

Mercersburg Borough Council
Borough Hall, Mercersburg, PA
March 16, 2015
MINUTES

Attending: President Tom Suddeth, Vice-President Jeff Main, Mayor Jim Zeger, Treasurer Catalin Bonciu, Jonathan (Jon) Kittredge, Amy Burkot, Lisa McCoy, Borough Manager Dawn Scheller, Assistant Borough Manager Derek Stoy, and Borough Solicitor Steve Coccoresse

Absent: Member Donald Stoner, Borough Engineer Lance Kegerreis, and Police Chief John Zechman

Guests/Press: See sign-in sheet

President Suddeth called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, Mayor Zeger led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Suddeth opened the floor for Public Comment.

Dr. Elizabeth George spoke to Borough Council regarding the proposed Mercersburg Trail on the Tannery Site and asked this Council to continue to support the efforts. She asked Borough Council to imagine what the trail could look like off of Oregon Street and a lot of other communities are trying to reclaim space and Mercersburg already has it. Dr. George reviewed that the stream is part of history of Mercersburg. Dr. George stated that it is ashamed that the Borough is currently using the area as a dumping space and asked that the Borough's contractor work with their efforts to disperse the piles of dirt and debris. She recommended that the Borough not use the property as a place for excess snow as the runoff could cause environmental concerns. She reviewed that they have spent many volunteer hours, grant money, the National Park Service, National Fish and Wildlife, have been involved with the community and involved with Council. Dr. George stated that it is important if a plan is put in place, it's important that they can have a long-term vision and start a project and continue it without the threat of New Council coming in. She stated that the community has to have a way being able to have a long-term vision and being able to plan projects like this. Dr. George reviewed that DCNR, National Fish and Wildlife, and National Park Services know that MPMC is working on this project and they are important grant people for a community to have and it would negatively affect the community if this project would not continue forward. MPMC stated that this project could set an example and make a positive impact. She asked Borough Council to continue the support that has been established and those they authorize the grant that Bob has been working on where the Borough would be the Grantee. They asked if Council had any questions.

President Suddeth asked if the grant could be written adding the grant money be used for the Alleyways in addition to the proposed trail. Dr. George reviewed that the grant writing is an intensive, specific process, where construction and engineering designs are required and only the trail drawings are completed at this point. She added that DCNR won't change their mind and not allow the trail to be placed on the site; she reviewed her opinion of the findings of the reports based on her education and background.

Jeff Main asked questions; 1) was the neighboring electrical property; a) who would hold the insurance needed for the trail?, b) have they provided written permission or needed right-of-way agreement allowing the trail?, 2) how can they apply for a grant if they have not received the appropriate right-of-ways for the trail?, Bob Whitmore answered that they have given verbal approval and are in the process of reviewing the site plan of the trail and they would need an easement, 3) What support has MPMC received from the community? Dr. George spoke and said that they are planning to raise funds and they have received a total of \$30,000 towards this project and Bob will be working hard for them to continue to raise the 50% match. Jeff also asked if Council has already approved this trail and it was reviewed that Borough Council has voted and approved the trail two

years in a row. He asked if MPMC has approached the Water and Sewer Authorities to obtain their approval of the trail. Dr. George said that they can do that again.

Jon Kittredge reviewed that it was approved in concept, but Jon stated that Council did not vote on the actual construction of the trail.

Jeff Main spoke and said that he is hoping that Council is moving forward for a trail that is going to promote fitness and health. Jeff stated that he feels that Council would be fools not to continue with it because of the time and money and effort that have been already spent.

Steve Coccorese reviewed that DEP has not approved this design of the trail and the Borough Solicitor is still waiting to hear an approval of the design.

Bob Whitmore reviewed the grant process where the application is due April 15, 2015 and we would be hearing if the Borough received the grant in November 2015 earliest. The approximate contract would be tentatively signed in January of 2016 at which time if DEP were to deny the trail, Borough Council could simply decline the grant.

Mayor spoke about that he has been on board with this project from the beginning, and that he encourages Council to approve this to move forward.

MOTION: to approve MPMC to continue with the grant process, with prior years commitments for the 2015 grant application, contingent upon DEP's approval, was made by Jeff Main, second by Catalin Bonciu, Lisa McCoy reviewed what the Borough's contribution would be, Council Members reviewed the letter included in the packets dated April 14, 2014 that was approved last year and the same would be included in the 2015 application, Jon Kittredge asked if Council has seen the schematics, and Amy was in agreement with Jon, Jeff Main spoke that he recommended that they speak with Water and Sewer, Catalin spoke on behalf of Dr. George and all of her work and expertise, It was asked what the representatives from Water and Sewer thought about the trail, Jon reviewed that the Water representatives had concerns that it was too close to the fencing around the solar panels, Jon also spoke about the trail traveling directly thru the Public Works Area, a discussion occurred about possibly relocating the salt shed in the future and it could be looked at, a vote was then taken, Jon Kittredge and Amy Burkot were nays, remaining ayes, motion carried a vote of 4 ayes to 2 nays.

Mayor Zeger spoke about that spring is around of the corner and asked Borough Residents to sweep up and get ready for the flowers. He noted that Mercersburg has made it to Arkansas and he also noted that there was a nice article about Mercersburg in the Builders Show Tourist Bureau.

There was nothing from the Solicitor at this time.

The next item discussed was the Summer Playground program. Dawn Scheller reviewed that there has been a small number of children participating in recent years. Amy Burkot spoke about new ideas to revamp the program widening the ages of the participants, running the program in conjunction with the Library and maybe having the program on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a longer period of time. Dawn Scheller reviewed that a coordinator would need to be hired to run the program and Council would be updated with the details. Dawn reviewed that she met with members from the Academy and they are very interested in supporting the program and would make a donation to the program for the 2015 year.

MOTION: to approve the 2015 Summer Playground Program and authorize the use of funds for this program to hire a coordinator and begin planning was made by Jon Kittredge, second by Catalin Bonciu, all ayes, motion carried.

Derek Stoy brought forward a CSE Agreement that he asked Council to cancel as it does not benefit the Borough. Derek recommended that any heater or cooling work could be handled using a local contractor not necessarily having a said contract.

MOTION: to authorize Derek Stoy to cancel the CSE Contract was made by Jeff Main, second by Catalin Bonciu, all ayes, motion carried.

Borough Council spoke about the recent curb letters that was sent out, and asked about exceptions or appeals. Derek reviewed that the property owner would have to present the appeals to Council. Council suggested that the Engineer be present to assist in the process for those meetings.

MOTION: to adjourn into executive session for Personnel Matters and potential Litigation Matters with action to be taken at 8:00 pm, was made by Jeff Main, second by Jon Kittredge, all ayes, motion carried.

Regular session resumed at 8:42 pm.

MOTION: to authorize Salzman Hughes to represent the Borough of Mercersburg in matters brought before the PA Labor Relations Board regarding Unionizing was made by Jeff Main, second by Catalin Bonciu, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to adjourn at 8:44 pm was made by Jon Kittredge, second by Jeff Main, all ayes, motion carried.

These meeting minutes have been transcribed and respectfully submitted by Dawn Scheller with the use of here meeting notes and recording.

Date approved: _____ Motion Made by: _____ Second by: _____