

**State College Borough Council
Work Session
Monday, October 11, 2004**

The State College Borough Council met in a work session on Monday, October 11, 2004, in the State College Municipal Building's Council Chambers, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA. Mr. Daubert called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

Present: Thomas E. Daubert, President of Council
 Catherine G. Dauler
 Elizabeth A. Goreham
 Craig R. Humphrey
 Jeffrey R. Kern
 Janet K. Knauer
 James H. Meyer

Also present: Thomas J. Fountaine, II, Borough Manager; Ronald A. Davis, Assistant Borough Manager; Thomas R. King, Chief of Police; Mark Whitfield, Public Works Director; Amy Story, Borough Engineer; Mike Groff, Finance Director; Mark Henry, Health Officer; Alan Sam, Borough Arborist; Carl R. Hess, Director of Planning/Community Development; Timothy Grattan, Director of Information Systems; Amy R. Miller, Recording Secretary; members of the media; and other interested observers.

Public Hour.

The Town/Gown Relationship with Regard to Students.

Dr. Vicky Triponey, Vice-President of Student Affairs at Penn State, began with questions for Council asking members to share positive interactions with fraternities and sororities. Ms. Knauer replied she was pleased by the Greek system's response after the town riots and how fraternities worked with the Borough to eliminate problems. Ms. Goreham added that two or so years ago the Highlands neighborhood held a 'Give a Greek a Cookie' night where fraternity members met with residents and enjoyed good conversation. Ms. Dauler was given the opportunity to be a judge for the Greek holiday lighting contest and said interaction with fraternity members is always a delight.

Dr. Triponey said the reason for the questions was to focus on positive interactions, not just the negative as most people do. She presented Council with highlights from a summit held at Penn State in April 2004, entitled "Greek Pride: A Return to Glory." This summit was held over a four-day period and included over 250 stakeholders in the Penn State Greek community that included students, advisors, alumni, staff, faculty, State College residents, and national chapter representatives. The main focus of the summit was to develop a new vision for fraternity and sorority life via Appreciate Inquiry (AI) which is a progressive and collaborative approach to organizational change developed in 1980 by David Cooperrider. AI explores and embraces past successes in order to design and implement the best possible future for an organization. Dr. Triponey explained the four steps of AI are:

1. Discovery phase – sharing stories of life-giving energy; appreciate what is
2. Dream – use history to create shared images; imagine what might be
3. Design – plan a path to reach an optimal future; decide what could be
4. Destiny – determine how to implement the action; commit to what will be

At the conclusion of the summit a steering committee was formed to follow through with the goals that were created. The result was a plan or *Pledge of Commitment* which all stakeholders will be asked to sign to make the dreams a reality.

Mr. Kevin Kerr, Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life at Penn State, said the plan is what attracted him to Penn State. He stated there are very few universities around the country that have a plan to reconnect with the alumni and community. The *Dream Statement* is where we envision the university to be in 10 years. Fraternities and sororities have an esoteric bond with the men and women on campus as well as with alumni that will last forever. We want to encourage positive leadership and make known that fraternity members must take responsibility for their own actions.

Brian Bertges, Executive Vice President of the Interfraternity Council (IFC), explained two programs the IFC has recently implemented. The first one is a sexual assault prevention program. After looking at crime statistics, IFC learned that most assaults occur off campus in public areas. The IFC then considered how they could implement a plan for safer surroundings. An initiative was taken to provide a safe place where students could go. Students are told about the sexual assault prevention education zone and if one feels uncomfortable at any time they should go to a designated area and report the incident. Members are also trained on how to deal with and handle these situations. Another program implemented by IFC is the TIPS program which is training for alcohol intervention procedures. The TIPS program trains individuals on how to look at identification cards and teaches chapter members about alcohol policies and laws and informs them that fraternities are not exempt from the law.

Dr. Triponey said Penn State has one of the largest fraternity systems in the country, but certainly not the best reputation. Penn State's goal is to raise its rating to be one of the best positive programs. This program is in the very early stages of implementation, and Penn State hopes to see positive changes in the near future.

Mr. Daubert asked for an explanation about the Saturday/Sunday programs. Mr. Bertges said the new initiative is to clean up neighborhoods and yards after social functions. Fraternities will be given a time limit for clean up; otherwise the Fraternity will be cited.

Ms. Goreham said she received an email from a resident stating dismay with the garbage in fraternity yards. Mr. Bertges said the issue would be covered under the new initiative. Ms. Goreham wanted to know how the plan could be made practical. Dr. Triponey replied standards need to be set as well as consequences for noncompliance. If standards are not met, the chapters will no longer be welcome at Penn State. Mr. Kerr suggested Council send him an email to notify him whenever neighborhood situations occur and IFC will immediately try to resolve the situation.

Mr. Kern said he walks through his neighborhood of trash and listens to noise until late hours in the night. Residents want solutions now. Things happen that are not planned; items such as garbage in the yards, overflowing dumpsters, and signs knocked down. Alcohol consumption is not controlled. His daughter's friend is 17 years old and goes to fraternities where they are supplying her with the alcohol. Long-range plans are good, but these things need to be controlled now. Dr. Triponey replied that the University cannot fix the problems overnight, nor alone. Penn State needs the help of the town with obeying ordinances and the Borough police with enforcing the noise ordinance. Unfortunately the University is just now reestablishing these relationships, and it will take time to solve the problems.

Mr. Kern also stated the conditions of some of the houses are atrocious. The Borough has an ordinance that requires sprinkler systems be installed, yet some fraternities have not complied. Dr. Triponey responded that some items can be fixed immediately, while most will take years to fix. This is a cultural change that requires the way groups interact with each other.

Ms. Dauler referred to Dr. Triponey's use of the word accountability; she felt fraternities are not held accountable. Fraternity problems have been the resident's problems. Children are afraid to play outside. Houses are not well maintained. Students do not take pride in the places where they live. Ms. Dauler said as much as she thought the *Dream Statement* is a good idea, she asked how nationalists can respond to this statement. Mr. Kerr replied that in the past three months he has been working with the national headquarters from varying levels to have them come to Penn State to address these local issues. Over the years the national chapters have pulled back and now they are being told they are accountable for their local chapters. Mr. Kerr said at one time the fraternities thought they were exempt from local laws, but they are not. Dr. Triponey added that in the past the University distanced itself from the IFC and now the partnership has to be recreated. All groups need to work together to reform relationships.

State College Transportation Commission's Plans for the Future.

Chris Falzone, Chair of the Transportation Commission, provided Council with a report on the Commission's activities and their work plan for 2005. He said the Commission has worked on the following items the past 12 months:

1. Reviewed and recommended the installation of chicanes and loading/unloading zones on Beaver Avenue (implemented)
2. Completed Borough-wide traffic counts
3. Reviewed and commented on pedestrian node plans for Beaver/Allen and Atherton/Beaver
4. Reviewed plans for the Urban Village with regards to pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic, and made recommendations to the Planning Commission
5. Reviewed a proposal for the use of a speed sign board (study done)
6. Reviewed the Transit Signal Priority Project and made recommendation to Council (approved by Council)
7. Reviewed the Traffic Impact Study of the proposed Beaver Avenue parking garage (prompted a proposal of a plus intersection)
8. Made a recommendation for an east-west bicycle corridor (on-going discussion)
9. Reviewed plans and made recommendation on Garner Street bike paths (implemented)
10. Reviewed and commented on the Centre County Long-Range Transportation Plan (sent to Borough Council)
11. Reviewed and commented on the downtown signal retiming, including the implementation of a 3-second pedestrian lead time (approved)
12. Reviewed plans for the re-alignment of the Beaver/Fraser intersection (initial recommendations made)
13. Reviewed plans for the signalization of Whitehall/Blue Course Drive
14. Reviewed and made recommendations to the 2005-2009 Capital Improvement Plan (initial recommendations sent)
15. Reviewed plans for school crossing signals (recommended)
16. Reviewed application for Bicycle Friendly Communities designation

Mr. Falzone continued with on-going projects of the Commission, as follows:

1. East Highlands traffic mitigation
2. Pedestrian channelizing devices
3. Review of the average daily traffic counts of the Street Classification Policy
4. Work to implement transportation and parking elements of the Downtown Vision Plan

Ms. Knauer said, in addition to street classification, the definition of 'cut-through' needs to be determined.

And finally, Mr. Falzone discussed the future plans of the Transportation Commission as follows:

1. Assess the adequacy of off-street parking requirements for residential uses in the downtown.
2. Parking way-finding signs
3. Review number of public parking spaces needed in the downtown and recommend long-and short-term action to maximize present facilities and recommend long-term strategies to reach the optimal number of spaces
4. Review outcome of the Intermodal Transportation Center plans and make recommendations
5. Along with the Planning Commission and College Township, consider the relocation of O'Bryan Lane that will complement the Westerly Parkway Plaza and undeveloped lands in College Township.
6. Continue to work toward the implementation of designated bike lanes on bicycle routes within the Borough, including the possibility of a shared bus/bike lane on College Avenue
7. Work toward the implementation and installation of pedestrian countdown signals in the downtown.
8. Evaluate the recommended change to the motor vehicle ordinance regarding vehicular noise (loud mufflers, jake brakes, etc).

9. Evaluate alternatives to reduce the need for parking in the core of the downtown.
10. Evaluate the effects of the University's parking strategies on Borough parking facilities and CATA

Mr. Kern said he is concerned with the University's parking strategies and how the numbers have affected CATA. He feels the decline in CATA use is a major problem and the University is the cause of it. He explained that CATA, along with the University and Borough, needs to discuss this issue.

Mr. Kern questioned the countdown traffic lights and when the downtown will have the lights in use. Mr. Falzone replied they are scheduled for installation in the fall. There will be a three-second all-red time before the walk signals.

Mr. Daubert said the Transportation Commission should look into the problem with delivery trucks blocking Calder Way. Mr. Kern said the downtown plan requires deliveries to be made during certain business hours. Businesses and restaurants should have been notified by the Downtown Improvement District. Mr. Jovanis said the alleys are there for the purpose of deliveries.

Kristen Kofmehl, 210 West College, said the parking situation has been discussed with officials at Penn State. The \$5 parking lots are making a huge difference on campus with regard to bus service; people should be riding the bus more.

Ms. Goreham asked Mr. Jovanis to update Council on the Intermodal Transportation Committee. Mr. Jovanis, who is also liaison to the Intermodal Transportation Committee, said four locations are being considered for the new transportation center: (1) High Street and College Avenue, (2) Atherton Street and College Avenue, (3) White Course Drive, and (4) northwest corner of Garner Street and Beaver Avenue.

Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Long-Range Transportation Plan.

Mr. Fountaine introduced Trish Meek, Transportation Planner for the Centre Region Planning Agency (CRPA). Ms. Meek highlighted the Centre County's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The plan inventories current transportation facilities, forecasts county and regional demographics, and assesses the transportation needs up to the year 2030. The LRTP includes the following:

- Prepare a regional transportation prospective to look at trends and their impact on Centre County.
- Develop current (2000) and future year (2030) population and employment.
- Develop a travel demand model to assess transportation conditions and needs.
- Evaluate all transportation modes.
- Identify current and future needs and measures of effectiveness.
- Evaluate strategies to address needs.
- Prepare a draft plan that meets funding limits through the year 2030.
- Adopt the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

Ms. Meek explained there were alternatives tested and they include a no-build network consisting of the existing roadway system as well as projects that should be completed by the year 2030. There were 27 projects tested and each project went through five model runs. The first set of projects were included on the MPO's current long-range plan. The second set were not included but were requested by municipalities, and the third set were also not included in MPO's current long-range plan but were identified by CRPA after reviewing the 2003 levels of service. The first model run was to add capacity to existing roads. The second model includes the capacity adding projects and adding new roads on new alignments. The third, fourth and fifth runs add in large scale projects such as Corridor O. There are no projects listed that are definite, but the MPO wanted to look at the network should these projects be completed.

Alternative test results are as follows:

- Not all improvements can be modeled.

- Runs 1 and 2 have a less significant impact on system-wide measures of effectiveness.
- Run 3 had a more significant impact on the system-wide measure of effectiveness.
- Runs 1 and 2 improve level of service (LOS) but do not change traffic patterns.
- LOS remains poor in core areas of Bellefonte, Philipsburg, and State College Boroughs.

Ms. Meek asked Council for their input for the next set of model runs but reminded them that not all improvements can be modeled. She stated that projects on the list can be removed or new projects added. The next step would be to look at how these projects would impact the overall system because, once the projects are chosen, they will be ranked in order of importance. At the next workshop on October 27 there will be two sessions to discuss non-highway modes. The third workshop will be held to discuss the second set of model runs and afterwards a draft of the LRTP will be prepared. A new LRTP is expected to be adopted in the spring of 2005.

Mr. Daubert said Council spent many hours two years ago discussing a connection from the expressway to the eastern inner loop and found out that nothing can be done because there are too many existing interchanges. He felt that discussion now would be a waste of time. Tom Zilla, Transportation Planner for the CRPA, confirmed that new interchanges are not permitted, but it was suggested the eastern inner loop be connected to the existing Waddle Road interchange.

Mr. Daubert said the University Drive widening was also discussed previously and asked why it was put back on the list as a potential project. It is a Borough street and the MPO has no jurisdiction. Mr. Kern agreed and said the same goes for Atherton Street widening; both projects should be removed. Ms. Meek said CRPA can remove the items from the list. Mr. Kern said he would like to see a plan that removes traffic from the Borough rather than encouraging additional traffic as well as taking property away from residents.

Mr. Daubert suggested the MPO add the rerouting of Route 26 and connect Route 26 to Route 45 to eliminate through traffic. Mr. Zilla responded that there are three municipalities that want to do different things with Route 45. Neither Harris nor Ferguson want the additional traffic. Mr. Zilla said he has 36 municipalities to contend with. He suggested Council get together with Harris and Ferguson Townships to discuss this matter.

Mr. Kern questioned the possibility of extending Beaver Avenue to University Drive, which would eliminate the widening of High Street. Mr. Daubert replied the topography is the reason Beaver Avenue was not extended. Mr. Kern said road widening encourages development and traffic should be kept out of the Borough. Mr. Zilla replied that studies show most cars traveling in the Centre Region are going into the Borough.

Mr. Fontaine agreed to prepare a memo to CRPA with Council's suggestions.

The Supplemental to the Aquatics Feasibility Study and Concept Plan Dated August, 2004. Discussion of this item was delayed until October 29.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Streets

Mr. Daubert stated Park Avenue would not be discussed until October 29. Council began discussion with the list of street projects that were not included in the 2005-2009 Capital Improvement Plan. Council did not suggest reinstating any projects.

Mr. Meyer suggested that to save \$95,000, the Westerly Parkway reconstruction project be eliminated because the condition is not extreme and could be delayed for a couple years. Mr. Kern asked if project costs increase if projects are delayed; Mr. Whitfield answered yes, conditions get worse so the costs of repairs increase. Mr. Fontaine said staff's goal is to come up with a steady stream of dollars to set aside for projects.

Mr. Fontaine said O'Bryan Lane is deferred and will be studied to determine if it should be relocated to tie it in with the traffic signal at Plaza Drive. O'Bryan Lane was dropped as an issue for discussion at this time.

Ms. Dauler was disappointed to see the \$13,000 for diverter improvements removed. Mr. Whitfield informed Council that, even if the project was approved, Public Works staff was not able to begin the improvements.

Mr. Kern inquired about the \$90,000 for storm water inlets and asked why this project is not needed. Mr. Fountaine replied the projects removed from the list are merely delayed.

Storm Water

Mr. Daubert questioned the proposal relating to Berry Alley because storm water was never an issue in this alley. Ms. Story said there is a sinkhole where the pipes in this area drain. The outlet pipe is only 6 inches, which creates flooding.

Mr. Kern said the Borough permitted construction on Prospect Avenue which caused storm water problems; he asked if this can be prevented in the future. Ms. Story said the public right-of-way floods at Prospect Avenue and Apple Alley and was a known problem; the developer cannot be held responsible for a problem that already existed.

Ms. Goreham said the ordinance exempts all properties having less than a 1,000 square foot footprint from submitting a storm water management plan. Ms. Dauler said staff is trying to educate the Planning Commission on this very issue, but they seem reluctant to grasp what was just discussed. She thought the issue might require some zoning changes. Mr. Fountaine agreed and said zoning amendments for maximum pervious limits for the public districts are on the agenda for November 6.

Parks

Mr. Daubert stated playground equipment replacement and repair is necessary.

Ms. Goreham wondered if the Borough could get bench sponsorship which would bring in extra money for the project. Mr. Fountaine said the project is still a long way off because the legal suit for the property at 234 South Allen could go another six months.

Ms. Knauer asked how much of the existing funds will be used for replacing the roof on an existing pavilion. Alan Sam said the cost was a little over \$1,000 because our staff already replaced the roof.

In response to Mr. Daubert's question about lighting Central Parklet, Mr. Whitfield replied that staff cannot get replacement parts for the light fixtures in the Parklet when they are out or destroyed. The intent is not to put in fewer lights, but rather attempt to lighten the park by using more efficient lighting.

Other Projects

Mr. Kern inquired about the proposal to build a new maintenance facility. Mr. Daubert explained the funds are to maintain the current municipal building. Mr. Daubert thought an electric rolling gate is a bit extravagant. Mr. Fountaine stated the project cannot happen unless the Sheesley property can be obtained.

Mr. Daubert referred to technology improvements and said he is not in favor of electronic payments unless fees are raised. Mr. Meyer said the credit card company can pass the fees on to the customer. Mr. Groff agreed and said the company, Official Payments Corporation, would obtain a fee for their service when a customer pays by using a credit or debit card either via phone or on line. Mr. Kern stated he could not respond because his technology firm is being considered for the software installation. Mr. Groff continued saying these electronic payments will benefit the Borough because we will receive payment immediately. Mr. Fountaine added that the Borough needs to be user-friendly to customers and keep up with the demand. Mr. Groff said the primary costs would be the installation of the software; costs are not on-going.

Mr. Daubert said police records need updating. Chief King agreed stating the current system is becoming obsolete. Mr. Grattan said the Borough's goal is to begin integrating all departments so that all departments would be able to answer all questions. He also said during the past two-three years, the IS department has been working on standardizing the

whole computer system. Ms. Knauer asked what costs were associated with the GIS integrated operating system. Mr. Grattan said quotes at this time; quotes will come in with the start up costs of purchasing and maintaining the software. The CIP already includes the software maintenance. The Borough has not kept track of maintenance costs previously. Mr. Fountaine agreed all employees should have access to the GIS system to search for information. Once all of the information is entered, everyone would have access to the same information.

Daubert said that the zoning ordinance rewriting needs to be delayed for more discussion. Mr. Hess requested that the zoning ordinance rewrite not be discussed on October 22 because he is unable to attend the Council work session.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned to a work session at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Barbara J. Natalie
Assistant Borough Secretary