

BOROUGH OF CHALFANT – WORK SESSION

September 13, 2022

PRESENT: Mayor Perry, Mss. Fullwood, Hillen, Fennell, Messrs. Hoover, Sauter, Lilac.

ABSENT: Mr. Royster

The work session began at 7:00 pm and ended at 9:15 pm.

BOROUGH OF CHALFANT - REGULAR MEETING

September 14, 2022

PRESENT: Mayor Perry, Mss. Fullwood, Hillen, Fennell, Messrs. Hoover, Sauter, Lilac, Sol. Evashavik

ABSENT: Mr. Royster

Mr. Hoover called the meeting to order and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Sauter, seconded by Fullwood, to approve the minutes from the last regular meeting. The motion was unanimous.

Motion by Lilac, seconded by Fennell, to approve the bank balances as read. The motion was unanimous.

Motion by Sauter, seconded by Fennell, to approve payment of the monthly bills after being properly countersigned. The motion was unanimous.

Motion by Lilac, seconded by Fullwood, to approve the Tax Collection report as read. The motion was unanimous.

MAYOR

There were 176 routine patrols by the Forest Hills Police Department and 24, 911 calls in August. The majority of the 911 calls were:

- 3- Med unit assists
- 3- Ordinance violations
- 2- Traffic stops
- 2- Vehicle violations

There were no questions from Council.

SOLICITOR

No report.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Fullwood gave a report detailing information from the Chalfant Community Day which was held on August 14, 2022. Ms. Fullwood presented a list of silent auction basket winners and the winner of the 50/50 raffle as well as a list of all donations and expenses. The list is available following the meeting for review by residents and a copy will be on file at the borough office. Ms. Fullwood advised that the borough will present the Chalfant Crime Watch with a donation in the amount of \$725, which equals the total proceeds of the day after expenses were paid. Ms. Fullwood noted that a lot of time and effort was spent ensuring the day was successful. Mr. Hoover agreed that the day was a success; he advised that he would like to see more residents volunteer to help out with the event in the future.

PERMITS AND ORDINANCES

Ms. Hillen advised that the Code Enforcement department is currently in transition. A new code officer, John Snelson, was hired to replace Sean Gramz, who resigned on August 18, 2022. A code enforcement report from August was unavailable but Ms. Hillen explained that there were two building permits and two occupancy permits issued in the previous month.

Ms. Hillen advised that there was a serious dog incident that occurred on September 3rd, for which both the police and dog officer were called. A resident was walking with four small dogs when they were attacked at the intersection of Greenfield Ave. and Rossmore St. by several dogs that live at 203 Greenfield Ave. Ms. Hillen advised that she understands that residents are upset and have questions about the incident. Ms. Hillen assured residents that the situation is being handled aggressively but that state law supersedes local ordinances and that the dog officer follows state law. Ms. Hillen advised that dogs are considered personal property in Pennsylvania and cannot be removed from a residence without a court order. Dog owners are responsible for any damage caused by their dogs; dogs must be licensed and vaccinated for rabies. Dogs may be seized only with a court order or if they are found running at large. Ms. Hillen explained that there are ongoing code violations at 203 Greenfield, including a violation of illegal occupancy, for which the property owner has been cited by Code Enforcement. The citations have been before the magistrate since September 2021. The case has not been heard because the property owner keeps requesting a continuance. To date, there have been eight continuances issued for each citation currently before the magistrate. The tenants at 203 Greenfield have been cited by the police and Hoffman Kennels as well, following the incident on 9/3.

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Ms. Hillen explained that the borough will continue to do what they are able to aggressively address the situation. She stressed the importance of residents reporting aggressive dogs to the police and to the borough. Though Council is now hearing from neighbors that the dogs at 203 Greenfield appeared to be aggressive and were often left tied outside to a tree, neither the borough nor Hoffman Kennels received any complaints about the dogs prior to the incident on 9/3. Ms. Hillen said it is extremely important for residents to say something if they see something so the borough can address issues before there is a problem. Ms. Hillen explained that she will listen to residents' concerns and answer questions during Citizen Participation.

ROADS AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Sauter advised that he has been working with the Forest Hills DPW on general maintenance, most recently fixing several signs in the borough.

Motion by Sauter, seconded by Hillen, to pay Urban Construction Services, LLC's invoice in the amount of \$2,672.00 for the replacement of the steel bollard on Lynnwood Avenue following a single-vehicle crash that damaged the bollard. This invoice was submitted for reimbursement to the at-fault party and their auto insurance has submitted a check to the borough in the full amount. The motion was unanimous.

HEALTH AND SANITATION

Ms. Fennell advised that she has several motions to make.

Motion by Fennell, seconded by Sauter, to pay the remaining balance of Mike the Balloon Guy LLC's invoice from Chalfant Community Day in the amount of \$320.00. The motion was unanimous.

Motion by Fennell, seconded by Lilac, to pay Urban Construction Services LLC's invoice in the amount of \$7,900.00 for the emergency storm inlet replacement in the vicinity of 301 Chalfant St. The motion was unanimous.

Motion by Fennell, seconded by Sauter, to transfer \$7,900.00 from the Sewer Line Fund to the General Fund Checking to cover the cost of the emergency storm inlet replacement.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Hoover explained that Mr. Royster could not be at the meeting tonight and asked everyone to keep his father, John Royster, in their prayers.

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Ms. Fullwood advised that the VFC reported two incidents in August. Ms. Fullwood read a detailed narrative of the call with the date, location, and the number of members attending.

Ms. Fullwood explained that both the Chalfant VFC and Forest Hills VFC each made \$1,272.69 from the Car Cruise fundraiser in July.

PARKS AND RECREATION/BOROUGH PROPERTY

Mr. Lilac advised that the park is in good condition but that he'd like to purchase gutter guards for the refreshment stand.

Motion by Lilac, seconded by Hillen, to spend up to \$100.00 to purchase gutter guards at Home Depot. The motion was unanimous but will be ratified for the exact purchase amount at the October meeting.

On a personal note, Mr. Lilac was proud to report that his son was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Military. Council congratulated Mr. Lilac with Mr. Hoover adding that there is a lot of military background in the borough and advised residents to visit the memorials at the park and on North Ave.

WHEMS

Ms. Fullwood advised there were 10 calls to WHEMS in August. She read the date, location, and outcome of each incident.

Motion by Fullwood, seconded by Hillen, to transfer \$99.22 from the General Fund Money Market account to the Designated WHEMS account. This was the amount of WHEMS tax collected in August. The motion was unanimous.

CRIME WATCH

Luann Bouvier introduced herself as the new head of Crime Watch. She explained that she stepped into the position following Mark Swinney's resignation on August 10, 2022. Ms. Bouvier explained that she has lived in Chalfant her entire life. She is presently assembling a committee for the Crime Watch, with Cindy Roche being appointed as Treasurer. They will work to open a new Crime Watch bank account with two required signers, noting that they were told that there is around \$500 in the current account that was controlled by Mr. Swinney.

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Ms. Bouvier explained that her father, former mayor, Steve Orosz, will be involved on the committee in some way, perhaps as a consultant or as the secretary, though she explained that he is 91 and will not be able to make it to all of the meetings. Ms. Bouvier advised that she stepped into this role to ensure the borough remains a safe place to live. She stressed for residents to speak up if they see something concerning. Ms. Bouvier acknowledged that sometimes residents are afraid to call 911; if that is the case, they can reach out to Ms. Bouvier and she will address their concerns with the police and Council. Ms. Bouvier also plans to create a Chalfant Crime Watch group on the Nextdoor App and encouraged residents to join for information and updates. Ms. Bouvier said Crime Watch hopes to establish a Welcome Committee to greet new residents and provide borough information. Ms. Bouvier acknowledged that not every resident is on social media and said it was important to be able to reach these residents to provide information and updates; she thanked another resident, Mr. Lasser, for reaching out to his neighbors to let them know about the dog incident on Greenfield. The next Crime Watch meeting will be held on 10/18 at 7 p.m. at the Chalfant Community Center.

TAX COLLECTOR

Ms. Donahue stated that she has no report but reminded residents that The first installment payment for the Woodland Hills School Tax for 2022 is due on October 31, 2022. All payments must be postmarked no later than October 31, 2022. The face amount is also due on October 31, 2022, if you are not paying installments.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Alexandra Dreibelbis, 116 Greenfield Ave., explained that she, her boyfriend, and their four dogs were attacked by the dogs at 203 Greenfield Ave. Ms. Dreibelbis gave a detailed account of the attack, explaining that they were charged by several dogs in front of 203 Greenfield and one of their dogs was severely mauled; as a result of the attack, her dog needed to have its leg amputated. Ms. Dreibelbis is thankful her other dogs were unharmed and hopeful that more can be done to protect the community. Ms. Dreibelbis explained that she would like to see Council consider a ban on dangerous dog breeds and stricter ordinances for dogs that attack. Mr. Hoover explained that he is horrified at what happened. He saw video footage of the attack and it was sickening and horrified him beyond belief. Mr. Hoover explained that Chalfant has strict dog ordinances, but unfortunately, state law supersedes local ordinances.

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Sol. Evashavik reiterated this fact, explaining that federal law supersedes state law, state law supersedes county law, etc. Sol. Evashavik explained that Chalfant cannot ban certain dog breeds from the borough. Mr. Hoover detailed the state provisions for dogs that have been declared dangerous by a court, which include but are not limited to, requiring the dogs to be muzzled when outside, requiring the dog to be registered annually at a cost of \$500, and there must be a \$50,000 liability insurance policy or a surety bond payable to anyone injured by the dog in place. Mr. Hoover explained that 203 Greenfield Ave. has been a problem in the borough for quite some time with ordinance violations. Mr. Hoover would like to see the property owner cited weekly, or even daily if possible, until the issues are resolved. A discussion between Ms. Dreibelbis, residents in attendance, and Council ensued regarding the incident, the property in question, and steps forward, including a new ordinance related to non-owner occupied properties passed by Council earlier this summer, to prevent similar incidents from happening in the future. Mr. Hoover again stressed the importance of reporting concerns to the police, borough, and Hoffman Kennels.

Walter Early, 232 Highland, complained about 220 and 224 Highland Ave. stating there are high weeds and grass at the properties. Mr. Early noted that when he called to complain, he called the residents at the properties (deleted ignorant comment), and the girl that answered the phone didn't like that. Mr. Hoover said Code Enforcement would look into the matter and address it where appropriate.

Luann Bouvier, 101 Highland, asked about the procedure for calling the code enforcement officer. Mr. Hoover explained that Council would like all complaints to go through the borough office so Council is aware of any and all issues in the borough. If people call code enforcement directly, Council is unable to ensure their complaint is addressed because they are not aware of the complaint.

Cat Sulley, 100 Wilkins Ave., asked about the dogs involved in the attack and stated that she is concerned about Halloween. Mr. Hoover explained that the police will be regularly checking on the property on Halloween.

Bruce Vergato, 300 Lynnwood Ave. asked about feral cats in the borough and if there was a limit to outdoor cats. Sol. Evashavik advised that if a resident's outdoor cat is causing problems, such as a sanitation issue, that cat owner could potentially be cited. Mr. Vergato then asked about Critical Race Theory and transgender people at the high school and wanted to know what Council was doing to address the issue. Sol. Evashavik advised that is a matter for the school board.

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Ed Olen, 208 Lynnwood Ave., stated that he's seen issues with dogs in the borough in the past and said that people need take the owner to the magistrate and be aggressive. Mr. Olen said that he heard that kids on Lynnwood Ave. were throwing rocks at cars and houses. Mr. Hoover advised that if so, it would be a police matter and to please call the police.

Citizen Participation ended with another discussion regarding the dogs at 203 Greenfield with Ms. Dreibelbis' attorney asking if there was a police report from the incident. Mayor Perry said he did not have a copy of the reports from September yet but that he could ask the police chief for a copy. Sol. Evaskavik advised that they could file a Right To Know request with the Forest Hills Police to obtain a copy as well.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Hoover explained that the borough has received the second and final American Rescue Plan Act disbursement in the amount of \$40,425.06.

Motion by Sauter, seconded by Lilac, to transfer \$40,425.06 from the Designated ARPA Account to the General Fund Checking. ARPA funds will be used to pay general government expenses as permitted by Treasury guidelines.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Sauter, seconded by Hillen, to adjourn at 8:53 p.m. The motion was unanimous

ATTEST: _____
Borough Secretary Council President

