

**BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN PARK
BOROUGH COUNCIL PRE/POST MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 2023**

A pre/post meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Franklin Park was held on Wednesday, July 19, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Municipal Building, 2344 West Ingomar Road, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237. The meeting was also held virtually via remote audio and video conferencing.

Council President John Parks called the meeting to order.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Jiang Lipresent
Brian S. Malkinpresent
Lucas R. Myslinski, Vice Presidentpresent
Uday Palledpresent
John P. Parks, Presidentpresent
Thomas C. Schwartzmier, Second Vice Presidentpresent
Junior Councilperson Ava DiGiacomopresent
Mayor Dennis E. O’Keefepresent

BOROUGH ENGINEER:

Dave Kovac, Lennon, Smith, Souleret Engineering, Inc.present

SOLICITOR:

Robert Max Junker, Babst Callandpresent

STAFF:

Zach Brower, Recreation Program Directorpresent
Gary Bucuren, Superintendent of Public Works.....present
Cindy Crain, Finance Director/Borough Treasurer.....present
Rege Ebner, Borough Managerpresent
Walt Healy, Police Chief.....absent
Cathy Krummert, Borough Secretarypresent
Andy Nock, Assist. Bldg. Insp./Fire & Tech Official.....present
Tim Phillips, Building Inspector/Zoning Officer.....present
Sam Snyder, Police Lieutenant.....present

PRE-MEETING

AUDIENCE: 7

MID-YEAR BUDGET REVIEW – Mrs. Crain presented the mid-year budget review.

General Fund Financials – It is anticipated that the Borough will finish 2023 with an unrestricted cash balance of \$1,944,900 of which \$1,304,900 (12%) is reserved to fund operations for the beginning of 2024 as municipalities typically experience a cash flow shortfall during the first few months of each year. We try to have a 17% reserve, but we will be short of that if things end as projected.

- **Revenue** – Year-end revenue, prior to cash reserves transferred in, through 12/31/23 is projected at \$10,806,900, which is about a 2.4% deviation from the budget, and a 9% decrease from our actual 2022 revenue. The projected decrease over the prior year is mostly due to not receiving ARPA funds as we had received over the last two years and a projected decrease in both Real Estate Transfer Tax revenue and EIT revenue for 2023. Additional interest is projected since the market is up. Anticipated building permit revenue was approximately \$200,000, and because there is less development it will be less than anticipated. Bicentennial donation estimates were \$50,000, but so far only \$30,000 has been raised. Mr. Palled joined the meeting at this time. If we want to continue to do projects in future years that are outside normal expenses, we will need to possibly look at a tax increase or a potential stormwater fee to increase revenue. We need to take a hard look at the implications at budget time.

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- **Expenditures** – Year-end expenditures are projected at \$13,044,900, a 1.4% deviation from budget and a 16% increase over actual 2022 expenditures. This includes a transfer of \$1,491,300 for capital projects and \$700,000 for the fire fund. The projected increase in expenses is mostly due to the assumption that the Borough will complete \$1,000,000 of MS4 work by December 31st. A full-time Receptionist position was added with benefits. Legal services are higher than projected. Road maintenance and repairs have been increased by \$75,000. We are over budget for tax refunds due to property tax adjustments.

2023 Borough Initiatives (large capital projects)

Mrs. Crain pointed out some of the specific line items:

- Originally approved a total of 3.5 million in initiatives for 2023. The General Fund and Clover Hill Golf Course are projected to spend \$1.7 million, and the Capital Reserve Fund is projected to spend \$1.4 million, for a total of \$3.2 million. We will be slightly under budget for the large, anticipated purchases.
- Golf Course - Purchased some equipment and ordered some equipment that may or may not be delivered this year.
- Municipal Building - Still need to purchase a couple garage doors, but a lot of the other items have been purchased.
- Police Department - Purchased new tasers that were slightly under budget, and they are hoping to purchase additional cameras for Linbrook Park and the Big Sewickley Creek Road property in either late 2023 or 2024.
- IT - There are many things in process that we hope to accomplish this year including a new fire alarm system, upgrades to Wi-Fi, and upgrades to the conference room and meeting room. Some items may carry into 2024.
- Public Works - Purchased an excavator and budgeted for a used bucket truck and air compressor.
- Parks – No large purchases planned. The wide area mower will likely push to 2024.
- Acorn Park Improvements – We will spend the \$250,000 on the pump track and playground this year. We will also be able to submit for reimbursement through the grant.
- Blueberry Hill Park – A Master Parks Plan was approved, but it will probably not be a reality this year. The log cabin engineering and consulting fees were actually paid last year, and we do not foresee any increased fees.
- Stormwater and MS4 – All budgeted items are as projected. Extended permit period another 2 years.
- Streets/Paving – Mr. Bucuren has made some changes to the roads to be paved, but the amount projected for paving will not change.

Dr. Li joined the meeting at this time. The current 5-year Capital Improvement Plan from 2023-2027 includes \$21.5 million of major items (infrastructure, stormwater, capital equipment, park improvements and paving) that we anticipate spending money on over the next five years.

Mr. Parks expressed concern and asked Mrs. Crain to provide a 5-minute budget update each month during the pre-meeting and noted that it seems to be financially tight everywhere. Council discussed the information provided and asked questions. The first budget hearing will be held October 14th.

OLD BUSINESS - None

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA REVIEW: Mr. Junker briefly reviewed the agenda items.

JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – Allegheny County reviewed the draft plan and recently provided comments. It was noted that many of the comments were positive. The Planning Commission reviewed the draft plan last night and decided to table the final recommendation until they have time to review the comments and they can have more Planning Commission members present. Council will hold a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan at the August 16th regular meeting, one night after the Planning Commission meeting. Under the MPC, Council must receive a recommendation from the Planning Commission.

MANAGER'S REPORT DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Cell and radio coverage RFP – Mr. Ebner provided the draft RFP for review, and Mr. Junker had provided the only comments. Council discussed the draft and will review it further and provide suggested changes to Mr. Ebner as soon as possible.
- Rochester Road crossing at Old Orchard Park – Mr. Ebner contacted PennDOT to ask if the Borough could install park entrance signs on Rochester Road in the area of Old Orchard Park, and PennDOT indicated that the signs could be installed. They also scheduled a virtual meeting, where they indicated that there is nothing that precludes having a crosswalk at an intersection, as long as we install the sidewalk on both sides of Rochester Road.
- Grant application for I-79 sound study – We have until July 31st to submit a grant application. Mr. Junker explained that a motion to amend the posted agenda would be required if Council chooses to consider adoption of a resolution for the submittal of a grant application. The amended agenda must then be posted the next day showing the motion for the resolution. Mr. Ebner asked a CFA Board member if it is true that the 30% municipal match could be waived, and he was told that the municipal match is sometimes waived. This is a very competitive process, and the CFA Board decides who gets waived and who does not. We may have to show hardship. In order to apply, we must show that we have the funds available. So, if we apply for a \$3 million grant, we must tell them that we have \$900,000 available right now for this project. We must submit an audited financial statement, and we must state specifically that we have it in cash unless we already have a bank note for the funding. We would have to apply for a sound study and infrastructure construction. Detailed specifications would need to be prepared by an engineer to be included with the application. PennDOT would also have to provide a letter that they approve of the Borough installing a sound barrier in their right of way. This would be a huge undertaking that must all be accomplished in the next ten days prior to the July 31st deadline. Council discussed and indicated that we need to think through the implications before moving forward, and we do not currently have the funds available. We could pursue reaching out to a sound engineer to see what would be involved to have a sound study completed to determine what we need to do before pursuing funding sources. Council asked Mr. Ebner to reach out to other communities that may have constructed sound barriers to find out the process that they went through.
- Wedgewood sidewalk update – Staff measured for the sidewalk to be installed on the Borough property to connect existing sidewalks. LSSE provided costs to outsource the work, but Mr. Bucuren believes the public works department could do the work fairly quickly at a cost of \$8,300 including labor. The HOA will sign off that they will maintain the sidewalk in the winter.

KAREN DRIVE SPEEDING – Council received an email expressing concerns about speeding on Karen Drive. Lieutenant Snyder will have the Jaymar speed monitoring unit put on the resident's property to complete a speed study, and he will report back to Council.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS & MAYOR

- Mr. Palled indicated that residents reached out to him asking how to approach the Borough with a request for a stop sign on Georgetown Drive at Pittsburgh Court in the Ridge Forest Plan. It was noted that a traffic study would need to be completed with speed and accident data to determine if this intersection would meet the criteria for a stop sign. The residents should reach out to the Manager or the Public Safety Committee. Mr. Palled also asked about a concrete pad installed at the Five Points intersection. It was noted that these are state roads, and the concrete was replaced by PennDOT.
- Mr. Myslinski stated that two residents on Wexford Bayne Road approached him about accessing public water. One of the residents has a failing well. Mr. Ebner indicated that the residents should reach out to him.

The regular meeting was held from 8:00 p.m. to 9:27 p.m.

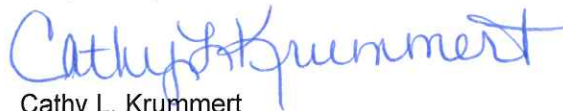
POST-MEETING

- Mr. Schwartzmier discussed political activities at Borough events and mentioned an incident with a candidate at the Festival in the Park. Council discussed political activities at future events including the upcoming National Night Out. Mr. Junker discussed and suggested studying and researching the best way to handle these instances and developing a policy and guidelines. Council discussed and agreed to discourage political activities at National Night Out and work toward developing a policy for future events. Mr. Schwartzmier discussed speeding on Cole Road and asked if one of the solar speed signs could be installed. Lieutenant Snyder indicated that a sign would be effective, but he cautioned that other communities may also request the signs. Mr. Schwartzmier also discussed the installation of fiber by a subsidiary of Consolidated Communications in the Cole Road area and noted that the Borough was not notified. He asked if this was covered under the Franchise Agreement with Consolidated. He suggested that there should be some requirement that contractors must notify the Borough and homeowners before beginning work in the Borough.
- Mr. Parks expressed concern that a golf ball from Clover Hill Golf Course landed near a young child in his back yard. Mr. Parks noted that residents have brought to his attention that there are no benches with backs in the Blueberry Patch Playground, and we should give it some consideration. Mr. Parks asked about the status of the Audubon Society plan for Old Orchard Park. Mr. Ebner noted that they have recommended a controlled burn of the canary reed grass, but we would have to use a certified grass burner. There is currently only one certified grass burner in the state, and they charge a premium price. DCNR has recommended that we wait a year because they think they will be certifying more contractors to do that work, and we would get a better rate. Some old dead trees were cut down in the park, and they will be replaced with new trees. Mr. Parks asked about the Snow Angels program that was previously discussed. Mr. Ebner will have Donna Platt look into developing the program since she is coordinating volunteer programs.
- Miss DiGiacomo presented a program that she developed regarding civic responsibilities that she will be presenting to middle school students during the upcoming school year.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – An executive session was held to discuss personnel and potential litigation.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy L. Krummert
Borough Secretary