

**BRADFORD WOODS BOROUGH COUNCIL  
COUNCIL MEETING - approved  
March 11, 2024**



The Bradford Woods Borough Council meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Council President Victoria Pongrace. There were 2 guests in attendance.

Officials in attendance:

Doug Marsico, Mayor  
Victoria Pongrace, Council President  
Kevin Rhule, Vice President  
Dan Dimond, Council Member  
Todd Hipwell, Council Member  
Christopher Mansfield, Council Member

Officials Absent:

David Baldonieri, Council Member  
Michael Kelly, Council Member

Others in attendance:

Kate Diersen, Solicitor  
Lt. Jeffrey Jones, NRPD  
Chief Ben Titus, BWVFC

Appointed Officials in attendance:

Rusti Null, Borough Manager  
Jake Turner, Roads Supervisor

**CALL TO ORDER**

Pledge of Allegiance  
Roll Call

**MINUTES**

- Motion made by Mr. Hipwell, seconded by Mr. Mansfield, to approve the February 12, 2024 meeting minutes with one correction. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

President Pongrace announced an executive session following the public portion of this evening's meeting to discuss legal matters.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AGENDA**

None

**RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER MOTIONS REQUIRED**

- Motion to approve Proclamation recognizing National Library Week April 7 - 13, 2024. Motion made by Mr. Dimond, seconded by Mr. Rhule. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Marsico thanked Ms. Null for accurately and succinctly capturing discussion in the minutes.

**MANAGER'S REPORT**

Ms. Null reported the following:

- State Senator Devlin Robinson will be holding monthly office hours in Bradford Woods the third Wednesday of each month. She will advertise this on Facebook, the website and via email blast. The senator's staff can help residents with state-related questions and issues.
- Liquid Fuels allocation of \$48,958 has been received from the State.
- The Department of Labor and Industry performed their five-year UCC audit of the Borough's commercial construction permitting process. No issues were found, as no commercial permits were issued in the five-year period.
- The Insurance Services Office performed a building code effectiveness survey for the Borough on March 6. The results are pending. A high score on this survey could result in reduced liability insurance rates for the Borough.
- The Conservancy will host an Earth Day event in the Reserve on April 27. The event will feature a live raptor (bird of prey) and therapy dogs.
- Chief Chris Dell of the McCandless Franklin Park Ambulance Authority met with the managers of the municipalities in their service area. McCandless and Franklin Park Boards will be voting on expanding/restructuring the authority board. The group will meet again in early May. At that meeting, Chief Dell will quantify the financial need, propose a funding formula, and propose a board configuration.

## **SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Diersen discussed the recent Allegheny County decision to reduce the Common Level Ratio, used to calculate property values for real estate tax purposes. The County has extended the deadline to appeal valuations to March 31, 2024, and appeals can go back two years to include 2022 and 2023. Many municipalities and school districts can expect to see continued refund activity following appeals. Ms. Diersen also mentioned that GRB Law is one of the sponsors of the ALOM conference, taking place April 4-7, 2024.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **SOFI forms are due to the Borough Office by May 1, 2023 .**
- **110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

Ms. Null reported that she is assembling a planning committee, and that they will hold the first meeting in late April.

- **Sign Ordinance**

- Mr. Rhule discussed the Planning Commission's review of the draft sign ordinance provided by Ms. Diersen and offered a red-lined version of the draft ordinance for Council's review. Council discussed the red-lined version and Mr. Dimond recommended that the minimum distance for all signs from the curb or edge of paved street should be 8 feet, which is the same as the requirement for fences. Motion to accept the Planning Commission's revision of the draft sign ordinance with the addition of the 8-foot minimum setback from the edge of the pavement for all signs made by Mr. Rhule, seconded by Mr. Dimond. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- Ms. Null reported a request from the Bradford Woods Conservancy. They would like to rototill an area of the Reserve to eliminate some invasive plants and then plant native plants in their

place. Mrs. Mansfield stated that EPAC had no objection to the plan. Council also had no objection.

## **FINANCE REPORT**

Mr. Hipwell presented the February check detail report, stating there were 16 electronic check payments, 1 paper check. The 5 largest payments were \$24,364 to Northern Regional Police Department, \$7,325 to Northland Library, \$3,579 to Bradford Woods Volunteer Fire Company, \$2,945 to US Bank for credit card charges, and \$1,658 to MEIT. Motion made by Mr. Hipwell, seconded by Mr. Rhule, to pay and ratify checks/payments for February 2024. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Mr. Hipwell reviewed the pre-ratify checklist for March/April 2024 (10 vendors) for Council approval.

Motion made by Mr. Hipwell, seconded by Mr. Dimond, to pre-ratify bills for March/April 2024. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Mr. Hipwell reviewed the Financial Reports for February 2024. Total Revenue: \$51,630 (the majority of which was Earned Income Tax of \$38,955). Expenses; \$46,935 and Total Fund Balance; \$1,190,691.

## **MONTHLY REPORTS**

### **SAFETY**

- **FIRE**

Chief Titus reported there were no calls last month. Volunteers from the Fire Company provided a fire science demonstration at Bradford Woods Elementary's STEAM Day event. Building maintenance projects planned this year include upgrading the outdoor lighting, replacing 3 exterior doors, replacing the water heater, and reinforcing the steps leading to the borough office entrance.

- **POLICE**

Lt. Jones reviewed the February calls for service: 14 calls, 8 traffic citations, and 14 traffic warnings. NRPD total calls, all municipalities; 695 for February. K9 Hank and his partner Officer Welling performed a demonstration at the Bradford Woods Elementary STEAM Day event.

- **AMBULANCE**

Ms. Null reported the McCandless Franklin Park Ambulance Authority activity in Bradford Woods in January: 11 requests for service resulting in 5 transports to hospitals.

### **MS4**

Ms. Null reported the following:

- The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) visited the Borough to perform the required 5-year inspection of the MS4 program. The visit lasted 2.5 hours, with half of the time spent in the office and half spent in the field. In the office, records were inspected to ensure that the Borough is complying with training, education, public participation, reporting and documentation requirements. The field inspection consisted of visits to the public works garage, fire company garage, salt shed, The Woodlands' detention pond, and one stormwater outfall. There were no violations noted. The inspector made recommendations regarding The Woodlands' pond, website improvements, and evaluating use of the Traisr program through LSSE. All recommendations are completed or in process.

- The amended PRP was advertised for public comment on March 7. Ms. Null asked if any members of the public wished to comment on the amended PRP. No comments were made. The public comment period will end on April 8.
- The bank account for the EDCDI grant funds will be opened on March 12. The deposit of funds from the state is expected within the next week. The next step for the project is to obtain a letter of authorization from the DEP Dams Division. After that, the project can be advertised for bidding.

## Roads

Ms. Null reported that the 2024 Road Improvement Project bid opening took place on February 26. Youngblood Paving was the low bidder with a base bid for paving Oak Road of \$95,936. Columbia Gas, as part of their gas line upgrade project, will be paving Lake Road from Woodland to the Borough line and Woodland Road from Lake to the Borough line at a cost of \$102,290. Patch work is planned for Laurel Road, a portion of Bradford Road and a portion of Centervue Road at an estimated cost of \$20,000, which will be paid with Liquid Fuels funds. Ms. Null recommended that the remaining 2024 road program budget of \$154,064 as well as \$76,583 from stormwater reserve funds be used for the paving and stormwater upgrades project on Washington and West Harding Roads. The Allegheny County Conservation District notified the Borough that they have approved a 20% increase in the grant amount for this project, bringing the total grant to \$245,040. Ms. Null read a statement from absent Council member Mr. Baldonieri in support of the roads plan as presented by Ms. Null.

- Motion to approve awarding the 2024 road program contract base bid to the low bidder, Youngblood Paving, Inc., for the amount of \$95,936 made by Mr. Rhule, seconded by Mr. Dimond. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.
- Motion to approve Contract 23-R01 Change Order No. 9 in the amount of \$475,686.50 for paving and stormwater improvements on Washington and West Harding Roads made by Mr. Rhule, seconded by Mr. Mansfield. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.
- Motion to approve execution of an Easement and Right of Way Agreement with Kevin and Molly Krober of 164 Bradford Road for the construction and maintenance of stormwater infrastructure made by Mr. Dimond, seconded by Mr. Rhule. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.
- Motion to approve execution of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Landowner-Grantee Agreement for the construction and maintenance of stormwater infrastructure at 164 Bradford Road made by Mr. Rhule, seconded by Mr. Dimond. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

## Public Works

Ms. Null reported the following:

- The Borough is 47 tons away from meeting the minimum order quantity on the salt contract. If no more salt is needed this winter, Morton Salt will store salt until December 31 at a cost of \$11 per ton (\$517 total).
- Mr. Turner is obtaining quotes for the skid steer boom mower attachment.

## Planning

- Mr. Rhule reported that the Planning Commission met on March 4 and discussed revisions to the sign ordinance, and review of the Comprehensive Plan goals. The Planning Commission wondered if adding more conditional uses and special exceptions would be better than revamping the ordinances themselves. Ms. Diersen stated that ordinances must be amended so that they can be applied universally and consistently, and the Zoning Hearing

Board must enforce the ordinances. Mr. Rhule reported that the Planning Commission proposed increasing the real estate transfer tax as a possible source of incremental revenue. Ms. Diersen stated that the transfer tax was set by state statute.

- The next meeting will be held on April 1 and will focus on zoning updates, fee schedules, pedestrian safety, and binder updates.

### **Zoning Permits**

The following permits were issued in February:

- 609 Lincoln Road zoning permit for a fence.
- 337 Cedar Road building permit for a kitchen remodel.

### **PERSONNEL**

Nothing to report.

### **NORTH HILLS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (COG) / NORTHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY**

NHCOG:

No report.

LIBRARY:

Ms. Null shared Mr. Kosmala's written report, stating that the detail design for the new entrance has been approved, and the Gatsby in the Garden fundraiser event on April 20 still has a few tickets available.

### **ENVIRONMENT**

Mr. Mansfield reported that EPAC met on February 20. The EPAC is seeking ideas for public land where the Conservancy can plant trees in order to reach their tree planting goals. Ms. Null suggested the elementary school property. The next meeting will be on March 19.

### **ALLEGHENY COUNTY BOROUGH ASSOCIATION (ACBA)**

Ms. Pongrace attended the March 7 meeting. The group discussed the sale of water utilities and how it can be denied by the Public Utilities Commission, even if residents vote to approve it. A potential resolution was drafted to present to PSAB for recommendation to the state legislature.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Rhule suggested that Council consider more aggressive approaches to deer management, since Suburban Whitetail Management only harvested 2 deer last season. Council discussed other options such as open hunting and a cull. There was also discussion of reaching out to surrounding municipalities to encourage them to sign on to the Suburban Whitetail program.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Ms. Pongrace acknowledged Mr. Turner for his ten years in service to the Borough and presented him with an anniversary gift from the Borough.

### **ADJOURN**

Motion made by Mr. Rhule, seconded by Mr. Dimond, to adjourn the public meeting and go into executive session at 8:27 p.m. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Dimond, seconded by Mr. Hipwell, to adjourn the executive meeting and go back into the public meeting at 8:47 p.m. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Mansfield, seconded by Mr. Dimond, to adjourn the public meeting at 8:47 p.m. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Rachelle Null, Secretary

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March 14, 2024  
Date