



Borough of Bellevue

Incorporated 1867

Borough Pre-Council Meeting Minutes
November 14, 2023 7:00 pm
Municipal Building
2nd 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 Ms. Templeton, Ms. Sloane, Mr. McAfee, Mr. McKelvey, Ms. Denton, Ms. Edmondson, Mr. Hryda, and President Cerminara. Mr. Stuncard was absent. A quorum was established.

Also, in attendance were Mayor Val Pennington, DAS Cindy Bahn, DPW Superintendent Jim Kelly, Firefighter Lt./Interim Fire Chief Bill Hartman, Firefighter Lt. Mark Ford, Police Chief Matt Sentner, Library Director Ellen Goodman, BCO/Zoning Officer Shawn Jacobs, Code Enforcement Officer Jack Davin, and Solicitor Matt Racunas.

Public Contribution on Agenda Items

- Susan Stabnau, Bona Fide Bellevue: Presented a check representing donations towards the cost of new holiday decorative lights for Lincoln Avenue. Bona Fide Bellevue raised \$3,910 from 69 people and Bona Fide rounded the amount up to \$4,000.
- Joe Scioscia III, 256 Lincoln Avenue: Asked if there was a resolution to the ownership of the fire truck being used by the Fire Department.
- Joe Scioscia Jr., 260 Lincoln Avenue: Asked why Bellevue has a paid fire department when other northern communities and surrounding VFDs are willing to provide mutual aid.
- Dionesia Dingler, 45 S. Bryant Avenue: Reported that there is an issue on her street with vehicles using it as a shortcut to Lincoln Avenue. Asked about traffic calming measures.
- Joe Christl, 49 S. Bryant Avenue: Agreed with Ms. Dingler's comments adding that recently a car speeding on the street hit another vehicle, then bounced and hit his car.
- Pam Wright, 49 S. Bryant Avenue: Added her concerns about speeding vehicles on S. Bryant.
- Paul Miller, 105 Grant Avenue: Thanked Mr. McKelvey and Mr. McAfee for their public comments about the property tax increase, and then stated that the Borough does not need a full-time fire chief or a pumper truck.
- Connie Rankin, 116 Arch Avenue: Stated that in the 8 months since CHHL was decertified, no steps have been completed. Added that the Borough needs an aerial truck, not a 20-year-old fire truck.
- Linda Woshner, 137 S. Euclid Avenue: Stated that she expected no tax increase and that regionalization is a very good option. Complained that Council members did not talk to former council members. Added that the Borough had "beautiful (fire) equipment" and "lots of volunteers".

Reports

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

- Mayor Pennington had nothing to add to the written report, which was distributed via email.

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

- Mr. Scioscia stated that if no other big bills are coming in, the Borough is in the same place as last year.

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 will be attending Pitt's Institute of Politics Forum, and speakers will include the DCED Secretary; the meeting will be followed by a dinner honoring the Coleman awardees for Excellence in Community Service.
- She also noted that the CONNECT November Executive Committee meeting will be held in Bellevue on 11.30.23 at 4:00 pm, followed by a Friendraising event at Grille 565. She encouraged Council members to attend, and stated that RSVPs to CONNECT are appreciated.
- The DAS reported that the Borough received 7 applications for the full time police officer position; the written examination is scheduled for 11.29.23.

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 Mark Helbling from 565 Grille has offered to provide outside music for Light Up Bellevue as well as repair the Lincoln Avenue speakers if required.

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

- Mr. Jacobs stated that his report was "as submitted".

Fire Department

- Lt. Hartman reported he had nothing to add to his written report.

Police Chief Report

- Chief Sentner reported that the plan is to proceed quickly to hire a new officer as an officer is leaving in early December.

Northwest EMS Report

- No representative was in attendance; no questions were asked about the report.

Engineer's Report

- The engineers had nothing to add to their written report.

Joint Planning Commission

- Ms. Dingler reported that a public hearing will be held before the 11.28.23 meeting.
- The final JPC meeting of 2023 will be held in Ben Avon on 12.11.23 at 7:00 pm.

Shade Tree Commission

- No representative was present.

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

- Mr. McKelvey stated that he had nothing to report.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee: Jodi Cerminara, Chair

1. Motion to Approve Payment of the November 14, 2023, Bill List.
Moved: President Cerminara Second: Ms. Sloane
All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried, 8-0.
2. Discussion: Sick Time Accruals and Payouts for Employees Not Covered by a CBA.
The DAS reported that Mr. Davin accumulated many hours of sick time from his service as a firefighter. These hours were not paid out when he moved to the Code Enforcement Department, and there is no provision for employees not covered by a CBA to receive payment for those hours. This will be referred back to the Finance Committee.

3. Motion to Authorize the Advertisement, at a Cost Not to Exceed \$250, of a Public Hearing Required for the Issuance of Legal Clearances to Demolish the Structures at 211 N. Balph Avenue, 146 Ridge Avenue, and 31 E. Roseridge Avenue. (01.406.341)

Moved: President Cerminara

Second: Mr. McKelvey

Discussion: Mr. Racunas stated that he has ordered a title search, and must give notice to any interested parties prior to demolishing the properties. Ms. Templeton asked Mr. Jacobs for his assessment of the condition of these properties and Mr. Jacobs responded that they are not structurally sound.

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

4. Motion to Authorize the Advertisement, at a Cost Not to Exceed \$250, the December 11, 2023 Public Hearing on the 2024 Budget. (01.406.341)

Moved: President Cerminara

Second: Mr. McKelvey

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

Parks and Recreation Committee; Jennie Denton, Chair Pro Tem

1. Motion to Adopt Resolution 23-23, Authorizing a Grant Application in the Amount of \$50,000 to the T-Mobile Home Grants Program for Improvements to the Bayne Avenue Retaining Wall.

Moved: Ms. Denton

Second: Ms. Templeton

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

Public Safety Committee; Amanda Sloane, Chair

1. Discussion: Approving the Shepherd's Door Application for an Annual Walk to Remember Event on 11.25.23 from 8-9 am.

Chief Sentner reported that the route is from Avalon Elementary to The Center of Bellevue, and last year walkers, numbering about 20, used the sidewalk, not the street.

Motion to Amend the Agenda to Include a Vote on the Shepherd's Door Street Closing Application.

Moved: Ms. Sloane

Second: Mr. Hrynda

Public Contribution: None

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

Motion to Approved the Shepherd's Door Street Closing Application for 8-9 am on 11.25.23 for a Walk to Remember Event.

Moved: Ms. Sloane

Second: Mr. Hrynda

Public Contribution: None

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

2. Discussion: Amending the Borough's Noise Ordinance to Provide for the 10 pm Cessation of Live Outdoor Music at Establishments Serving Alcohol.
President Cerminara stated that a portion of the noise ordinance was recently amended, but no cut off time was included for live music. Much discussion ensued regarding whether or not the proposed amendment should only apply to establishments serving alcohol, and whether or not it should only apply to live music. Mr. Racunas will provide suggested changes, and action on advertising the amended Ordinance will be added to the agenda for the November Council meeting.
3. Discussion: Resolution 24-23, Authorizing the Borough to Submit a Petition to the PLCB for a Hearing to Consider Local Control of Amplified Music Emanating from Licensed Establishments. The Solicitor noted that this resolution correlates with the ordinance previously discussed; action to authorize the advertisement of the Resolution will be on the agenda for the November Council meeting.
4. Motion to Accept a Grant, in the Amount of \$15,000, from Norfolk Southern's Safety First Program for the Purchase of Air Monitoring Equipment.
Moved: Ms. Sloane
Second: Mr. Hrynda
All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried, 8-0.

5. Motion to Authorize the Bellevue Fire Department Chief to Spend Up to \$100,000, Utilizing a KS Bank 5-Year TELP, to Purchase a Used Fire Truck. (01.411.700)

Moved: Ms. Sloane

Second: Mr. Hrynda

Discussion: Interim Chief Hartman noted that a second engine would serve as backup for the Borough's current truck, which has had mechanical issues since it was first acquired. He reported that a second engine could also favorably impact the Borough's ISO rating. Lt. Hartman added that long term, the Borough needs a fire truck replacement fund and a replacement plan, and a second truck could provide a short-term solution while a fund is established and funded. The market for fire trucks remains tight and Lt. Hartman stated that it would take two or more years to take delivery of a new truck, meaning used trucks sell quickly, and his concern is that any available used trucks would be sold before Council could approve the purchase. His parameters are no older than 20 years, and a maximum price of \$100,000; KS Bank has offered a rate of 6.56% with a 5-year term, at which point the truck would belong to the Borough free and clear.

Moved: Ms. Sloane

Second: Mr. Hrynda

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

Public Works Committee; Jillian Edmondson, Chair

1. Discussion: Vacating the Alley Between North Fremont and Dakota Avenues.
Ms. Edmondson stated that the alley has been abandoned, and Mr. Kelly added that the Borough does not maintain it. The Solicitor noted that this would require a map and measurements of what is being vacated if it's unnamed; he would then put together an ordinance. Mr. Scioscia, Jr. interrupted and stated that the Borough did considerable repair work on the alley, and Mr. Kelly responded that it wasn't true as several Borough employees with longevity of twenty plus years reported that they have never been in the alley. Ms. Templeton asked for clarification regarding the meaning of "vacate" and Mr. Racunas responded that legal ownership would go to the adjoining property owners. This will be on the November Council meeting agenda for action.
2. Motion to Adopt Resolution 25-23, Authorizing the Application for a Local Share Account Grant in the Amount of \$273,000 for the Repair and Remediation of the North Jackson Retaining Wall.
Moved: Ms. Edmondson
Second: Mr. McKelvey
All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried, 8-0.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

- Ms. Edmondson asked Chief Sentner what could be done regarding the complaints from S. Bryant Avenue residents, and he responded that it's a narrow, one-way street; he will conduct a traffic study and report back to Council.

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

- Joe Scioscia III, 256 Lincoln Avenue: Stated that in other Boroughs, reports are posted to the backs of agendas, and asked if the Borough would do the same.
- Dionesia Dingler, 45 S. Bryant Avenue: Asked Chief Sentner about the changes to traffic by Bellevue Elementary.
- Connie Rankin, 116 Arch Avenue: Remarked that she "can't believe" the Borough's assertion that its ISO rating will improve with "two decrepit trucks" and added that there are no aerial trucks and not enough firefighters. Stated that in the 8 months since CHHL was decertified, no steps have been completed. Added that the Borough needs an aerial truck, not a 20-year-old fire truck.
- Joe Scioscia Jr., 260 Lincoln Avenue: Clarified the location of the alley the Borough has been requested to vacate, and insisted that the Borough has paved it in the past.

Executive Session:

- Council adjourned to Executive Session at 8:29 pm and returned to the Legislative meeting at 9:46; no action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

Adjournment

There being no further business, President Cerminara adjourned the meeting at 9:47 pm.

ATTEST



Cindy L. Bahn, Director of Administrative Services, Secretary



Jodi Cerminara, Council President

