

COUDERSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

FRIDAY, September 16, 2022

5:45 PM

The Coudersport Borough Council held their regular monthly meeting on Friday, September 16, 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, Jesse Minor, Jack Keifer, Todd Husson.

Also present were Manager Beverly Morris, Mayor Andy Dubots, Police Officer William Wenzel, Solicitor Dan Glassmire (via conference call), Recording Secretary Georgeanna DeCarlo, Junior Council member Lilah Husson, DCED STMP Program representative Jim Rose, Rick Jones, Theresa Kisiel, Wayne Wentzel, Linda Russell.

VISITOR'S REQUESTS AND COMMENTS

CLASS OF '66 PROJECT- FLAGPOLES AT LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD AND CARP CIRCLE

AND SHRUBS: Linda Russell from the CAHS Class of 1966 was present to request council's permission to refurbish the flagpole at the Little League Field and furnish a new flag and a solar light, and do the same to the flagpole that is located in front of the pavilion in CARP Park. She said that the group was advised that the existing pole in the park is deteriorated and presents a hazard. Their plans are to replace the flagpole with a pole that is much heavier and would need no upkeep for years. The group is asking the borough to remove the overgrown bushes making it easier to remove and replace the pole, and due to the lateness of the season, will in the spring replace landscaping with something that will enhance the area and need very little care to maintain. The group has a licensed contractor that will do the work and will furnish documents of insurance if the project is approved. She said the group also has a couple other plans in the works that they will bring to the council that will help beautify Coudersport. The group is planning to get a plaque for the flagpole that gives honor and thanks to all of the students of Coudersport that have served in the services. She said that if they're able to secure funding, she will attend a council meeting again to ask council's permission to hang the plaque.

Motion made by Marty Fry to accept the Class of '66 project with the stipulations stated by Mrs. Russell and thank the class as a whole for their willingness to do, and take on such a project. Seconded by Councilman Hults. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman

Husson, Yes; Councilman Minor, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried unanimous: 6 Yes, 0 No.

TRASH BURNING: Rick Jones, Galeton, said that he does a lot of landscaping and painting in Coudersport. He complained about residents of Coudersport Borough being able to burn papers. He said that Galeton changed its ordinance, and he encouraged council members to reconsider their position. Council members held a brief discussion, noting that the issue has been brought to council and discussed numerous times for the last forty years, and that the burning is limited to paper; no plastic, diapers, etc.. Officer Wenzel said that the police department usually addresses one or two complaints monthly and multiple citations have been issued. Council agreed that they are satisfied with the current policy but thanked Jones for his input.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Minutes for the Aug. 19th meeting will be presented at the next meeting, October 21, 2022.

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, \$34,384.96; Water Operating Fund, \$22,333.49; Sewer Operating Fund, \$16,259.78; Capital Reserve Fund, \$20,000.00; Street Lighting Fund, \$3,598.57; Fire Protection Fund, \$1,057.58; Recreation Fund, \$5,739.15; Library Fund, \$63.00; Act 13 Gas Well Impact Fund, \$24,600.00; American Rescue Plan, \$40,000.00. No discussion. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Husson, Yes; Councilman Minor, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried unanimous: 6 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, noting that there was not a police report. No one had questions.

OLD BUSINESS

DR. BLAKE REIMBURSEMENT: Council reviewed the motion approved at the prior meeting that detailed reimbursement as read by Manager Morris: "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." Council decided to send a letter to Dr. Blake, reaffirming council's decision to just pay for the material. Solicitor Glassmire suggested that in the letter, the request be made to Dr. Blake to be more specific about the information for the amount of money that he is requesting, invite him to show up in person to let him know that the local government wants to hear from him. Manager Morris said that the invoice that Dr. Blake's office sent listed one line item from

the contractor, not a detailed breakdown. Council held a discussion and asked Manager Morris to send Dr. Blake a letter requesting a detailed breakdown of the cost, or to attend a meeting to discuss the details.

NEW BUSINESS

REPOSITORY OF UNSOLD PROPERTY

Manager Morris said that notice had been sent by the Tax Bureau regarding a property on 11 River Lane which has property from the repository of unsold property; a bid was made from Joshua Tubbs for \$506.00 for a trailer. Motion made by Councilman Hults to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Keifer. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Husson, Yes; Councilman Minor, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried unanimous: 6 Yes, 0 No.

HALLOWEEN PARADE

Rotary is requesting permission for a Halloween Parade on Saturday, Oct. 29th with the parade beginning at 3 pm on Third Street to go to the Gunzburger Building. Motion made by Councilman Hults to approve the parade, seconded by Councilman Minor. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Husson, Yes; Councilman Minor, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried unanimous: 6 Yes, 0 No.

TAX COLLECTOR TRAINING

Coudersport Borough Tax Collector Theresa Kisiel is requesting to attend Pennsylvania Tax Collector's Association Training to be held in Gettysburg on Oct. 21st and 22nd. The training allows her to receive necessary credits to maintain her certified Pennsylvania Tax Collector status. Cost is \$175 for registration, plus two nights lodging and meals. Motion made to approve as requested by Councilman Minor, seconded by Councilman Fry. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Husson, Yes; Councilman Minor, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried unanimous: 6 Yes, 0 No.

MANAGER'S REPORT

The Water Authority (CBA) met the previous evening, Sept. 15th, at 6:30 pm. Manager Morris said that CBA is discussing an increase in water rates due to an increase in expenses, necessary repairs over the last few years including bringing the chlorination room up to standards. Sewer Authority (CAMA) will meet on Sept. 26th at the Wastewater Treatment Facility at 6:30 pm. Coudersport Borough Planning Commission meeting scheduled for October 5 at the Coudersport Borough Maintenance Facility for a 30x30 add-on property at 402 S. Main Street. McWaPEC meeting on Thursday, Sept. 22nd in Youngsville. All council members are

invited to attend on Monday Sept. 19th at 10 am, a pilot program by PSAB, The Art of Communication.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Andy Dubots said that on October 29th Trunk 'n Treat will be held from 4-6 pm and Trick or Treat from 6-9 pm.

POLICE REPORT

Manager Morris said that the Charger needs to go back to the shop. Officer Wenzel said that he thinks it is a blown head gasket, that he believes is still under warranty as part of the drivetrain. Manager Morris said that she and the officers have been looking at a car for next year. The Charger has been kept for a year longer than usual; normally the vehicles are switched out every four years. Manager Morris said that Chief McClain has received quotes from a company in Ridgway that has some leftover 2022 Dodge Durangos and asked council whether this is something that they want to consider. Council held a discussion about the cost of and types of vehicles available to police departments. Manager Morris said that the Properties and Equipment Committee could meet with her to review options.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

CARP PARK & SCHOOL

Solicitor Glassmire said that he has read the proposed agreement from the school board concerning the borough's park related issues and he has issues that he needs to sort out with respect to the language; some he can work with, others he thinks need to be changed and strengthened for the borough. He said that is probably not where the real main issue is. He'd emailed Manager Morris that although the compensation may be inadequate, that is not really a solicitor issue, that's an elected official issue. He feels real progress has been made because the school officials showed up, and they were all able to have a discussion. He plans to meet with Manager Morris in the next couple weeks to create a more detailed financial accounting. Solicitor Glassmire said that he was impressed with the members of the school board who attended the meeting and were very knowledgeable and commended the many different departments of the borough who work so well together in completing projects. He has concerns about piecemealing out work affiliated with borough property, noting that it might be a good idea but he needs more information and encouraged conversations to continue whether through invitation for school board members to attend a council meeting or vice versa. Solicitor Glassmire is not in favor of the document the way that it is written, and apart from some of the more fundamental issues, he feels the borough needs to provide a more clear insight to the school board about expenses and the borough's needs, and was surprised at the school board members' reaction to the borough acknowledging that the school has a broader tax base.

Council members held a discussion regarding the meeting held the previous evening with members of the school board that Councilman Keifer, Councilman Hathaway, Councilman Hults, Manager Morris, and Councilman Fry attended. At that meeting, from the previous meeting, the school board members said that they would present a lease agreement which they

did. Councilman Hathaway and Councilman Fry attended Monday night's school board meeting and did not speak but the school board unanimously agreed to pay the \$7,500 from last year that is normally paid in March or April. Council discussed particulars of the proposals from the school, and cost of maintenance for CARP. Meeting with the school officials from the previous evening ended with the school board members requesting a proposal from the borough which is what Manager Morris and Solicitor Glassmire will be working on. Solicitor Glassmire said that the most important thing is that the elected officials of the borough and the elected officials of the school district should care about our youth, and one of the ways to help them is to have them be doing things that are constructive and they're getting educated in sports, etc.. and that the driving factor should be, in his opinion, how can we reasonably take the resources collectively we have and devote enough of them to truly help the young people of the Coudersport area and it doesn't just help the Coudersport Borough students. Councilman Fry noted that that was the same sentiment expressed by a school board member who spoke before the board voted unanimously to approve paying the \$7,500 to the borough. The next school board meeting is September 26th.

Councilman Fry made a motion to modify the previous motion and changing that that had been approved to having Solicitor Glassmire with the committee or parts of the committee put together a proposed agreement to the school district saying that they would mow for the period of time, the five months approximately, plus pay the borough an additional \$7,500 within the first year's lease with the terminology and everything that needs to be corrected in the agreement which will be gone over, these are just proposed figures and then also add a \$1,000 escalation clause annually and do the initial lease for five years. Council asked for clarification from Solicitor Glassmire about whether the council can enact an agreement that will surpass the period of time that they're elected to serve, four years. Solicitor Glassmire said that there are exceptions to that rule, but he is not worried about it extending beyond the term of the current council. Councilman Fry amended the lease term to four years. Councilman Fry clarified his motion that the contractual part Solicitor Glassmire will have to revise to make sure that the borough is not taking care of the maintenance of the field, the school district is not dictating what the borough does with the funds, the school district is responsible for as other items in the lease proposal was if the school does any damage to any property, the school takes care of it, if there is any erosion created by flooding or whatever, the school's maintenance of the fields is totally the school's responsibility to keep them up for the proposed purposes that they may utilize them for, also if there is any damage to the fencing and stuff they agree, as in this original proposal, that they take care of it which they never have done but those items would remain better to the benefit for residents of Coudersport by this board. The amounts would be in the borough's original proposal, \$9,000 plus the school's mowing for five months would be the first year's contract with the clarifications that the council talked about as the Mayor brought up regarding public utilization - as far as contractual stuff, Solicitor Glassmire will take care of what the borough needs for the borough's benefit. Regarding the annual escalation clause- it would be \$9,000 for year one, \$10,000 year two, \$11,000 year three, \$12,000 year four. Motion seconded by Councilman Keifer. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Husson, Yes; Councilman Minor, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried unanimous: 6 Yes, 0 No.

POOL

Solicitor Glassmire said that real progress is being made in bringing pool matters to a conclusion. He said that Coudersport is in a much better position than other communities, and credited it to the work that Manager Morris, Chris Ernst, June Moore, and Council has done. Coudersport Borough is in a solid situation and Solicitor Glassmire said that as he understands, the representative from the state agency who met with Bev and Chris, came away pleased with what he saw.

DCED STMP PROGRAM

Jim Rose from DCED, the governor's center for local government services, said that he had met with President Hathaway and Manager Morris a few months prior and was there to present information to council regarding the Strategic Management Program, called STMP, that the council had agreed to participate in. Mr. Rose said that it is a program where the borough would hire a consultant to come in and look at the borough's operations, finances and make recommendations to help figure out where the borough will be in five years about what needs to be changed and what doesn't need to be changed. There are different stages to the program, and this would be for the primary stage. Initial stage involves interviewing borough employees, department chairs. The state will pay 80 percent, and the borough will pay 20 percent.

He said that an RFP came in from the Pennsylvania Economy League, a premier consultant that has done many municipalities throughout the state. Mr. Rose said he was attending the meeting to answer questions as it was his understanding that the council had tabled the proposal to proceed with the PA Economy League. Manager Morris said that whatever action the council chooses to take will determine whether the proposed project moves forward or not. For the first phase, the PA Economy League quoted \$55,750 of which DCED has committed to \$48,000 and the borough will pay about \$11,000. Mr. Rose said that the council can choose whether to follow the recommendations. Additional phases would be at the same 80/20 percent split. Different stages are implementing whatever recommendations the PA Economy League would make. Solicitor Glassmire asked for clarification as he was having trouble hearing, and wondered whether documentation had been received for what was being discussed. Manager Morris said that everything is in writing, that documentation had been presented in April, with the quote being received from the PA Economy League that had bid on the first portion of the program. Solicitor Glassmire said that he did not have the documents with him at his location.

Manager Morris clarified that the council had already approved using the program, but the issue was whether to accept the proposal from PA Economy League. Mr. Rose said that this is a financial study, a tool that is available to help municipal governments get a good grasp on where they are right now, where they'll be in 5 years if nothing changes, and a good idea of what will happen with increases in the cost of everything and will evaluate structure of crews and departments and how to make them work more smoothly. Solicitor Glassmire recommended

that since the council will be spending money, if the council votes to approve it, that the motion also include that it be subject to the solicitor's review. Councilman Husson made a motion to enter into the STMP Program with PA Economy League as the consultant, subject to the solicitor's review. Seconded by Councilman Keifer. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Husson, Yes; Councilman Minor, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried unanimous: 6 Yes, 0 No.

JUNIOR COUNCIL

Junior Council member Lilah Husson said that regarding the beautification of Coudersport, that there is a house by the high school that has a huge Confederate flag that is ugly, that she and all the students have to walk past every other day during gym class and is especially concerned about the impact that it has on her fellow students. She said that she is aware that the council taking action to remove the flag is likely not something that the council can do, but wanted to say how much it upsets her and others, and detracts from the beauty of Coudersport. Council members agreed with Husson but said that she is correct, they are unable to do anything about it.

PERSONNEL/POLICE

President Hathaway opened discussion about whether the council wants to hire a full-time or part-time police officer. Councilman Husson made a motion to hire a full-time police officer. Discussion was held noting that contracts are currently being negotiated and about the lengthy process of hiring an officer, hours without police coverage, and necessity of adding another full-time police officer, in addition to the three officers who are already full-time, or whether it is more prudent to hire a part-time police officer but acknowledging that council has experienced difficulty in the past securing a police officer for a part-time position.

Councilman Husson amended his motion to hire a full-time or part-time employee to the borough police department. Seconded by Councilman Keifer and Councilman Hults. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Husson, Yes; Councilman Minor, Yes; Councilman Fry, No; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried: 5 Yes, 1 No. Motion made by Councilman Husson to advertise for a full-time or part-time police officer. A brief discussion was held about response from potential candidates to prior advertisements. Motion seconded by Councilman Keifer. Roll call vote taken: Councilman Keifer, Yes; Councilman Husson, Yes; Councilman Minor, Yes; Councilman Fry, Yes; Councilman Hults, Yes and Councilman Hathaway, Yes. Motion carried unanimous: 6 Yes, 0 No.

FINANCE & ORDINANCE

BUDGET

Manager Morris said that she is working on the 2023 budget but that is stalled until negotiations are complete.

2023 FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTRACT

Manager Morris said that she just received the contract for 2023 from the Fire Department for council to review, that it can be discussed in more length at the next meeting, and doesn't need to be decided now. Discussion was held regarding how the Fire Department determines the cost. Manager Morris said that it is based on the assessed evaluation summary that the department gets from the tax assessor. Council asked Solicitor Glassmire whether the Fire Department has the legal right to dictate the amount that they are requesting for their annual contract. Solicitor Glassmire said the short answer is no, they can request anything they want but what the council decides is the council's choice. Solicitor Glassmire discussed details about the working relationship between the Fire Department and the borough. Manager Morris said that the Fire Department included a profit and loss sheet with the financial request.

FRANCHISE AGREEMENT WITH ZITO

Manager Morris said that the council received a copy of the franchise agreement with Zito to review. She still has questions that need answered yet but the contract will not expire until April, 2023 so there is plenty of time for discussion to work out the details.

FIREMEN'S ANNUAL DINNER

September 21st is the Firemen's Annual discussion dinner at 6 pm at the firehall where they will provide an update on all the department's activities. Everyone is welcome to attend.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Husson asked whether the equipment was ready for leaf pick up. Manager Morris said that the equipment is ready, the borough purchased a new box last year, and leaf pick up will begin in a few weeks. Councilman Husson asked whether there was other equipment that needs to be repaired, and about equipment overall. Councilman Hults said that the new loader had arrived last week. Councilman Minor asked whether there was any indication as to when the houses would be torn down. Manager Morris said that probably within the next week, noting that the houses had been used for training for the fire department but will not be burnt, will be torn down.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no other business, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Georgeanna DeCarlo, recording secretary