezoning and stated that the project cost is approximately \$100,000 of which the cost to each Borough would be split evenly, if the \$25,000 grant is awarded or not. He also noted that only expenses concurred in 2021 and later could be used toward the grant match. Interim Manager Sample stated that an action item would need to be on the next agenda.

Mr. Levasseur stated that he understood that this project would only move forward if Ingram agreed to participate.

Mr. Saba asked if the Borough had anything in writing stating that DCED would accept the 2021 expenses toward the match.

Interim Manager Sample stated that there is nothing in writing at this time.

Council continued to discuss the Rezoning Grant project details and whether Council should hold off on any permanent decision without the commitment of Ingram Borough, as well as, how to precede if Crafton Borough continues with the project without the cooperation of Ingram.

Mr. Levasseur noted that he hopes to have a decision from Ingram by the next meeting which will determine how Crafton will move forward.

E) Char-West COG UCC Board of Appeals

Mr. Alo stated that Crafton currently does not have any members on the Crafton Building Appeals Board and noted that there is a growing need for most communities to have a Joint Municipal Board.

Ms. Perry stated that Crafton has already passed the resolution stating that Crafton would participate in the Joint Municipal UCC Board.

Interim Manager Sample noted that he will check in with the Char-West COG to see if there is anything Crafton needs to do to move forward with this.

Mr. Saba brought up for discussion an issue with Jordan Tax Service, Inc billing delays due to the postal mail and asked what Council can do to make sure residents are not charged penalties due to the delay.

Mr. Saba thanked everyone who attended and donated for the Crafton Celebration of Lights, the Recreation Boards, Public Works, Police Department and Participants and added that with the Celebration of Lights and the Haunted Crafton tour over \$4500 has been raised for the Crafton Ingram Food Bank. He also announced that anyone interested in being a part of the Recreation Board to please go to the Borough's website.

Mr. Levasseur spoke regarding the pending demolitions around the Borough including 1528 Barr Avenue and 52 Baldwick.

Mr. Crouse asked Interim Manager Sample for an update on 129 Dinsmore Avenue.

Mr. Levasseur noted that the house is listed in foreclosure and added that it is a blight property.

Interim Manager Sample also noted that he will check in on any safety issues with that properties.

Ms. Perry noted that there is an attendee with wishing to speak and asked Mr. Levasseur to allow resident comments at this time.

Alice Glaser, 10 Belvidere Street, asked if Council could consider allowing comments at the end of the meetings as they had in the past. She spoke regarding a concern with the deteriorating roadway where Creighton Avenue meets Noble Avenue.

Mike Zuhl, 604 Broadhead Avenue, also commented on the section of Creighton that is in need of repair. He also thanked Council for their work on the improvements the Borough has begun to undertake.

Mr. Amendola also agreed with Ms. Glaser and asked if Council could allow comments at the end of the meeting.

Solicitor Korbel stated that Council is only required to allow comments on any topic, at the discretion of Council, and noted that it can be at any time during the meeting.

Council continued discussion regarding the permission of having a comment section at the end of the meeting for meeting attendees.

Mr. Levasseur stated that going forward, community comments will be taken at the beginning and end of the discussion meetings.

13. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Borough Office will remain closed to the public; however, staff is available during normal business hours and can be reached via telephone or e-mail. There is a drop-box in the rear of the building for any written correspondence. Any changes to this action will be posted on the Borough website and Savvy Citizen.

Mr. Levasseur announced that Council will recess to executive session.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carissima Kerns, Borough Secretary