

Police and Public Safety Committee Meeting

Minutes

August 31, 2022

The meeting of the Police and Public Safety Committee was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Committee Chairman Charles Neubauer. Present in addition to Mr. Neubauer were committee members Charles Heller, Jeff Cascino, and ex-officio member Frank Deery.

Also in attendance were Lori Carnes, Mayor; Councilman Keith Endy; Patricia Loder, Borough Manager; Police Chief Barry Leatherman; and interested citizens.

Mr. Neubauer called for public comment and recognized Mr. Charles Haddad who commented that parking in the Town Center Parking Lot and metered parking on Philadelphia Avenue is much improved since the Borough now employs a parking enforcement officer.

Mr. Neubauer made a motion, second by Mr. Cascino, to approve the minutes of the July 27th, 2022 meeting of the committee. The motion was approved.

Police Chiefs Report

Chief Leatherman briefly reviewed his report with the Committee. The Chief also advised that he and the school district are working through a shortage of crossing guards and traffic congestion at all schools within the department's jurisdiction. The Chief said the shortage of crossing guards and the traffic congestion have improved since the start of school and they are hopeful that the traffic will return to a more normal volume in the upcoming weeks.

Unfinished Business

Handicap Parking Request – 108 S Franklin Street – The committee reviewed and discussed a handicap parking request submitted by a resident of Franklin Court Apartments. The applicant does have a handicap placard and is requesting a handicap space on South Franklin Street close to the building entry door. Following discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Neubauer, second by Mr. Cascino, to recommend Borough Council approve the request. The motion was approved. This matter will be listed on the agenda of the September 6th, 2022 meeting of Borough Council.

Boyertown Area Multi-Service – Turkey Trot – Mr. Neubauer recognized Mr. Jeff Shontz, representing Boyertown Multi Service, concerning the request to hold the Turkey Trot on November 24th, 2022. Details of the race were provided and are unchanged from the prior year's event. Multi Service will file the required application with PennDOT to close a portion of East Philadelphia Avenue, and they will retain the services of Atlas Signs for traffic control. It was noted that a Park Use Agreement is also required because the race begins and ends in the Community Park. Following discussion, Mr. Neubauer made a motion, second by Mr. Cascino, to recommend Borough Council approve the Turkey Trot and Park Use Agreement. The motion was approved. This matter will be listed on the agenda of the September 6th meeting of Borough Council.

Mr. Schontz also advised the committee that he has opened a new business at 400 East Second Street, called “Bear’s Den Fitness”. He is having a ribbon cutting on Saturday, September 17th at 11:00 a.m. and is expecting approximately 100 people to attend. He is concerned about safety of event attendees due to the limited space between his building and East Second Street. Discussion was held on the subject after which, a motion was made by Mr. Neubauer, second by Mr. Heller, to recommend Borough Council close East Second Street from Franklin Street to Jefferson Street on Saturday, September 17th between 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. for Bear’s Den Fitness ribbon cutting ceremony. The motion was approved. This matter will be listed on the agenda of the September 6th, 2022 meeting of Borough Council.

Pickfest – Request to Close South Washington Street – The committee reviewed and discussed a request submitted by Lori Carnes, Pickfest Committee, (sponsoring organization is Berks Mont Business Association) to close South Washington Street from Philadelphia Avenue to Third Street between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 8th and Sunday, October 9th, 2022 for vendor displays for the annual Pickfest Event. A somewhat lengthy discussion was held on the subject with members of the committee expressing concern about closure of the street for an extended period to time and the inconvenience this would cause to residents and the church. Alternative suggestions were made by the committee including use of Third Street and Pear Street or closure of South Washington Street between Pine Alley and Third Street and a reduction in the closure hours. Following discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Neubauer, second by Mr. Heller, to recommend Borough Council authorize the closure of South Washington Street from Pine Alley to Third Street on Saturday, October 8th and Sunday, October 9th, 2022 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for the Pickfest Event. The motion was approved. This matter will be listed on the agenda of the September 6th meeting of Borough Council.

County Hazard Mitigation Plan – Municipal Action Plan – The committee briefly reviewed the Municipal Action Plan for inclusion in the County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Mrs. Loder stated that she will complete the Municipal Acton Plan and share it with Chairman Neubauer, and Utility Committee Chairman Endy prior to submission of the plan by September 30th to Berks County Department of Emergency Services.

New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

Public Comments

Mr. Neubauer called for public comment; no comments were forthcoming.

There being no further business to conduct a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m. was made by Mr. Neubauer and seconded by Mr. Heller. The next meeting of the Police and Public Safety Committee will be held on Wednesday, September 28th, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Loder
Borough Secretary