

Borough of Crafton
Monday, July 8, 2019

(Note: Due to technical issues the video recording of the meeting does not begin until the Discussion section. Information prior to the Discussion section was compiled from the meeting's official motion sheet and staff notes.)

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Perry called to order the Discussion Meeting of the Crafton Borough Council, Monday, July 8, 2019 at 7:15 PM.

2. FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Ms. Glaser.

3. ROLL CALL

Manager Susko recorded five (5) members of Council present as follows: Mr. Crouse, Ms. Damits, Ms. Glaser, Mr. Amendola, and Ms. Perry. Also present were Mayor Bloom, Solicitor Korbel and Public Works Director Kaczorowski. Absent was Mr. Levasseur.

4. SWEARING IN-OATH OF OFFICE

Mayor Bloom performed the swearing in of the new Council Member, Eric Valcheff, for the vacant term expiring December 31, 2019.

5. APPROVAL OF THE BILL LIST

MOTION #1: It was moved and seconded (*Crouse/Damits*) to approve the Bill List dated July 8, 2019 as presented.

MOTION #1 carries by a Voice Vote (5-0-1). *Valcheff Abstained*

6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

MOTION #2: It was moved and seconded (*Crouse/Glaser*) to approve the Minutes dated June 24, 2019 as presented.

MOTION #2 carries by a Voice Vote (5-0-1). *Valcheff Abstained*

7. CITIZENS PRESENT TO ADDRESS COUNCIL/Agenda Items Only:

Ms. Perry noted that one citizen had signed up to speak regarding W. Crafton Ave parking and asked that comments be delivered during the Discussion section following the business agenda. W. Crafton Ave parking was added to the Discussion section at this time.

8. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

9. MAYOR'S REPORT

10. SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Korbel announced that an executive session would be held following the meeting in order to receive legal advice and discuss collective bargaining matters.

11. MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Susko provided details on Business Agenda items including:

2018/2019 Real Estate and Road Tax Refunds

Manager Susko stated these are routine property tax refunds as provided by Jordan Tax Service.

Ordinance No. 1658: Stop Intersections at Clearview Ave and Harris Ave and Prohibit Parking on Westerly Side of Johnston St

Manager Susko noted these vehicle and traffic amendments were previously advertised as one ordinance with the W. Crafton Ave parking changes but were re-advertised to be considered separately and added that the Johnston St parking change was directly requested by Mayor Bloom in consideration of a fire truck turn radius.

SHACOG Joint Sewer O&M Preventative Maintenance Bid Concurrence

Manager Susko stated that this contract is part of the routine sewer O&M activities the Borough undertakes annually in a joint bid with SHACOG.

Advertisement for a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Zoning Ordinance Update

Manager Susko provided a recap of the Borough's discussions regarding this issue over the past year and stated that Crafton greatly needs a full update and re-write of the zoning ordinances including permitted uses, performance standards, and building size and dimension requirements. The 2017 Comprehensive Plan identified commercial redevelopment as a key strategic area for the Borough. Manager Susko stated that smart redevelopment will require a modern zoning code and noted that Crafton's current zoning ordinance has not received a full update since 2004. Manager Susko expressed her excitement to be presenting the RFP to Council adding that a zoning ordinance update would be a major step for the Borough.

Manager Susko announced that the 2019 Side Yard Program administered by the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County (RAAC) was now open and that property owners located next to vacant lots or structures could apply to acquire those properties. Interested property owners should contact RAAC for more information.

Manager Susko stated that a Zoning Hearing Board meeting was scheduled on July 11 for a zoning variance hearing regarding sign size for Planet Fitness.

Mr. Valcheff expressed concern about the appearance of the sign.

Ms. Perry added the Planet Fitness sign size variance request to the Discussion section and asked that detailed comments be held until then.

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS***PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE***

Ms. Damits inquired about weeding the rain garden on Steuben St.

Manager Susko stated the engineers could provide a planting plan and plant guide that would help public works staff care for the rain garden.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Ms. Damits requested an update on Ewing Rd paving at the next meeting.

13. BUSINESS AGENDA***A. ADMINISTRATION***

MOTION #3: It was moved and seconded (*Amendola/Glaser*) to appoint David Bloom to the Civil Service Commission for the remainder of the term expiring, July 1, 2024.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Crouse (NO), Ms. Damits (NO), Ms. Glaser (YES), Mr. Valcheff (ABSTAIN), Mr. Amendola (YES), Ms. Perry (YES).

MOTION #3 carries by a Roll Call Vote (3-2-1).

MOTION #4: It was moved and seconded (*Amendola/Damits*) to approve the 2018/2019 Real Estate and Road Tax Refunds in the amount of \$2,957.62 as presented and submitted by Jordan Tax Service, Inc.

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

MOTION #5: It was moved and seconded (*Crouse/Amendola*) to adopt Ordinance No. 1658 amending Chapter 214 of the Crafton Borough Code of Ordinances, Vehicles and Traffic, to establish stop intersections at Clearview Avenue and Harris Avenue, and to prohibit parking on the westerly side of Johnston Street.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Crouse (YES), Ms. Damits (YES), Ms. Glaser (YES), Mr. Valcheff (YES), Mr. Amendola (YES), Ms. Perry (YES).

MOTION #5 carries by a Roll Call Vote (6-0).

B. PUBLIC WORKS

MOTION #6: It was moved and seconded (*Crouse/Damits*) to concur with SHACOG to award the bid for the SHACOG Joint Municipal Preventative Maintenance – Year 9 contract to Insight Pipe Contracting, LLC, with Crafton's share of the project at \$11,125, as recommended by the Borough Engineer.

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

C. PLANNING & ZONING

MOTION #7: It was moved and seconded (*Glaser/Amendola*) to advertise a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the professional planning services necessary to facilitate a full update and re-write of Crafton Borough's Zoning Ordinance in support of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Crouse (YES), Ms. Damits (YES), Ms. Glaser (YES), Mr. Valcheff (YES), Mr. Amendola (YES), Ms. Perry (YES).

MOTION #7 carries by a Roll Call Vote (6-0).

DISCUSSION

W. CRAFTON AVENUE & CRENNELL AVENUE PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Ms. Perry invited Christin Sciulli to present her citizens comments at this time regarding the W. Crafton Ave and Crennell Ave parking discussion.

Christin Sciulli, 25 N. Emily Street, spoke regarding her experiences with driving on W. Crafton Ave while vehicles were parked along the church side and described an incident where she and another driver almost collided. Ms. Sciulli requested that Council prohibit parking on the easterly side of W. Crafton Ave along the hill.

(VIDEO RECORDING STARTS)

Solicitor Korbel clarified for Council the previously advertised amendment to prohibit parking as follows, W. Crafton Avenue on the easterly side from W. Steuben Street to the intersection of Crennell Avenue and W. Crafton Avenue and on Crennell Avenue on the westerly side from Broadhead Avenue to 55 Crennell Avenue.

Manager Susko suggested that Council pass the amendments as two separate ordinances.

Mr. Crouse shared a video recording he took of the parked vehicles on W. Crafton Ave during a church service and stated that the width of W. Crafton Avenue, on the church side, does not provide enough room for parking on both sides and added that cars are always parked illegally on the sidewalk. Mr. Crouse also added that this section of W. Crafton Avenue is often used for handicap accessible parking and asks if the Borough can help to provide better handicap accessibility.

Ms. Perry noted that it would be the responsibility of St. Philips to provide handicap accessibility and parking, not the Borough.

Ms. Glaser noted that there is handicap accessible parking located in the school lot behind the Church.

MOTION #8: It was moved and seconded (*Crouse/Damits*) to advertise the W. Crafton Avenue and Crennell Avenue parking restrictions per the previous advertisement and as prepared by the Solicitor.

Mr. Valcheff asked if the Church should be given an opportunity to work with the Borough on a solution.

Ms. Perry noted that the motion is for advertisement only and not for adoption.

Ms. Perry opened the floor for citizens comments.

Anthony Saba, 568 Broadhead Avenue, asked if the amendment includes W. Crafton Avenue around the bend and along the side of the Church and added that the E.M.S. responders would not be able to navigate the roadway in the event of an emergency.

Mayor Bloom noted that the emergency plan, that has been in place for several years and has been discussed at previous meetings, is for the E.M.S., Fire or Police to go through the parking lot and up the driveway and added that the E.M.S. vehicles could not navigate that bend even if there are no cars parked.

Christin Sciulli, 25 N. Emily Street, stated that St. Philips Church does have handicap parking behind the Church in the school parking lot.

Roy Niemann, 102 Haldane Street, asked if Manager Susko was able to reach the church by phone.

Mr. Amendola noted that in his time living near the Church he has never seen or heard of an accident on the hill section of W. Crafton Avenue but had witnessed a hit and run on the W. Crafton Avenue section on the side of the Church.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Crouse (YES), Ms. Damits (YES), Ms. Glaser (YES), Mr. Valcheff (YES), Mr. Amendola (YES), Ms. Perry (YES).

MOTION #8 carries by a Roll Call Vote (6-0).

BACKFLOW PREVENTION DEVICE GRANT PROGRAM

Solicitor Korbel noted that with a couple changes the Brentwood Ordinance is in line with the legal wording and with what Crafton has expressed they would like to pursue.

Mr. Crouse spoke regarding the timeframe and eligibility requirements noting that it is a good starting point but feels that it may restrict those with known flooding from last year, such as Sterrett Street and Maxwell Street residents, to be eligible for the grant.

Manager Susko stated that if the Borough approved this program it should be done on a similar basis as a Mini-Grant where funds could be allocated into the budget under a specific line item adding that residents would have to provide documentation stating that flooding was not a result of negligence or lack of proper maintenance, this way the Borough would not be bombarded with applications and they would be approved on a first come, first serve basis until the budget funds are expended.

Mr. Valcheff asked if there has been any discussion regarding a pilot program.

Manager Susko noted that researching and following the Brentwood Borough Backflow Prevention Share Program can be considered a pilot program and added that the Sewer Fund will have plenty of room to support this program if approved by Council.

Ms. Perry added that Council has had lengthy discussions in the past year regarding this program.

Solicitor Korbel stated that if adopted as a Mini-Grant program, the Borough could choose to stop funding it as Council sees fit.

Manager Susko noted that the proposed ordinance reads that residents must contact the Borough within 48 hours adding that if Council would like to expand on the timeframe requirements the ordinance would need to be reworked. Manager Susko stated that she recommends advertising as prepared by the Solicitor.

Public Works Director Kaczorowski stated that after the heavy rain events from June last year, Public Works conducted an inspection of both the main line and some of the laterals on Sterrett Street, inspections showed that 99% of tap-ins in this area were connected at the top; however, there were several residents, whom had flooding, that inspections showed the tap-in was inadequately placed. Public Works Director Kaczorowski, at the time, suggested that these residents install a Backflow Prevention Device. He added that similarly a device was installed at a residence in the Woodlawn Avenue area of Crafton. Public Works Director Kaczorowski explained that after several calls to the Borough for flooding, he and the Manager at the time worked with the resident on the installation of a Backflow Prevention Device and added that the residence has only had one instance of flooding since the installation.

MOTION #9: It was moved and seconded (*Crouse/Amendola*) to advertise the Backflow Prevention Mini-Grant Program as presented by the Solicitor.

Ms. Perry opened the floor for public comment.

No citizens came forward.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Crouse (YES), Ms. Damits (YES), Ms. Glaser (YES), Mr. Valcheff (YES), Mr. Amendola (YES), Ms. Perry (YES).

MOTION #9 carries by a Roll Call Vote (6-0).

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Mr. Crouse asked if it could be a requirement for an Alternate, serving on one of the Crafton's Boards or Commissions, to automatically fulfill a Full-Term vacancy when one becomes available.

Mr. Valcheff stated that those serving as an Alternate may not be interested in taking on additional responsibilities and they should be asked first.

Mr. Valcheff and Ms. Glaser both volunteered to lead an ad hoc committee charged with looking over, evaluating and creating job descriptions for the various Boards and Commissions seats.

PLANET FITNESS SIGN – ZONING HEARING

Mr. Valcheff stated that he was not pleased with the aesthetics of the proposed sign for Planet Fitness and questioned if Council could advocate for written assurance that they will place a sign in context with Council's wishes.

Solicitor Korbel noted that the Zoning Hearing Board members could put a conditional approval within certain specified guidelines and suggested someone reach out to the sign company to express Council's request prior to the hearing.

Council continued discussion regarding the quality of the proposed Planet Fitness sign as compared to the existing signs at current fitness centers in surrounding areas.

Manager Susko stated for the record that this Zoning Hearing is the last item that needed to be addressed prior to Planet Fitness opening for business.

BLIGHT & VACANT PROPERTIES

Ms. Damits inquired about the Blight & Vacant house list provided by the interns last summer and asked when it may be updated.

Manager Susko noted that the original list was based off delinquent taxes rather than actual blighted properties.

Ms. Perry suggested re-energizing the Blight Committee.

Mr. Crouse volunteered to continue working on the Blight Committee.

Ms. Perry stated that Council can discuss in further detail what properties can be considered for demolition at the budget meetings.

CRAFTON CELEBRATES

Mr. Valcheff stated that Council should have better communication regarding the needs of the Committee and asked for data and information on volunteers vs. man-hours required.

Public Works Director Kaczorowski noted that Angela Palchowski, Celebrates Chair, would have this information.

Manager Susko spoke regarding the changes and steps the Borough had taken this year to support the Celebrates Committee both financially and administratively adding that there will be clearer financial tracking as well as an easier way to pull financial data.

PROPOSED BREWERY UPDATE

Mr. Crouse inquired about the zoning changes approved due to the pending brewery.

Ms. Perry noted that Council approved the zoning amendment to open the way for a brewery to come into Crafton but noted that there were other obstacles preventing the deal from following through, therefore there has been no movement on the real estate side.

Mr. Crouse questioned why there had been no follow up from the proposed buyers.

Mr. Valcheff stated that the proposed buyers had no obligation to follow up with Council.

Mr. Crouse questioned why it was recommended to quickly pass this ordinance amendment when there were plans to revamp the zoning code.

Manager Susko stated that she recommended that Council quickly pass the amendment to allow brewing operations to be conducted in the C-1 and C-2 districts because it was the only thing restricting a brewery from conducting business and added that she would have recommended this amendment even if there was no pending brewery looking to establish in Crafton as the zoning ordinance update will be a lengthy process.

SENIOR DINNERS

Mr. Amendola asked for a monthly report on the Senior Dinners similarly to the monthly department reports.

Ms. Perry noted that this information is already provided in the Monthly Financial Reports as well as the Bill List Approvals that are voted on at each meeting.

Manager Susko noted that the administrative office compiles a list of RSVP's that is used to determine the catering order for each dinner and added that once the admission fees are received from the Senior Dinner representatives the number of seniors that attended can be calculated.

CRAFTON PERFORMING ARTS

Ms. Damits inquired about purchasing a commemorative plaque in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Crafton Performing Arts.

Mr. Valcheff suggested contacting the Performing Arts members and ask if they want the plaque first.

15. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Concerts in the Park** series starts Thursday, July 11 at 7:30pm and will occur every Thursday through August 15.
- Allegheny County's **2019 Side Yard and Blighted Structure Program** will be accepting applications through September 30. Contact the Borough Administrative Office from more information.

16. ADDITIONAL CITIZENS COMMENTS

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carissima Kerns, Borough Secretary