

COALDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
221/223 THIRD ST., COALDALE, PA 18218
JULY 11, 2023, 7:00 PM

Executive Session: 6:30pm – 7:00pm Personnel matters were discussed.

Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order by Council President Angela Krapf followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Solicitor Robert Yurchak, Council President Angela Krapf, Council Vice President Claire Remington, Councilman Jacob Adamitis, Councilwoman Yvonne Stoffey, Councilman Francis Hutta, and Councilman Wayne Figner and Councilperson Cadence Krapf were present. Councilman Ken Hankey Jr. and Mayor Herb Whildin was absent.

Attendance: There were 11 members of the public and 1 reporter in attendance.

Public Participation:

- Rudy Feane, 133 W. Earley Ave., addressed two issues.
 - He stated that the neighbors at 135 and 137 W Earley Ave. leave the trash out 7 days a week. It smells, overflows, and attracts animals. Wayne Figner verified the location between Fifth and Sixth Sts. Mr. Feane stated he filed a complaint and spoke with the police. The problem continues. Claire Remington asked to see the complaint. Jill Figner stated she passed the complaint along and did not have a duplicate copy. Claire Remington asked Mr. Feane to fill out another complaint and the Jill Figner stated she would keep a duplicate copy in the future. Claire Remington asked if these were the same neighbors that had a barrel fire last year. Mr. Feane replied yes.
 - He also reported that he smelled gas, so he called 911 because his neighbors were using an outdoor gas grill inside the kitchen because their furnace was broken. Claire Remington asked Jacob Adamitis if they could be cited.; he replied possibly. Claire Remington asked for the Quality-of-Life Ordinance to follow-up.
- Michele Solem, 136 Sixth St., addressed blight.
 - She stated that the property is becoming a wildlife refuge. She spoke with Gary Bender of Schuylkill County, who stated that he could help at no cost to Coaldale.
 - She also stated that she could volunteer her services for government grant writing. Claire stated that she thought the property had been condemned. Both Claire Remington and Luis Negron confirmed a miscommunication; each thought the other would initiate the next steps. Angela Krapf was concerned about credentials. Claire Remington asked about liability insurance. Solicitor Robert Yurchak stated a volunteer waiver would be needed.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to accept volunteer services pending review of her credentials.
Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Ted Bortnick, 55 W. Phillips St., addressed one issue.
 - He questioned the purchase of a hot water heater for Borough Hall. He expressed concerns about reduced lifespan of both the oil burner and hot water heater because of turning them on and off. Claire Remington stated the cost of oil to heat the water was prohibitive. Mr. Bortnick suggested lowering the temperature setting. Jacob Adamitis stated the hot water heater would be more efficient. Luis Negron stated the temperature must be at 110° and a hot water heater is more efficient.
- Kim Gavornik, 30 W. Phillips St., addressed one issue.
 - She questioned how many times she needs to complain before Coaldale police cite the neighbor because her dog continues to come into Ms. Gavornik's yard, goes after her dog, and has bitten her son. She has called Coaldale police multiple times, she even called 911 and the State Police responded and cited the neighbor. She tried to resolve matters peacefully with the neighbor and has even reinforced

her fence to no avail, and installed cameras. She stated that if Coaldale police had responded, her son might not have been bitten. Claire Remington asked for clarification about the bites and if the neighbor was in a rental unit. MS. Gavornik clarified and stated she spoke to the landlord, who stated it was a matter with the tenant. Angela Krapf asked who the officer was. Claire Remington asked how to proceed. Solicitor Yurchak asked about rabies and discussed removal of the dog, and landlord responsibility. Claire Remington expressed her concern for Ms. Gavornik's son, and that Angela Krapf would follow up. Angela Krapf stated that she would like to have a discussion with Ms. Gavornik after the meeting.

- Luis Negron / Systems Design Engineering, Inc. 1032 James Drive, Leesport, PA 19533
 - He attended the meeting to answer questions about his services and the issue of condemned properties. Claire Remington asked about his title and authority to condemn properties. Luis Negron replied, Code Enforcement Officer and that he did have that authority. Angela Krapf stated that past emails were exchanged about services. Claire Remington asked about fees. Luis Negron provided examples of possible services. Solicitor Robert Yurchak advised discussion with the police regarding the matter. Jill Figner presented an email regarding fees and stated it was received after the agenda was complete. Angela Krapf stated specifics were needed regarding fees and services and that action would need to be coordinated with Officer Kevin Soberick.

- Jim Rose / PA Department of Community and Economic Development, Keystone Building, 400 North St., Harrisburg, PA 17120
 - He stated he works for the Center for Local Government Services. He presented two programs that he thought could be beneficial for Coaldale. He explained that he worked for the agency that receives and processes the reports to determine how the community is doing. He stated that a copy of the budget and the audits are also received. He stated that several of Coaldale's are missing. He stated that the agency noticed issues with the finances and recommended consideration of two programs to help the borough. He shared addressed the amount of turnover in the positions of secretary, treasurer, and/or manager.
 - The first program is the Peer Program and would be absolutely no cost to the borough. DCED picks up the cost. An experienced and trained peer can be provided to assist and train personnel regarding state and federal reporting requirements to ensure timely receipt of monies the borough is entitled to receive. A form would need to be completed and any additional questions could be received.
 - The second program is a matching Grant Program. Generally, it is a 50/50 split, however, based on Coaldale's finances, the split could be 90/10 because DCED is quite concerned about Coaldale. This is the maximum split allowed by law. A consultant experienced in municipal matters would review operations and finances and make recommendations some with others without cost. If there is a cost, certain items would qualify for a 90/10 split. The overall cost for the consultant would be approximately \$60,000.00, of which Coaldale would be responsible for approximately \$6,000.00. The balance would come from state funding. At least a dozen qualified consultants are available. There would be no "hooks" or requirement to implement recommendations. The help would be to develop best practices and the best bang for the residents' tax bucks. A resolution would be needed for the programs. Mr. Rose would make himself available to answer questions at another meeting.
 - Claire Remington expressed thanks and asked about the duration of the consultation process. Jim Rose stated there is a boiler plate contract that can be modified.

Approval of Previous Minutes: Motion made by Frank Hutta to accept MAY and JUNE meeting minutes. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.

Treasurer's Report / Approval of Bills:

- **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to accept Treasurer's Report. Seconded by Jake Adamitis and motion carried **unanimously**.
- **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to pay the bills when money is available. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.

Police Report: Read by Yvonne Stoffey.

- June 2023: Total money collected was \$354.60; Total miles patrolled were 1,722; and Total number of calls for service was 105.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to accept Police Report. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.

Mayor's Report: None.

President's Report: Given by Angela Krapf, President

- \$1,740.22 principal / \$68.48 interest collected in June from PLA for delinquent sanitation.
- \$2,385.90 principal / \$61.09 interest collected in June from PLA for delinquent sewer transmission.
- \$2,341.71 principal / \$0.00 interest collected in June from PLA for delinquent real estate taxes.

Secretary's Report: Given by Jill Figner.

- Outstanding Invoice from Computer Pals Follow up for late payment:
 - Emailed to former Secretary, not provided to Treasurer.
- Conservator's Plan from Brennan Law Firm LLC:
 - What action should be taken? Per Solicitor Robert Yurchak, the matter relates to St. Clair and can be filed.
- Course Vector – Recommendation for new website:
 - Recommended by PSAB, preliminary questionnaire completed by Jill Figner proposed cost \$1,050.00 for new website design, \$617.00 annual fee. Final cost to be based on Council preferences.
 - Current website down, exceeding bandwidth, inaccurate information, and not up to date.
 - The questionnaire will be emailed for Council to complete, and the results will be compiled by Jill Figner.
- Diversified Technologies Billing System:
 - Online payment application still needs to be completed.
 - Third Quarter Billing Errors – incorrect discounts, penalties, balances due, and statements. Programmer believes problems stem from history pulled from MuniBilling. No entries, changes, and adjustments can be made until problem is verified and corrected. Currently there is a significant backlog of tasks to be completed in the database. Checks and cash can be deposited but payments cannot be applied.
 - Diversified is very responsive to these issues. Council saved the borough money, unfortunately going live with the new system comes with the cost of debugging the programs.
- Kistler O'Brien Renewal Cost Follow up:
 - \$345.00 is for the Annual Inspection of 36 extinguishers and Trip Charge plus \$262.00 to swap out 2.5# and 5# chemical extinguishers every six years. We received a list of all extinguishers within the borough.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to approve the renewal. Seconded by Jacob Adamitis and motion carried **unanimously**.
- LCB Correspondence regarding LCB License for Viennese Villa
 - James Metsopoulos is willing to pay up to \$100.00 for an ad in the Times News if necessary.
 - He is also willing to come to a meeting to answer questions during Public Participation
- Liquid Fuels Reports missing reports:
 - Discussed during Executive Session – Angela Krapf and Lacey Gonzalez working on necessary DCED reports.
- Tenant Complaint: 21 East Lehigh St.:
 - Tenant reported fire hazards.
 - Officer Kevin Soberick was contacted and filed a report. He can speak to that.

- Luis Negron was also contacted. Luis Negron stated the property was inspected 2022. His report verifies electrical problems in the report. Follow-up inspections are needed. Landlord denies knowledge. Claire Remington asked about procedure and follow up. Luis Negron stated he has not heard from the borough about next steps. Jill Figner reported that the documentation is in six different places and is not in agreement regarding dates and/or pass/fail status. She recommended that the borough work with Luis Negron and/or his company to bring the records and procedure up to date. Claire Remington asked about the landlord's response. Jill Figner stated he plans to evict the tenants. Luis Negron stated that many landlords are not present. Solicitor Robert Yurchak stated that this landlord will need to be pressured to comply. Claire Remington asked about property managers and said that we need to act. Frank Hutta suggested that we should have Luis Negron manage this process. Claire Remington asked about fees. Jill Figner stated Rental Applications and Renewals are \$30.00 and every inspection costs \$75.00. If the property passes the inspection, the next inspection is due in 2 years. Otherwise, if the property fails inspection, it must be inspected annually. Claire Remington spoke about housing standards and the need for enforcement.
- Emergency Management Agency – Municipal Contact Information Update:
 - Contact Information sheet will be passed around to gather preferred contact information and will be entered and submitted by Jill Figner.
- PIRMA Invoice for Insurance Renewal of Coverage:
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to pay PIRMA Invoice. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Settlement Agreement:
 - Discussed during Executive Session – Personnel issue.
- MRM Termination of Workers' Compensation Coverage:
 - Jill Figner got contact info in the McGriff file and reached out to Greg (no last name), by calling the main number but did not receive a response.
 - After six calls requesting a quote from the Weiss-Schantz Agency, a proposal was never received.
 - Claire Remington suggested contacting PSAB, looking through Borough Code magazine, or contacting other boroughs for information.
- Field Day for Kids – July 22nd, 2023, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM:
 - Claire Remington asked if this was an organization. Jill Figner said that it was initiated by Hope Scaggs, and some other parents interested in doing something for the kids. Ms. Scaggs would like to make this an annual event. Claire Remington said the parking area will need a clean up and cans can be provided for trash. Jill Figner stated liability insurance had already been paid for and that she would contact Hope Scaggs regarding Coaldale's approval and the need to contact Lansford for tennis court approval.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to approve the use of the field for July 22nd, 2023. Seconded by Jacob Adamitis and motion carried **unanimously**.

Solicitor's Report: Given by Attorney Robert Yurchak.

- Vacating Moser Ave. between 6th and 7th Sts. and Lehigh St. past 6th St. via ordinance will not serve Frank Hutta's plans for paving the road and installing drainage. The vacated land must go to the owner(s) bordering the property. In this case that would be the Rod and Gun because they own both sides surrounding the property to be vacated. He suggested granting a permanent easement which would prevent restricting access.
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to grant a permanent easement to Frank Hutta. Seconded by Jacob Adamitis and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Kennel Ordinance needs to go to Planning Commission, Council agreed. Claire Remington asked about chickens and livestock in the borough. Solicitor Robert Yurchak stated that the borough has an Animal Control Ordinance 1995-2 relating to noise and that he is working on one that will address issues with dogs and chickens.

Fire Report: Given by Jake Adamitis, Chairperson.

- Fire Chief reports 8 calls for June 2023 and 72 calls YTD.

- Wayne Figner asked if the calls were for Coaldale. Jacob Adamitis said the calls included assistance for police and EMS.

Code Enforcement/Zoning Report: None

Council Report: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Building/Complex: Given by Angela Krapf.

- Based on the agreement with the school and the preschool, the Complex floors will be stripped and waxed for free. Claire asked when that would occur and requested a copy of the agreement. Angella Krapf will provide copies.

Demolition/Grants: None

Finance/Utilities: None

Handicap: None.

Police: Given by Angela Krapf.

- Part time police officer list addressed at special meeting.

Police Pension: None

Recreation/Memorial:

Streets: Given by Claire Remington.

- Need to advertise material bids for streets.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to advertise for material bids. Seconded by Jacob Adamitis and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Parking Ordinance will need to be looked at for consistency and to prevent problems with enforcement. Kim Gavornik asked about snow emergencies. Claire Remington stated that the police can enforce parking requirements. Rudy Feane stated his neighbors do not comply and should be ticketed. Claire Remington stated that the Union Agreement needs to be confirmed first.

New Business:

- Motion to Add a Motion: Request by Angela Krapf.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to add a motion. Seconded by Jacob Adamitis and motion carried **unanimously**.
- Mayor Herb Whildin's Letter of Resignation.
 - **Motion** made by Claire Remington to accept letter of resignation. Seconded by Jacob Adamitis and motion carried **unanimously**.
 - Solicitor Robert Yurchak stated that the Election Bureau will need to be notified. Jill Figner will do so. Claire Remington asked what the borough needs to do. Solicitor Robert Yurchak stated the borough has 30 days to appoint someone; the borough can solicit people for the appointment. She asked what happens if no one is appointed. He replied that it will be up for election in the fall. Angela Krapf inquired about advertising for interested parties to submit a letter to the Borough.
 - **Motion** made by Frank Hutta to advertise for mayor. Seconded by Wayne Figner and motion carried **unanimously**.
 - Solicitor Robert Yurchak stated that Public Notice must be given. Jill Figner will do so.

Meeting temporarily paused for Executive Session.

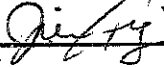
Meeting called back to order.

- **Old Business:** Klines Hill

- Mikah Gursky provided a review and update for the Klines Hill Project. In 2018 Council Members approached St. Luke's about working together on Klines Hill. A pre-application was submitted for funding through the Appalachian Regional Commission. Initially the project was to reconstruct the road. The Commission said pedestrian amenities needed to be included to qualify. St. Luke's contributed Mikah Gursky's time along with \$30,000.00. The borough committed \$20,000.00. An 80/20 split is required between federal and local funds. Penn DOT oversees the projects. Delays increased costs to \$570,000.00. This resulted in the elimination of the sidewalk. Additional funds were sought. Initially, denied, an additional \$168,000.00 was added. However, ARRO stated that an additional \$22,000.00 for engineering and right of way, and \$5,000.00 for construction management is needed from the borough.
 - Current Council Options include:
 - Proceed without the sidewalks.
 - Proceed with the sidewalks at the cost of an additional \$27,000.00.
- Claire Remington inquired when the \$27,000.00 would be due. Mikah Gursky stated the \$22,000.00 would be due immediately, the \$5,000.00 at the start of construction. Claire Remington stated that the money would have to be taken from the General Fund. Wayne Figner objected to using General Funds and/or raising taxes. Mikah Gursky stated that future costs would be greater. Angela Krapf mentioned the anniversary of the young man killed on the road and wanting a dedication in his memory. Claire Remington stated the sidewalk did not extend to 7th St. She also mentioned the Name the Hill Contest and a Shelter. Angela Krapf suggested talking with Lacey Gonzalez. Various options were discussed including donations.

Adjournment: Motion made by Frank Hutta at 10:10 PM. Seconded by Claire Remington and motion carried unanimously.

SUBMITTED BY:



Jill Figner, Borough Secretary

Submitted for Approval on August 8th, 2023