

COUDERSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

FRIDAY, August 19, 2022

5:45 PM

The Coudersport Borough Council held their regular monthly meeting on Friday, August 19, 2022 at the Coudersport Borough Maintenance Facility on Damascus Road.

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 pm by Council President Wayne Hathaway who led all in the pledge of allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Present were Council members Wayne Hathaway, George Hults, Marty Fry, Jack Keifer.

Also present were Manager Beverly Morris, Mayor Andy Dubots, Chief Curt McClain, Solicitor Dan Glassmire, Recording Secretary Georgeanna DeCarlo, Nicole Slovel, Potter Leader-Enterprise Reporter Marilyn McCann.

VISITOR'S REQUESTS AND COMMENTS

Potter Leader-Enterprise Reporter Marilyn McCann asked Council if they knew when the Goodwill store would re-open. Council members said that they had not been informed of an expected opening date.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was motioned by Councilman Hults, seconded by Councilman Keifer to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2022 meeting as presented. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 4 Yes, 0 No.

VOUCHER LIST

It was motioned by Councilman Fry, seconded by Councilman Hults to approve the voucher list as presented in the following amounts: General Fund, \$37,504.57; Water Operating Fund, \$23,253.64; Sewer Operating Fund, \$14,114.50; Street Lighting Fund, \$3,571.73; Fire Protection Fund, \$1,057.58; Recreation Fund, \$8,599.97; Library Fund, \$63.00; Act 13 Gas Well Impact Fund, \$33,112.00. No discussion. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes, and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 4 Yes, 0 No.

REPORTS RECEIVED

Manager Morris asked for confirmation from Council members that everyone had received their packets containing meeting notes, voucher list, fund balances, treasurer's report, and police report. Everyone had. No one had questions.

OLD BUSINESS

STMP PROGRAM

Manager Morris said that the borough has been accepted by DCED into the Strategic Management Program (STMP). She explained that a firm will do consulting work with the borough to assess its operations and give advice for areas of improvement. She said that they would interview everybody and give recommendations for a plan. Every recommendation comes with money from DCED to implement that plan. She and Biz had already been interviewed by DCED Rep. Jim Rose. Pennsylvania Economy League quote is \$55,750 and DCED has already committed to \$48,000. She said that the borough has never used a program like this before and she felt confident that using it would give the borough good direction, including help in locating funding sources, opportunity to improve and upgrade technology, training.

Discussion was held about details of the program, and its cost. Manager Morris said that DCED will only pay 80 percent, it's 80/20 match funding. There was already a request for proposals and Pennsylvania Economy League was \$55,750, another quote was for about \$76,000. She said that the focus of the program is to review the last five year's financials; assess how each department is doing, how departments can work together more efficiently and identify areas where the borough can save money. She said that it's a program that has been used by many boroughs widely across the state, including some in our local area and that it is especially helpful for smaller communities that don't generally have access to some of the information provided by working with the program. She has spoken with officials who have used the program and they said that it has helped them tremendously. A request was made that the council receive packets of information about the Pennsylvania Economy League before making the decision to proceed. Motion made by Marty Fry to table the discussion in reference to the Pennsylvania Economy League until council members have had a chance to review the Pennsylvania Economy League pamphlet, and revisit it at the next meeting. Motion seconded by Councilman Hults. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes, and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 4 Yes, 0 No.

NEW BUSINESS

CHRISTMAS IN A SMALL TOWN

Manager Morris said Cori Wagner and Abby Rossman are requesting to do Christmas In A Small Town like they did last year; block both sides of First Street, with vendors on each side. She said last year, there weren't any issues that she's aware of, and asked Chief McClain who agreed. Manager Morris said the event last year was very well organized, and is scheduled to be held this year on Nov. 26th from 10 am-2 pm. Motion made by Councilman Hults to approve the request. Seconded by Councilman Keifer. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes;

Councilman Hults, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes, and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 4 Yes, 0 No.

REAL ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION

Manager Morris said that the borough has received notification from the Potter County Assessment office that Vincent Hagan at 707 South East Street qualifies for real estate tax exemption from his property.

REPOSITORY OF UNSOLD PROPERTY

Manager Morris said that additionally from the Tax Claim Bureau, borough received notification of a Repository of Unsold Property at 7 Liberty Lane, that there is a buyer of that property in the amount of \$500, Mark Covin, who would like to purchase the property. The property is a trailer that has been vacant for several years and is on leased land. Councilman Fry made a motion that the borough agrees with the sale of that property as the Tax Claim Bureau wants to do. Motion seconded by Councilman Keifer. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes, and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 4 Yes, 0 No.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS FUN RUN OCT. 29

Manager Morris said that Special Olympics is trying to get more involved in the communities that they serve and would like to have a 5k run on Saturday, October 29th. Registration would be at 9 am with the run beginning at 10 am and expect to be cleaned up and out by noon. The group plans to use the same route that has been used previously by the Library and other organizations; starting at the library, proceeding down Park Avenue, up South East Street, cross over South Main Street, down to Beech Street, to South West Street and back to the library. Motion made by Councilman Fry to allow that activity to occur. Seconded by Councilman Hults. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes, and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 4 Yes, 0 No.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Morris said that Coudersport Borough Authority (CBA) met the previous evening, Aug. 18th at 6:30 pm, and that Coudersport Area Municipal Authority (CAMA) will meet on Monday, Aug. 22nd at the Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) at 6:30 pm, the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) met and approved a variance of Anne Gimenz, 506 North Main Street with conditions; compromised on some aesthetics with the neighbors. The Fire Department is having their yearly meeting on September 21st at 6 pm.

Manager Morris said that she wanted to acknowledge some borough employees for their exceptional work. She said that June Moore has done an amazing job of keeping the pool clean and running well this year, and that she had also just been made aware of a couple borough employees who happened to come across a small battery operated vehicle for children that was on fire on someone's porch that was starting to catch the stairs on fire. She said Jeff Schroeder and Beau Gross immediately stopped and got the vehicle off the porch and put the fire out. She

said that she felt it was important for the council to be aware of some actions of the extraordinarily good people that are working for the borough. President Hathaway recommended writing a note of appreciation to the employees for their service. Manager Morris said that she would.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Dubots said that since school would be starting the following week, he wanted to remind everyone to watch out for the kids.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT

Police Chief McClain agreed with Mayor Dubots, that with school starting soon, it is important to get advertising out to alert drivers to watch for and be prepared to stop for bus stops, students.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

TRACTOR SUPPLY COMPANY

Solicitor Glassmire said that everything's going well with Tractor Supply, and that Manager Morris has done a great job of getting the paperwork done, signed, notarized. He said he thinks that the borough is in very good shape, and that things that could have been a problem, were not a problem because of mutual accommodation. He said that there is no formal action necessary, it's all going as it should. He heard from their attorney that they would be having their closing today but did not know when construction would begin.

CARP PARK & SCHOOL

Solicitor Glassmire said that he plans to have documents to Manager Morris on Monday regarding CARP Park and the school, that she can email to all council members who are interested in the subject, and meeting with school officials. He will keep it to a minimum, but it will contain history and that the documentation is mostly notable for what it doesn't say. He's done research through the years and has formed some viewpoints. He said there was this good community spirit and that there was a park personnel committee, which had various names, that was very active in the 50s, 60s, 70s up into the 80s that had joint membership appointments by the borough, by the school board and the group worked together to bring a cohesive plan for recreation that involved CARP, the pool, Mitchell Park, and more. He said that those individuals were so well respected that what they were suggesting, which was somewhat already a compromise, got approved quickly by the school board and by council. He said that the school district was much more active in funding the projects. He said there was a time when having these activities for the young people, for the community as well, benefited by having these various types of recreation and it was considered educational and in that spirit of cooperation, a lot got done. He spoke about how the borough identifies what it feels is important and the cost, just as the school board is identifying what it feels is important, and the costs.

He suggested that since the borough will be holding a meeting on Thursday at 4 pm, that it would be easy to have too great of an expectation, and that a more modest expectation would

be to get both sides really listening to each other, to have a conversation. He said as he understands it, that the school's position is that the pool, CARP, Mitchell Park are just borough concerns and that the school has no responsibility. Solicitor Glassmire said that his goal is to promote a conversation, rather than an ultimatum. He said that the stalemate has been going on for a very long time, with nothing getting done and it will continue that way with probably less and less cohesive cooperation until it becomes a true crisis, and if it ends up a crisis, it could end up in court.

ZONING

Solicitor Glassmire said that it has been a long time since the borough has done much looking into zoning issues. It's his recommendation that over the next year or so, things that have been sitting on the back bench, that the borough considers more how zoning can help the community.

UNION

Solicitor Glassmire said that he'd been made aware by Manager Morris that there was information concerning the collective bargaining agreement, and asked Manager Morris whether the information had come from the Union. She said that it had. His recommendation is to work closely with the Union which in the past has helped with numerous borough meetings, and if the Union has something that they would like to talk about, the borough should look at the agreement and consider whether there are other things that should be discussed. Discussion was held about what the Union's request was. Solicitor Glassmire said that it wasn't just condensing a couple paragraphs, that it was rewritten somewhat to the Union's advantage. Conversation, Solicitor Glassmire said, particularly when it comes to a collective bargaining agreement, should be looked at as an opportunity.

789 NORTH MAIN STREET

Solicitor Glassmire said that if the borough wants to send a team of people and equipment to go tear down the structure at 789 North Main Street, that there are some paperwork issues that he wants to make sure that the borough has - its I's dotted and T's crossed - because going onto somebody's land and tearing things down could be a problem. He has no doubt that the borough has a legitimate basis, it's more the procedure and the protocol which he is preparing to address. Discussion was held about whether notifying the property owner of the situation, and giving a time to respond would be advisable. Solicitor Glassmire agreed that would be a good idea.

JUNIOR COUNCIL

No members present.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PERSONNEL/POLICE

Councilman Fry said that the Personnel Committee is in negotiations with the Union. The Committee has met with the Union and have scheduled additional meetings to continue to facilitate the negotiations. Councilman Fry said concerning the Police, that the Committee wants to have further discussion before making a recommendation. President Hathaway suggested putting the matter on the following month's agenda. Councilman Fry agreed.

UTILITIES, STREETS, BRIDGES, AND TREES

DR. BLAKE REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

Manager Morris said that a catch basin was being repaired when Dr. Blake's office wanted to have their parking lot sealed. She said that Dr. Blake is requesting that the borough pay half of the cost that the contractor charged, half of \$890. She said that she feels that the job could have been completed, omitting the basin, which the borough crew would have finished. About a quarter of a ton of material was used, which she said costs about \$40. Solicitor Glassmire asked for clarification about whether the property is Dr. Blake's private property. Manager Morris said that it is in the borough's Right-of-Way, and that the borough was in the process of repairing the catch box. She said that the borough was not informed of the plan to seal the lot until the last minute, and that as she understood, the contractor wanted to seal everything at once, but she felt that the borough crew sealing the catch basin afterwards would not have been a problem. Motion made by Councilman Fry to pay Dr. Blake \$250. Council held a discussion about the cost, particulars of the project. Motion died for lack of a second. Motion made by Councilman Hults to pay for .23 ton material, rounded to \$50. Seconded by Councilman Keifer. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes; Councilman Fry, No, and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 3 Yes, 1 No.

BONDING REESE HOLLOW AND AVENUE A

Manager Morris said that per the ordinance, in order to bond Reese Hollow and Avenue, the issue needs to be brought up at a council meeting, and approved. She has all the paperwork from the logger signed and information about the vehicle to be used. According to PennDOT rules and regulations, costs are figured per mile which amounted to \$5,975 for the borough to hold until the job is finished and the road is re-inspected. She said that the borough crew has video recorded the entire road. She said that the cost was calculated using what PennDOT authorizes: \$12,500 per mile of paid road; the borough has .22 miles of paved road and for an unpaved road, PennDOT allows \$6,000 per mile, the borough has .31 miles of unpaved road. Discussion was held about how the borough would handle the situation if costs exceed the bond amount. Solicitor Glassmire said that the borough is not prevented from taking further action to pursue additional reimbursement. Motion made to approve bonding the roads as presented by

Manager Morris by Councilman Hults. Seconded by Councilman Keifer. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes, and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 4 Yes, 0 No.

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Manager Morris said that the borough was contacted by Cleveland Brothers, informing the borough that they have a backhoe loader in stock for \$149,300. Cleveland Brothers is offering the borough \$63,000 for the borough's, which would leave a balance of \$86,300. Cleveland Brothers is offering a five-year lease type of payment plan; borough would pay about \$25,000 a year for the next five years, which is how the borough purchased the last one. She said the interest rate is 6.38%. Discussion was held about whether it would be cheaper to obtain a loan through the bank. Solicitor Glassmire said that he is prepared to assist with that. Discussion was held regarding the necessity of the backhoe; the current backhoe is a 2014, and is used heavily especially during the winter. President Hathaway said that he feels the price is fair, and that the cost to have the current backhoe assessed is \$1,000 which does not include the repairs to the hydraulics. Councilman Hults made a motion to make the swap. Council discussed how to finance the expenditure, spending funding already secured allocated for this purpose. Solicitor Glassmire asked Manager Morris for her opinion. She said that she would prefer to not have to finance anything, and did not like that interest rate. She would rather pay for it outright with the swap. Discussion was held about using the American Rescue Plan and the Act 13 monies. Manager Morris said that both qualify to be used for this purpose, are equally available and that there is also enough money in the capital reserve to take 1/3 out of that, too. Motion made by Hults to proceed with the swap, amended to include at Manager Morris's discretion, to finance as discussed, using 1/3 out of each account. Seconded by Councilman Fry. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes, and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 4 Yes, 0 No.

FINANCE AND ORDINANCE

Manager Morris said that she has begun working on the budget for 2023. She said that the Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) that the borough does annually for the pension does not require a motion, it just requires that it be in the minutes. She said that the borough's pension fund is in very good shape, and that the commitment for next year for the police pension fund is \$43,076; non-uniform pension fund, \$93,145. Discussion was held about whether costs have increased. Manager Morris said that she estimated that the police pension fund had increased about \$5,000, and non-uniform pension fund, about \$15,000, noting that employees had been added and the water and sewer authorities both contribute their share towards cost.

ADJOURNMENT

President Hathaway asked for comments, questions from the public and council. There were none. Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Georgeanna DeCarlo, recording secretary