

February 3, 2009, Council Meeting

A regular meeting of the Clarion Borough Council was held on Tuesday, February 3, 2009, in the Clarion Free Library. President Wilshire called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All Councilmembers were present as were: Mayor Stroup, Chief Hall, Messrs. Ragon and Stutzman, and Mss. LaVan and Freenock.

The minutes of the January 6, 2009, Public Hearing, were unanimously approved following a motion by Mr. Zerfoss with a second by Ms. Leonard.

The minutes of the January 6, 2009, Council Meeting, were approved unanimously upon a motion by Mr. Herman with a second by Ms. Vavrek.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Hopkins made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Moore to approve the appropriations for the month of February. They were approved by a vote of six yea, with Mr. Zerfoss voting no.

A motion was made by Ms. Vavrek and seconded by Ms. Leonard to adopt the Clarion Borough Tobacco-Free Employee Policy. Mr. Hopkins stated that he was uncomfortable deciding for employees that they should stop smoking. He was concerned with the wording in the first paragraph of the policy. Mss. Moore and Freenock stated that the language could be removed. Mr. Herman called the question and the following are the results of the roll call vote: Mr. Zerfoss-yes; Mr. Herman-yes; Ms. Leonard-yes; Ms. Vavrek-yes; Ms. Moore-yes; Ms. Hopkins-no; and President Wilshire-yes. The motion carried.

On a motion by Mr. Herman, with a second by Mr. Zerfoss, Resolution No. 2009-278, changing the name on the First United National Bank account from Clarion Area Authority to Clarion Borough, was unanimously approved.

President Wilshire stated that the Peterson appropriation for South Seventh Avenue was funded. The grant is for \$250,000 with a 45% match by the Borough.

The request of Immaculate Conception Church for a street closing and the March of Dimes' special event request were both unanimously approved upon a motion made by Ms. Leonard and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Ms. Freenock stated that a Public Hearing on the 2009 proposed CDBG projects are scheduled immediately preceding the March Council Meeting. Ms. Freenock recommends using the 2009 funds to supplement the budgets for the 2006 and 2008 projects; barring any extraordinary expenses, those projects would be fully funded.

Ms. Freenock stated that the Borough's Code has not undergone an editorial review for five years; she recommended that one be completed at a cost of \$4,295. Prior to undertaking the analysis, a number of ordinances must be codified at an approximate cost of \$1,100. Ms. Vavrek made a motion to accomplish both of the foregoing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hopkins and carried unanimously.

Following a motion by Ms. Vavrek and a second by Mr. Hopkins, permission was granted for Ms. Freenock and Mr. Stutzman to attend the PSATS conference in April in Hershey.

Ms. Freenock asked that the press relay to the public that input is being sought as to whether a need for the Borough to apply for grant funding for a HOMES program exists. The funds would be used to bring homes, not including student rentals, up to code. The grant would target individuals over 65 years of age. Anyone having an interest is asked to call the Borough office.

DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE

Ms. Moore stated that Spring Fling will be held from April 20 through the 25th; this is earlier than usual as the University has moved its schedule up one week.

PUBLIC WORKS

Ms. Vavrek noted that PennDOT plans to resurface Route 68 this summer. The project will include making the east-west crosswalks/ramps ADA compliant. PennDOT has offered to include north-south crosswalks in its scope of services. There are 12 crosswalks that would be replaced at a cost of \$2,500 each. Ms. Vavrek recommends that the Borough replace the ramps at this time as PennDOT will assure that they are compliant with the new ADA standards; the Borough would eventually have to replace these ramps, and it is more cost effective to do them now. Liquid Fuels funds would be used to pay for the Borough's portion of the project.

Mr. Zerfoss stated that he would like to see a paving project but understands that the ramps should be replaced. Mr. Hopkins confirmed that the work must be done it's just a question of timing. Ms. Vavrek made a motion to replace 12 crosswalks at a cost of \$30,000 using Liquid Fuels funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zerfoss. There was a roll call vote at which each Council member voted in the affirmative.

There was a discussion about the need for a center turn lane from Boundary Street to South Street. Mayor Stroup commented that the traffic does not back up in the Borough at either of those points. Traffic is a problem at the turn and at Comet, both outside the Borough. Ms. Vavrek made a motion, seconded by Mr. Zerfoss to have the turn lane installed. There was a roll call vote with all Councilmembers voting no. Therefore, the road will remain as is.

Ms. Vavrek then stated that PennDOT would like to work on Route 68 at night. The crosswalks would be done during the day. It is expected that milling would take 2 nights and paving would take 2 nights. Mr. Herman stated that he felt that night work was the best alternative; all on Council agreed.

President Wilshire read a letter that he will send to Senator Mary Jo White asking that the Route 68 Project be kept on the TIP. Mr. Herman made a motion that Council support President Wilshire's letter. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vavrek and was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Herman made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Hopkins to approve the Chamber's Spring Fling requests. Ms. Leonard expressed concerns about the parking spaces opposite from the park that are reserved for loading/unloading and the lack of a crosswalk from Grant Street to Merle Road. The motion passed by a vote of six yea with Ms. Leonard voting no.

HOUSING AND ZONING

Mr. Zerfoss made a motion, seconded by Ms. Vavrek, to direct the Planning Commission to review the Zoning Ordinance with special emphasis on signage. The motion was unanimously approved.

RECREATION COMMITTEE

Ms. Leonard noted that the Committee met and that a follow-up is scheduled.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Stroup stated that he participated in an open mike night at the Methodist Church. The event was sponsored by Clarion Area and Clarion Limestone School Districts and benefitted the Invisible Children. The Mayor commended the students and teachers involved in the event.

The Mayor also stated that an I-80 video is being produced and will be distributed to political leaders. The video will outline possible alternatives to tolling.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leonard asked about a resolution to Ms. Pope's concerns expressed at the last Council Meeting. Mr. Ragon stated that Ms. Pope spoke with Father Monty and that this was not an issued that involves the Borough.

Mr. Herman asked that a letter be sent to Dr. Kerr thanking him for his service on the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Herman stated that Dr. Kerr organized the Board and that good decisions were made during his tenure. Ms. Vavrek seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

President Wilshire then called for an Executive Session to discuss the disposition of property and potential litigation, leaving at 8:00 p.m.. The meeting reconvened at 8:20 p.m. President Wilshire reported that no action was taken.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, upon a motion by Mr. Herman with a second by Ms. Moore, the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy K. Freenock
Borough Secretary