

**BOROUGH OF CLARKS SUMMIT
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 6, 2024**

The November 2024 Borough Meeting was conducted on Wednesday, November 6, 2024, at 7:00 P.M. The meeting was held in Borough Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, 304 South State Street, Borough of Clarks Summit, County of Lackawanna and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Council members in attendance were Ms. Gerrie Carey, Ms. Roni Lopez, Mr. Robert Sheils, Mr. Joshua Mitchell, Mr. Gene Hallinan, Ms. Kathleen Simrell, Mr. Steve Guza, Borough Manager Ms. Virginia Kehoe, Solicitor Andrew Krowiak, Police Chief Chris Yarns, and Junior Councilperson Mr. McVety and Junior Councilperson Ms. Siddiqui were all in attendance.

MEDITATION: **President Carey**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: **President Carey**

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: **President Carey**
Steve Guza made the first motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Bob Sheils, vote was 7-0.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: **President Carey**
9/25/24 Work Session
10/2/24 Council Meeting
10/30/24 Work Session: Bob Sheils made the first motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Kathleen Simrell, vote was 7-0.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT & INPUT: **President Carey**
Officer Kevin Yetkowskas, President of the Clarks Summit Borough Police Association. He will be present throughout the meeting along with Officer Pat Gibbons and Officer Alex Keiser. They are present as the negotiating committee to answer any questions and get the contract resolved.

Kate McNulty, a resident of Waverly Avenue, attended the meeting concerning the property at 407 Columbia Avenue, owned by Rebekah White. She stated that the conditions of the house are basically condemnable. There is a hole in the roof with animals climbing in and out, broken glass windows and what looks like mold. Ms. McNulty discussed the feral cat problem also and requested some help with trapping and neutering the cats. Janine Port was also in attendance. She stated that she knew Ms. White and would reach out to her about this situation. Ms. Kehoe stated that she and Jenn Basalyga were going to start the process to see if the house can be condemned.

Gerrie Carey asked Officer Yetkowskas to go back up to the podium. She stated that the Personnel Committee would like to sit down with him and the union members,

there is one thing they want to go over with them. Ms. Carey stated that the vote was tabled and the committee would like to meet with the officers tomorrow. Officer Yetkowskas stated that they won't turn down a meeting, but they do have an officer from the borough that they did accept. Also, the arbitration process is in full bore; the arbiter has been picked for both sides. Josh Mitchell stated that there were some people coming in and out of the process. He stated that there were a few things that the officers previously agreed on that didn't land in the offer that was given. He wanted to see these previous agreements included in the offer. Roni Lopez stated that she will unfortunately not be meeting with the officers. She stated that Gerrie Carey told her that since Josh is available, it will be Gerrie Carey, Josh Mitchell and Bob Sheils meeting with them. Ms. Lopez stated that she didn't drop out and she was just informed that she would not be proceeding with this. Officer Yetkowskas stated that he was going to have to talk to the two officers. They both have young kids, and this is short notice to meet again tomorrow. Josh Mitchell stated that he didn't have his own schedule, but they would find a time to meet.

4. **POLICE REPORT:** **Mayor Kelly**
 Chief Yarns stated that a part time officer resigned. He is actively looking for part time officers. He discussed overnight parking, the new police car that was ordered, Halloween patrol, DUI and aggressive driving. Bob Sheils commented on the overtime being better. Chris congratulated Gerrie Carey on her skydiving.
5. **BIDS & QUOTATIONS:** **President Carey**
6. **BOROUGH TREASURER'S REPORT:** **President Carey**
October 2024: Josh Mitchell made the first motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Steve Guza, vote was 7-0.
7. **VENDOR PAYMENTS TO BE RATIFIED:** **President Carey**
October: Steve Guza made the first motion to approve the vendor payments, seconded by Josh Mitchell, vote was 7-0.
8. **OLD BUSINESS:** **President Carey**

CDBG projects – Hillside?: No new information.

Police Contract: Tabled

DPW Contract: Roni Lopez made the first motion to approve the contract. Bob Sheils asked if council wanted to wait on this until they have everything squared up with the police contract. Ms. Carey stated that it has nothing to do with the police contract. She stated that they have already gone over everything and it seems ok. Mr. Shiels stated that there is an issue about the buyback of the health insurance. There is a big discrepancy between theirs and the police one. Josh Mitchell asked if this has been brought back to the DPW. Roni Lopez stated that she had called Ms. Carey

about scheduling a meeting and she didn't hear back. Then Bob Sheils said he didn't have his calendar last week when she was talking about scheduling meetings with the unions. Ms. Lopez never heard back. So no it hasn't gone back to the DPW. Mr. Mitchell thinks they should iron that out first. Ms. Carey tabled this vote also.

Stormwater Regionalization MOU: Ms. Kehoe stated that Solicitor Krowiak reviewed the MOU and there is no obligation on the borough to continue the process if at any point the borough wants to step out. It does give Scranton some reassurance about looking into it. Bob Sheils made the first motion to approve Gerrie Carey to sign the MOU for the stormwater regionalization, seconded by Steve Guza, vote was 7-0.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

President Carey

- **Replacement for ARWA:** Ms. Kehoe stated that this was advertised and we did receive interest from Harry Jenkins who has been on ARWA before. Steve Guza made the first motion to approve the replacement on ARWA to be Harry Jenkins, seconded by Bob Sheils, vote was 7-0.
- **Resolution 2024-11 County Re-Invest Grant:** Ms. Kehoe stated that she is applying for the flashing crosswalk signs. They are solar charged. The grant is \$25,000 max. Kathleen Simrell made the motion to approve Gerrie Carey to sign Resolution 2024-11, seconded by Bob Sheils, vote was 7-0.
- **Resolution 2024-13 CDBG budget:** Mr. Mitchell stated that this is just authorizing the county to give us our money. He made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-13, seconded by Steve Guza, vote was 7-0.
- **Resolution 2024-14 Gene Hallinan:** Bob Sheils made the first motion to approve Resolution 2024-14, seconded by Steve Guza, vote was 7-0.
- **Review and approve draft budgets for 2025:**
- **Authorize advertising Ordinances 2024-04, 2024-05 and 2024-06 milage and sewer fees:** Ms. Kehoe had two different budgets available for Council to choose between. Josh Mitchell stated that he is of the opinion that they should advertise the budget that increases the sewer fee to \$54 a month, which hasn't been raised in a decade. Also, we have a 33% increase coming from ARWA. He thinks the \$2 increase is modest and the paving has been cut by 1/3. He is reluctant to see that cut further. Bob Sheils stated that we have a conservative budget, we are applying for grants, we have capital budgets for equipment. Ms. Kehoe stated that the original budget for paving as \$600,000 was reduced to \$350,000. The \$2 increase will be \$45,000. Josh Mitchell stated that the borough is in a budget that is getting a little precarious. Our expenses are rising faster than our revenues are. It's somewhat irresponsible not to raise the use fees because costs increase. Janine Port talked about stormwater issues. Mr. Mitchell stated that the MOU that was voted on earlier was to pursue a regionalized approach to stormwater. Ms. Kehoe also explained that the new paving will be for roads that are already paved. The reason why the sewer fund contributes to the paving costs is because the stormwater and the sewer are always investigated and improved before we pave. We would not pave a road until the stormwater is improved. Josh Mitchell stated

that we started out the budget with a \$400,000 deficit. They considered a millage increase to our general fund and/or fire fund. They were considering an increase to the garbage fees. They avoided both. Many things were cut in the budget also. Josh Mitchell made a motion to advertise that version of the budget advertising Ordinances 2024-04, 2024-05 and 2024-06 milage and sewer fees. Bob Sheils made the motions for each ordinance individually. Bob Sheils made the motion to approve the advertisement for Ordinance 2024-04 which is keeping the millage the same at 29.5, seconded by Josh Mitchell, vote was 7-0. Josh Michell made the first motion to approve the advertisement for Ordinance 2024-05 with the \$54 per month sewer billing, seconded by Steve Guza, vote was 6-1 with Bob Sheils voted no. Josh Mitchell made the first motion to approve the advertisement for Ordinance 2024-06 with no change to the fire millage, seconded by Steve Guza, vote was 7-0.

- **Hiring of new police secretary:** Ms. Kehoe stated that with the shifting of personnel, we are going to have to get somebody in by the end of the year, have them trained by the end of the year. This will be advertised.
- **Search for code enforcement co.:** Ms. Kehoe stated that we would like to have someone to hire for the December meeting.

10. SOLICITORS REPORT

11. CORRESPONDENCE:

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS:

President Carey

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|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Prior- | 10/30/24 Personnel/Contracts |
| • During- | N/A |
| • Subsequent- | N/A |

Due to Thanksgiving, Council will recess and reconvene for the worksession on November 20th. Ms. Kehoe will advertise the reconvene for the 20th along with the worksession.

ADJOURN:

President Carey