

July 27, 2009, Council Meeting
Minutes

A meeting of Clarion Borough Council was held on Monday, July 27, 2009, in the Clarion Borough Offices. President Wilshire called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. All Council members with the exception of Mr. Hopkins were present. Mayor Stroup, Messrs. Ragon and Stutzman, and Mss. LaVan and Freenock were also present.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Herman made a motion to approve the Special Event Request for Patriot Day Services. This is an annual request and it contained no changes. Ms. Vavrek seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Ms. Vavrek made a motion to ratify the filing of an American Reinvestment & Recovery Act Fire Station Construction Grant in the amount of \$441,585. The applications were due on July 10th. The 25% match will come from a fundraising campaign. Ms. Freenock prepared and filed the application with input from Mr. Kopko. Ms. Freenock stated that the Borough would be the grantee as it owns the building. Mr. Herman seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Ms. Freenock presented a proposal from EADS Group to do an energy audit and prepare an ARRA grant application for the Admin building for a fee of \$5,250. Grants can be awarded up to \$250,000 and there is a 25% suggested match. It was thought that the report prepared by Northwest Commission, based on a visit made in May, would be sufficient for the application. However, the published guidelines require that an energy audit be undertaken by a certified engineer. HVAC/mechanical engineers from EADS inspected the building last week; although the grant requires only a 25% energy savings, EADS will not prepare an application unless they feel that a 35% savings can be achieved. EADS has a great deal of experience in this area and are facile in the grant's requirements. This is a one-time funding opportunity and grants are due August 14th.

Mr. Herman stated that he is concerned about the \$62,500 match. Ms. Freenock stated that awards will not be made until December so that it could be budgeted in 2010. Also, the match is not a necessity, but those applications with a match will be scored higher. Ms. Vavrek stated that discussions concerning remodeling the building to make it more secure have occurred in the past and she would like to see that done. Since only \$20,000 is spent per year on all utilities, it will take the Borough a long time to recoup its costs. Ms. Freenock reminded Council that rates will increase on January 1.

President Wilshire polled Council and all decided to pass on this grant opportunity.

President Wilshire stated that DEP has approved the Borough's Act 537 Special Study Review. An application will be filed to recover 50% of the costs for preparing the study. It must now be combined with the approved plans from Clarion and Monroe Townships to develop a Revised 537 Plan.

PUBLIC WORKS

A new three-year contract for Clean-Up Day was discussed. Shirey did not offer a proposal as it is too small; Tri-County sent in a bid that is over \$8,000 in 2010, and increases in each successive year. Veolia proposes to continue to provide the service at the same rates; in 2007 and 2008, the cost averaged \$6,300. Ms. Freenock was asked to check with the Borough Solicitor to see if it needs to be advertised.

Ms. Vavrek stated that 66 applications were received for the Public Works position. The Committee reviewed all of the applications and selected six individuals to interview. Ms. Vavrek then made a motion, seconded by Mr. Zerfoss to hire Doug Preston to fill the vacancy in the department. Mr. Preston will start at \$9.25/hour for the probationary period. Hiring is subject to a pre-employment drug test and physical. Mr. Herman expressed concern over filling the position noting that also on the agenda tonight is the purchase of a PW truck. Mr. Stutzman stated that if the position is not filled, there will be a decrease in services. His department will do its best to fill the void but with one less person, some things will have to be let go. President Wilshire called for a roll call vote as follows: Mr. Zerfoss: yes; Mr. Herman: no; Ms. Leonard: yes; Ms. Vavrek: yes; Ms. Moore: yes; and President Wilshire: yes. The motion carried.

A discussion then ensued concerning the proposed purchase of a new pick-up truck. Ms. Freenock stated that there was sufficient funding in the 2009 Liquid Fuels account to make payments for the truck. However, she is unsure if that will be the case in 2010 as a decrease in the allocation is projected, and the 2010 allocations will not be announced until October. \$13,500 of the 2010 allocation is encumbered due to the purchase of the 2007 truck. This year, the budget had \$10,000 allocated for capital expenditures. That amount was used to repair the street sweeper. If that account is funded next year, the truck payments could come from there.

Mr. Stutzman explained that the 1994 pickup that is being used will not pass inspection in October. It is used for picking up trash in the winter when the other 4 trucks are outfitted to plow. He would like to put a plow on this truck to do parking lots; currently, the high lift is used to plow the lots. If the truck is not purchased, a third party will have to be engaged to empty the trash cans on Main Street and dumpsters will be needed at the municipal buildings and at the park. He is telling Council what is needed. Council must decide if the purchase is prudent.

Mr. Herman stated that local businesses should be given the chance to bid on the truck. The price sheet provided was from the state's piggy back program; and if the price could be met by a local dealer, that opportunity should be extended.

Mr. Herman stated that he will not vote for a tax increase to pay for things, and that is where the money for the truck may have to come from. Mr. Zerfoss made a motion, seconded by Ms. Vavrek, to send this matter back to committee. The motion carried unanimously.

In order to move things forward, Ms. Vavrek made a motion to advertise the specs for the truck. Ms. Leonard seconded the motion and it carried by a vote of six yeas.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Herman made a motion to expend \$6,250 to upgrade the traffic controls at 5th, 6th, 8th and 9th Avenues and Main Street. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vavrek. Mr. Herman explained the reasons why it has taken so long for this to occur and also explained the upgrades to be made. Mr. Zerfoss asked if there was money to pay for the upgrades. Ms. Freenock stated that the upgrades will be paid through Liquid Fuels. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Herman then stated that the Borough is still attempting to have Bilo close the exit closest to Emerson Way. The individual at Penn Traffic that was working on this is no longer with the company. His replacement is looking at the file and we will be talking with him soon.

HOUSING AND ZONING

Mr. Zerfoss reported that three public hearings will occur immediately preceding September's regular Council Meeting.

Mr. Ragon stated that according to the Ordinance that was recently passed, one cannot put a fire ring directly on the ground; residents are also prohibited from burning garbage. There has been some confusion-the purpose of the Ordinance was to allow for recreational fires in approved appliances.

President Wilshire asked Mr. Ragon to explain the process for issuing sidewalk letters. Mr. Ragon stated that Mss. Freenock and Troutman walked the Borough and gave him the addresses where sidewalks needed repair. Mr. Ragon then personally inspected the sidewalks in question. Letters were sent to the owners of those sidewalks in need of repair. ADA standards are being used; sidewalks more than ½ inch or more out of line or those that are broken or spalling need replaced or repaired. When requested by the owner, Mr. Ragon paints the blocks in need of repair. There is one part of the Borough that has not yet been reviewed; all of the notification letters have not yet been sent. There is a process to be followed in those cases where the owner is unable to have the sidewalk repaired within the four month period allowed by the Ordinance.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Stroup stated that the battle over tolling I-80 continues. He also stated that there are ARRA funds available for broadband in rural communities. He will report more on that at a later date.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Freenock introduced LuNeda Troutman, a CUP student that has been interning at the Borough this summer. Ms. Freenock enumerated the projects on which Ms. Troutman has been working and stated that she has done a wonderful job. A letter will be prepared

and signed by all Council per Mr. Herman's suggestion, and given to both Ms. Troutman and to Professor Barry Sweet.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leonard inquired about moving the day of the second monthly Council Meeting. Ms. Vavrek replied that the Administration Committee looked into that, and it was decided that perhaps the second meeting should be cancelled and special meetings called. Since the meetings for this year have already been advertised, it was thought that the new Council should address this matter in January.

NEW BUSINESS

President Wilshire explained that the proceeds from the sale of the Clarion Area Authority are invested in a CD that will mature on July 31st. In order to assure that the proceeds continue to earn interest and are collateralized until Council determines how to continue to invest the funds, it is suggested that they be rolled over into a nine month, non-penalty CD at First United National Bank, earning 1.15% APR. Mr. Herman made a motion, seconded by Ms. Vavrek, to adopt Resolution No. 2009-290, to accomplish the foregoing. The motion carried unanimously.

President Wilshire called for an Executive Session at 6:14 p.m., to discuss the possible sale of property.

The meeting reconvened at 6:30 p.m. President Wilshire stated that no action was taken at the Executive Session.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, on a motion by Ms. Leonard, with a second by Mr. Herman, the meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy K. Freenock
Secretary