

Palmyra Borough Council Special Meeting
Thursday, April 2, 2015
6:00 PM

Borough Council President Jane Quairola called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers of the Palmyra Municipal Building, 325 S. Railroad Street, Palmyra, PA 17078. Other Council members in attendance included Brian Craig, Gary Laudermilch, Pat Hennessy, Beth Shearer, Joe Templin, and Ralph Watts. Also present were Mayor Fred Carpenter, Police Chief Stan Jasinski, Borough Manager Roger Powl and Assistant Borough Manager Brenda Pera.

Discussion & Action Items

- a. Mr. Powl apprised Council of the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant to repair the sinkholes in the 300 Block E. Cherry St and 100 Block S. Grant St. He indicated the following points about the grant:
- \$3,000,000 maximum funding eligible per grant application which will require a 75% - 25% match. Grant eligible expenses include the acquisition of property, demolition, repair to damaged infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc.), and sinkhole repair. There is a maximum of 5% for contingency cost and management costs. The Borough should request a minimum of 2 to 3 years for the duration of activity for the grant and no work can be completed until grant is approved. Any work completed prior to grant approval is responsibility of Borough and/or the private property owners.
 - FEMA prefers the municipality to acquire ownership of damaged properties. However, if the Borough decides not to acquire the properties, then the property owners are only eligible for mitigation funds that are over and above what they may have already received via insurance monies.
 - The area affected must remain as open space in perpetuity. Deed restrictions will be assigned to each property stating it must be used for open space. If the deed restrictions are violated, all grant monies will be required to be paid back to FEMA. A municipal parking lot is not considered acceptable.

Mr. Powl informed Council that FEMA is requesting several items by April 15th in order for their office to review the grant application for completeness. These items include:

- Engineering cost estimates for all demolition, repairs, etc.
- Geophysical report, which has already been completed by ARM Group
- Pre-Event real estate appraisals by certified appraiser
- Full page photos documenting damages to each property
- Property owner Volunteer Participation Agreements
- Hazardous material property survey

Mr. Powl estimated the costs of total repairs to the project to be close to \$2.2 million dollars, which the Borough would have to prepare to cover 25% of the costs.

President Quairola asked Mr. Powl what he needs from Borough Council to prepare the grant application. Mr. Powl stated that he needs Council to authorize the following:

- Authorize FEMA pre-event certified real estate appraisals
- Authorize acquisition of properties (Resolution 2015-04)
- Authorize Borough Engineer to prepare required cost estimates
- Authorize Borough Solicitor to prepare settlement documents if properties acquired

President Quairola opened the meeting for public comment.

Public Comment

- Ken Medina, 234 E. Cherry Street, inquired on which properties are included in the repairs. Mr. Powl replied that Mr. Medina would not be required as one of the property owners participating in the grant because his property did not suffer structural damage rendering the dwelling uninhabitable and resulting in him having been displaced. Mr. Powl explained that Mr. Medina will see repair work done on his property which will require his permission to enter onto the property prior to any injection grouting, or curb and sidewalk replacement being undertaken.
- Jael Wolfe, 301 E. Cherry Street, inquired about the depression in East Cherry Street. Mr. Powl indicated that it would be included in the grant application. She also complained about the design of the new sidewalk handicap ramps. Mr. Powl responded that the sidewalk handicap ramps were constructed and inspected according to the current federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) specifications.
- Barry Shellenhamer, 228 E. Cherry Street, asked why the water company was exempt from responsibility for the S. Grant Street sinkhole. Mr. Powl replied that the water company blames the adjacent sinkhole for causing their water main to break and it would be impossible to prove that cause and effect in a court setting.
- Bill Logan, 323-325 E. Cherry Street, inquired whether the crown that was placed in E. Cherry St. would be redone to stop water from pooling in the alley beside his property. Mr. Powl responded that the road will have to be re-milled and re-paved once any repairs are completed.
- Jim Hartman, 238 W. Maple St, referenced the pending DEP grant for wetlands and asked if the Borough, through its Authority, has the right to condemn lands needed to put in the wetlands to save the Growing Greener Grant monies. Mr. Powl responded that he would have to research this question to answer correctly.

President Quairolì closed the public comment period.

Motion: To authorize the completion of FEMA pre-event certified real estate appraisals. Motion by Pat Hennessy, second by Joe Templin. Motion passed.

Motion: To approve Resolution 2015-04 authorizing the acquisition by the exercise of the right of eminent domain of a certain tract of land on the 300 block of East Cherry Street. Motion by Ralph Watts, second by Beth Shearer. Motion passed.

Motion: To approve the Borough Engineer to prepare the required cost estimates for the grant application. Motion by Pat Hennessy, second by Joe Templin. Motion passed.

Motion: To authorize the Borough Solicitor to prepare settlement documents for the acquisition of properties on the 300 block of East Cherry Street. Motion by Beth Shearer, second by Gary Laudermilch. Motion passed.

Mr. Powl also expressed his concern that the properties at 308 & 310 E. Cherry Street were beginning to sag indicating possible structural failure and collapse and he would like to place road millings in the hole between the houses in order to help support the structures to keep them from collapsing. He advised Council that the Borough will need to rent a belt loader machine to move the millings in between the houses.

Motion: To authorize the Borough Manager to seek permission from private property owners to have the Borough fill the sinkhole between 308 and 310 E. Cherry Street with road millings in order to prevent collapse of the structures. Motion by Brian Craig, second by Joe Templin. Motion passed.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Announcement

President Quairoli announced that Borough Council will conduct a special meeting at Citizen's Fire Co. No. 1 on Monday April 13, 2015 beginning at 7:00 PM to seek public input from Borough residents concerning construction of a new firehouse. Borough Council will also conduct a public workshop meeting on Tuesday April 14, 2015 beginning at 6:00 PM and the regular monthly public meeting on Tuesday April 28, 2015 beginning at 7:00 PM

Motion to Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Pat Hennessy, second by Beth Shearer. The meeting adjourned at 6:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger E. Powl
Borough Manager