

Tuesday, November 21,2023

COURTDALE COUNCIL MTG. MINUTES

Meeting was called to order at 7pm by Carl H.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL:

Carl Hodorowski, President
Jeff Ford-
Joseph Rish, Vice President-
Debra Youngblood-*absent*
Amy Yuhas
Michael Waslin-*absent*
Joe Biniek
Mayor Degnan
Len Sanguedolce, Solicitor
Loriann Monto-Secretary/Treas.

MINUTES READ:

Amy made a motion to accept the minutes, Joe seconded. All in favor.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Copies of sewer investment statement made available for council members to review. Budget Report read and reviewed by council members Carl expressed concern over grant funds skewing the actual income on the budget—Carl will make separate pages in the budget for the grant accounts. Joe B motioned to accept the treasurer's report, Jeff seconded. All in favor of accepting and paying bills. Joe B motioned to pay the bills, Amy seconded the motion. All in favor

MAYOR COMMENTS:

Mayor Degnan read the police report dated 10/22-11/21—. Dan Duffy explained his analysis of the months calls and analysis of calls through 911 —provided copies to all members of the council.

Discussed crosswalk study —and need to enforce for safety of crossing guards and students.

Discussed speed signs efficiency and where to place the final digital sign—all signs will be adjusted to flashing speed.

PUBLIC:

COMMITTEES:

Scott Smith, borough engineer was present to discuss updates on current projects, later in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mike Handley and Shadow Technologies work was discussed—Chief Dan verified that the system is working and that the main issue is the signal in the cars and he is working on getting it rectified by running speed tests and possibly choosing another provider. Can Verizon run a test to improve signal or will First Net be a better provider – Chief Dan is comparing the 2 to see which is a better option for the boroughs needs. He will report back with his findings. (There is a benefit to having a “borough” phone for the police on duty.)

NEW BUSINESS:

Chief Dan discussed the benefit of having a drug paraphernalia ordinance in place, mostly because of the misuse of medical marijuana, making it difficult to charge people and the paraphernalia ordinance will help with this. Amy made the motion to adopt the ordinance prohibiting the possession of drug paraphernalia within the limits of the borough and imposing fines and penalties for violations thereof.(effective immediately,11/21/23) Joe seconded the motion—roll call was taken and all were in agreement.

Joe R made a motion to amend ordinance no.3 of 2020 providing for pave cuts and openings within the public roads and right of way,sidewalks,tree lawns, and appurtenances;definitions,applications,criteria,inspections,permits,fees and penalties and adding a new section 300(b) prohibiting excavation on newly paved roads. Jeff seconded the motion and all were in favor. Roll was taken and all were in favor. Effective immediately(11/21/23). PA One call will alert to any digging requests.

Council reviewed the Mountain Stanton 230kV Line rebuild project, which is the reconstruction of an existing electric utility line, all taking place in Luzerne county. Affecting some of the roads and property in Courtdale.

Tax collector payment for 3 bills at \$2.50 each—Amy made a motion to pay the tax collector and Joe seconded the motion. All were in agreement.

Courtdale Volunteer Fire company is asking for donations for the Santa Claus project, Jeff made a motion to donate \$1000 to the Fire Dept Amy seconded his motion, and all were in agreement.

Amy made a motion to pay \$279 for the annual police stopwatch calibration. Joe seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Joe R made a motion to pay \$159.98 for the vacuum cleaner for the boro building. Jeff seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Carl made the council aware of a request from UGI to cut pavement on Corby Rd. Due to the new

ordinance, this request was denied because of the fact that the road was just recently paved.

Joe R will look into the PennDot AGILITY Program.

Road Salt; Carl will call and order road salt.

Proposed 2024 budget and tax increase were discussed; copies were handed to all council members-Carl reviewed the proposed budget, which was done including a .5 increase, which would raise the millage for the borough to 2.5. Borough operated at a loss in 2023 of approx. \$7,000. Some of the income was skewed because of the grant money that came in. Major expenses were the increase (26%) of street lights. Also, gas and electric expenses of the borough building, facing major increases in price of both. Council members understood the impact of the increase to homeowners but felt it is necessary and it has been quite some time since there was an increase. All employees have been given increases over the past several years with it being noted that Courtdale is on the low rate for police officers. Rates of surrounding boroughs were noted (Edwardsville at 4.45, Forty fort at 5.59, Jackson Twp 2.72, Larksville 3.80, Luzerne 3.76, Plymouth 7.72, Pringle .75, Swoyersville 1.80) for comparison. The proposed budget was read which has Income of \$235,595 and expenses of \$230,568, leaving a surplus of \$5000. This is factoring in an increase of 6% for the police and 3% for everyone else. The council also discussed and agreed to a .5 mil increase to taxes, leaving EIT the same. A note was made that mayor Degnan will warn police and street about leaving the garage doors open, especially in the colder months, for cost effective savings .

Scott Smith, borough engineer, discussed the current projects he is overseeing with HRG, "2023 Paving Program"; HRG oversaw the paving on Valley View, Hoyt and Corby Road. The contractor placed base course and wearing course on all three roads as well as shoulder backup. Payment application of \$269,652.25 and change order (extending the contract to 5/31/24) for the remaining streets will be submitted. The motion was made by Joe R. to submit the payment of \$269,652.25, and was seconded by Joe B. A motion by Jeff was made to extend contract times, with Joe R seconding. All were in agreement to Both motions.

Jeff mentioned needing reflective posts along Hoyt St. –regardless of where the money comes from, he feels they are needed. Maybe using liquid fuel funds for this issue.

Scott also discussed sketches of the playground project, the cost estimate. The sketches were reviewed by council members Jeff expressed concern for the wood chips, Scott explained that the wood surfaces are safe. Overall the council was satisfied with the sketches of the playground. Committee will meet Tuesday 11/28/23. A motion was made by Joe that the park committee will meet and make final decisions so the park can be advertised in December, Jeff seconded the motion and all were in agreement.

Scott requested the HRG payment (\$6000) for the Parking lot project be paid —Loriann will submit the request to the CFA for reimbursement of the engineering fees.

Len received a call from the solicitor from the Pringle Borough Sewer authority--Courtdale Borough has 12 houses that run through the Pringle sewer line, an agreement was made in 1993 that fees and assessment were agreed upon, they have not been paid in any of these fees and they would like a new agreement, requesting \$100 per year for the 12 houses. Len will make the agreement and will discuss it at the December meeting. Joe made the motion to adjourn the mtg at 8:46pm. All agreed.