

Pottstown Borough Council / School Board Meeting
Joint Meeting Minutes

The Joint Meeting of the Pottstown Borough Council and Pottstown School Board was called to order on Thursday, February 27, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of the School District Administration Building with President Dan Weand and President Amy Francis presiding. Also present were Borough Manager, Justin Keller, Mayor Stephanie Henrick, Superintendent Mr. Stephen Rodriguez and Business Administrator Maureen Jampo.

ROLL CALL

School Board members present were Mr. John Armato, Mrs. Bonita Barnhill, Mr. Thomas Hylton, Mrs. Laura Johnson, Mr. Steve Kline and Mr. Raymond Rose. Absent was Ms. Katina Bearden and Mrs. Susan Lawrence.

Borough Councilors present were Donald Lebedynsky, Trenita Lindsay, Michael Paules, Ryan Proscal, Lisa Vanni.

SCHOOL BOARD ACTION

Mr. Rodriguez presented the Personnel Election for Board action. He introduced Melisa Morgan to be the new Director of Co-Curricular Activities and the first African American female director. She is also the 2nd in the history of Montgomery County.

Personnel: Administrative Election

Melisa Morgan, Director of Co-Curricular Activities, anticipated effective date May 19, 2020
\$85,000/yr (replacing M. Miller)

It was moved by Mr. Armato and seconded by Mr. Hylton.

Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye. Ayes: Seven. Nays: None. Absent: Two
Motion carried.

Ms. Bearden entered the meeting at approximately 6:45 p.m.

BOROUGH COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS

Walk / Bike Education Program

Kourtney High, Grants Administrator, gave an overview of the Walk/Bike Education Program. The program receives funding through Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation. A brochure outlining safety tips, rules of the road, and mapping was distributed to all present. The Walk Bike Program is a collaborative effort between the Borough, School District and Pottstown Health & Wellness. The goals of the program include encouraging students to bike to school and to educate the community.

Urban Land Institute Plan Presentation - PAHWF

David Kraybill, President of Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation voiced his appreciation to the team work within the Foundation and collaborative effort of the Borough and School District to the community. The Foundation provides approximately \$3 million in grants per year. Sixty percent of the grants go into the borough and forty percent to the surrounding areas.

Howard Brown, Program Officer of Schools, Active Learning & Community Development gave an overview of the recommendations from the October 19 study. The Foundation recognized the need to have recommendations that were tangible, actionable, lead to equitable economic development, a plan for implementation. Mr. Brown provided a hard copy of the final report.

Josh Warner, Consultant, reviewed highlights from the report focusing on the recommendations: “actionable, informational and immediate steps”. Some “actionable” recommendations were have one clear leader/coordinator for economic development (P.A.I.D.) fills that role) and to establish a housing resource center and key economic development pillars. Informational recommendations included developing a cohesive mission and strategies for community economic development. Immediate steps are community learning sessions, establish working groups and develop broad community engagement strategy.

All members present engaged in conversation on ways to collaborate efforts to move forward with the recommendations. Board Members talked about offering evening workshops and establish collaboration with district and borough to develop relationship with community. Go Fourth is looking at a “Ward Wars”. Councilors shared ideas on engaging the community via “Block Rock Fair” and Ward meetings for community service.

PAID Update (recent Investments, LERTA, Opportunity Zones, Downtown Pioneers)

Ms. Peggy Lee-Clark P.A.I.D. Director of Economic Development, provided the annual P.A.I.D. update. She highlighted new development plan and new businesses in the Borough. She explained LERTA and QOZ initiative.

Blight Remediation Update (Land Bank, Demolitions, 400 Block) – Justin Keller

Mr.Keller gave a update on the Land Bank process. He highlighted blighted properties that have been demolished /scheduled to be demolished.

Sustainability Plan Implementation Updates – Justin Keller, Stephen Rodriguez

Mr. Keller and Mr. Rodriguez highlighted the list of Borough and School district items as recommended by the Sustainability Plan. School District items included contracted landscape equipment powered by propane, added emergency power to refrigeration units, established an indoor air quality committee. Borough items included completion of closed loop traffic signal project, installation of LED streetlights on High Street. A complete list was shared with all members present.

DISCUSSION

Assessment Amendment for Properties: Mr. Keller reviewed the parameters of the MOU between the Borough and School Board to challenge property under assessments at \$250,000. He proposed a consideration in lowering the threshold of properties under assessed by the county to \$150,000.

The general consensus of the School Board and Borough Council was to allow the solicitors to review and provide recommendations to both entities.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Mr. Keller invited everyone to view “Our Town” broadcast by PCN (Pa Cable Network) on March 5th.

President Weand asked the District for assistance in addressing issues with students running through yards, especially with spring season approaching.

Mr. Rodriguez stated the district continues to addresses the issue every year.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Joint Meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.


Maureen Jampo, Board Secretary