

BLOSSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

April 10, 2019

Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Council President Jolene Hall called the Blossburg Borough Council regular meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. in the Council Room of the Blossburg Borough Building, 241 Main Street, Blossburg, PA.

Attendance: President Jolene Hall, Vice- President Jill Nickerson, Pro-Temp Tonya McNamara, Council Members Jerome Ogden (came late), Paul Hosszu, Tim Martin, James Rakoski, Mayor Shane Nickerson, Borough Solicitor Patrick Barrett, Chief Josh McCurdy, Borough Manager George D. Lloyd, Borough Secretary Cheryl Bubacz.

Guests included Betty Woodard, Sharon Manikoswki, Henry Bartlett, Uni Hicks-Lee, Josh Jones, Bob Metarko, Annie Brooks, and Corporal Bob Scott.

Minutes The minutes of the March 13, 2019 meeting were accepted as presented, by motion of Paul Hosszu; second, Tim Martin. All in favor.

Treasurer's Report Report accepted subject to audit by motion of James Rakoski; second, Tim Martin. All in favor.

Bills: Bills to be paid by motion of Tim Martin; second, Paul Hosszu. All in favor.

Guests: Betty Woodard: had three (3) topics to discuss:

1. Issue with trash collectors not emptying trash cans and remaining trash being spread around neighborhood. She also discussed the appearance of the town with the amount of litter around the streets, etc. She would like to see people take pride in the town and stop and pick-up trash when they see it. Mayor Nickerson and the council seconded that thought. With spring cleanup being scheduled for April 30th and May 1st, perhaps we can get a good handle on some of the litter around our neighborhoods.
2. Unregistered cars previously discussed at the March meeting. The Council discussed sending a certified letter to those homeowners and give a specific timeframe to remove the vehicles. Chief McCurdy stated that he had been working with some of the owners and the salvage yard to remove some vehicles.
3. Overwhelming cat population in town. Multiple strays in her neighborhood alone. She would like to see the Borough get involved with program to spay and neuter stray cats. Uni Hicks-Lee stated that he has been working with an organization that does just that and the cats are returned to where they were caught. Cost is approximately \$65 and to neuter is approximately \$45. Council wondered if there were grants available, one possible grant is from the Doris Day Foundation which will donate monies for spaying and neutering to a 501(c)(3) organization. The Council stated that they would work with Uni and his program to see what can be done. Council mentioned that this may be a good project for a senior project and/or an Eagle Scout project

Sharon Manikowski two (2) concerns regarding White Street:

1. White Street is the “shortcut” to the NTSWA facility in Hamilton Township and the Street regularly has speeding cars, trucks, and vehicles rolling through stop signs. Concern with more people being out riding bikes, walking, etc. with the better weather. She has seen the Police Department in the area more often and thanked the Chief for their presence.
2. Secondly, the amount of dust created from the unpaved portion of White Street. She nor her neighbors can sit on their front porches due to the dust, nor can they have windows open that face White Street. It also causes dirt on the homes and outdoor furniture. The NTSWA street sweeper uses White Street to go back to the NTSWA facility, can they sweep White Street on their way through. Also, several years ago, the Borough put something on the road and it helped tremendously. The Borough Manager said that the Road had been tar and chipped 3-4 years ago. He will talk with NTSWA about doing the same.

Henry Bartlett had three (3) topics of discussion:

1. Unkept properties and specifically pointed out a property on Morris/Lynd Street. There is not an Ordinance regarding unkept properties, as far as “junk” around the property. There is an Ordinance regarding garbage and refuse removal.
2. Appointment of the replacement to the Blossburg Municipal Authority and the Council Meeting of February 13, 2019. Concerned that since the Council appoints the members of the Municipal Authority Board, he believes the Council should have received recommendations from the Municipal Authority for the replacement and voted on it rather than the Municipal Authority just appointing someone. He researched this online at the through the DCED website and a publication from June of 2000, Section 4, Administration and Appointment Power. He mentioned that he found a copy of the Borough Council Handbook and wondered if the Council members each had a copy. Several Members said that they did.
3. At the February 13, 2019 Council Meeting it was brought up about doing work around the Veterans Monument. Tonya McNamara stated that VIBE had discussed doing work on the yard behind the Monument to make the property usable for residents. Mr. Bartlett said that he had heard a rumor that the Monument was going to be torn down. The Monument needs work, but it shouldn't be torn down. The Borough Manager was asked about this one day by another guest, Bob Metarko, who had heard a similar rumor that the Monument was to be torn down. Mayor Nickerson emphatically stated that the Monument was not being torn down. The Borough is going to have repairs made to stabilize the Monument. Funds to repair the Monument may be donated by the VFW and Legion if asked, as well as the Williamson Road Foundation.

The Council guaranteed the Monument was not going to be torn down.

Annie Metarko representing the Coal Festival Committee: laying wreaths on veterans' graves as part of Wreaths Across America in the four (4) cemeteries in the Borough as well as Hamilton Township and Bloss Township. The wreaths would be placed the weekend of December 14, 2019 and be picked up the first weekend in January. Volunteers would be greatly appreciated to place and pick up the wreaths. Wreaths can be purchased for \$15/wreath. Will need a count of the graves prior to the project. Annie said that the graves would have to be counted because up to a certain date there was a count, but from that date on, there was not a good record of veterans.

Uni Hicks-Lee: faded street signs, some unrecognizable. Councilwoman Jill Nickerson said that was actually one of the items she was going to bring up. We need to look for a better vendor, one that will guarantee product for a specific period of time.

Betty Woodard brought up the wrong way cars parking on Granger and Bleeker Streets.

Josh Jones: some of the Hometown Hero Flags mounts pulled out of poles due to the high winds, etc. Who should be contacted regarding this? Borough Secretary stated that Janice House had been in and said if anyone turned in flags, they were working to get a truck to rehang them. Suggested Janice be the point of contact.

Reports:

Junior Council

Person:

Nothing to report. He was approached by the Track Team to have the discus cage set up. Borough Manager said he would contact Mr. Houser regarding setting up the cage.

Committee

Business

Development:

Blossburg V.I.B.E. (Visions in Business and Entertainment) Community Yard Sale will be held April 27, 2019 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Maps and free coffee available at Momma's Restaurant and Revolution Coffee. Not sure how long the coffee would be available.

VIBE discussed the Canyon Music Festival to be held July 27th on Island Park.

The 2nd Annual Island Park 150 has been set for November 9th.

VIBE is discussing signage on the I-99 Corridor at the Blossburg Exit. They were looking into who to target to direct people to town. They are currently working on some ideas for signage. Borough Manager mentioned that before any signs are purchased or installed, we will need to get Penn Dot Approval of the signage and the placement.

Next meeting will be March 27th at 6:30 at the Library.

Mayor: The Mayor, Police Committee met to discuss hiring a part-time officer. Mayor would like to advertise for a part-time officer. Motion made by Tim Martin and seconded by Paul Hosszu to advertise for a part-time officer. All in favor.

The Mayor and Chief went to the house that Mr. Bartlett had concerns about on Granger Street. Unfortunately, the Ordinance does not cover junk on property.

The Mayor noted that on the same property one of the unregistered cars had been removed and they are working on removing the second. He commended Chief McCurdy for working with the homeowner and junkyard owners for the removal of the car.

The Mayor made a suggestion that we help our neighbors or offer to help when a property becomes a concern. The Mayor said that he will start going around town next week to look at unsightly properties and will talk to the landowners as required. Betty Woodard asked about wood piles. If the wood pile is close to a property line, then the Borough can contact the homeowner. If the pile is simply on the property, there is nothing that can be done.

Police 1. Everyone has received a copy of the Police Report.

The Police Report was accepted on motion of Jill Nickerson; second, Tonya McNamara. All in favor.

2. Chief McCurdy stated that on May 4th there would be a chicken barbeque in town for the LEA (Law Enforcement Association) of Tioga County. He asked that we support the Association.

3. As a follow-up to the March 13th meeting, the Department was the first to use the new intoxilyzer machine.

Police Committee: See the Mayor's report above.

Borough Manager: 1. Borough Manager report accepted on Motion from Tim Martin; second, Paul Hosszu. All in favor.

2. Jerome mentioned that the River Walk was going to need some work due to the winter erosion.

3. The list of past due bills from prior to 2009 was discussed. The Municipal Authority previously reviewed and agreed to write off the water and sewer bills. After discussion, a motion was made by Tonya McNamara and second by Paul Hosszu to write off the garbage bills that were from prior to 2009. Jerome Ogden voted nay, all other members voted aye. The accounts will be written off. The Motion was carried.

**Planning
Commission
Report:**

The Planning Commission met and recommended approval of a Special Exception for an in-home business on St. Mary's Street, being a dog-grooming business.

**Zoning Hearing
Board:**

Zoning Hearing Board will meet and hold a Public Meeting on May 9th for the in-home dog-grooming business on St. Mary's Street.

Need to advertise an open position due to a member of the Board resigning.

Recreation:

The Rec Board was approached for a Muscular Dystrophy walk to be held on the Island Park on June 29, 2019. The Rec Board approved the walk. Borough Manager said that we should check with the Solicitor regarding insurance coverage. Pending the findings of the Solicitor, by motion of Tim Martin and second by Jill Nickerson, the Muscular Dystrophy walk was approved. All in favor.

The Rec Board has interviewed for Pool Manager and Life Guards.

Playground: The playground is completed and need to submit the necessary paperwork to the state for funds.

Tennis Court: Nothing

Trees: Will be planting 140 saplings along the River Walk on April 25. Fourth and Fifth grades from the Elementary school will be helping.

Island Park River Walk: Jerome commented that the walk continues to be used and looks good except for the winter erosion previously discussed

Fire: Minutes received.

Library: No Meeting. Betty Woodard is a new Library Volunteer. The Library will have its annual chicken barbeque on April 20th.

Street Committee: Borough Manager and Street Committee will work in conjunction with Penelec for the installation of LED Street Lights. The thought is to start in the downtown area and work our way out from there.

**Shade Tree
Commission:** Nothing to Report

Budget: Nothing.

Blossburg Municipal Report:

Working on the new driveway to the sewer plant. A question was raised about taking leaves, branches and grass trimmings to the plant. It is open during the week from 8:00 a.m. to about 3:00 p.m., but not open on weekends. Jerome asked if there was a place residents could take these materials on the Island. Borough Manager said he would clear a spot by the stones on the Park.

OLD BUSINESS:

Borough Website: Borough working with PSAB on the new website. Have received a few preliminary mock ups. Need to gather content, etc.

Communication Team will be meeting to put together content for the website and other communication ideas.

Street Signs: The faded Street Signs were discussed. There are specific specifications for new street signs. Signs have to be reflective and the letters must be 6” high. George said that he had a list of signs and would supply that to the Street Committee for their review and discussion.

QuickBooks and Diversified Technology Utility Billing Programs:

QuickBooks is up and running. Diversified billing system went live as of April 1, 2019. Motion made by Tim Martin and second by Jill Nickerson to remove this item from Old Business. All in favor.

Consent Agenda: A form was passed around to Council Members to obtain their preferred contact information.

Codification: Borough Secretary spoke with Troy Borough and obtained the name and contact information for a Company to update the Codification of the Ordinances. The Company is obtaining a copy of the existing Codification from Keystone Publishers. Once that is received they will provide us with a quote for print and on-line copies.

NEW BUSINESS: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The TCAB Meeting for April to be held April 18, 2019 at the Elkland United Methodist Church. Guest speaker will be Representative Clint Owlett.

ADJOURNMENT: President Jolene Hall adjourned the meeting at 8:13 pm by motion of Jill Nickerson and seconded by Tim Martin. All in favor.

Cheryl L. Bubacz