

COLUMBIA BOROUGH COUNCIL – WORK SESSION

August 8, 2019 | 6:00 PM

Paul W. Myers Council Chambers

MINUTES

1. Council President Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Councilpersons present: Berntheizel, Burgard, Kress-Hartman, Fitzgerald, Murphy, Novak & Williams. Mayor Lutz was also present.

Junior Councilperson present: None.

Council President Murphy requested phones be turned off or silenced, reviewed proper meeting protocol and announced the meeting is being live streamed to the Borough's social media page.

2. A moment of silence was observed. Councilperson Burgard led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.
3. Council President stated that there are no Announcements
4. Finance

- a. Council President Murphy turned the floor over to Finance Manager Watts for an update on the 2019 Budget Review and 2020 Budget Development. Manager Watts shared a brief overview of current budget and fund balance projections. Borough Manager Denlinger announced that in addition to the meetings being held with all Department Managers, staff is also reaching out to the Borough's various Boards and Commissions to ask them to determine their budget needs for 2020, to ensure these requests are included in the budget under consideration by Borough Council. Council President Murphy requested Borough Manager Denlinger add to the next meeting agenda to consider releasing Request for Proposals for both legal and auditing professional services.

- b. Council President Murphy lead a discussion regarding the collection of delinquent taxes. Council President Murphy and Borough Manager Denlinger shared that they are reaching out to PSAB as well as other municipalities to gather information on collecting delinquent taxes. Borough Manager Denlinger provided information on both the Real Estate Tax Sale Law, which is used by County Tax Claim Bureaus and is our current method, and the Municipal Claims & Tax Liens Act which allows the municipality to either do it on their own or use a third party agency. Borough Manager Denlinger added most municipalities use the Lancaster County Tax Collection Bureau to collect their delinquent taxes. Borough Manager Denlinger will continue to gather information and bring it back to Council. Mayor Lutz discussed the use of a "well-crafted letter" to seek payment and Councilperson Novak discussed a "three-payment option" as something the Borough should look into. Councilperson Kress Hartman questioned whether a monthly payment option should be considered. Councilperson Burgard questioned whether an amnesty on the tax penalties would result in payment of late taxes. Councilperson Novak requested to have the discussion on delinquent tax collection be added to the September Work Session Agenda.

Mr. Howard Stevens (430 Linden Street, Columbia PA) discussed the collection of delinquent taxes, the drawbacks of the current system, and ways the Borough can better collect.

Mr. Frank Doutrich (1001 Ironville Pike, Columbia, PA) asked for clarification on the advertising of tonight's meeting. Borough Manager Denlinger and Council President Murphy responded. Mr. Doutrich discussed the fact that the School District is no longer collecting their taxes. He also discussed the Borough's spending.

5. Public Safety

- a. Councilperson Burgard turned the floor over to Jeff Helm for an update on publishing 2019 Food Inspection Reports online and the steps being taken to transition food inspections to the PA Department of Agriculture. Mr. Helm details the action plan for the transition and that he expects the work to be complete in September. Mr. Helm stated the 2019 Food Inspection Reports are currently posted on our website. Council President Murphy requested a separate tab be made on the Borough website for easier access. Councilperson Novak asked for complaint-based inspections conducted in 2019 to also be posted on the Borough's website.
- b. Councilperson Burgard announced the following three discussion items will be placed on the August 27, 2019 Borough Council meeting agenda: Columbia Borough Code-Chapter 24: Fire Department, Columbia Borough Code-Chapter 27: Fire Inspector, and Columbia Borough Code-chapter 31: Fire Police.

6. Legislation

- a. Councilperson Novak asked for Planning/Zoning Manager Jeff Helm to provide an update on the Historic District Expansion. Mr. Helm detailed the work being done by staff to allow for an initial review by PHMC. If the response from PHMC is favorable, the Borough would then continue with the district expansion, as defined, with the release of a Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a consultant to complete an official survey of the parcels within the expansion area. The survey would then be reviewed by the Borough and submitted for formal review by PHMC. With PHMC's formal approval, the Borough Council could then consider final approval of the expanded Historic District. According to the Borough's HARB Consultant, Suzanne Stallings, Mr. Helm indicated that the process could be completed by summer 2020. Councilperson Novak expressed his frustration with the length of the process and asked for increase focus on the action steps to allow the Borough Council to be able to take formal action on the expansion of the Historic District.

Mrs. Sharon Linter (500 Chestnut Street, Columbia PA) questioned the need to expand the Historic District and asked for clarification on enforcement of HARB regulations within the proposed expanded Historical District. Councilperson Novak responded that there are a limited number of parcels within the total number of parcels included in the proposed expansion that will be regulated. Councilperson Novak also acknowledged the work that Borough Council, Staff, and the HARB must do to be a well-functioning Board and program. Mrs. Lintner commented on unauthorized work being done in the current Historic District. Borough Manger Denlinger, Planning and Zoning Manager Helm and Councilperson Novak responded regarding the communication with the property owner and business occupying the building who was doing the painting. There was a discussion on the next steps to address and work to resolve the unauthorized work. Councilperson Berntheizel and Mayor Lutz also weighed in on the regulations and the enforcement by the Borough. Councilperson Novak requested Mr. Helm to follow through per the Borough Ordinance with respect to the specific property and any alleged violations of the regulations.

Ms. Heather Zink (31 S 9th Street, Columbia, PA) asked for clarification on the RFP being put out to contract with a consultant to survey the proposed expansion of the Historic District. She expressed her concern for spending money on something that she feels many residents have spoken out against and to expand a district that we are not now properly enforcing the regulations on. Council President Murphy responded.

Mr. Frank Doutrich (1001 Ironville Pike, Columbia, PA) commented on the expansion of the Historic District and the regulation of some properties and not others within the district. He discussed work being done in the Borough without a permit. Councilperson Novak responded.

- b. Councilperson Novak asked Zoning & Planning Manager Jeff Helm for an update on Columbia Borough Planning Commission discussion of Columbia Borough Code-Chapter 220; Article III, 220-28.1: Airport District Overlay. Jeff Helm reported the Planning Commission met last week for a work session devoted to the comprehensive plan process. He stated that because the Chair was not in attendance, that the matter would be fully discussed at a subsequent Planning Commission meeting. Borough Manager Denlinger was directed to place the issue on the agenda for Borough Council's September Work Session.

7. Community Development

- a. Councilperson Berntheizel turned the floor over to Kelsey Miller of CHI St. Joseph's Healthy Columbia Initiative, the partner organization under agreement with the Borough to manage the Market House, to review the proposed Special Event Alcohol Addendum and BYOB Restaurant Policy for the Columbia Market House. Ms. Miller provided two draft documents to Borough Council. Following discussion, Councilperson Novak requested the item be placed on the agenda for Borough Council's September Work Session.
- b. Borough Manager Denlinger provided an update on the Boroughs Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) Application. The Borough was notified they will be offered a \$1,750,000 award. This money will be used for the Historic Market House project and a yet-to-be-defined parking improvement project in the Borough. There is a 3rd step to the application process that will be completed to advance the release of funds. Borough Manager Denlinger recommended to move forward with a parking study to prepare for the use of the RACP funds. Mayor Lutz commended Council and Borough Manager Denlinger on the efforts that went in to securing the RACP funding award from the Commonwealth.

Mrs. Sharon Linter (500 Chestnut Street, Columbia PA) asked for clarification on the amount awarded to the Borough and how the funds will be divided between the two proposed projects. Borough Manager Denlinger responded.

Mr. Frank Doutrich (1001 Ironville Pike, Columbia, PA) asked for clarification on the group that did surveys in the Borough. Borough Manager Denlinger responded. He also commented on the redevelopment of the old Hotel Locust building.

- c. Borough Manager Denlinger lead a discussion on a request by Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster to use the Columbia Trolley for an architectural tour of Columbia on September 28, 2019. Mayor Lutz and Council discussed the issue and requested the item be put on the August 13th agenda for continued discussion with additional information provided by Borough Manager Denlinger. Councilperson Burgard added there is more information on the tour at HPtrust.org.

Mr. Howard Stevens (430 Linden Street, Columbia, PA) discussed that he spoke with Chris Vera about use of the Trolley for similar touring purposes. He expressed interest in having the trolley be operational, even if it just breaks even, rather than just sitting in storage.

Mr. Frank Doutrich (1001 Ironville Pike, Columbia, PA) questioned the insurance on the trolley. Borough Manager Denlinger responded. Asked if the codes department will be directed to clean up the town prior to the tour. Councilperson Berntheizel responded and continued the discussion on high grass and weeds in the Borough. Mayor Lutz also commented on high grass and weeds in the downtown and along the Route 462 corridor.

Ms. Heather Zink (31 S 9th Street, Columbia, PA) pointed out we have a member on staff that already takes care weeds and grass the clock located at 5th & Chestnut.

Mr. Howard Stevens (430 Linden Street, Columbia, PA) discussed the certification required to spray weeds.

8. Announcements

Council President Murphy announced on August 13, 2019, Borough Council will hold an information session to receive information from its Borough Manager and Solicitor prior to the regularly scheduled Borough Council meeting at 7:00 PM that evening.

9. Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 PM.

Motion by:	Second by:	Voice Vote:
J. Novak	P. Williams	All Favored – Motion Carried

MOTIONED AND APPROVED this 13th day of August 2019, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Columbia, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in lawful session duly assembled.

BOROUGH OF COLUMBIA, LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

By:



Kelly Murphy, Council President

ATTEST:



Rebecca S. Denlinger, Secretary/Treasurer