**RICHLANDTOWN BOROUGH**

**Committee Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, July 27, 2021

**OPENING:**

* Call to Order made by Christopher Willever at 7:00 p.m.
* Moment of Silence
* Roll Call

**In Attendance:** Mayor, Jim Dunn; President, Chris Willever; Vice-President, Floyd Bless; Michele Grida**,** Iolanda Logan, Brooke Morita, Jillian Snyder, Bo Trovinger, Alexa Scheetz (JCP), Solicitor, Frank D’Amore; Secretary, Kathy Wetzel

**PUBLIC COMMENT**: (held to a 5 min. time limit for comments only)

* Rachel Koch – brough the plaque for council to see that will be placed on the rock as the finishing touches to the donated tree in the small dog park in memory of Bob Roth. Calvin Trovinger will take Rachel to see the rock that the plaque will be installed on.
* Dave Kinney – Towne Court HOA President presented the letter written by the HOA board that they will be mailing out to residents of Towne Court regarding the new rules and regulations for the residents. The HOA letter will be mailed after the Borough Council mails their letter to the HOA residents. The Borough Solicitor is still writing the letter to be sent by Borough Council and will be providing the letter to Council for approval. Council has agreed, at the request of Mr. Kinney, to notify the HOA board when the borough letter is mailed.

**REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**: (Christopher Willever)

* Review & Approval of July 13, 2021, Council Meeting Minutes
* Solicitor Backup - a concern has arisen that may require an alternate solicitor due to a conflict of interest. Kathy will reach out to Richland Township and Ivyland Borough to get references for an alternate solicitor for the borough as discussed by council.

**Motion** made to accept the Council Meeting minutes for July 13, 2021, by Brooke Morita, seconded by Michele Grida. All in favor. Motion carries.

* **Keeping Of Certain Animals Ordinance Hearing** (opened at 7:10 p.m. and closed at 7:45 p.m.)

Hearing was opened to Council comments first and opened to audience immediately after

Council Comments:

Brooke Morita and Christopher Willever stating why they intend to vote against the advertised ordinance as it stands stating that they feel that the ordinance, as written, is too restrictive and imposes to many restrictions for pet owners. Both Brooke & Chris thanked all of the members of the council for all of the discussions, hard-work, comments, attention to detail, and the amount of time they spent on creating the newly amended ordinance. Statements were made by Michele Grida and Iolanda Logan as to why they intend to vote to approve the advertised ordinance. Michele stating that she feels that it is in the best interested of all of the borough residents. Iolanda also stated that she feels it is in the best interest of all the residents putting all personal feelings aside, also stating that the proposed ordinance takes into consideration not only the residents’ concerns but also the manner, care, and upkeep of all the animals. Both Michele and Iolanda thanked everyone on council for their hard-work, dedication, and commitment for the work done on the ordinance and looking out for the best outcome for the entire community. Floyd Bless referenced the animal ordinance being amended in 2012 to allow for a resident to own a pot-bellied pig in the borough stating that at that time the resident met with council to present their concerns and at the time council agreed to amend the ordinance. As with any matter relating to an ordinance changes can and will always be taken into consideration. Floyd further stated that ordinances are put into place initially and, required to support, the best for all residents of the borough and giving council somewhere to start when any similar issues arise. Floyd also spoke to the lot sizes in his Pennwood Drive neighborhood stating that most of them are now permitted to have chickens with the 70-foot-wide property that he has. Floyd went on to mention that council has spent many hours and days, not to mention and a good deal of borough money on solicitor and zoning officer fees regarding this ordinance amendment and as the head of the finance committee he agrees of this ordinance being passed. Chris Willever stated that council is not oblivious to concerned mentioned regarding the ordinance and the ordinance will give council a starting point when any concerns arise in the borough regarding the housing of animals. Brooke Morita reiterated that the current proposed ordinance amends the household pets that were limited to 5 of each animal up to 10 in a residence to 5 of each animal or combination of 8 total. Brooke also wanted to go on record thanking Jillian Snyder for dedicated, thorough, and hard work spend on amending this ordinance. Jill did hours of research and produced quality work for council to review. Jillian Snyder spoke to Floyds comments regarding neighborhoods that had yards large enough to house the chickens allotted by the amended ordinance, correcting his measurements. Jill stated that she wanted to go on recorded having said that her extensive research came not only from records in Bucks County, but also boroughs surrounding Bucks County. Jillian also stated that facts presented by her were not based on a whim or feelings but also on the Constitution which knows nothing of this greater good mentality used to strip individuals of their rights /property rights.”. Iolanda Logan stated that she runs a farm, and it is inspected by the PA Department of Agriculture, stating that her knowledge comes from firsthand dealings with following the rules and regulations set in place by the State of PA. She has always stated facts that she abides by daily when giving her input regarding this ordinance. Iolanda feels that personal wants and needs of council members should not come into play with them making decisions for all of the residents of this borough.

Residents Comments:

Bob Burns, resident, opposes farm animal in backyards of borough residences. Todd McCurdy, resident, loves animals, grew up on a farm, but opposes the keeping of animals in back-yards without proper lot sizes. Todd stated that he believes anything is possible in moderation. John Minster, resident, stated farm animals are not the same as chickens and thinks having chickens would not promote the increase of rodents and other wild animals since the feed mill is already in town. Nathaniel Snyder, resident, said he is insulted that some of council think certain residents can’t be relied on to take proper care of animals, he further stated that that is not council’s concern, that the ownness for these actions would fall on the residents. Mr. Snyder also mentions that he feels that the previous meeting was not conducted by open-minded members of council and that no facts, no references. And no research was taken into consideration, not that he saw at the meeting he attended. Nathaniel stated that Jillian did conduct extensive research in her findings before amending this ordinance and feels that the ordinance will hinder anyone from having chickens on their property with the limitations put into place. Chris Aber, resident, stated that his personal opinion is that farm animals should not be in the borough and if allowed wonders who would handle violations and multiple offenses. Dave Kinney, resident, stated he has no opinion and no pets but also wonders that with the current restrictions on the borough handling violations and other offenses by borough residents how would the animal ordinance violations be handled any differently.

**Motion** **made** to accept & adopt the Keeping of Certain Animals Ordinance #280 as advertised made by Calvin Trovinger, seconded by Iolanda Logan. Yay votes made by Calving Trovinger, Iolanda Logan, Floyd Bless & Michele Grida. Nay votes made by Christopher Willever, Brooke Morita, and Jillian Snyder. Majority rules. Motion carries.

* **Beekeeping Ordinance Hearing** (opened at 7:50 p.m. and closed at 8:16 p.m.)

Hearing was opened to Council comments first and opened to audience immediately after

Brooke Morita commented that her feelings towards the beekeeping ordinance advertised are the same as the keeping of animal’s ordinance stating that while she appreciates all of the worked done by council in writing this ordinance that she feels it is still too restrictive allowing for very few residents to be able to keep bees and that enforcing the ordinance will be difficult. She supports the aspect of the ordinance but feels it is very restrictive. Brooke did mention that this ordinance was created as a new ordinance but that templates from the PA Beekeepers Associations were used to help write it. Brooke further mentioned that her vote against the ordinance does not mean that she feels it’s not important to get the ordinance into the books for the borough with helps of regulating the movement of backyard beehives. Iolanda Logan states that she is supportive of the ordinance and thinks the ordinance does a good job of looking out for the children, animals, and residents of the borough with regards to bees. Michele Grida stated that she is support of the ordinance as advertised. The research was phenomenal and feels that everyone learned a lot about bees with all the research provided from research and experts that provided in depth knowledge of their craft. Her vote is more about the community as a whole. She feels that residents with honeybee allergies need a voice. Christopher Willever stated that after lots of details and knowledge out there on the web the ordinance would keep random people from thinking they can manage beekeeping and feels like the ordinance is a good idea to get the beekeeping ordinance on the books for the borough. Jillian Snyder feels that Calvin Trovinger brought up very good points during council meetings with the concerns about beekeeper licensing and certifications.

Residents Comments:

Mayor, Jim Dunn read a written statement prepared by Amy Young voicing her opposition to have beekeeping in our small borough. Samantha Chapman voiced her opposition to the ordinance stating that her daughter is extremely terrified of bees of any kind. Dave Kinney stated that he is fearful of the ordinance since his wife is deadly allergic to bees and fearful after being told EpiPens would not help her survive a bee sting. He also wonders how violations to this ordinance would be handled.

**Motion** made to accept & adopt the Beekeeping Ordinance #281 as advertised made by Michele Grida, seconded by Iolanda Logan. With one nay vote by Brooke Morita. Majority rules. Motion carries.

Shelley Book, resident, was permitted to give her comments towards the keeping of animal’s ordinance although the hearing was already closed when she arrived. Ms. Book feels that with sufficient space having chickens by residents would help allow families with sustainability. She feels that the feral cats in the borough are more of a nuisance that chickens.

**President, Christopher Willever excused himself from the meeting at 8:20 p.m. handing the gavel to Vice-President, Floyd Bless to conduct the remainder of the meeting.**

**PUBLIC WELFARE**: (Chair, Jillian Snyder; Brooke Morita)

* Draft Application for Solicitation License was distributed and discussed, voting to accept the license will take place at the next Council Meeting.
* Resident complaint regarding "perpetual yard sale(s) inside the Borough limits. 2 reports of habitual yard sales and Kathy will notify the residents of their need for a yard sale permit along with the perimeters set forth by the Borough regarding yard sales.
* HOA update on additional requested signs – meeting with the Council Public Works and Public Welfare Committees set for Thursday at 6:30 p.m. to discuss

**PARKS & RECREATION**: (Chair, Brooke Morita; Michele Grida)

* Christmas in July recap - great participation (over 40 crafters/vendors), very positive feedback from vendors and attendees. Hoping to make this an annual event.
* Upcoming event: National Night Out & the John E. Kandel Memorial Park dedication - Tuesday, 8/3/21, 5:30-7:30pm at Walnut St. Park. RFC EMS will attend. Richland Twp. Police cannot. Iolanda is reaching out to the State Police.
* Review of proposed 2021 Benner Hall & Pavilion fee schedules (tabled till another meeting)
* Pride of the Diamond (baseball) update. Meeting went well with Pride of the Diamond and field maintenance, infield mix, and future plans were discussed. A final draft of the contract from Pride of the Diamond has not yet been received by Council.

**FIRE & POLICE:** (Chair, Iolanda Logan)

* Noise Ordinance discussed as it refers to decibel levels only.
* Iolanda is still working with Chief Fiecho who will be providing a Richland Twp. cost proposal for police coverage for the Borough.
* Iolanda is meeting with Trooper Benowski on Thursday and will ask him about attending N.N.O.
* Police were called to an incident in the Borough last weekend details are not clear at the moment.

**PUBLIC WORKS:** (Chair, Calvin Trovinger; Floyd Bless)

* Memorial Park Flagpole light repairs have now been scheduled.
* Benner Hall and Park parking lot are in the process of being retarred and relined.
* Larry’s Cycle shop clean-up was discussed as a matter of “public safety” and how to handle this matter moving forward. Gentleman’s agreement not upheld by Mr. Weiss.

**PLANNING COMMISSION:** (Iolanda Logan)

* Iolanda questioned the Zoning Hearing Board meeting on Wednesday, August 25, 2021, and what it was regarding. The Planning Commission was not properly notified, and proper procedures were not followed. Kathy will reach out to Randy and Chris. Iolanda will be notified of how to proceed from here. The Planning Commission meets on Monday, August 23, 2021, and there is concern if there is enough time to vote on the matter.

**BOROUGH OFFICE REPORT:** (Kathy Wetzel) (no report)

**OPEN ACTION ITEMS:**

* NIMS 700 Training for Council
* Benner Hall Security Cameras
* New Borough Banners (quotes in progress)
* Tractor & Snow Blower Purchase

**NO REPORTS**

BUILDING COMMISSION (IDLE) (Chair, Jillian Snyder)

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR: (Calvin Trovinger)

FINANCE: (Chair, Floyd Bless; Jillian Snyder)

JR. COUNCIL REPORT: (Alexa Scheetz)

PERSONNEL: (Chair, Michele Grida; Jillian Snyder)

**ADJOURMENT:** Adjourn Council Meeting (motion required)

With No Further Business to Discuss a motion made to adjourn the meeting by Michele Grida, seconded by Iolanda Logan at 9:45 p.m. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:** (all at Benner Hall @ 7 P.M.)

* Parks & Rec Committee Meeting: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 (changed)
* Council Meeting: Tuesday, August 10, 2021
* Planning Commission: Monday, August 16, 2021
* Committee Meeting: Tuesday, August 24, 2021
* Zoning Hearing Board Meeting: Wednesday, August 25, 2021

Respectfully submitted by:

Kathy Wetzel

Borough Secretary/Treasurer