

**BOROUGH OF BROWNSVILLE
FAYETTE COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA
JANUARY 11, 2023**

The Regular meeting of the Council of the Borough of Brownsville was held this evening at the Borough Building in Brownsville. The meeting was called to order by President, Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich at 6:00 p.m. by reciting the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was taken for retired officer John Mattie, who passed away.

The following members were present: Council President, Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, Beth Bock, Jackie Jackson, Kasandra Ward, and Mike Walters. Also present were Solicitor Mitch Mitchell, Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr., and Borough Secretary/Treasurer Melissa S. O'Brien. Council Vice President Paul Synuria and Councilman Barbara Pfeffer were not in attendance.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Shane Ronzio, 217 Front Street. Mr. Ronzio would like to address protecting and preserving the national heritage. Mr. Ronzio noted that public safety is a challenge and that everyone needs to do their part to keep the community safe. There is opportunity here for economic growth. With the right resources, there is potential to thrive.

Brian Brashear, 300 Front Street. Brian Brashear would like to address Ordinances and the historical district. Mr. Brashear asked what the availability of Ordinances was for the general public, and how long the scanning process would take before they are available online. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that we are working on scanning them into the system, but that process will take some time. Until that time, all Ordinances and Resolutions are available at the Borough Building for viewing to the public, provided they come into the office and search for them. We continue to work on digitizing Ordinances and Resolutions. Mr. Brashear asked if there were specific Ordinances in place for the Northside Historic District and also if the Borough would be taking specific measures in the future to outline and identify preservation of our historic sites.

Mara Sim, 303 Catherine Avenue. Ms. Sim spoke about complaints that she filed with the police. Ms. Sim noted that she attended a prior meeting. She is concerned that there was a break-in on Catherine Avenue that was never investigated. There was another incident where 17 phone calls were made to 911 prior to Brownsville police answering. Complaints were filed with everyone, including the solicitor, which no one answered. Ms. Sim feels that the police are not answering phone calls. If there is no answer to the complaints that were filed, she will proceed to request an investigation through the FBI. There are active drug deals going on around her and nothing is being done.

Shameena Isaac, 96 Frick Street. Ms. Isaac spoke about getting rid of blighted properties, vicious dogs, and Heartland Fabrication. Ms. Isaac noted that she asked for houses to be torn down on Frick Street across from her house and was told there was no money to do so. Beth Bock confirmed that this was an area where a house burnt a few years ago. There are wild animals and squatters in the houses. Ms. Isaac also noted that there is a resident with a dangerous dog in the neighborhood and the children are afraid to get off the bus because of the dog. Heartland opens their gate and allows traffic to go through. This is the same area where a child was hit years ago and the gate was installed because of this. They are now using the road again and opening the gate.

Lorraine Dennis, 96 Frick Street. Ms. Dennis spoke on the gated area at Heartland Fabrication. This area was to remain gated after the child was hit there years ago, but it seems they are opening it up again. The residents do not feel this is safe.

Kim Rhodes, 320 Front Street. Ms. Rhodes spoke on code enforcement and an app that is available. Ms. Rhodes had information passed on to her regarding Code, and that is that Council can deputize someone to be a Code Officer through a non-profit. Also, there is an app she would like Council to look into that is for community watch. The app is Twylia and available through a non-profit. There is a \$500 grant towards the purchase.

Rob Rhodes, 320 Front Street. Mr. Rhodes spoke on Brownsville's Neighborhood Watch group meeting. There were 27 people in attendance at this week's meeting and things are going well. This was the third meeting. One of our district attorneys was present, along with our Solicitor, Mayor, and a Councilman. They have been working with the Mayor and are supportive of Council and would like to see everyone at the community meetings. The goal is to make our community

a stronger and better place, and to work with our police and code officer. The next Neighborhood Watch meeting will be held on February 6 at 7 p.m. at Nemacolin Castle.

Kim Brashear, Brier Hill. Mrs. Brashear spoke on Ordinances and Neighborhood Watch. Mrs. Brashear wanted to remind everyone that the issues occurring in the Borough have been going on for a while now and did not just happen overnight. The Neighborhood Watch is hopeful. Mrs. Brashear attended the Fayette County Tourism & Alliance meeting at the Hilton Garden Inn, where there were about 50 people. In tourism, they use a lot of flyers to attract people, and they will have Brownsville in the next flyer. This flyer will also have widgets showing where to eat, where to stay, etc. Everyone wants to eat when they travel, and this widget will show everything but chain restaurants, and feels it is a positive thing.

Jamie Bogol, 300 Front Street. Ms. Bogol spoke on Ordinances and general information. Ms. Bogol noted that she is concerned with the number of out-of-state and absentee landlords in the Borough. Where are we with a new rental Ordinance or with having a property manager within 25 miles of the property? Will we have someone enforcing this?

MINUTES

Motion by Mike Walters to approve the December minutes. Second by Jackie Jackson. All in favor. Motion carries.

MAYOR'S REPORT – Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr.

The police fines for the month totaled \$120.69 from the County and \$590.65 from the MDJ.

There were 99 calls for service, 27 citations, 13 incidents, and 3 arrests. 2 prisoner transports were reported. A total of 1,978 miles were put on the police vehicles last month.

For the 2022 calendar year, there were a total of 979 calls for service, 173 incidents, 341 citations, 15 accidents, and 49 total arrests.

We are waiting for the contract to be finalized for a department cell phone and hope to have something in the next few weeks.

Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. noted that we interviewed officer Brice Joll and offered him a position contingent upon his background check and investigation. Chief Brant spoke on Joll's experience and pending offer. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted this would be a full-time offer, in compliance with the current contract. This position is budgeted for 2023. Motion by Mike Walters to hire Officer Joll. Second by Jackie Jackson. Beth Bock asked how close we would be to having 24/7 coverage, which Chief Brant noted we will only have 8 hours a week without coverage. Mike Walters asked if having a third officer will help address issues like Ms. Sims. Chief Brant noted that all emergency calls must be made through 911 and that they check the phone throughout their shift multiple times. Ms. Sim noted that 911 is telling her that calls must go to Brownsville Borough when they are on duty. Ms. Sim also noted that the state police were refusing to respond. Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. noted that if a call is placed to 911 and then automatically transferred to Belle Vernon state police, we did not have an officer on duty. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that we are working to get back to three full-time officers as that is what our community needs. **Roll Call:** Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, yes; Beth Bock, yes; Jackie Jackson, yes; Kasandra Ward, yes; Mike Walters, yes. Votes are unanimous. Motion carries.

Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. is still working on an Ordinance for parking on yellow lines.

The police car has a build date in January, and no additional information is available.

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. applied for a PCCD grant in the amount of \$74k for police equipment and was awarded \$54k. We are expecting to purchase cameras with this grant that will allow our officers to go back and look at cameras to see things that have happened.

Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. also noted that there is a \$15k pending LSA grant that has been awarded to the police.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION – Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich

Budget reports were included in Council's folders. The total funds at this time are \$446,804.43, including General Fund \$137,237.10, Payroll \$3,238.53, Petty Cash \$511.08, Act 13 \$25,333.15, K-9 Fund \$5,463.15, Fenwick Park \$3,001.00 Fire Escrow \$1.00, Parking Authority

\$1,920.59, PLGIT \$42,622.32, ARPA Grant Fund \$225,476.27, and Comprehensive Plan Fund \$2,000.24.

Monthly bills paid were \$61,912.75. Bills that still need paid total \$8,372.18 from the General Fund, \$0.00 from the Payroll Fund, \$0.00 from the ARPA Grant Fund, \$657.35 from PLGIT. Deposits this month totaled \$34,738.61.

Motion by Beth Bock, second by Jackie Jackson to pay the bills. Beth Bock asked if Who Rescued Who was the prior animal control agency who did not provide us with a contract. Melissa S. O'Brien responded in the affirmative. Beth Bock amends her motion to pay all bills, except the animal control invoice. Additionally, Beth Bock adds to her motion to pay \$50,940 to Hunters Excavation provided we get the signed paperwork back from the RACF. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that state grant money came into the Borough to cover the costs of this demolition and we are thankful for that. **Roll Call:** Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, yes; Beth Bock, yes; Jackie Jackson, yes; Kasandra Ward, yes; Mike Walters, yes. Votes are unanimous. Motion carries.

Motion by Mike Walters, second by Beth Bock to pay the PLGIT invoices. **Roll Call:** Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, yes; Beth Bock, yes; Jackie Jackson, yes; Kasandra Ward, yes; Mike Walters, yes. Votes are unanimous. Motion carries.

Mike Walters noted the invoices from McMillen are on the bill, which we will be meeting on later this week. He would like to table the payments to McMillen until after that meeting.

Beth Bock asked if we were okay financially at this time, which Mike Walters noted we are at this time, although there really is not much going on with the budget at this time. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that the budget is a public document which anyone is able to look at if they so desire.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Mike Walters

Motion by Kasandra Ward to adopt Ordinance O-05-2022 regarding Per Capita Taxes. Second by Beth Bock. All in favor. Motion carries.

Motion by Kasandra Ward to adopt Ordinance O-06-2022 regarding Failure to Receive Tax Notices. Second by Beth Bock. All in favor. Motion carries.

Motion by Kasandra Ward to adopt Ordinance O-01-2023 regarding Setting the Tax Rate. Second by Jackie Jackson. All in favor. Motion carries.

CODE ENFORCEMENT – Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich

Paul Synuria was not present, therefore, Council President Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich spoke on Code. Ordinance O-02-2023 is presented to Council to add a fee for SWEEP appeals. This was discussed with the Sweep Appeals Board. Motion to advertise Ordinance O-02-2023 by Jackie Jackson. Second by Mike Walters. **Roll Call:** Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, yes; Beth Bock, yes; Jackie Jackson, yes; Kasandra Ward, yes; Mike Walters, yes. Votes are unanimous. Motion carries.

Motion by Jackie Jackson to adopt Sledding Ordinance O-07-2022. Second by Kasandra Ward. All in favor. Motion carries.

Code fines for the month totaled \$116.56.

The Code Officer reported that for the month of January, he filed 10 complaints, 0 inspected houses, 6 court hearings attended, 6 magistrate citations issued, 8 SWEEP citations issued, 0 follow-up inspections, and 0 letters sent.

FIRE

For the month of December, Northside had 6 fires, 19 rescue and emergency calls, 2 hazardous condition, 4 service calls, 0 good intent calls, and 2 false alarms.

For 2022, Northside had 44 fires, 143 rescue and emergency calls, 35 hazardous conditions, 51 service calls, 27 good intent calls, 36 false alarms, and 1 special incident.

For the month of December, Southside had 6 fires, 18 rescue and emergency calls, 4 hazardous condition, 3 service calls, 0 good intent calls, and 5 false alarms.

For 2022, Southside had 67 fires, 2 no-fire calls, 153 rescue and emergency calls, 40 hazardous conditions, 38 service calls, 1 good intent calls, 70 false alarms, and 3 special incidents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – Barbara Pepper

Nothing to report.

LIBRARY – Paul Synuria

Nothing to report.

PUBLIC RELATIONS – Beth Bock

Beth Bock noted that she posted the SWEEP information publicly. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that there are Borough Complaint Forms available at the Borough building and also on our website.

PUBLIC WORKS – Kasandra Ward

Kasandra Ward would like to discuss the Bull Run project, which started on January 9. There will be more disruption of traffic and the streets will continue to be dug up as Columbia Gas makes these upgrades. The gas company sent letters to the affected residents, as well as posted info on social media. Kasandra Ward asked Beth Bock to put this out to the residents of the Borough through her email blast.

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich would like to say thank you to Kasandra Ward as she is on top of the upgrades and construction and improvements to the infrastructure here.

Kasandra Ward noted that the gas company is doing a lot of paving, and we want to be sure to work with them to coordinate street upgrades. Additionally, the water company will probably come through in another year or two and do more work once more funding is available. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that we have a pending \$500k multi-modal grant to work on streets.

RECREATION – Jackie Jackson

Jackie Jackson is still waiting to hear from Rivers of Steel. Ms. Jackson asked when we decided to remove the batting cages as she received information from McMillen stating that the cages are coming out. Beth Bock noted that her daughter was not involved in any meetings for over a month and this is the kids playground. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that the batting cages are staying where they are.

Shameena Isaac would like to thank Council for the roads in Newtown Patch, which Kasandra Ward noted was the water company. We have an Ordinance regarding street openings that Councilwoman Ward enforces with the utility companies.

Kim Brashear asked if she could discuss an Ordinance, and Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted if it was not on the Agenda it could not. Mara Sim spoke up and quoted the Ordinance numbers that were discussed earlier. General Ordinance discussions have to happen either during the public session, which passed, or after the meeting.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – Mitch Mitchell

Solicitor, Mitch Mitchell noted that he attended the Northside meeting this week and would like to report to Council that policing and code enforcement are top issues of concern with that group. The following day, Solicitor, Mitch Mitchell scheduled a meeting with MDJ Defino to see how things are handled once they go beyond the appeal process. MDJ Defino noted the next step is to file a citation at his office. Solicitor, Mitch Mitchell finds the quick ticketing system a benefit of the SWEEP program.

As far as the rental program, this will be a much bigger project that we hope to work towards. These things cost money, and we have opened the door with the municipal authority.

Rob Rhodes asked how the Code Officer was prioritizing complaints. Once there is a surplus of money coming in, can it be used towards infrastructure or additional code hours. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that this is a work in progress. We had a system for many years, hired a new officer, initiated a new program, and have to work through this. Councilman Paul Synuria heads that committee, but is not here tonight to discuss. Everyone is interested in making this work, and if we get extra revenue, then yes, we can discuss where those monies will be spent. We just tore down five buildings in the last 60 days, but these things take time. The assessment and valuation of our largest asset is a priority. We do not want to raise taxes again. Council and our Mayor have been working tirelessly to bring grant money in for Borough projects.

Solicitor, Mitch Mitchell excused himself at this time for a personal matter.

Kasandra Ward noted that potholes are showing up again and for complaints, please file a complaint form or call the Borough.

TAX BUREAU – Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich

Information is included in everyone's packet from the Appeals Board, the Upset Sale, and the Zoning Board.

Mike Walters discussed the zoning for Michael Brown's building. Construction started on this project and they expect to be open in 2024.

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted there is construction on the Northside parking lot, and this is private work, not Borough work.

OLD BUSINESS

The Charles Street Bridge construction project came in much higher than the money we have available. It was to be completely demolished and redone. We received a \$500k grant to do this, and the lowest bid we received is \$795k. Motion by Kasandra Ward to reach out to the contractor with the lowest bid and request the work be broken out into more than one project. Second by Mike Walters. **Roll Call:** Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, yes; Beth Bock, yes; Jackie Jackson, yes; Kasandra Ward, yes; Mike Walters, yes. Votes are unanimous. Motion carries.

The Comprehensive Plan is available for review and will be considered at the next meeting.

Under DCED, we have a pending grant for approximately \$600k for Hollow Road to address the slide.

Mike Walters discussed the wharf project. There is a meeting on January 23 with the DCNR regarding funding and how the process works. We were tasked with finding a company to design and build it. We reached out to three companies for bids and will soon be ready to go. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted that there were rumors in the past that the Army Corps would not allow a wharf expansion here, which Mike Walters noted this is just a rumor and the Army Corps is on board with our expansion project. Mike Walters noted that we have approximately \$205k in funding for the wharf project. We are expecting 100' of dock in the water for recreational use. This is an exciting time.

NEW BUSINESS – Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich

There is information from Fayette County on zoning and assessments in the packets for everyone's review.

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich would like to table the selection of a Borough Engineer and Borough Solicitor until next months' meeting.

The website renewal and maintenance contract through PSAB is included for review. The annual fee is \$597. Motion by Beth Bock to continue the PSAB agreement. Second by Jackie Jackson.

Roll Call: Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, yes; Beth Bock, yes; Jackie Jackson, yes; Kasandra Ward, yes; Mike Walters, yes. Votes are unanimous. Motion carries.

CORRESPONDENCE – Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted the LOI for the Municipal Authority will be tabled until next month.

Invitations to the annual banquet for the Brownsville Fire Co. #1 are included for each Councilman.

The Luzerne Park financial statements and TCBA meeting notice are also included for review.

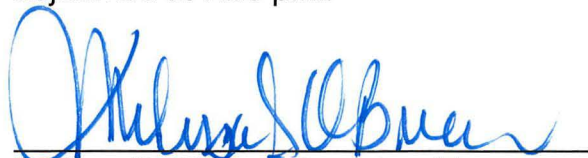
Statements of Financial Interest are included for everyone. These are required annually, so please get these to Melissa S. O'Brien before May 1 so that you are in compliance.

Michael Walters spoke briefly about the conditional zoning on Mr. Michael Brown's building.

There is construction happening on the Northside, but it is private work.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Jackie Jackson. Second by Mike Walters. Motion carries. Meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.



Melissa S. O'Brien, Secretary/Treasurer



TREASURER'S REPORT		
January 2023		
BANK ACCOUNTS (adjusted through January 11, 2023)		
General Fund		\$ 137,237.10
Payroll		\$ 3,238.53
Petty Cash		\$ 511.08
Act 13		\$ 25,333.15
K-9 Fund		\$ 5,463.15
Fenwick Park		\$ 3,001.00
Fire Escrow		\$ 1.00
Parking Authority		\$ 1,920.59
PLGIT		\$ 42,622.32
ARPA Grant Fund		\$ 225,476.27
Comprehensive Plan Fund		\$ 2,000.24
	TOTAL	\$ 446,804.43
DEPOSITS (adjusted through January 11, 2023)		
Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr.	Fines & Fees	\$ 590.65
Clerk of Courts	Fines & Fees	\$ 120.69
Brownsville Police	Police Reports	\$ 30.00
Brownsville Township	Police Protection	\$ 3,750.00
MDJ	Code Fines & Fees	\$ 116.56
Various	SWEEP Fines	\$ 50.00
Various	No Lien Letters	\$ 30.00
Various	Building Permits	\$ 195.00
Various	Demolition Permits	\$ 432.00
Fayette County	Delinquent Real Estate Taxes	\$ 396.84
Fayette County	Delinquent Fire Hydrant Taxes	\$ 12.35
Fayette County	Delinquent Street Light Taxes	\$ 38.09
Recorder of Deeds	Real Estate Transfer Tax	\$ 758.89
SWRTB	Local Service Tax	\$ 120.90
SWRTB	Per Capita Tax	\$ 38.84
SWRTB	Earned Income Tax	\$ 25,843.31
Tena Congelio	Phone Bill	\$ 115.95
First National Bank	Interest	\$ 468.77
First National Bank	Refund	\$ 200.00
Misc	Street Digs	\$ 880.55
Tryon Trucking	Insurance Claim	\$ 22,591.09
Reilly Trucking	Insurance Claim	\$ 4,379.64
	TOTAL	\$ 61,160.12

BOROUGH OF BROWNSVILLE				
MONTHLY BILLS PAID - January 2023				
DEPARTMENT	VENDOR	FOR	AMT.	TOTAL
Finance	Amazon	Office Supplies	\$ 92.17	
	Breezeline	Cable & Internet	\$ 157.08	
	DeLage	Copier Lease	\$ 361.60	
	First National Bank	loan fees	\$ 90.13	
	Guardian Life	BEO Insurance	\$ 33.65	
	IRS	Federal Income Tax	\$ 4,360.90	
	IRS	Federal UE	\$ 22.54	
	Microsoft	Office 365	\$ 50.00	
	PA Department of Revenue	PA Taxes	\$ 725.18	
	PSAB - MRT	Pension	\$ 1,050.00	
	PSP	Crash Report for Insurance Claim	\$ 22.00	
	UPMC	Medical Insurance	\$ 6,603.13	
	UPMC	Dental/Vision Insurance	\$ 290.43	
	Watson Mundorff	Retainer Fee	\$ 5,000.00	
	West Penn Power	Electric	\$ 16.69	
				\$ 18,875.50
Buildings	Amazon	router	\$ 45.02	
	Brownsville Municipal	Sewage	\$ 136.00	
	Columbia Gas	Gas Bill	\$ 1,638.87	
	Costello Wooten	Release of Escrow Funds	\$ 6,666.00	Fire Escrow
	Dollar Tree	supplies	\$ 2.65	
	J&D Distributor	water	\$ 42.00	
	PA American Water	Building	\$ 124.89	
	Terminix	Pest Control	\$ 66.00	
			\$ 8,721.43	
Code Enf.	Hoffman Kennels	animal control	\$ 150.00	
			\$ 150.00	
Police	Bevard	Gas	\$ 558.96	
	FNB Equipment Finance	Lease Payment	\$ 7,676.05	ARPA
	Local 491	Union Dues	\$ 54.00	
	PSAB	Pension	\$ 1,015.00	
	Sumeral Tire	Tires	\$ 665.56	
	Trapuzzano's Uniforms	Vests	\$ 2,982.00	Act 13
	Verizon Wireless	Police Phone	\$ 40.01	
			\$ 12,991.58	
Streets	Bevard	Gas	\$ 673.00	
	Brownsville Ace Hardware	supplies	\$ 14.58	PLGIT
	CAT	repairs	\$ 3,380.14	PLGIT
	Coolspring Stone Supply	aggregate	\$ 4,213.40	PLGIT
	Evolution Edge	repairs	\$ 657.35	PLGIT
	L. Hosler	Uniform Allowance	\$ 676.05	
	LCFOWPA	Pension	\$ 3,986.36	
	Local 373	Union Dues	\$ 80.00	
	NAPA	Supplies	\$ 60.81	PLGIT
	PA One Call	Street Digs	\$ 34.98	
	Traffic Control	repairs	\$ 1,236.77	PLGIT
	US Municipal	repairs	\$ 265.86	PLGIT
				\$ 15,279.30
Fire	Center Independent	Gas	\$ 392.11	
	PA American Water	Hydrants	\$ 1,154.83	
	SWIF	Workers' Comp	\$ 4,498.00	
				\$ 6,044.94
	TOTAL BILLS PAID			\$ 61,912.75
BOROUGH OF BROWNSVILLE				
BILLS DUE - January 2023				
Bills paid this month total		\$ 61,912.75		
The following bills are due from the General Fund:				
	PAWC	water	\$ 1,306.95	
	West Penn Power	electric	\$ 5,660.80	
	Who Rescued Who	animal control	\$ 1,404.43	
				\$ 8,372.18
The following bills are due from the PLGIT Account:				
	Evolution Edges	repairs	\$ 657.35	
				\$ 657.35
	TOTAL BILLS DUE THIS MONTH			\$ 9,029.53