

Borough of Coraopolis
Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
Regular Council Meeting via teleconference
October 11, 2023
6:30 PM

The Regular Meeting of the Borough of Coraopolis was called to order by Council President, David Pendel.

Police Chief Denbow led the gathering in the Pledge to the Flag.

A Roll Call of Members was then taken.

Present

Robb Cardimen

Rudy Bolea

Ed Pitassi

George Mihalyi

Allison Marine

Gary Flasco

Joe Szabat

David Pendel

Michael Dixon, Mayor

Mr. Pendel said are there any questions from Borough Council on the Agenda? Mr. Pendel said are there any comments from the Public regarding Agenda items? Being none, the meeting continued.

Mr. Bolea made a motion to approve the Minutes of the September 13, 2023 Regular Council Meeting. Mr. Pitassi seconded the motion.

Motion passed by Unanimous Voice Vote.

Mr. Bolea made a motion to approve the Minutes of the October 4, 2023 Regular Council Workshop Meeting. Mr. Szabat seconded the motion.

Motion passed by Unanimous Voice Vote.

Mr. Bolea made a motion to approve the Invoices for October 2023 in the amount of \$336,763.32. Mr. Cardimen seconded the motion.

Mr. McCutcheon said that is the month we make the bond payment in the amount of \$162,575.00 and that is why it is double the amount that it usually is.

Upon Roll Call Vote

Robb Cardimen Yes

Rudy Bolea Yes

Ed Pitassi Yes

George Mihalyi Yes

Allison Marine Yes

Gary Flasco Yes

Joe Szabat Yes

David Pendel Yes

Motion carried.

Mr. Pitassi made a motion to approve the Payroll for the month of September 2023 in the amount of \$145,972.14. Mr. Bolea seconded the motion.

Upon Roll Call Vote

Robb Cardimen Yes

Rudy Bolea Yes

Ed Pitassi Yes

George Mihalyi Yes

Allison Marine Yes

Gary Flasco Yes

Joe Szabat Yes

David Pendel Yes

Motion carried.

Mr. Pitassi made a motion to approve Resolution 23-407 for a Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant through the Commonwealth Financing Authority for \$600,000.00 for Phase III of the Riverfront Park. Mr. Cardimen seconded the motion.

Motion passed by Unanimous Voice Vote.

Mr. Pitassi made a motion to approve Partial Payment No. 2 to Youngblood Construction in the amount of \$241,204.56 for the 2023 Road Program. Mr. Mihalyi seconded the motion.

Mr. Drew Null said all work is generally completed, but we are still holding a 5% retainage which equals about \$20,000. The punchlist items are pretty minor and a discussion pursued.

Upon Roll Call Vote

Robb Cardimen Yes

Rudy Bolea Yes

Ed Pitassi Yes

George Mihalyi Yes

Allison Marine Yes

Gary Flasco Yes

Joe Szabat Yes

David Pendel Yes

Motion carried.

Mr. Bolea made a motion to approve the use of the Permit Parking Lot next to McDonald's for a Trunk or Treat event on Saturday, October 28, 2023, from Noon to 2 pm sponsored by McDonald's. Mr. Pitassi seconded the motion.

Motion passed by Unanimous Voice Vote.

Mr. Bolea made a motion to approve Food Trucks (Gryphons Tea) in front of Emma Jeans Relics at 930 5th Avenue on November 11, 2023, from 9 am to 4 pm and on December 2, 2023, from 9 am to 4 pm utilizing two parking spaces. Mr. Pitassi seconded the motion.

Motion passed by Unanimous Voice Vote.

Solicitor's Report

Mr. Richard Start said the only matter I would like to report on this evening is the status of the Shallenberger Zoning Appeal. Since the last public meeting, Mr. McCutcheon, myself, and Attorney Steve Bovan (who represents the Coraopolis Zoning Hearing Board) and the lawyer representing Mr. Shallenberger believe that we have made some headway. I have been advised that the Shallenberger legal team has been in contact with some of the residents on State Avenue to discuss options that may be done for those people, but are still confidential due to ongoing litigation and the judge has asked us not to make comments. We did reach an agreement this afternoon to extend the briefing deadline one more time and he continued to explain.

Police Chief's Report

Chief Denbow gave the Police Department Report for the month of September 2023.

Chief Denbow said Trick or Treat will be Thursday, October 26th from 6 pm to 8 pm. Safety is our main concern with the Police Department and the Fire Department and we will be out in full force. Please be mindful if you are driving for the safety of the children.

Chief Denbow said it is with great sadness that the Coraopolis Police Department announces the passing of K-9 Amor on September 13, 2023. K-9 Amor was sworn into service on November 11, 2015 and served the Borough until May 20, 2023. During his tour of duty K-9 Amor assisted the Coraopolis Police Department, the PA Attorney Generals Office, the DEA and the neighboring Police Departments and he continued to explain.

Chief Denbow said it was a sad passing. We have acquired another K-9, a two-year-old German Shepherd named Rhaegar. Rhaegar is a certified dual-purpose K-9 in narcotics, patrol and traffic and he was awarded his certification from the American Working Dog Association on May 20, 2023.

Fire Chief's Report

Chief Spencer gave the Volunteer Fire Department report for September 2023 and said we answered 19 calls. Four of which were mutual aid calls, one EMS assist, two motor vehicle accidents, two flooding incidents assisting the Coraopolis Police with traffic control, one natural gas smell outside (nothing was found), five carbon monoxide alarms, two natural gas calls, one false alarm and one report of smoke which was someone cooking out in the back yard. We had a total of 69.34 hours for the VFD.

Chief Spencer said regarding carbon monoxide, with the colder weather coming, please have your furnace serviced by a professional and make sure you have CO2 alarms in your house and he continued to explain.

Engineer's Report

Mr. Drew Null directed everyone to his monthly report and said the Riverfront Park; we did a walk through this past week and there are still a number of punchlist items which are minor and there is not a pay request this evening. Mr. Null said the Phase III resolution that you authorized this evening to file a local share account grant that is a no match application. A response was received from the DCNR from an application filing earlier in the year for funding on this project but that was not awarded and he continued to explain.

Mr. Drew Null said 2023 Road Program; this pay request was authorized this evening and look to have a final change order closed out withing the next month.

Mr. Drew Null said Grant Applications; last month we filed the GEDTF application with the County for the Salt Storage Facility to replace the current building.

Mr. Drew Null said Street Opening Permits; there are a number of street opening permits that I have been working with the Manager.

Mr. Drew Null said Water and Sewer Authority; the MS4 annual report was filed last month.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Dixon said I want to remind everyone that this Saturday is the CCDC's Fall Festival and Art Walk from 11 am to 3 pm. I would like to see everyone there.

Committee Reports/Comments from Council

Mr. Flasco said I have nothing to report tonight.

Mr. Mihalyi said I have nothing to report for tonight.

Mr. Bolea said I have nothing this evening.

Ms. Marine said I want to thank the Borough Manager and Councilman Cardimen for being the liaison with the Coraopolis Water and Sewer Authority to help address a concern from a resident in my Ward. I also want to mention the great asset we have in State Representative Kulik's Office, they are a great local resource and she continued to explain.

Mr. Cardimen said our 2023 F-550 Super Duty that we ordered for the Street Department is in and currently being outfitted at Zoresco. It will be ready for the winter season.

Mr. Cardimen said we have ordered five replacement poles for Mill Street to replace some aging poles there.

Mr. Pitassi said I want to thank the Coraopolis Street Department for removing the dead trees on Mill Street.
Mr. McCutcheon said the stump removal is scheduled for next week.

Mr. Szabat said there haven't been any issues brought forward by residents of the Third Ward.

Managers' Report

Mr. McCutcheon said the Allegheny County South West Tax Collection District are asking about delegates. The current delegates are myself, as the regular delegate and Mr. Bolea and Mr. Pitassi are alternates. They want to know who wants to be the back ups next year and he continued to explain.

Mr. McCutcheon said I have received information from Trans Associates and the traffic signals at Montour and State are being painted, so we are hoping to see something later this month.

Mr. McCutcheon said due to the inclement weather predicted for Saturday, some of the Fall Festival activities will be moved inside to the Coraopolis Youth and Creations building and in the new CCDC building. They are still going to have the parking lot between the Scuba Shop and the Jailhouse blocked off.

Comments from the Public

President David Pendel said before opening the meeting to public comments I would like to make the following observations and direct that they may be part of the public record. It is the public's right to comment at public meetings and is limited to residents of the Borough or persons who pay taxes to the Borough and that is why we ask each person who desires to comment to give your name and address of the residence of property that you own in the Borough. Each person who seeks to comment is limited to three minutes and comments are limited to matters that are or may be before the Borough. Council Members are not required to answer any questions posed by the members of the public or engage in any dialog with the comments of the public. Council Members shall not comment on matters of personnel, discipline, or any legal matter.

Daniel Hickton of 1318 Vance Avenue said as you all know me, sort of the canary in the minds down here, I am here to hold you guys to the highest standard as possible. First of all, I would like to ask for a moment of silence for the tragedy that took place between Israel and Palestine.

Mr. Hickton said where that lamp post fell, you said we are ordering new lamp posts, we would like to see that forward proactive planning as opposed to getting band aids and replacing things that fell down, especially in regards to Mill Street. I encourage this whole Council to be more productive and cooperative with the business owners on Mill Street to maybe come up with some kind of 50/50 deal to put lights on their buildings or something, trash cans. I know there is an election coming up and I hope you all hold yourselves to the highest standards through that.

Ms. Christine Whyte of 1446 Ridge Avenue said I take pride in my home and my community and I think the majority of the people living in Coraopolis feel the same way. There is so much negativity and untruths out there on how we need a change of government in Coraopolis and my question is why, when this Council and the Borough Manager work together so well and has achieved so much. Maybe people need to be reminded of how much they have accomplished and the real truths. Did you know that over \$4M has been spent on road repairs to Main Street, Mulberry Street, Chestnut Street and the alley between 4th and 5th Avenues and I'm sure others. Other improvements have been made to the Ridge Avenue Tot Lot, the basketball court at Shelley Jones Park, the new Riverfront Park, and the Ferree Street Steps and these are places that most people don't see or even know about. Traffic signals and street lights throughout town have been replaced with grant money. Frankly, I don't recall Coraopolis ever receiving so many grants as they have in the last few years. For those who think that Council does nothing other than attend meetings once a month, think again. Each Council Member is on two to three committees each, working on every aspect of running a town, from finance and infrastructure to the public library and she continued to explain. Ms. Whyte said would the new candidates honestly tell the public that they are willing to do this much work on a volunteer basis for our town? And will they work together like this group right here does, without being so controversial and confrontational? People have complained on social media repeatedly about the condition of Mill Street, even though they knew there was grant money targeted for it. Lastly, our Borough Manager, Ray McCutcheon has spent countless hours applying for grants; getting them, overseeing the planning and progress of every project. That is why he received the Pennsylvania State Association of

Borough's 2022 Distinguished Service Award and most importantly, he has not raised the taxes to the residents in over ten years. I wanted to take the opportunity to thank Borough Council and the Borough Manager for doing all that you do to make the majority of our residents proud. Please vote on November 7th for those people who have already proven that they are doing what is best for our town.

Ms. Dana LaRocca Niedergall from 1807 Vance Avenue said Dan LaRocca was a member of this Council for 30 years and he was my dad. He was well loved and respected by the people of Coraopolis and in turn he loved this town and its people. After my dad passed, I stepped away from politics, but due to what is happening to my town I know my father would want me to speak up. Why is it, that a rich businessman who isn't even a Coraopolis resident feels that he deserves tax breaks? If anyone deserves a tax break it should be the seniors and the retirees who actually live in Coraopolis. Why does he feel he deserves one? Everyone should pay their fair share, he is no one special. The new people running for Council seem to want to tear this town down on social media. They are all being backed by this same man, why? So, he can fulfill his agenda which is getting Ray McCutcheon fired. This Council along with the hard work and due diligence of Ray has kept taxes in check for ten years, they have applied for, received, and continue to apply for grants. These are not bailouts as was stated by Birch Holdings on Coraopolis Connect. A grant has been awarded for Mill Street, but people are not aware that this is not done overnight. Mr. Harris has accused this Council and Manager of doing unsubstantiated things, but he has joined and quit our amazing fire department with the excuse they really didn't want him. He was also on the Shade Tree Committee where he did the same, and quit. These people say what is wrong, but are yet to say what they are going to do about our so-called problems and she continued to explain.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Bolea seconded the motion.
Motion approved by Unanimous Voice Vote.

MEETING ADJOURNED