



## **Borough of Bellevue**

### **Borough Pre-Council Meeting Minutes**

July 14, 2020, 7:00 pm  
Via Zoom Teleconference

#### **Call to Order**

President Pennington called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

The call to order was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in memory of Borough employee Jim Delcroix.

#### **Roll Call**

The roll was called to establish a quorum. Present were Ms. Hause, Mrs. Pikul, Ms. Edmondson, Ms. Sloane, Mr. Pritchard, Ms. Cerminara, Mr. DiTullio, Mr. Stuncard, and President Pennington. A quorum was established.

Also in attendance were Mayor Emily Marburger; Treasurer Joe Scioscia, Director of Administrative Services Cindy Bahn; Financial Services Administrator Andrea Contes; Engineers Ben Gilberti and Bryan Churilla; and Solicitor Matt Racunas.

#### **Public Contribution on Agenda Items**

- Linda Woshner, 157 S. Euclid Avenue: Commented on grants for blighted properties and expressed her preference that they be rehabbed if possible.
- Connie Rankin, 116 Arch Avenue: Stated that under the Borough's Home Rule Charter, the Administrative Code and Personnel Code are two different things.
- Joe Scioscia, 256 Lincoln Avenue: Commented on the "Anti-Police Protest" in Bellevue.
- Sue Benaquista, 166 Davis Avenue: Complained about conditions at 40 Kendall Avenue.

#### **Review of Minutes**

- There were no changes to the minutes of the following: June 9, 2020 Pre-Council Meeting; June 23, 2020 Council Meeting. Ms. Hause stated that she will talk to the Solicitor about details in the minutes, and that public comments included inflammatory statements.

#### **Reports**

##### **Mayor's Report** (written report was included with Council packet)

- Mayor Marburger had nothing to report.

##### **Treasurer's Report** (written report was included with Council packet)

- The Treasurer reported that he spoke with the Tax Collector, and that income is close to where it was last year.

##### **Financial Report** (Budget, Tax and Services reports were included with Council packet)

- No comments were made.



## **Parks and Recreation Committee; Val Pennington, Chair**

1. Discussion: Status of Summer Concert Series at Bayne Park
  - Ms. Goodman reported that the next 2 concerts have been cancelled because Allegheny County is limiting outdoor events to 50 people. Two more are on the schedule. Ms. Hause believes that these should be held. Mr. Stuncard attended 2 of the 3 concerts that have been held and stated his wish that they were better attended. Mrs. Pikul wondered how the concerts were advertised, and Ms. Goodman responded that the banner had been damaged, and she was unable to get it replaced in time; other advertising outlets have been closed due to the pandemic. Ms. Cerminara stated that while the concerts are a community benefit, fewer people have been attending and cancelling the remaining concerts would provide a cost savings.

Motion to cancel the remaining concerts in the Summer Concert Series at Bayne Park.

Moved: President Pennington      Second: Ms. Edmondson

Aye: Mr. Stuncard, Ms. Sloane, Ms. Edmondson, Ms. Cerminara, Mr. Pritchard, Mrs. Pikul, Mr. DiTullio, President Pennington

Nay: Ms. Hause

Motion carried 8-1 with no abstentions.

## **Public Safety Committee; Anya Pikul, Chair**

1. Discussion: Traffic Signal Maintenance
  - Mrs. Pikul reported that the Police Chief would like to get more bids, and talk with the Borough engineers. To date, Bruce & Merrilees, the company that currently handles maintenance, is the only company to provide a proposal, which was \$12,600 plus a rider. Mr. Stuncard asked if the DPW Superintendent has experience, and was told that he does not; the Chief added that the boxes have become more complex and require technical expertise.
2. Mrs. Pikul reiterated that cases of COVID-19 are increasing, and reminded everyone to keep their distance, wear masks, wash hands, use sanitizer, and be safe.

## **Public Works Committee; Jillian Edmondson, Chair**

1. Motion to Adopt Resolution 13-20, Authorizing the Application for Funding Under the Alcosan GROW program, 2020 Funding Cycle.

Moved: President Pennington      Second: Ms. Cerminara  
All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried, 9-0.
2. Discussion: Parking Pad at 65 North Jackson
  - Ms. Hause stated that the Joint Planning Commission worked on this, and that she doesn't believe the Borough should keep making exceptions.
  - Ms. Cerminara was curious about what the area looks like.
  - The Solicitor stated that the resident can apply for a variance to the Zoning Hearing Board; Council would be alerted to the request, and could have an opportunity to intervene.
  - DAS Bahn was asked to provide photos and relevant sections of the Borough Code to Council.
3. Motion to Advertise, at a Cost Not to Exceed \$250, for a Second Seasonal Laborer Who Possesses a Valid Driver's License and is Available to Work Until Thanksgiving, 2020.

Moved: Ms. Edmondson      Second: Mrs. Pikul  
All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried, 9-0.

## **Unfinished Business**

1. President Pennington stated that the conversation in regard to his motion at the June 23, 2020 Council meeting regarding Mr. Scioscia has been tabled until the July Council meeting.

2. Discussion: Returning to In-Person Council Meetings.  
President Pennington stated the Mrs. Pikul said it well; cases are increasing, and Council has voted several times not to do so at this time. Mrs. Pikul agreed and suggested that it be tabled, and that Council continue to review the issue; while the best way to meet is in person, the safest way is virtual.
3. Ms. Edmondson reported that she met with Cindy Phelps and Officer Hudson to plan for National Night Out; this year's event will be scaled back because of the pandemic.
4. Mr. Pritchard asked about the status of 40 Kendall Avenue; DPW Superintendent Kelly responded that DPW has cleaned and mowed the front, but there is a lot of trash in the back. When asked about the presences of rats, Mr. Kelly stated that no activity has been observed. The Solicitor recommended that the property be demolished or sent to sheriff's sale with the joint tax committee.

### **New Business**

1. Discussion: Publishing Emails Between Council Members on the Borough Website.  
President Pennington has suggest that emails between Council members related to the discussion of official business, and votes taken, be published on the website in order to be transparent and so Members' words are not taken out of context. The Solicitor stated that it could be an issue be scope, as some emails may be related to personnel or police matters that could not be posted. This might make people think that the Borough is trying to hide something. Mrs. Pikul stated that she has reviewed other communities where this has been done and there have been issues. Ms. Hause does not believe that it's a good idea. Mr. Pritchard stated that unless there is a true emergency, email votes should not be happening. Ms. Edmondson understands President Pennington's concern that something could be taken out of context, and wondered if responses to Right to Know requests be published on the website. The Solicitor stated that he is here to protect Council and the Borough, and suggested that Council let people follow the legislative process in place – the Right to Know law. Mr. Stuncard agreed with the Solicitor and wondered about the time burden on staff and management of implementing this. Mr. DiTullio suggested using a chatroom Through Microsoft Teams, with a separate Team for each Committee; participants would know that their comments would be published. President Pennington responded while he doesn't have the technological expertise to do this, he like the idea. Mr. Raconas does not like this idea, and it is making the process much more complicated that it has to be; Council should hold discussions at public meetings unless it's an emergency, and then any online votes can be ratified. He went on to say that he was taking the temperature of Council, and as no one is interested, he is not making a motion.
2. Discussion: Resolution 14-20, Black Lives Matter.  
Ms. Cerminara suggested that Council needs to address this topic, and she drafted the Resolution, which she read. She stated that it's really important for Council to have uncomfortable conversations. President Pennington stated that it's an importable declaration for the Borough, and that this is a binary topic – either Black Lives Matter or Black Lives Don't Matter. Ms. Hause stated that it makes sense as a proclamation, but not as a resolution, which is a law and should be reviewed by the Solicitor. DAS Bahn noted that ordinances are laws, but not resolutions. Ms. Edmondson, Ms. Sloane, Mayor Marburger and Mr. Stuncard thanked Ms. Cerminara for her efforts. Ms. Cerminara explained that she formatted this as a resolution because she wanted action attached to it, unlike a proclamation.
3. Discussion: Providing Additional Outdoor Seating Options for Restaurants.  
Mayor Marburger stated that restaurants who are unable to serve food indoors during pandemic restrictions need additional outdoor seating options. She suggested that the Meade Avenue parking lot could be a solution as it's not heavily used; tables could be set up for diners who purchased food from restaurants and wanted to eat outside. Mr. Stuncard agreed that there are not many options for restaurants, and suggested that owners be asked for suggestions. Mr. DiTullio stated that he has been to KFC, and that chains have an advantage. He suggested a communal drive-through option. Ms. Cerminara wondered about blocking off side streets that are not high traffic, and erect tables. The Mayor and Mr. Stuncard agreed to pursue this with restaurant owners.

**Public Contribution on Non-Agenda Items (limit of 2 minutes)**

- Joe Scioscia, 256 Lincoln Avenue: Stated that Council couldn't help themselves in regard to Resolution 14-20, and that the Resolution is against the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment.
- Linda Woshner, 137 S. Euclid Avenue: Reported that Jim Delcroix said the structure at 40 Kendall Avenue is structurally sound, and cautioned the Borough about demolishing it. Also stated that voting by Council should be reserved for emergencies. Mr. Stuncard, in his role as a citizen, asked Ms. Woshner if the pandemic emergency existed or not, and Ms. Woshner replied that approving the purchase and flying of a Pride flag does not constitute an emergency. President Pennington stated that while he appreciates Mr. Stuncard's passion, this type of back-and-forth was not appropriate.

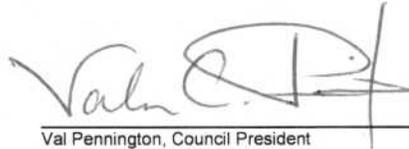
**Adjournment**

There being no further business, President Pennington adjourned the meeting at 8:32 pm.

ATTEST



Cindy L. Bahn, Director of Administrative Services/Secretary



Val Pennington, Council President

Minutes approved by Bellevue Borough Council on August 25, 2020.

