

Meeting Minutes
State College Borough Council
Work Session
Friday, November 18, 2011
Noon

The State College Borough Council met in a work session on Friday, November 18, 2011, in the State College Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA. The meeting was called to order at noon.

Present: Elizabeth A. Goreham, Mayor
Ronald Filippelli, Council President
Tom Daubert
Donald Hahn
Theresa Lafer
Peter Morris
James Rosenberger

Also present: Thomas J. Fountaine, II, Borough Manager; Thomas R. King, Chief of Police; Carl R. Hess, Planning Director; Mark A. Whitfield, Director of Public Works; Norma J. Crater, Accounting Supervisor; Roger A. Dunlap, Assistant Borough Manager; Charles DeBow, Parking Manager; Brendan McNally, UPUA Representative; Ernest C. Dabiero, Purchasing Director/Risk Manager; Angel Hernandez, Information Systems Director; Courtney Hayden, Grants & Communications Coordinator and Debbie Lang, Recording Secretary.

Public Hour – Ms. Janet Bristol of 815 McKee Street spoke to the Council regarding the problems she is encountering in her neighborhood. She stated she lives at “Ground Zero”. She expressed her concerns about the lack of enforcement of rules, i.e. No Parking on the street, park usage, public urination, etc. in this area. She noted the danger to her and her family from all the media vehicles and personnel in this area. She stated vehicles are running stop signs, disobeying speed limits, have portable generators running constantly and general disruptiveness in the neighborhood. She stated she has called for police action and spent ½ to 1 hour on the phone before patrols responded to her call. She stated she is proud to support Penn State but she is not sure she is proud to pay taxes here. She stated this is a neighborhood and there are things we can do to handle this situation better.

Council asked Mr. Fountaine to address Ms. Bristol’s concerns. Mr. Fountaine stated the Borough did allow the media to use Sunset Park the first week and the Borough added porta-potties to the park for their use. He stated we have had police officers in the area and also closed McKee Street to traffic for a while. He stated police have continued to monitor the area. He did not have any knowledge of her telephone call and how it was handled. He stated he felt staff managed this issue as effectively as possible.

Council members expressed their sympathy on this situation. They stated they were very concerned about Ms. Bristol’s problems and suggested she speak with Mr. Fountaine or Mr. King, the Chief of Police, on a personal basis.

2012 Operating Budget. Council continued to discuss the 2012 Operating Budget.

A Council member questioned the percentage of the total budget on Page 15. Staff noted this amount is the percentage of revenue compared to expenditures. This Council member felt the wording should be changed in the proposed budget to clarify this.

A Council member also expressed concern that Borough Council would not have any say on purchases up to \$25,000. Staff explained Borough Council would have a say on these purchases; however, the policy document in place allows for purchases up to \$25,000 without approval of a specific contract by Council. Items under that amount are awarded and approved administratively.

Discussions were focused on the following sections:

- Debt Management discussed by Roger Dunlap.
- Capital Improvements discussed by Norma Crater.

A Council member noted that in the 5-year forecast, there is a 1% increase in tax revenue but expenditures rose by 9% and he was confused by that. Staff stated this is a 5 year projected historical amount and is based on different assumptions we make. Staff advised we like to look at 10 year of data and analyze this data to modify any assumptions.

A Council member discussed the 2007-2011 Capital Improvement Program and the projected number of \$19,936,472 in 2012. Staff explained that budget projections complied for the 2007-2011 CIP have now been changed or modified, i.e. the Public Works and labor services are now handled through the General Fund.

This Council member stated there is a \$2.5 million difference here. Staff explained that value diminishes each year and expenses were cut. Staff also stated they were confident that these were reasonable estimates for the first 2 years. They felt the numbers were fairly tight and consistent on revenues and expenditures. The Council member stated we can always do better. He felt this was not a recent problem and on long term projects, we could do better. He noted the more accurate it becomes, the more creditable it will be.

Another Council member noted a Joint Committee of the House and Senate recently passes a bill cutting CDBG funding \$2.9 billion so funding to the Borough for projects of this nature will be reduced yet again.

Staff reviewed pages 59-63 with the Council. A Council member questioned the Garner Street Streetlight Conversion program on page 64. She stated we do not know yet what we are putting there, where they will be purchased from, etc. She stated she has a problem with what is currently there. She stated she wants some specifics before she can justify spending \$42,000 on this project. Staff advised a presentation was given on this project and the lighting was identified after this presentation and review. Staff advised Council that this information can be brought back to them for another update. Staff stated the sample light was moved to Garner Street (by Bill Coleman's driveway) at the request of a Council member and any comments from the neighbors on this fixture should be sent to the Public Works Department.

A Councilman expressed his concern with moving funds to the general fund and felt projects may fall by the wayside and never get done since they are no longer a line item. Staff stated the projects will get done because staff will follow the goals and objectives of Council and normal purchasing procedures will be followed.

Staff mentioned the new line item for VMWare Software and IT staff explained this software for those present. It was noted the software will consolidate desktops and extend the lifecycle of computers. In response to a question from Council, staff stated this software would allow us to have one server but that server would be treated as several different servers.

A Council member also questioned the useful life of the Pugh Street parking garage. Staff responded that at this point, the useful life of this structure is another 5-10 years. A condition appraisal on this structure is currently being completed and Council will have more discussion on this matter early next year.

A Council member noted he was happy about the increase in the future pension obligation monies being set aside (page 69).

A Council member pointed out that Council was instructed to read and review this budget document only up to page 70 and therefore asked that any further review be completed at the meeting on Monday.

Staff just highlighted some items in the General Fund. It was noted taxes remain flat and there were some fee increases proposed. Staff also discussed departmental earning changes and Public Works

Services. It was noted that previously, Public Works labor was charged to the garages, etc. and now all services for hours used will be charged to various other funds.

There being no further budget review, Council adjourned to an Executive Session at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon K. Ergler, Recording Secretary

Prepared by: Debra A. Lang