

**REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 9, 2009**

President Christman called to order the Regular Meeting of Crafton Borough Council, in Council Chambers of the Community Center; Flag Salute was led by Mr. Byers. Roll call, by Mrs. Tremblay, recorded all (9) members of Council present, as follows: Mr. Bloom, Mr. Byers, Mr. Cindric, Mr. Crown, Mr. Donovan, Mrs. Luxbacher, Mrs. Sappie, Mrs. Viola and Mr. Christman. Also present were Mayor O'Connell, Manager Sample, Solicitor Ayoob, Engineer Minsterman and Jr. Council Mr. Shearris.

President Christman announced that Council met in a brief Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss labor contract matters.

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mr. Donovan, seconded by Mr. Bloom, to approve the December 9, 2009 List of Bills. **COMMENTS:** Mr. Bloom inquired on #410.53, Court Reporting expense. Mrs. Tremblay noted that there are two separate invoices; one for the reporter's attendance/time, and one for the hearing transcript.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0), with exceptions noted by Mrs. Viola (#411.23, #411.231, #430.31).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mrs. Viola, seconded by Mr. Crown, to approve the November 18, 2009 meeting Minutes.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Voice Vote (9-0).

CITIZEN'S PRESENT TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Dean Davis, 38 Maplewood Avenue – Commented on ordinance violation notices he received; to remove his boat and trailer from the property and scrape/paint his garage. Due to weather, the property maintenance violation was stayed until spring, but feels he cannot remove the boat and trailer. Manager Sample referred Mr. Davis to upcoming Ordinance Review Meetings to discuss and provide input to amend the recreational vehicle storage issue.

RECEIPT OF WRITTEN REPORTS

The following written reports were provided in Council's Packet: Treasurer's Report, Financial Report, Act 511 and Trash Collection Fee Reports, Property Tax Collection Report, Police Report, Ordinance Officers report, REMs Report, Animal Control and Engineers Report. MOTION (Bloom/Crown) to accept the Written Reports was carried by Unanimous Voice Vote.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Engineer Minsterman reported that the ADA curb project was complete and is recommending payment be approved. He advised that the bid documents are being prepared to go out in January for sewer defect corrections. Mrs. Luxbacher inquired about a resident's issue with the ADA curb installation. It was reported that changes would be made and a waiver signed by the Owner.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor O'Connell thanked Mr. Byers for his 16 years of service on Borough Council, as well as thanking other members of Council whose term on Council were done. She commented on the tree planting/dedication ceremony conducted in Crafton Park by Rege Patton in memory of Fred Peelor. She reported that the Department responded to 226 complaints in November and referred Council to the written report. She reported that the department received grant funds from Sam's Club in the amount of \$1,000. She commented on the change of Mayor process, and a copy of a letter she provided to Mayor Hull at the time she took office, relating to police department records. She thanked the electors for the

opportunity to serve as Mayor over the past four years, thanked the police officers, particularly Chief Rost for their service. She commented on changes, equipment updates, programs over the past four years, particularly the Opt-In program, and the challenges with staff shortages, but able to stay under budget each year. She commented on the increases in the budget over the years, starting at 5 ½ mills in 2005 to present 8 ¾ mills; a 60% increase. She welcomed the incoming Mayor Bloom.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Christman thanked the residents for the opportunity to serve on Council the past four years and wished everyone well for the Holidays.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Sample reported that the EIT audit was completed by Case/Sabatini and are on file in the office for Councils review.

DISCUSSION ITEMS AND OLD BUSINESS

a. Resolution 2009-19 – Wage Resolution – Manager Sample reported that the wage resolution reflects no pay increases for Administrative employees, and includes the addition of employee contributions to health care. Mrs. Viola questioned life insurance and tax collector compensation. Manager Sample advised that life insurance is provided by contract and that the incoming tax collector is entitled to same compensation/benefits as provided to the previous tax collector (by Borough Code), unless timely changes are made prior to the next election.

b. Resolution 2009-20 – Rate Resolution – Very little change in rates, includes a \$10 increase in weekend park shelter rental fees. Sewer Surcharge increase from \$6.00 to \$6.50 per 1,000 gals.

c. Police Service Agreement (Thornburg) – A three-year Agreement has been provided to Thornburg reflecting a 3% increase per year; to be considered for approval at Thornburg's December 14th Council meeting.

d. Reorganization Meeting – Per Borough Code, held the 1st Monday in January; scheduled for Monday, January 4th at 7:30 pm.

e. White Avenue Property – Mrs. Luxbacher encouraged some small improvements to the property, perhaps a bench, trash cans, flowers, trees, etc.

f. Letter of Intent – Volunteer Fire Department Study – Mr. Crown reported that he has been talking with the Pa DCED since July regarding consolidation of services with other communities; as discussed and considered previously by Council. Ingram has shown no interest, so CVFD has been talking with Carnegie, being in the same School District, etc. Mr. Crown clarified that it would be companies that service the residents of the district, not the school property in Robinson. This would be a free study, with no commitment to consolidate. A scope of services, etc. would be defined and would be one of the first, so it could serve as a model plan. Having a study performed by the DCED would open up grant opportunities for a merger of departments. Mr. Crown said the EMS part of the study would be for the QRS only, not NorthWest EMS. Carnegie Council has not voted on this study/Letter of Intent yet, and plan on doing so in January – if they do not go forward, then Crafton could not continue with the application/Letter of Intent. Mr. Cindric suggested that perhaps Crafton wait until they have Thornburg and Rosslyn Farms input on this action since they are provided fire service protection by CVFD; and possible table this motion for now.

g. Commission Vacancy Appointments – Manager Sample reported that Mr. Harlich has expressed an interest in the open seat on the Zoning Hearing Board, and Mr. Shriver has agreed to reappointment as an alternate member. Mr. Clark has not confirmed interest in re-appointment to the Building Appeals Board, so the motion on the Agenda should be withdrawn for now.

h. Resolution 2009-21 – Local Fiscal Assistance Act – Manager Sample referred Council to a recent article in the Borough News; this is a resolution of support to continue financial assistance to boroughs.

- i. **Recreation Board** – Special Activities Account – Requested by Mrs. Sappie, to receive fund raising revenues for special recreational activities not budgeted for, such as teen and family activities in addition to other Senior Citizen activities. Rec Board’s recent fundraiser was a Craft/Vendor show with proceeds slated to go into this fund.

BUSINESS AGENDA

ADMINISTRATION:

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mr. Donovan, seconded by Mrs. Viola, that the Borough Secretary be authorized to advertise the 2010 Council Reorganization Meeting to be held at 7:30 PM on Monday, January 4, 2010.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0).

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mrs. Viola, seconded by Mr. Crown, to appoint Jeffery Harlich to the Zoning Hearing Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2012.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0).

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mrs. Luxbacher, seconded by Mr. Crown, to re-appoint James Shriver as an “alternate” to the Zoning Hearing Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2012.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0).

~~**MOTION:** It was regularly moved by to re-appoint _____ to the Building Appeals Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2012. **Withdrawn.**~~

BUDGET AND FINANCE

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mrs. Sappie, seconded by Mr. Donovan, to adopt the 2010 Borough of Crafton General Fund and Special Road Improvement Tax Fund Budget. **COMMENTS:** Mr. Cindric spoke against the current proposed Budget, reiterating comments made by Mayor O’Connell, re: 60% increase in tax millage since 2005, and the estimated \$175,000 surplus fund balance is a result of the tax increase and no other reason. Mr. Christman, Mrs. Sappie noted that the Road Tax Fund was eliminated in 2005, the road program budget was underfunded that year, and the borough had to borrow funds for the 2006 paving program; which is now being paid for by current budgets. Mr. Cindric reiterated that he was not in favor of any of the prior bridge improvements, for which monies were also borrowed. Mr. Bloom noted that a surplus fund balance is anticipated, which need not be spent – there is a five year plan in place for road improvements, and, maybe after that time, a reduction in taxes can be considered. But, to do so now would jeopardize the work planned, and you would see, once again, deterioration of our roads, which would be taking steps backward. He also noted that 2010 is the first year in a long time that the Borough does not have to take on TRAN borrowing (Tax Revenue Anticipation Note); there are several needed repairs scheduled for the bridge (expansion dams, rocker bearings, etc.), which are being funded in the 2010 budget. Mr. Cindric stated that funds would now be available for the bridge repairs under the Federal Stimulus Money, but now the bridge rating went up so we no longer qualify for funds – the whole bridge could have been done out of grant money. Mrs. Sappie disagreed, and said we could not just re-asphalt the bridge and put a weight limit on it because the re-bar was cut, and based on the meeting with PennDot we moved forward on the repairs at their recommendation, and advise that we did not qualify for the TIP because the bridge was not structurally deficient. Mrs. Sappie and Manager Sample confirmed that the bridge was re-rated and did not qualify.

MOTION carried by an Eight Yes, One No (*Cindric*) Roll Call Vote (8-1).

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mr. Byers, seconded by Mr. Donovan, to adopt Resolution No. 2009-19 fixing the Annual Salaries of Certain Employees of the Borough of Crafton, Commencing with January 1, 2010, establishing Holidays, Vacations, Sick Leave and other Benefits and providing

Disciplinary Procedures for the Violations thereof; and, repealing any and all Resolutions inconsistent therewith.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0).

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mr. Byers, seconded by Mr. Donovan, to adopt Resolution No. 2009-20 of the Borough of Crafton establishing the 2010 General Schedule of Fees, Costs, Charges and Expenses pursuant to Borough Ordinances and repealing any and all Resolutions inconsistent therewith.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0).

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mr. Crown, seconded by Mr. Donovan, to Adopt Ordinance No. 1599 of the Borough of Crafton fixing the Tax Rates on Real Property for the 2010 Fiscal Year at 7 mills for General Fund purposes and 1.75 mills for the Special Road Improvement Tax Levy.

MOTION carried by an Eight Yes, One No (*Cindric*) Roll Call Vote (8-1).

MOTION: It was regularly moved by to adopt Resolution No. 2009-21 which urges Congressmen to support the passage of the Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 2009, providing \$90 billion in assistance to local governments.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0).

MOTION: It was regularly moved by to authorize the proper Borough Officials to open up a Recreation Special Activities Account, which would be used for activities approved by the Borough Council for the Crafton Recreation Board.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0).

PUBLIC SAFETY

MOTION: It was regularly moved by to approve the Police Service Agreement to provide police protection and services to the Borough of Thornburg, for a four (4) year period commencing January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2013.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0).

MOTION: It was regularly moved by to approve the Letter of Intent requesting technical assistance from the Governor's Center for Local Government Services to assess the operations of the fire and emergency service providers of Crafton Borough.

MOTION carried by an Five Yes, Four No (*Byers, Cindric, Viola, Christman*) Roll Call Vote (5-4).

PUBLIC WORKS

MOTION: It was regularly moved by to authorize the Char-West COG to approve payment to Mario Palomobo Contracting, Inc., in the amount of \$17,071.38 for Payment #1, for the 2009 ADA Handicap Ramps, per the execution of Change Order No. 1, as recommended by the Engineer.

MOTION carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote (9-0).

COUNCIL COMMENTS/ COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mr. Bloom – Commented that he has learned a lot being on Council, and looks forward to being Mayor of the Borough. He thanked Mr. Byers for all of his years of service on Council.

Mr. Crown – Reminded everyone of Santa visiting the streets of Crafton on a fire truck on Saturday, Dec. 19th – and requested it be noted on the Borough's website.

Mrs. Sappie – Reminded everyone of the Senior citizen dinner on December 19th.

Mrs. Luxbacher – Noted that the Carnegie Libraries are in dire straits with loss of Access funding, State Aid and RAD funds. The Crafton Public Library will tighten it's budget, and may still be almost \$15,000 short even with the increased contribution from the Borough. She mentioned various activities and programs provided by the Library at no cost to the residents. She thanked Council for the opportunity to serve on Council, and thanked the Administrative Staff who carries out the many requests of Council. She noted the work and effort by the Recreation Board and Mrs. Tremblay for the Senior Citizen dinners; they are very well attended and are a highlight of the month for most of the Seniors; she hoped the program will continue.

Mr. Cindric – Reminded everyone of the Historical Society Gala at Cefalo's in Carnegie; tickets still available at the library, and at the door of the event. He also reminded everyone to keep in mind the needs of the Food Pantry at the Bradford Avenue Presbyterian Church. He commented that it was sad to say goodbye to Mr. Byers, after serving four elected terms on Council.

Mr. Donovan – Wished all a Merry Christmas, and his thoughts will be with the family of the slain City of Pittsburgh Police Officer.

Mr. Byers – Commented that it has been quite a ride. He thanked his wife and the Third Ward Constituents. He's seen a lot of changes in the Borough over the past sixteen years; it has been quite an experience. He's looking forward to less stress, and will be seeing him around.

Mrs. Viola – Thanked the out-going Council members for their time and service to the Borough. She announced that there would be no December Ordinance Review Committee meeting in December, and would resume in January.

Mayor O'Connell – Requested a moment of silence for the fallen Officer, Michael Crawshaw. Crafton Officer's will be attending the funeral service on Friday.

Solicitor Ayoob – Wished all and Happy and Peaceful New Year. Noted it has been a pleasure to service Council.

President Christman – Reported that he will still be active with Crafton Celebrates; a few fund raisers are being considered such as a golf outing, a Crafton's Got Talent talent show, etc. He noted that refreshments are being served in the Community Center following the Council meeting.

ADDITIONAL CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: It was regularly moved by Mr. Donovan, seconded by Mr. Crown, that this meeting be adjourned.

MOTION carried by a Unanimous Voice Vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Tremblay, Borough Secretary