

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK

MINUTES OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Date: January 14, 2013

Time: 7:30 P.M.

Location: Municipal Building

1. Roll Call

Present: Council Members Allen, Gibbons, Hannan, Harrison, McLean and O'Brien

Absent: Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape

Also Present: Mayor Morton; William Spagnol, Manager; Judith Miller, Assistant Manager; Robert McTiernan, Solicitor; Gerard Duke, Director of Community Services; Police Chief John Mackey; Michael Smith, Municipal Planner/Assistant Director of Community Services; Joseph Villella, Finance Director; Jean Statler, Municipal/Environmental Engineer

Meeting Note: Council Vice President Jack Allen served in the capacity of Acting President in the absence of Tim Moury.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Chair Announcement

Reports of Officials

4. Library Director's Report

Library Director, Christine McIntosh, stated that the Bethel Park Public Library provides services to inform, inspire and enrich the community.

Ms. McIntosh spoke about Zinio, the new downloadable magazine service free to library cardholders. Over 300 titles are available for use on your computer, smart phone or handheld device. A Learn to Use Zinio class has been scheduled for Monday, January 21, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. Please call the library for more details.

Ms. McIntosh announced that one-on-one technology appointments are available with librarians to answer any technology related issues or questions.

She said that the library had many e-books available, but the Big Six publishers will not sell to the Library. Those that do sell, limit the number of times that the electronic book can be borrowed to 26 times, then they must be repurchased.

The Library will be open on Monday, January 21st, Martin Luther King Day.

For more information on any of the programs and services offered by the Library, visit the website at www.bethelparklibrary.org

5. Police Chief's Report

Police Chief John Mackey said the Bethel Park Police Pals vs. Pittsburgh Steelers Basketball game is scheduled for Friday, March 8, 2013 at 8:00 p.m. at the Bethel Park High School gymnasium. At 7:00 p.m., the Police Department will play the Fire Department. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. Tickets are on sale at the Records Room, Every Hardware and Eat 'n Park on Route 88 for \$7.00. Tickets will be available at the door for \$9.00. Proceeds go to the Sgt. Charles Bonczak Police Association College Scholarship Fund.

Chief mentioned that the Citizen's Police Academy and LEAP Programs begin on Wednesday, January 16, 2013. There are two positions still available. This is a 10-week program. Please contact the Police Records Room for more details.

The Bethel Park Police Department will once again participate in the Drug Enforcement Administration Drug Take-Back Program. The event will take place on Saturday, April 27, 2013 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Bethel Park Community Center. He said they are trying to obtain a second location at the Highmark Building. More information is forthcoming.

The next Crime Watch meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 19, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bethel Park Community Center. The speaker will be Magistrate Rob Wyda. You do not have to be a member of Crime Watch to attend.

Chief Mackey said that the recent Adopt a Family and Bethel Park Food Drive Programs were the most successful ever. They were able to help 38 families in need with Christmas presents, food, gift certificates and a complete Christmas Dinner. He offered a special thanks to all the volunteers and donors in the community. This year, the Police Department partnered with the Fire Department and Tri Community South EMS and it had a huge impact on the success of the program. He sent a special thanks to Kathy Rigatti, Eva Parker and Rob Knestrick who volunteered an entire day to be with Officer Tom Rigatti to put everything together. In addition, 266 big boxes of food were distributed from the Food Drive to families in need, as well as bulk food donations to SHIM and St. Winifreds. Special thanks were given to IMS Club Spirit and the kids who helped with the program, the Public Works Department, the Fire Department, the volunteers and Two Men and a Truck for donating the boxes.

At this time, Chief Mackey introduced Doris Nagel, Program Director at SHIM. On behalf of the families that they serve, Ms. Nagel thanked everyone that the Chief named and more. They are appreciative of the volumes of food they received and said this will help them through the tough winter months. She added that one thing you can count on in Bethel Park is that our people step up when someone is in need. We have a generous community who takes care of their own.

6. Fire Chief's Report

Deputy Fire Chief Bob Brown gave the Fire Report for the month of December. In addition, he gave the Fire Report for the Year 2012.

Deputy Chief Brown requested that residents keep the fire hydrant areas cleared of snow for fire fighters in the event they have to respond to a fire call.

Mr. Allen commented about the life expectancy of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Deputy Chief Brown said the life expectancy of a smoke detector is 7 years. In addition, batteries should be changed in the detectors every time you change your clocks in the spring and fall.

7. Mayor's Report

Mayor Morton announced the 90+ Club birthdays for January.

Mayor Morton introduced Andy Amrhein of the Bethel Park Community Foundation. The Foundation sponsored Super Bowl Party Package raffle consisting of a 51-inch TV with delivery and installation, a catered lunch and sheet cake. Mr. Amrhein, on behalf of the foundation, asked Mayor Morton to perform the fund raiser drawing. The proceeds from the raffle will benefit the activities of the Foundation such as grants and scholarships for residents of Bethel Park.

At this time, Mayor Morton announced the 2012 Christmas Lighting Contest winners and presented those in attendance with certificates.

8. Approval of Minutes

Regular Council Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2012.

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to approve the Regular Council Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2012. Motion Carried 6 – 0. Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape absent.

9. Bills and Payrolls

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to approve the Bills and Payrolls for the Municipality per Bill List #011413 in the amount of

\$1,540,704.43. Motion Carried 6 – 0. Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape absent.

10. Residents' Comments (non-agenda items only)

None

GENERAL POLICY AND FINANCE

11. Citizens' Comments – General Policy and Finance Items

None

12. Reappointment – Library Board

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to reappoint Jill Shoemaker to the Library Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2015. Motion Carried 6 – 0. Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape absent.

13. Reappointment – Municipal Authority

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to reappoint Jerry Pifer to the Municipal Authority for a term to expire on December 31, 2017. Motion Carried 6 – 0. Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape absent.

14. Reappointment – Board of Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to reappoint Jim Gastgeb to the Board of Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services for a term to expire on December 31, 2015. Motion Carried 6 – 0. Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape absent.

15. Reappointment – Board of Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to reappoint Debi L. Taylor to the Board of Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services for a term to expire on December 31, 2015. Motion Carried 6 – 0. Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape absent.

16. Reappointment – Planning and Zoning Commission

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to reappoint Frank Mingrone to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a term to expire on December 31, 2016. Motion Carried 6 – 0. Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape absent.

17. Reappointment – Planning and Zoning Commission

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to reappoint Rick Raeder to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a term to expire on December 31, 2016. Motion Carried 6 – 0. Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape absent.

18. Reappointment – Zoning Hearing Board

Motion by Mr. Hannan and seconded by Mrs. Gibbons to reappoint Charles G. Koch to the Zoning Hearing Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2017. Motion Carried 6 – 0. Council Members Dixon, Moury and Pape absent.

Mr. Harrison said he'd like to speak to the public about a communication received from our Solicitor, Robert McTiernan, regarding an amendment to the Home Rule Charter to fund the Volunteer Fire Company. The proposal is to change the Home Rule Charter to include a .3 mill mandated donation or apportionment to the fire company. Mr. Harrison said that in his 30 years on Council, dedicated taxes for several reasons including several occasions for the fire company have been proposed. He always opposed this idea and continues to oppose it. Bethel Park has been blessed with a dedicated and efficient volunteer fire company and he encourages people quite often to make donations because that is the way they survive. The fire company has historically relied on voluntary contributions and fund raisers to cover their operational expenses. All levels of government, federal to local, have contended with contributors and freeloaders for activities. A significant number of households and businesses fail to make annual contributions to the volunteer fire company. The fire company surely can provide details on that information. These non-contributors get and welcome the services of the volunteer fire company when they need it. This message is being highlighted to Bethel Park residents to alert them that this is a time for decision. If the residents are happy with the volunteer fire company and their service, they have to support it with voluntary contributions. The other option is to move towards a local government financed paid fire company. Mr. Harrison's concern is like the camel getting his nose in the tent, once it's in there, there's no telling what he will do. The following is his tutorial to the fire company non-contributors, to the people in Bethel Park who choose not to make contributions. Recently, signatures were collected to get the proposed unnecessary large real estate tax increase rescinded. Many people refused to sign and stated that they had no need to reverse the increase because they rent and therefore do not pay real estate taxes. He explained to them that they are incorrect, and that they pay real estate taxes every month in their rent, where most residents pay their real estate once a year by writing a check. The message to the present non-contributors is that if the dedicated tax is implemented, they will then be contributing non-voluntarily. He is amazed that people who rent property think that they don't pay real estate taxes, they do when they pay rent every month. If the owner gets an increase, you will feel the effects as the rent will probably go up. The bottom line for this presentation is when any change is made, you have to be sensitive to the possible unexpected consequences including a change in the Home Rule Charter, and that is the proposal. It is like pouring it in concrete. A change to the Home Rule Charter takes quite a process. If Council feels the need to enact a dedicated tax

for the fire company, the action should be enacted by an Ordinance. This allows for a future corrective action be taken immediately if it is decided that we do not like the effect. A Home Rule Charter change is a long and complicated process. Just to summarize quickly, he opposes a concept of a dedicated tax, but by putting it in the Home Rule Charter is a wrong way to go. If Council wants to do it, they ought to make it an ordinance. That way they can get feedback from the people if they think it ought to be less, or they think it ought to be more. If they put it into an ordinance, they have the opportunity to respond. If you put it in the Home Rule Charter and that gets approved, then it's stuck there until a future change is made in the Home Rule Charter and that is a complicated process. He wants people to think about that. He makes no secret that he opposes a dedicated tax, but if it is decided to go that way, it ought to be in an ordinance which is something that the people can communicate with Council and the change can be made at the dais if they felt it should. If we put in the Home Rule Charter, these elected officials can't change it without an arduous task.

Mr. McLean said he would like to address two of the things Mr. Harrison mentioned. He would like to ask people as we go through the process that Mr. Harrison described with respect to the fire company, that people keep an open mind both in terms of the process because the process we are going to go through is actually one in which the voters themselves are going to get to vote on whether or not this occurs. Rather than people coming and approaching this Council, there is going to be an actual vote on it on Election Day. So, please keep an open mind about the process. The second part is to keep an open mind about what you are going to hear. Listen to the folks from the fire company itself. Listen to them explain to you when they go through this process as to where they are, what their current arrangement is and what they would like to see done so that they can continue to provide what is, has been and hopefully can continue to be a very good service to this community. Keep an open mind about the process and listen to what it is that the folks from the fire company itself tell you.

PLANNING AND ZONING ITEMS

19. Planning and Zoning Items

None

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE ITEMS

20. Health, Safety and Welfare Items

None

Mr. McLean announced that, as a point of interest, the Bethel Park Varsity Ice Hockey team was supposed to play a game against Shaler outdoors at South Park. Due to the unseasonably good and warm weather, they were not able to play it. The game has been rescheduled for Friday, February 22, 2013 at 8:30 p.m. at the South Park Ice Rink. This is a great opportunity for people to see the local ice hockey team play in its natural element outdoors.

PUBLIC WORKS AND MAINTENANCE ITEMS

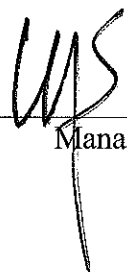
21. Public Works and Maintenance Items

None

Mr. O'Brien said that he spoke with Mr. Pape who asked him to mention that he recently slipped and fell and incurred some injuries and is recovering at home. He hopes to be back as soon as possible and we all wish him a speedy recovery.

22. Adjournment

Motion and second to adjourn at 8:19 P.M.



Manager