

State College Borough Council
Work Session
January 23, 2004

The State College Borough Council met in a work session on Friday, January 23, 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 12:07 p.m.

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

Absent: Janet K. Knauer

Also present: Thomas J. Fountaine, Borough Manager, Ronald Davis, Assistant Borough Manager, Michele Nicolas, Human Resource Director; Michael Groff, Finance Director; Thomas R. King, Chief of Police; Carl R. Hess, Director of Planning/Community Development; Mark A. Whitfield, Director of Public Works; Cynthia S. Hanscom, Recording Secretary; and other interested observers.

Public Hour. There were no comments from the public.

Agreement with State College Area School District (SCASD)

Mr. Fountaine explained an agreement between the Borough and School District, which proposes an easement to construct and operate a storm water detention facility on the soccer fields. The soccer fields are part of a natural drainage way that can be used to restrict runoff and reduce the potential flooding of downstream properties and buildings. Mr. Whitfield explained the agreement was reviewed by the SCASD Facility Committee. He said he had not been able to get a real sense where the School Board is with the agreement but believes there are members who realize the importance of the project.

Mr. Meyer noted comments from the Facilities Committee included a request that the project start by July 1 and finish a few months later; he asked if this timeline was possible. Mr. Whitfield felt it would be feasible. From discussions with Ron Woodhead, Director of Centre Region Parks and Recreation, Fogelman Field could handle the extra sports activities, which is amenable to the School District. Mr. Meyer asked when the project would be bid, and Mr. Whitfield replied it would be April or May.

Mr. Daubert asked about the cost of the project. Mr. Whitfield estimated it at \$770,000.

Mr. Kern asked what needed to be done to move ahead. Mr. Whitfield said he would work with the Borough Solicitor to draft a legal agreement and take it before the School Board for their next meeting.

Mr. Kern asked why the School Board would be opposed to the project if it would alleviate the flooding of the North Building. Mr. Whitfield replied the School Board feels the storm water is the Borough's problem. Mr. Fountaine indicated the School Board is also concerned with the loss of use of the soccer fields during heavy storms.

Mr. Kern asked if the detention basin would provide storm water storage for future development on school district lands. Mr. Whitfield explained the basin would be about $\frac{3}{4}$ inches deeper to accommodate future development.

Mr. Daubert asked why it was necessary for Ron Woodhead to sign the agreement. Mr. Whitfield said that he would need to make adjustments in the schedule for use of the fields because of the construction. Mr. Daubert asked the Borough Solicitor to confirm that Mr. Woodhead's signature is needed.

Ms. Goreham asked for an element to be added to the project for the placement of a sign stating the importance of storm water management and the coordination efforts of the

Borough and the School District to alleviate the problem. Mr. Whitfield commented that a sign could be placed at the retention facility near the entrance to the bike path.

Mr. Fountaine acknowledged a consensus of Council to move forward with the agreement. He said staff would work on finalizing the document and take it to the School Board.

CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (COG) AGENDA

Regional Fire Protection Program

Mr. Daubert indicated that, from a report from the COG Public Services Committee, the General Forum is being asked to establish an ad hoc Fire Program Evaluation Committee to study the operations and organization of the regional fire protection program. The COG Executive Committee discussed the recommendation at their meeting last week. Walter Wise, Fire Administrator for the Alpha Fire Company, would be making a presentation at the COG General Forum meeting on January 26.

Regional Library - Building Fund Agreement

Mr. Daubert noted the COG Finance Committee is asking that the participating municipalities release the funding committed to the construction of the new library. The Committee was unanimously satisfied that both the site selection criteria and the conditions established in the Funding Agreement have been met. Mr. Fountaine said funds have been released and five quarterly statements to the other municipalities will be sent requesting reimbursement for the funds. Mr. Davis added that the Borough received an invoice for the western Inner Loop from Ferguson Township, but per the agreement, funds would not be released until COG takes action on the release of funds for the library.

Regional Library – Funding Formula for Operating Budget

Mr. Daubert explained the funding formula for the library is based on patrons' residency. Some elected officials felt that patrons living a greater distance from the library are more likely to renew their materials rather than return to the library; therefore, the phone and computer renewals should not have the same value as first-time checkouts in determining municipal shares. Mr. Daubert noted the request to change the formula came from elected officials in Ferguson Township. With the change in the formula, both Ferguson Township and the Borough would see an increase in their funding shares. He noted a majority of the Executive Committee did not support the change.

COUNCIL'S FEBRUARY 2 AGENDA

Professional Services for the Memorial Field Drainage Area

Mr. Daubert indicated the SCASD wanted the Borough to evaluate the storm water needs for memorial field. Council needed to award a contract for the study. A commitment had been made by Council to contribute \$15,000 toward the study.

Field Computer System for the Health Department

Mr. Fountaine explained that Council had not acted on the bids at their previous meeting. Therefore, action would be needed to reject the bids.

Presentation in Harrisburg on Local Economic Development Projects

Mr. Fountaine explained that staff had made a presentation on local economic development projects in Harrisburg to the Governor's office. The presentation was based on the Downtown Vision plan. Staff also appealed to have redevelopment authorities extend to boroughs; currently, they are permitted only in cities. This could be incorporated with the Main Street program. Council discussed running a redevelopment authority through the Downtown Improvement District (DID); Mr. Daubert did not believe the DID would be an appropriate venue for a redevelopment authority.

University/Borough Liaison Meeting

Council received a list of topics discussed the Borough/University Liaison meeting held on December 19, 2003. Ms. Goreham felt that the new Director of Student Program, Vicky Triponey, would be interacting with the Borough on a regular basis. Mr. Fountaine said she would be working on improving the relationship between the University and fraternities, addressing concerns for safety, particularly for women, on Penn State Campus, housing issues in relation to the Housing Task Force, behavior concerns, and the role the University can play. He noted that she is open to the process and wants to include more community input.

Pennsylvania League of Cities and Municipalities (PLCM) Training

Ms. Dauler reported that she had attended a training session for newly elected officials hosted by the PLCM. Sessions were held on labor and personnel law, the budget process, communication skills, and homeland security.

Ms. Dauler indicated that one speaker stressed the importance of elected officials giving staff warning when they want a plan implemented. Council discussed problems with communication between staff and Council. Specifically, this Council would not move forward with the bids for the Health Department computer system after approving the proposal in the 2004 budget. Council discussed changes in membership that caused the failure to approve the project. Mr. Fountaine understood there were reasons for not approving the project but did not believe adequate opportunity had been given to discuss the item. A great deal of staff time was spent looking into what was needed. Mr. Fountaine believed the bid approval stage is too late in the process to decide a project is not wanted.

Mr. Daubert informed Council there would be quarterly budget meetings to track on-going projects and future expenditures. This would provide Council with information throughout the year rather than wait until the end of the year, which could improve the level of communication between staff and Council.

ITEMS OF INFORMATION

Bus Terminal. Mr. Goreham distributed a letter from the University to Council on the relocation of the bus terminal. Mr. Meyer noted that it would take a community effort to do this and believed the Centre Region COG should take the lead role in the process. Council members were divided on whether the Borough should take the lead role because members disagreed on whether or not the transportation center should be sited in the Borough. University officials believe a majority of the riders are students and they had an obligation to get the transportation center built. Ms. Goreham said it was important to have the facility convenient to campus. Mr. Meyer said Penn State has taken the lead role by hiring a consultant. He suggested a committee of Borough officials (three Council members), members of the COG Transportation Committee and University officials serve on an advisory group. A majority of Council agreed. Mr. Fountaine said he would draft a memorandum of agreement to come back to Council for approval.

Letter from Citizens on Parking Ticket. Mr. Meyer referred to a letter received from an individual who received a parking ticket for backing into a metered space. He noted the letter was well-written and the violator had not seen the sign requiring "Head In Parking Only." He asked why it was necessary to pull-in to a parking space. Mr. Groff interjected that the length of a vehicle from the back bumper to the axle is longer than the distance from the front bumper to the axle; therefore, by pulling into the parking space, there is less of a risk parking meters will be bumped.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Natalie
Assistant Borough Secretary