

**Meeting Minutes**  
**State College Borough Council**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Monday, March 16, 2020**

The State College Borough Council met in a Regular Meeting on Monday, March 16, 2020, in the Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA 16801. Mayor Ron Filippelli called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Present:            Ronald L. Filippelli, Mayor  
                      Jesse L. Barlow, Council President  
                      Deanna M. Behring  
                      Theresa D. Lafer  
                      Peter S. Marshall  
                      Evan Myers  
                      Dan Murphy  
Absent:            Janet P. Engeman

Also Present: Sharon K. Ergler, Assistant Borough Secretary; Thomas J. Fountaine II, Borough Manager; Shawn Kauffman, Centre Region Emergency Management Coordinator; Thomas R. King, Assistant Borough Manager; Dwight Miller, Finance Director; Brian O'Donnell, Health Officer; Douglas Shontz, Communications Specialist; Terry J. Williams, Borough Solicitor and Borough residents both in house and virtually via C-NET.

Mr. Fountaine wanted to let everyone know that they would be doing something a little different tonight. Peter Marshall will be joining remotely. The Solicitor has deemed it appropriate as long as he can hear the proceedings and the public can hear him. Virtual participation is available, there is a time delay of what happens live.

### **Special Report**

#### Coronavirus Update

Mr. Fountaine started with a COVID-19 report and update. He said they are trying to keep as up to date as possible, everything is changing constantly. He provided Council with a memo that outlined a summary of actions previously taken. Identified that there were four actions that required Council's Approval

- Rescind its previous approval and cancel all previously approved Special Activities and Special Events through May 10, 2020.
- Cancel the Council meetings scheduled for April 6 and April 20 and give notice that the April 13 meeting will be a regular meeting of Council to allow official action.
- Direct all Authorities, Boards, and Commissions to cancel all non-essential meetings. Essential meetings shall be limited to those meetings where actions are statutorily required
- Postpone the Annual ABC Banquet to a later date

Mr. Fountaine noted that the Governor issued an order that established closure of non-essential businesses in the Commonwealth for 2 weeks of all bars and restaurants except for carry out, pick-up and delivery. He added that the closure went into affect at midnight.

Mr. Kauffman stated his role as the Centre Region Emergency Management Coordinator and provided updates of what was going on in Centre County COVID-19 wise. He said there were plans in place so that Centre County will be prepared.

Mr. Myers stated his concern about what happened when the Borough or County reached the threshold for the plan that was in place, what would the community do. He commented that since we are a medium-sized community that revolved around Penn State, the University may make resources more available to the community.

Mr. Kauffman said he would get back to Mr. Myers with more information about the SURGE plans

Ms. Lafer wanted to let everyone know that the dorms on campus were private property to those who have items in them. She stated she was more concerned about ventilators and was wondering if there were enough.

Mr. Kauffman stated that he wanted Council to continue to be the sounding board for the residents. He added, if there were any questions brought forth, to please get those to the manager.

Mayor Filippelli wanted more clarification on what a non-essential business was and if local enforcement was to continue enforcing the laws. Also, he was wondering if police should make it more than a recommendation.

Mr. King stated that there was no authorization for local enforcement on the businesses and that there was no mechanism to force anything. The Police Department are waiting to hear back and to see how the state would go about enforcing the Governor's order within the next 24-48 hours.

Mr. Fountaine listed off businesses considered "non-essential" and stated that staff was still trying to get clarification and that updates would continue to be posted online.

Mr. Myers wondered if there was some way that Council, could urge landlords not to evict their tenants during the crisis. He wanted to do a short resolution supporting the national conversation that people should not lose their leases or be evicted.

Mayor Filippelli stated that Council needed someone to draft such a resolution and that Council should not do something like that on the fly.

Mr. Barlow moved that Council acted on the four items presented by Mr. Fountaine. Ms. Behring seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Public Hour – Hearing of Citizens**

Claire Kelling, President of Graduate and Professional Students urged Borough Council to rethink the student representative position. She wanted there to be a second position added to represent graduate and professional students separate from the undergraduate position.

Ms. Lafer said that she loved the idea and that it should be something that should be included on the April 13 agenda.

Charles Tierney, a member of the community group Centre County COVID-19 Response stated the hardships that members of the community were going through during the Coronavirus pandemic. He said he had a list of questions, most of which were answered, that he was going to forward to Council. He thanked Council for the presentation and looked forward to working together in the weeks and months to come.

### **Consent Items**

- Approve a resolution for the destruction of Records in Purchasing.
- Approve Payroll and Accounts Payable vouchers for the month ended January 31, 2020 totaling \$4,672,790.61.
- Approve Payroll and Accounts Payable vouchers for the months ended February 29, 2020 totaling \$3,067,498.91.
- Approve a Resolution lifting the 2 a.m.- 6 a.m. parking restrictions.
- Appoint the following individuals to various Authorities, Board Commissions and Committees:

<b>Appointment</b>	<b>Name of ABC</b>	<b>Person's Name</b>	<b>Date of Expiration</b>
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Appointment	Transportation Commission	James Graef	December 31, 2023
Appointment	CDBG Citizens' Block Grant Committee	Alexis Burke	December 31, 2023
Appointment	Zoning Revision Advisory Committee	Colleen Ritter	N/A
Appointment	Zoning Revision Advisory Committee	Catherine Dauler, Chair	N/A
Appointment	Zoning Revision Advisory Committee	Amy Frank	N/A

Mr. Murphy moved to remove Consent item C – which was related to parking restrictions from the list of Consent Items for further discussion.

Mr. Myers made a motion to approve the remaining Consent Items as presented. Ms. Behring seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Murphy stated that he wanted to postpone discussion on the parking restrictions until the until April 13 meeting. Ms. Behring seconded the motion.

Mr. Fontaine explained to Council that before they move on this Consent, it is a ministerial action and that under an ordinance adopted last year, Council are was required to let the public know when they voted to lift or amend the 2 a.m.- 6 a.m. parking restrictions Borough wide. Staff had failed to have Council vote on the restriction at their December 2019 meeting. He pointed out that the listed dates are the same dates they had lifted historically.

Mr. Myers asked whether the amendment included the Highlands neighborhood.

Mr. Fontaine stated the amendment was was not related to the Highlands parking pilot.

Mr. Murphy questioned why Section 2 of the amendment talked about the Highlands. Mr. Fontaine agreed that section 2 should not have been a part of the proposed resolution.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to amend the resolution by to removing section 2 from the proposed resolution. Ms. Behring seconded the amendment. Mr. Murphy then made a motion to adopt the amended resolution. Ms. Lafer seconded that motion, which passed unanimously.

## **Planning and Zoning**

### Neighborhood Sustainability Program: Property Acquisition Transition & Line of Credit Balance Payment Decision

Mr. Fontaine asked Council to approve a motion to loan the Redevelopment Authority (RDA) \$429,000 with a variable interest rate so the RDA could get things finalized by the deadline of June 1, 2020.

Mr. Myers asked the Finance Director if there was a total collapse of interest rates, how things would stand regarding that.

Mr. Miller stated that the Borough would be earning 1.65% on its money market. It was anticipated that it might drop; however, it is a wash for the Borough. The rates varied monthly and it would save the RDA and would not cost the Borough anything.

Mr. Barlow made a motion to approve the loan to the Redevelopment Authority, in the amount of \$429,000,00. Ms. Lafer seconded which passed unanimously.

## **Regional Issue**

### Centre Region Parks and Recreation (CRPR) Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Fountaine asked Council to authorize comments made by Dr. Thomas Daubert regarding the CRPR Comprehensive plan and provide to him any other comments Council may have had.

There were no additional comments.

Ms. Lafer motioned to approve the comments as presented by Dr. Daubert. Mr. Myers seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Official Reports and Correspondence**

Mayor's Report - Mayor Filippelli said he had attended the National League of Cities (NLC) conference in Washington D.C. where he attended some interesting sessions, specifically on affordable housing. He said there was a rise nationwide in student homelessness and it was a serious problem. He reported that there was a decline in student enrollments (not experienced at Penn State) and there was an issue with short-term rentals and the impact they had on communities.

Mayor Filippelli said he also attended a 2020 Census meeting and said that the National Director of the Census was very complimentary when talking about the Centre Region and Centre County with how events have been organized.

Mayor Filippelli also wanted to let everyone know that he had been working with staff on the Coronavirus updates. He sent out a video regarding the Coronavirus to all outlets that he could reach.

President's Report - Mr. Barlow said he had also attended the NLC conference in Washington D.C. where he had attended sessions on Communications as well as the one the Mayor attended and touched on earlier. He noted that the NLC's Information Technology Committee chose not to lobby the FCC but resorted to two strategies instead: one being to accelerate broadband, and the other one being to Co-Sponsor the Community Television Act.

Ms. Lafer said that one thing that all the committees she was a part of had in common was affordable housing. She said she had attended 3 sessions while also attended the NLC Conference in Washington D.C. and is mostly concerned about there being enough affordable housing in and near State College.

Mr. Barlow wanted to bring to everyone's attention that this Friday was the one-year anniversary of the shooting of Osaze Osagie. In the time since the shooting the State College Borough Police Department and staff impressed him with their professionalism. As Council President he said he gave his support to all inside and outside of local government who were working on race and equity, mental health issues and on police community relations. He added that the public's voices have been valuable to him and other Council members this past year. He stated that Council needed to continue to hear from its residents and that Council needed to continue to honor and celebrate diversity.

### Regional Liaisons Reports

*Executive Committee* – Mr. Barlow said the Executive Committee was meeting again tomorrow. He said that the last February meeting there was a briefing on road and bridge construction, an update on the U.S. Census, approving a contract for renovations to the COG Building which was approved at the last COG meeting, as well as some reappointments to the Code Board of Appeals. He noted that they also discussed the Solar Power Purchase Agreement. Lastly, the Executive Committee appointed a new Executive Director which became official at the General Forum meeting held earlier that day.

*Finance* – Mr. Myers said the highlight of the meeting was the committee picture. The main thing they discussed was the Regional Parks loan, which they had been looking at with the help of financial advisors to try and reduce interest rates which would be favorable for COG.

*Human Resources*- Mr. Marshall said the Human Resources Committee met and approved the job description for the Finance Assistant. In addition, they also approved a title change from Senior Inspector to Manager and approved the pay plan for the noted changes.

*Public Safety*- Mr. Murphy said the Public Safety Committee provided its approval/support for Code Administration to add two electric vehicles to their fleet. He noted that they also approved an electric duplex plugin that would be available outside of the COG Building which would be accessible to the public at no cost.

*Public Services*- Ms. Behring said the Public Services Committee met on March 5 and the bulk of the meeting was spent listening to a presentation on the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory presented by Pam Adams. Also discussed was a proposed resolution that each municipality in the Centre Region would be asked to approve.

*TLU/MPO* – Ms. Lafer said the Transportation and Land Use Committee and the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s meeting were cancelled this month due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Ad-Hoc Facilities* – Mr. Barlow said the Ad-Hoc Facilities Committee met on March 3 and received an informational project update. He said there was also discussion about the Millbrook Marsh Nature Center, which was very heavily used now that parks were one of the very few places people can visit during the pandemic. The rest of the meeting was an update and preparations for the Facilities Coordinator and repurposing student funds.

*CACC* – Mr. Murphy said that the Centre Area Cable Consortium had not met but wanted to acknowledge the extra effort cable companies are putting in to meet the demand and to understand that some people may not be able to pay their bills on time.

Manager/Staff Report – Mr. Fontaine said that at the NLC meeting in Washington D.C. Michael Bloomberg announced that Bloomberg Philanthropies was establishing a fund for COVID-19 response. Mayor Filippelli was working to get signed up for that so the Borough would be able to access funds.

Mr. Fontaine also noted that was the last official trip that anyone will be taking until at least May 10. He said he had put travel restrictions in place and would continue to update Council and added that they may extend beyond that date. Also connected to our work with the National League of Cities, Mr. Fontaine said he had identified dates for the Borough’s Race, Equity, and Leadership Program in State College but due to travel restrictions those dates were no longer going to work and the project would have to be pushed back somewhat.

Mr. Fontaine reminded Council that The South Field Lighting Agreement expires in August 2020. He said that staff had been working on reviewing the agreement. He said he anticipated bring the Agreement back to Council with any necessary actions. He said that he had met with the representative from the SCASD and Neighborhood Associations and that they were mutually agreeing on extending the deadline for the Agreement back due to COVID-19.

Mr. Fontaine wanted to bring up what he had discussed with the Director of the Census and that State College was the first to establish a Complete Count Committee in Centre County.

Lastly, Mr. Fontaine said the joint meeting between the Planning Commission, Zoning Rewrite Advisory Committee, that was originally scheduled for March 19 has been cancelled. That joint meeting would be rescheduled later.

Student Representative Report – There was no report.

## **Adjournment**

There being no new business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Sharon K. Ergler  
Assistant Borough Secretary