

**BOROUGH OF HOMESTEAD
221 EAST 7TH AVENUE
HOMESTEAD, PA 15120**

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
11 May 2017
7:00 P.M.**

Mr. Cunningham called the meeting to order.

The pledge of allegiance was led by the Mayor. A moment of silence was called for the late Council Vice President Barbara Broadwater.

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS RESPONDED TO ROLL CALL

ROLL CALL: Rev. Turner – Present
 Rev. Benton – Present
 Ms. Mariner – Present
 Ms. Burwell – Present
 Mr. Borcik – Present
 Mr. Cunningham – Present
 Mayor Esper – Present
 Police Chief DeSimone – Present
 Engineer Gilliland – Present
 Solicitor Bernie Schneider – Present
 Building Inspector Dan Hankins – Present
 Borough Manager Matt Staniszewski – Present

REQUEST TO BE ON THE AGENDA

- Town Center Associates did a presentation regarding the Central Business District and the administration's efforts to reduce blight and strengthen code enforcement efforts along the Avenues as well as next steps for property owners in providing outreach to educate on various code enforcement violations and ordinances.
- Mr. Jake Voelker of Voodoo Brewery announced preliminary plans for his vision of further redevelopment efforts of his building spurring additional economic development which include an indoor gardening/growing program that will be available to the area youth to teach them about growing, nutrition, farm to table, and opportunities within the food industry.
- Ms. Lynn Settles announced the 16th Annual Project C.H.U.C.K. / Best of Batch Foundation event for children taking place from June 7th to July 22nd. Ms. Settles requested use of the Charlie Batch Playground as well as assistance from the Borough in terms of services from Public Works and the Police Department. (Ref. M-1)

- Ms. Bernice Thomas requested McClure Street be paved particularly from 8th to 10th. Ms. Thomas indicated cars swerve to miss potholes and could hit parked cars. Ms. Thomas asked, since it's been a mild winter, if funds could be reallocated to McClure Street. Mr. Cunningham indicated McClure Street runs through Homestead and Munhall. Mr. Cunningham asked the Engineer to meet with the Munhall Engineer to see if the two municipalities could possibly do a joint project in the future. Mr. Cunningham indicated the snow removal budget isn't significant enough to pave a road. Mr. Borcik stated the cost, based upon past projects, would exceed over \$65,000.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

- Ms. Connie Portis expressed the need for a newsletter to be sent out at least annually. Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Staniszewski displayed an existing newsletter that is already sent out annually to residents detailing many of the items Ms. Portis identified; which is also paid for by private companies and not tax dollars. Rev. Benton stated if Ms. Portis is willing to do the newsletter, then Council should consider allowing her to compose it.
- Ms. Alice Paylor-Dais asked what the HARB does.

MOTIONS

- M-1** Immediately following Ms. Settles' presentation regarding Project C.H.U.C.K., a motion was made by Mr. Borcik, Seconded by Ms. Mariner, to authorize use of the Charlie Batch Playground from June 7th through July 22nd and provide support services as identified within Ms. Settles' request. Upon voice vote, motion carried 6 – 0.
- M-2** Mr. Borcik nominated Ms. Kimberly Fowler to the vacant Borough Council Seat. Upon voice vote, motion carried 6 – 0.
- M-3** Ms. Burwell nominated Rev. Louise Benton to the Borough Council Vice President seat. Upon voice vote, motion carried 6 – 0. At that time, Mayor Esper swore Ms. Fowler in to serve on Borough Council.
- M-4** Motion was made by Rev. Turner, Seconded by Mr. Borcik, to pay the bills as per the bill list in the amount of \$120,894.29. Upon roll call vote, Rev. Turner, Rev. Benton, Ms. Mariner, Mr. Borcik, and Mr. Cunningham voted yes. Ms. Fowler abstained, no reason provided. Ms. Burwell abstained indicating she had an issue with one of the vendors and their check. Motion carried 5 – 0.

- M-5** Motion was made by Rev. Benton, Seconded by Rev. Turner, to approve the minutes of the April 13th, 2017 meeting of Homestead Borough Council. Upon voice vote, motion carried 7 – 0.
- M-6** Motion was made by Rev. Benton, Seconded by Ms. Burwell, to accept the resignation of Police Officer Charles W. Thomas, Jr. Upon voice vote, motion carried 7 – 0.
- M-7** Motion was made by Ms. Burwell, Seconded by Rev. Benton, to hire Josephine Owens as a part-time School Crossing Guard at an hourly rate of \$12.67 as recommended by the Police Chief, effective May 15, 2017. Upon roll call vote, Rev. Turner, Rev. Benton, Ms. Mariner, Ms. Burwell, Mr. Borcik, Ms. Fowler and Mr. Cunningham voted yes. Motion carried 7 – 0.
- M-8** Motion was made by Mr. Borcik, Seconded by Ms. Mariner, to authorize the Solicitor to take steps necessary to provide a hearing to Ronald DePellegrin on his disability pension claim. Upon roll call vote, Rev. Turner, Rev. Benton, Ms. Mariner, Ms. Burwell, Mr. Borcik, Ms. Fowler and Mr. Cunningham voted yes. Motion carried 7 – 0.
- M-9** Motion was made by Rev. Turner, Seconded by Mr. Borcik, to adopt RESOLUTION 2017-12: Greenways, Trails and Recreation Grant Application in the amount of \$250,000 for the Trail Connector Project. Upon voice vote, motion carried 7 – 0.
- M-10** Motion was made by Ms. Mariner, Seconded by Mr. Borcik, to adopt RESOLUTION 2017-13: Oppose cuts to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. Upon voice vote, motion carried 7 – 0.
- M-11** Motion was made by Mr. Borcik, Seconded by Ms. Mariner, to adopt RESOLUTION 2017-14: Opt-in to Allegheny County's Economic Development's CDBG and HOME programs for 2018 through 2020. Ms. Burwell asked if the Resolution could be further explained. Mr. Cunningham stated adopting this Resolution enables Homestead to participate in various redevelopment efforts with the County. Upon voice vote, motion carried 7 – 0.
- M-12** Motion was made by Ms. Burwell, Seconded by Ms. Mariner, to appoint John A. Kudravy to the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB). Upon voice vote, motion carried 7 – 0.

M-13 Immediately following the Engineer's reports, a motion was made by Mr. Borcik, Seconded by Ms. Burwell, to award the lowest bidder to Lawson Excavating in the amount of \$145,625 for the Amity Street Green Infrastructure Project as part of compliance with the consent decree as recommended by the Borough Engineer. Upon roll call vote, Rev. Benton, Ms. Mariner, Ms. Burwell, Mr. Borcik, Ms. Fowler and Mr. Cunningham voted yes. Rev. Turner abstained, no reason provided. Motion carried 6 – 0.

M-14 Immediately preceding the Manager's report, a motion was made by Mr. Borcik, Seconded by Ms. Mariner, to change the time of Borough Council's Thursday night business meetings from 7PM to 6PM and authorize the Manager to advertise said change accordingly. Upon roll call vote, Rev. Turner, Rev. Benton, Ms. Mariner, Ms. Burwell, Mr. Borcik, Ms. Fowler and Mr. Cunningham voted yes. Motion carried 7 – 0.

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

Mr. Cunningham displayed reminder cards for residents to complete the online survey for the Multi-Municipal Recreation Plan. Mr. Cunningham indicated data needs to be collected so that the consultant knows what people want and encouraged people to visit the website. Mr. Cunningham stated Munhall had about 60% participation, West Homestead over 20%, and Homestead only slightly over 10%.

Mr. Cunningham explained details for the Memorial Day parade on May 29th as well as Planting Day taking place May 27th. Mr. Cunningham reminded everyone to please vote this upcoming Tuesday.

Mr. Cunningham further explained the CDBG program as a member of the audience, out of order, asked additional questions. Mr. Borcik stated that Allegheny County has been very good to Homestead in helping with Economic Development.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT - No report

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Gilliland gave his report. A copy was submitted to Council. Mr. Gilliland provided a recommendation to award the lowest bidder for the Amity Street Green Infrastructure Project. (Ref. M-13)

MAYOR ESPER

Mayor Esper stated she and the Chief met with the teachers at Barrett School to discuss concerns about recent area shootings.

Mayor Esper stated the teachers had questions regarding the building next to Barrett School. Mr. Cunningham indicated CDBG money was originally earmarked to HERC to tear the building down; however, because the organization no longer exists, it held the process up. The Mayor questioned how much longer it will take. Ms. Burwell stated she thought the school was going to tear the building down and then take it over. Ms. Burwell then questioned that the Municipality is going to tear it down and then allow the school to take it over. Mayor Esper stated the building is unsafe. Mr. Borcik stated Council has been working on the issue for over eight years.

Mayor Esper stated a School Resource Officer (SRO) will be back in the school by September.

Mayor Esper wished everyone a Happy Mother's Day and discussed details about a local luncheon. The Mayor announced she is attending the Allegheny County Black Caucus event on May 20th. Finally, the Mayor reminded everyone to remember loved ones on Memorial Day and to vote on Election Day.

CHIEF OF POLICE

The Chief gave his report. A copy was submitted to Council.

FIRE DEPARTMENT - No report provided.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Mr. Hankins gave his report. A copy was submitted to Council.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT

Motion (Ref. M-14) was made prior to the Manager's report. Mr. Staniszewski gave his report. A copy was submitted to Council. Meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew D. Staniszewski, MBA
Borough Manager/Secretary
Chief of Administration