



# **Borough of Bellevue**

Incorporated 1867

## **Borough Pre-Council Meeting Minutes**

July 11, 2023 7:00 pm

Municipal Building

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Council Chambers

### **Call to Order**

President Cerminara called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

The call to order was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

### **Roll Call**

The roll was called to establish a quorum. Present were Mr. McKelvey, Ms. Denton, Ms. Edmondson, Mr. McAfee, Ms. Sloane, Mr. Hrynda, Mr. Stuncard, and President Cerminara. A quorum was established.

Also, in attendance were Mayor Val Pennington, DAS Cindy Bahn, DPW Superintendent Jim Kelly, Firefighter Lt. Bill Hartman, Firefighter Lt. Mark Ford, Library Director Ellen Goodman, Police Chief Matt Sentner, Treasurer Joe Scioscia, and Solicitor Matt Racunas.

### **Public Contribution on Agenda Items**

- Jane Braunlich, 27 E. Roseridge Avenue: Stated that the "Borough looks bad" because there are weeds around the telephone poles, and a shop that has closed still has Christmas decorations in the window, which should be covered by curtains.
- Joe Scioscia, 260 Lincoln Avenue: Stated that President Cerminara "is not entitled to lie" and made reference to a "secret payroll"; further stated that the paid firefighters should "look for a job elsewhere".

### **Reports**

**Mayor's Report** (written report was included with Council packet)

- Mayor Pennington had nothing to add to the written report.

**Treasurer's Report** (written report was included with Council packet)

- Mr. Scioscia stated that his report was as submitted.

**Financial Reports** (Budget, Tax and Services reports were included with Council packet)

- No comments were made, or questions asked.

#### **DAS Report**

- Ms. Bahn reported that she had nothing at this time.

**Library Report** (written report was included with Council packet)

- Ms. Goodman had nothing to add to her written report.

**Public Works Report** (written report was included with Council packet)

- Mr. Kelly reported that he needs to buy additional chlorine for the pool, which will be added to the July Council agenda for action. Ms. Sloane inquired about her street, which has been closed for 4 weeks. Mr. Kelly responded that Westview Water Authority, Columbia Gas, and Alcosan are all doing work nearly simultaneously, which has resulted in lengthy street closures.

**Code Enforcement Report** (written report was included with Council packet)

- Mr. Jacobs had nothing to add to the Code Department's written report.

## Fire Department

- Lt. Ford reported that the Fire Department received a Federal grant of \$46,868.80, with a Borough match of \$3,320.00 to purchase SCBA Air Packs. A resolution accepting the grant will be added to the July Council meeting for action.

## Police Chief Report

- Chief Sentner noted that the police officer who was injured several months ago had a setback and will not be returning in August as originally anticipated.

## Northwest EMS Report

- No representative was in attendance, but a report was provided to Council.

## Engineer's Report

- Mr. Arnold had nothing to add to his written report, but stated that he has proposals for the N. Jackson retaining wall.

## Joint Planning Commission

- There was no representative in attendance.

## Shade Tree Commission

- Scott Heberling, a Commission member, reported that the Commission was reorganized over a year ago, and thus far has completed a list of recommended shade and street trees; has consulted with Tree Pittsburgh and the Western PA Conservancy; has gather and distributed information about tree issues and nuisances; developed a mailing list with names of people interested in getting trees and shrubs; and expects to have a shade tree inventory completed by the end of the summer. President Cerminara suggested that the Borough create a section on the website for the Shade Tree Commission. Mr. Stuncard asked about disseminating an approach for dealing with spotted lanternflies.

**Quaker Valley Council of Governments Report** (Executive Director's written report provided to Council)

- Mr. McKelvey reported that the COG has observed the 1-year anniversary of glass recycling, with 8 “pulls” of the dumpster resulting in the recycling of 24 tons of glass. The COG is also offering a yard waste program.

## Committee Reports

**Finance Committee: Jodi Cerminara, Chair**

1. Motion to Approve Payment of the July 11, 2023, Bill List.  
 Moved: President Cerminara Second: Ms. Sloane  
 All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried, 8-0.

**Parks and Recreation Committee; Jeff Stuncard, Chair**

**Public Safety Committee; Amanda Sloane, Chair**

1. Discussion: Bellevue Elementary/S. Howard Safety  
Chief Sentner reported that that the PA State Police conducted a traffic audit and expressed concerns about safety around Bellevue Elementary. He recently met with Dr. Johns, Northgate Superintendent, and Dr. Amick, Bellevue Elementary Principal, and that the immediate consensus is to close S. Howard Avenue and Hallett Place from 7:45 am to 8:15 am and 2:45 pm to 3:15 pm. Barricades would be erected at 3 locations: S. Howard & Lincoln Avenues; Hallett Place & S. Howard Avenue; and Hallett Place and Fremont Avenue. Ms. Sloane responded that closing streets is the last resort option, and that the school district has not taken any accountability for addressing safety concerns at arrival and dismissal times. Chief Sentner noted that issuing tickets hasn't helped, and there are a new group of parents each year who may not be familiar with the protocols. Mr. McAfee stated that the only alternative is to have a police officer on scene for the entire time students are arriving and being dismissed. Chief Sentner responded that ticketing gets "ugly" and that it's not fair to the officers. Ms. Edmondson asked if there would still be a police presence when the streets are closed, and Chief Sentner replied that he "will throw as much at this as possible" but he doesn't see a viable alternative to

closing the streets. Mr. McKelvey stated that he remembers this being an issue 12 years ago and suggested a pilot program of street closures. He wondered about the school district purchasing the vacant lot across the street and using it as a place for parents to pick up their children. President Cerminara stated that this seems to be the best solution for now, and that the Borough can't direct the school district regarding the handling of dismissals. This will be added to the July Council agenda for action.

2. Discussion: Borough Building CCTV

Chief Sentner reported that the current camera system is past its useful life, and he would like to update it. He obtained a quote for 10 cameras, 8 for the building and 2 for the holding cells, at a cost of \$1,800. This will be on the July Council meeting agenda for action.

3. Discussion: Sgt. Lucas' Attendance at the Penn State Executive Development (POLEX) Training.

Chief Sentner noted that the total cost of this training is \$1,339.00 plus daily mileage for travel to Monroeville. This will be added to the Council meeting agenda for action.

4. Discussion: Borough Noise Ordinance Amendments.

The Solicitor stated that this is follow up from the PLCB noise complaint received by a local liquor licensee. He recommends an amendment to our current noise ordinance that might be more acceptable to the PLCB so that Bellevue could be granted local enforcement control. He may have a recommended amendment for the July Council meeting.

5. Discussion: Fire Escape Ordinance

Mr. Racunas noted that he is fine with the proposed ordinance as written, except for the lack of a "grandfather" clause. This will be added to the July Council meeting agenda for action.

6. Motion to Reimburse IAFF Local 4014 for the Purchase of 5 Scott SCBA Units and 2 Heavy Duty Struts in the Total Amount of \$6,649.95. (01.411.260)

Moved: Ms. Sloane

Second: Mr. Hrynda

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried, 8-0.

7. Motion to Authorize the Advertisement of Ordinance 23-04, Relating to the Issuance of Disability Parking Permits Within the Borough. (01.406.341)

Moved: Ms. Sloane

Second: Mr. Hrynda

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried, 8-0.

**Public Works Committee; Jillian Edmondson, Chair**

1. Motion to Adopt Resolution 12-23, Amending the Fee Schedule to Include a Fee of \$2.00 per Hour for Use of the Borough Electric Vehicle Charging Stations.

Moved: Ms. Edmondson

Second: Mr. McKelvey

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried, 8-0.

**Unfinished Business:**

- Mr. McAfee asked Chief Sentner about the agreement to provide policing services to Avalon on a limited basis; the Chief responded that officers have already worked some shifts.
- Mr. McKelvey asked about the status of the parking meter app; Chief Sentner responded that Ms. Contes has worked hard to address the issues between the app and Bellevue's bank, but it seems that we "are there". There has been an issue with the credit card system on the bank's end, but expects the issue to be resolved soon and the app up and running by the end of July.
- Mr. McKelvey asked the Solicitor for an update on recouping demolition costs from the property owner on Forest Avenue where the structure was demolished on an emergency basis; Mr. Racunas responded that he is preparing a complaint in civil action.

**New Business:**

1. Mr. Arnold provided information on the N. Jackson retaining wall situation, stating that the Borough received an LSA grant in the amount of \$350,000, and that he has a design proposal, but the grant is

not sufficient to complete the entire remediation. He would like to have 2 more core borings done to determine underlying soil conditions at various points in the area, noting that there are differing conditions, and getting additional information now could save dollars down the road. The cost of the additional borings is \$6,900. Ms. Sloane asked about the urgency, and Mr. Kelly responded that if the wall further collapses, the alley will need to be closed. Mr. Kelly suggested waiting until August to vote on moving forward, which would push the project into 2024, and that funds that would typically be used for paving could be directed to the wall remediation because the utilities have done much of the paving that the Borough would be doing. He further stated that the alley may have to be closed for the winter because the plow trucks cannot clear the alley because of the barricades. This will be added to the July Council agenda.

2. Appointing a Resident to the Vacant Ward 1 Council Seat.  
Anyone interested in filling this vacancy is asked to submit a Talent Bank Application to DAS Bahn, and an appointment will be made at the July Council meeting.

**Public Contribution on Non-Agenda Items (limit of 2 minutes)**

- Jane Braunlich, 27 E. Roseridge Drive: Asked who owns the N. Jackson retaining wall. Also stated that her kids went to Bellevue Elementary and each class was dismissed from a different side of the building; she suggested that the school district should return to that system.
- Joe Scioscia, 260 Lincoln Avenue: Stated that the Chief is wrong – the Borough does not have the right to inconvenience residents, and that the football field is “barely used” and could be used for a parking lot.

**Executive Session**

- Council adjourned to Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter at 8:38 pm and returned to the business meeting at 9:04 pm. No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, President Cerminara adjourned the meeting at 8:15 pm.

ATTEST

  
Cindy Bahn, Director of Administrative Services, Secretary

  
Jodi Cerminara, Council President

