

**Meeting Minutes**  
**State College Borough Council**  
**Work Session**  
**December 2, 2005**

The State College Borough Council met in a work session on Friday, December 2, 2005, 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 of Council  
Catherine G. Dauler  
Elizabeth A. Goreham  
Craig Humphrey  
Jeffrey R. Kern  
Richard L. McCarl  
James H. Meyer

Also present: Thomas J. Fountaine, II, Borough Manager; Thomas R. King, Chief of Police; Carl R. Hess, Community Development/Planning Director; Linda S. Welker, Tax Administrator; John P. Marchek, Budget Officer; Timothy Grattan, Director of Information Systems; Michael S. Groff, Finance Director; Michele Nicolas, Director of Human Resources; Mark S. Henry, Health Officer; Joanne K. Lopinsky, Assistant Zoning Officer; Norma J. Crater, Accounting Supervisor; Sheila Lubold, Recording Secretary; members of the media; and other interested members of the public.

**Public Hour.** There were no comments from the public.

**Comments to COG on Technical Advisory Committee – Beneficial Reuse.** Mr. Fountaine reported that COG General Forum received a report from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) regarding the reuse of water for economic development purposes. COG has asked for comment to be given back to them by December 6, 2005.

Mr. Daubert stated Borough had previously agreed to participate in the program and the Borough's portion would be between \$5,000 and \$6,000 and was included in the Borough's 2006 budget.

Ms. Goreham questioned how much water would be re-injected back into the supply and the dollar amount that would be charged for use of this water. Mr. Daubert commented that there was not a decision made on an exact number but the majority of water was to be re-injected. Mr. Kern added there has not been a price set for the use of the water because COG is being cautious not to put smaller water companies out of business.

Mr. Fountaine added that COG is trying to decide on a marketing strategy and there has also been some discussion about doing a pilot program.

Mr. Humphrey reported he has suggested that COG contact officials from the Ben Franklin Partnership, but no contact has been initiated. He thought the problem may be that the groups have different goals. Ms. Goreham and Ms. Dauler thought if the suggestion was made as a group the response from COG may be better. A short discussion was also held about the type of businesses that would have an interest in using the water, and that perhaps the "high tech" projects involved in the Ben Franklin agency were not likely to use a lot of water.

It was decided that Council would participate in the program and suggest COG make contact with Ben Franklin.

**Changes to the Authorities Boards and Commissions (ABCs).** Mr. Daubert stated there has been some discussion among Council members to consolidate the work of the Historic Resources Commission (HRC) and the Design Review Board (DRB). The HRC currently consists of a seven member commission but the commission will only have five members at the end the year. DRB is a five member board but will only have three members at the end of the year.

Mr. Meyer stated it was a good idea to combine the two boards to try and reduce the duplication of staff among the boards. This may also help eliminate the issues with not having quorums at meetings.

Mr. Humphrey suggested Council should talk with the board members and get their thoughts and ideas. Mr. Daubert agreed with this but said it would be difficult to coordinate schedules.

Ms. Goreham felt each board is very valuable and questioned if too few people were applying for the boards and the vacancies could not be refilled.

Ron Madrid, 701 West Beaver Avenue, is member of the HRC. He stated it would be helpful for the members to know what Council is looking for from the ABCs Boards. He felt the HRC and DRB each have different goals and objectives. The two commissions are separate and distinct but at the same time compliment each other.

Mr. Humphrey questioned Mr. Madrid if he thought combining the two commissions would compromise the goals of either commission and Mr. Madrid stated the two commissions call for different expertise and therefore different members. Mr. Kern questioned what Mr. Madrid felt the pros and cons of combining the two boards would be and if the number of members should remain the same. Mr. Madrid stated the twelve members of the two commissions provide well rounded feedback and with more members they get a more diverse response on issues. He felt the commissions could work together but cautioned Council not to eliminate any of the functions.

Mr. Kern asked how the two boards affect Borough staff. Joanne Lopinsky stated her prep time for the HRC varies depending on the projects that are being worked on. Herman Slaybaugh agreed with Ms. Lopinsky's comment and added it takes about ten to twelve hours a month to prepare for meetings held by each commission.

Rosalie Bloom-Brooks, 812 West Beaver Avenue, is also a member of the HRC. She felt combining the two commissions would be a terrible error and a "kill button" for historic preservation. The groups have some similarities but the missions are different and each group currently has full agendas. She feels historic preservation would take a back seat if the two commissions are combined. She added the purpose of the commission is to help the Borough but the HRC could use some guidance with the direction Council would like the commission to take and what the goals should be. Mr. Kern suggested Council and the boards hold work sessions.

Mr. Meyer felt the boards should remain separate but thought maybe Council could consider changing the number of members on the boards.

Donald Hahn, 225 Bradley Avenue, felt the decision making process is easier with fewer members but it is also more burdensome for the members. Mr. Hahn added the ABCs are an asset to Council and they help to make the work of Council easier.

Council decided to keep the two commissions separate and they could discuss the number of members on the boards at a later date.

**2006 Operating Budget.** Council continued their discussion on the 2006 operating budget with the Health Department's budget.

Mr. McCarl questioned why there was such an increase in the personnel expenses as compared to the last two years. Michele Nicolas explained that the staff is now fully employed and rather than only paying a percentage of expenses for the secretarial staff the full amount is being budgeted.

Council also questioned why there was a decrease in the phone service. John Marchek explained the Borough has changed the service provider and that is the reason for the change.

Mr. Kern spoke about the need to keep up with inspections and questioned if staff has been working with other agencies to coordinate inspections for issues other than just health issues. Mr. Fountaine stated that inspectors have been working together and if a possible violation is noticed the proper department is notified. Mr. Henry added that the communications between the Code Office and the Health Department have been good and the two offices work well together.

Mr. McCarl asked why people are being charged for the radon testing program. Mr. Henry stated that people are only charged the cost the Borough pays for the kit and not for the testing.

Mr. Meyer suggested that the Health Department purchase an infrared thermometer to use when doing inspections. The thermometers are accurate and will make inspections faster.

Next Council reviewed the Finance Department portion of the budget. Mr. Daubert questioned the proposed idea of obtaining services to allow for e-payment and credit/debit card payments. He has concerns with allowing people to pay their taxes using this method. Mr. Fountaine stated that the Borough needs to look at ways to become more of an e-government and needs to have some type of an on-line payment option. Mr. Kern agreed and said many municipalities outside Pennsylvania are switching to these options.

Mr. Daubert questioned the fees that would be involved by providing this service. Mr. Groff explained for smaller agencies, such as the Borough, the service providers set the fees and the Borough is unable to negotiate fees like a larger company could.

Ms. Goreham questioned the amount budgeted for audit services and consulting services. Mr. Fountaine stated it is an ad hoc agreement. Mr. Groff added the audit costs are lower than previous years because the audit procedures have been reviewed and the preparation for audits is more efficient for the Borough.

Next Council discussed the tax collection budget and Mr. Meyer questioned the decline in staff by one part-time data entry clerk and the effects it has had on the department. Mr. Groff explained the position was not filled after the incumbent resigned early in 2005. In addition, another employee left the tax office to take a position elsewhere in the Borough and that has put the office behind with some matters because of training a new employee. Ms. Goreham asked if the data entry position was filled would it help to bring the department up to date. Mr. Groff felt it would be

valuable but added with the changes that are expected in the coming year it may be best to re-exam the position and wait to make a decision.

Council discussed the police budget next. Mr. Kern asked why there was more than a \$100,000 increase in administrative/clerical staff. Mr. King explained that two years ago the need for a police application specialist was recognized and at that time a member of the IS staff was moved to police. For the 2006 budget the funding for this position has been moved to the police budget rather than the IS budget. Since this position has been moved to the police budget the townships now help to pay for this position.

Ms. Goreham asked if the two new police officer positions were funded by grants. Mr. King said that was correct. Mr. McCarl pointed out that previously officers have been hired to fill positions due to grant money received but when the grants expire the personnel remain. He asked if that was due to police officers retiring. Mr. King responded that yes some do replace retiring officers but the need for more officers continues to grow so the additional officers have been retained. Mr. Fountaine added that when the grants expire a decision is made regarding the positions.

Mr. Humphrey asked about the continued use of foot patrols and Ms. Goreham questioned if the use of student auxiliary would continue. Mr. King said the use of foot patrols would remain the same and the student auxiliary program in the downtown has been successful. However, the internship program in the Highland neighborhood has been less popular because it is unpaid and the shifts for the foot patrols are overnight. Mr. King said the program will be reevaluated.

Mr. McCarl also questioned why the number of arrests have gone up. Mr. King explained the number of arrests in 2001 were very low and that makes it appear the arrests in the following years are much higher. Mr. Daubert also asked Mr. King for a breakdown of disorderly conduct violations by the nature of the violation.

The last budget item discussed was parking enforcement. Council had a few questions about the type of violations that were occurring. Mr. Daubert felt the amount of the fine should reflect the seriousness of the violation and it may be a good idea to review the fee schedule for parking violations.

Mr. Fountaine also explained to Council the experimental parking meters that are being used at certain locations in the Borough. After time expires on one of these meters, the meter starts timing negative minutes. When the meter reaches a negative 5 minutes, it resets to zero. If a parking enforcement officer observes a meter that displays negative time, the officer is not permitted to issue a parking violation. Using the countdown meters assures that the meter has been expired for at least five minutes before a ticket is issued.

#### **Review items on Council's Agenda for December 5, 2005**

Mr. Daubert mentioned the bike/pedestrian crossing signal at McKee Street and University Drive will be discussed at the regular meeting on December 5. After adjourning the regular meeting Council will then have a work session to discuss the budget.

Mr. Humphrey asked to revisit the decision made by Council regarding right hand turns at Park Avenue and Atherton Street. He would like to discuss having the sign indicate no turn on red. Mr. Fountaine stated the permit may have been filed and, if so, the issue could not be revisited. Mr. Fountaine will check the status of the permit.

Ms. Goreham added that she has been getting a lot of comments about the lack of bike racks downtown and complaints about bikes being taken away if not fastened to a bike rack. Mr. King stated the bikes are tagged and if they remain in the same location for an extended period of time, or if the bikes are a hazard, only then are they removed.

There being no further business, Council adjourned to an executive session at 2:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cynthia S. Hanscom  
Assistant Borough Secretary