

**Meeting Minutes**  
**State College Borough Council**  
**Work Session**  
**Monday, December 12, 2005**

The State College Borough Council met in a work session on Monday, December 12, 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 7:35 p.m.

Present: Thomas E. Daubert, President of Council  
Catherine G. Dauler  
Elizabeth A. Goreham  
Craig R. Humphrey  
Richard L. McCarl  
James H. Meyer

Absent: Jeffrey R. Kern

Also present: Thomas J. Fountaine, II, Borough Manager; Thomas R. King, Chief of Police; Michael S. Groff, Finance Director; Tim Grattan, Information Systems Director; Norma Crater, Accounting Supervisor; John Marchek, Budget Officer; Amy R. Miller, Recording Secretary; Amy J. Story, Borough Engineer; Mark Whitfield, Public Works Director; Ed Holmes, Parking Manager; Alan Sam, Arborist; Eric Brooks, Operations Manager; members of the media; and other interested observers.

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

**2006 Tree Commission Work Program.** Council discussed the Tree Commission's 2006 work program. Mr. Daubert recommended Council set priorities on all work plans; however all tree projects will be completed.

Ms. Goreham was pleasantly surprised to hear of a new program to combat vandalism and asked if residents would also be included in the program. Mr. Sam said staff has determined where the incidents occur most and believe planting big trees and thorn bushes may deter persons from damaging greenery, in addition to planting bushes away from property lines. Mr. Sam also explained the need to educate citizens and show that vandalism hurts everyone involved. Examples of the vandalism range from snapping tree branches to ripping shrubs and trees out from the roots which can result in fines up to \$300 plus court costs and costs of replacement.

Mr. Meyer questioned the reinstating of a tree inspector and how the position will affect the work plan. Mr. Sam said the position was eliminated previously for budgetary reasons and now the department can rehire a part-time seasonal employee. The position will not affect the work plan, and it is his hope the person will be an experienced forestry or agricultural major from Penn State.

Ms. Dauler asked for clarification on tree replacement on the 100 block of South Allen Street. Mr. Sam said the trees would not all be replaced at the same time. Some trees are in poor condition and have outlived their usefulness; sap falls from the trees and makes the benches sticky.

Council agreed to accept the Tree Commission work program at its meeting on December 19.

**2006 Transportation Commission Work Program.** Council next discussed the Transportation Commission's 2006 work program. Mr. Whitfield said two additional items should be included on the work plan. The first is the plan to install audible cross signals at two additional intersections. The other addition is pedestrian channeling devices but the Transportation Commission would need further discussion on the devices. Mr. Daubert and Mr. McCarl were not aware the Borough currently has one audible cross signal.

Mr. Humphrey questioned the status of traffic calming devices. Mr. Whitfield said the Borough received no bids for the project and the project will be rebid in spring.

Mr. Daubert said bicycle racks should be included on the plan; Mr. Whitfield replied that bicycle racks were included in the Borough's list of projects, but not included on the written plan. Mr. Daubert requested bicycle racks be written in the plan to let residents know their requests are being met.

Mr. Daubert questioned the Transportation Commission's main projects. Mr. Whitfield said the Commission's focus will be to simplify traffic calming policies and street classification.

Mr. Meyer asked what can Council do now to help the situation if minimizing traffic impacts on South Hills and Lytle Avenues were low priority. Mr. Whitfield answered the avenues are mapped to the Borough line. He said various approaches would be considered to determine the best use and at this point in time College Township has not been contacted. Ms. Dauler said plans are a low cost but a high priority. Mr. Fountaine said the comment of 'low priority to Council' will be removed from this project.

Mr. Daubert felt the Intercity Bus Terminal relocation was no longer a Transportation Commission issue because it was turned over to COG. Ms. Goreham disagreed and said it may become an issue if a Borough location is selected. Mr. Fountaine suggested modifying the comment to read the location is based upon the site chosen by COG.

Mr. Fountaine said including bike racks on the Bicycle Friendly Community item is not appropriate and suggested including bike racks in the comment area for transportation-related elements of the Downtown Plan.

Mr. Daubert said further consideration should be given to the proposed bike lanes; he felt there were too many.

**2006 Planning Commission Work Program.** Mr. Daubert said ABC work plans should go out to the community once they are approved and should be easily understood. He also suggested rewording 'owner-occupied housing' in the "Neighborhood Planning" section. Ms. Dauler agreed and said the statement should include mixed-use and workforce housing. Ms. Goreham suggested affordable housing be considered as well as high cost condos in the neighborhood planning.

Mr. Meyer asked what innovative storm water management techniques have been recommended and if staff or the Planning Commission would develop the recommendations. Mr. Hess responded that staff would develop the storm water techniques that would become part of the Borough's land development regulations. Mr. Hess added that many of the development projects in the Borough are small (less than 2500 square feet) and would not require submission of a storm water management plan. Mr. Daubert suggested making storm water management techniques a priority because it has been an on-going issue.

Mr. Hess said updating the Borough's land use goals is the first step in rewriting land use codes. He added that he and Bob Crum, COG's Planning Director, were working on a proposed scope of work to present to Council. Mr. Hess said the rewriting would not only change the zoning ordinance, but other land use regulations as well. Neighborhood representation is desired in this process as well as working with the townships and regional planning staff. Mr. McCarl asked with only 25 acres of undeveloped land in State College how much development is expected. If land use is changed it may affect the lives of many people. Mr. Fountaine said this is another reason land use needs to be addressed and the zoning codes need to be rewritten. Mr. McCarl recommended having more meetings with developers and including the land owners.

Mr. Meyer asked if the Catholic Student Center was a motivating factor in adding the initial planning for review of techniques for controlling scale and density in residential neighborhoods to the Community Planning section. Mr. Hess replied yes; the Catholic Student Center was a motivating factor. Mr. Meyer added that legally a church can not be regulated and excluded from a community, but home owners are limited in how much they can expand their homes. Mr. Hess responded that the proposed changes would apply to churches and schools and other nonresidential uses and could also be used to limit the size of homes. Ms. Dauler recommended Council watch C-NET's tape of the Planning Commission's last meeting because Herman Slaybaugh gave an excellent presentation on this project.

**2006 Operating Budget.** Discussion began with the budget for Public Works administration. Mr. Whitfield said a good portion of increased expenses is attributed to rising fuel costs. In addition there is a need for upgrading equipment and computers. Mr. Whitfield added that paid interns have been extremely helpful to the Public Works Department and the interns should be provided with a computer.

Mr. McCarl inquired how long seal-coating lasts and if seal-coating is worth the money spent. Mr. Whitfield replied seal-coating is a rejuvenation process and extends the life of asphalt. Staff has determined seal-coating is the best option at this time.

Mr. McCarl then asked where the audible pedestrian devices would be installed. Mr. Whitfield said requests have been made for College Avenue and Allen Street and on Atherton Street at the bus terminal. Mr. Whitfield said staff is determining costs at this time to decide whether devices are feasible. Mr. Whitfield added that the Beaver Avenue and Allen Street audible signal was part of the CATA and library project, and funding was a determining factor in installing the device at that location.

Streets were then discussed. Mr. Daubert asked how energy costs for street lights are controlled. Mr. Whitfield said most costs are dictated by Allegheny Power's rate structure and increases have been minimal.

Mr. Meyer asked why staff is replacing the 1989 Sicard Snow Blower rather than repair the snow blower. Mr. Whitfield said there has been damage to the machine, therefore it is not efficient. Mr. Meyer then questioned replacement of Borough trucks. Mr. Whitfield said the trucks are used heavily in summer and winter with plows attached; if kept too long, too much money is spent on repairs. Mr. Whitfield said maintenance of vehicles varies if winters are harsh.

Mr. Daubert then questioned municipal facilities. He said no money has been set aside for improvements of the facility and the community room is in need of sound enhancement. Mr. Whitfield said it was staff's intention to get estimates on sound enhancement, but have not yet done so. The municipal building reserve funds can be used when needed. Mr. Daubert felt sound improvements should be a top priority to make better use of the community room.

Mr. Meyer asked what type of janitorial service is contracted. Mr. Whitfield said window washing and floor mats are contracted.

Council next questioned Highway Aid. Mr. Whitfield said some funds come from the state for snow removal; if winter is harsh, the state will provide an additional amount. He added the cost of snow and ice melting material has remained stationary.

Mr. Daubert suggested in future budgets the use of reserve funds should be stated more clearly.

Regarding the bus terminal, Mr. Daubert asked if the Borough assumes that Penn State will renew the lease at the same amount. Mr. Fontaine confirmed it is assumed that Penn State will renew at same amount. Mr. Meyer asked if the location changes, would money be used from the General Fund. Mr. Fontaine answered yes the money would be transferred from General Fund. Mr. Marchek added that normally \$15,000 is transferred from the bus terminal each year for capital projects to fund bicycle improvements.

At the next work session the remainder of the Public Works budget would be discussed as well as the budgets for Administration and Information Systems.

**Consider Changing Parking Restrictions in Calder Way.** Staff has received a request to expand the five-minute parking on the south side of Calder Way between McAllister Street and McAllister Alley. Mr. Daubert felt all parking in Calder Way should be eliminated. Mr. Meyer disagreed and said Council needs to be business and customer friendly. Chief King said the Calder Way businesses requested the five-minute parking and believes the parking is working well. Mr. Daubert said cars abuse the allotted time and enforcement is necessary. Ms. Goreham suggested installing parking meters. Mr. Meyer said the idea was not to make money but provide a convenience to customers and businesses. Council agreed to vote on the parking restriction at its December 19 meeting.

**Items of Information.** There were no items of information.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Cynthia S. Hanscom  
Assistant Borough Secretary