

**BOROUGH OF GETTYSBURG
TROXELL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
59 EAST HIGH STREET, GETTYSBURG, PA 17325
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
MARCH 25, 2024**

President Matthew Moon called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with the following **Councilors present:** Vice-President Judith Butterfield, Ms. Patricia Lawson, Mr. Christopher Berger, Mr. Chad-Alan Carr, Ms. Alisha Sanders, and Mr. Peter Bales. **Staff present included:** Mayor Rita Frealing; Borough Manager Charles Gable; Borough Secretary Sara Stull; Borough Solicitor Harold Eastman, Barley Snyder; Police Chief Robert Glenney; Planning Director John Whitmore; Parking Manager Rebecca Fissel; and Chad Clabaugh, Borough Engineer, C. S. Davidson, Inc.

Others present included: Warren Bladen, Manager of the Adams County Department of Emergency Services; Dave Sanders, Emergency Management Coordinator for the Borough of Gettysburg; Susan Thresher and Mark Murphy, representing St. Francis Xavier Church, 25 West High Street; Randy Wallett and Chris Lupolt representing Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, 44 Chambersburg Street; Brian Hodges, 137 Ridge Avenue and owner of The Brafferton Inn, 44 York Street; Linda Atiyeh, owner of The Upper Crust, 26 York Street; Nancie Gudmestad, owner of the Shriver House, 309 Baltimore Street; Susan Cipperly, 314 North Stratton Street; Sharon Monahan, 114 West Broadway; and Darlene Brown, 355 West High Street; representing the press was Jim Hale with the *Gettysburg Times*; and filming by *Community Media-ACCTV*.

President Matthew Moon said that in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month the lights on Lincoln Square will be blue in April and encouraged people to place blue lights on their porches.

Councilwoman Sanders announced that the Adams County Children's Advocacy Center prepared a GO BLUE for April Toolkit that includes a calendar of events, 5% Challenge video link, graphics, and posts for social media and printables. The information is on their website at www.kidsagaincac.org.

Special Presentation

Emergency Operations Plan Review and Updates

Warren Bladen, Manager of the Adams County Department of Emergency Services gave an overview of the Emergency Management Operation Plan that was adopted by Council on November 14, 2022, and the Adams County Hazard Mitigation Plan which the County adopted in 2022; and the Borough adopted the County Hazard Mitigation Plan on December 14, 2022. He said that the County is in the process of updating it this year. He explained the necessary training that the Elected Officials are required to take noting that the four courses are IS100, IS200, IS700, and IS800. He noted that courses G402 and G191 are currently in Harrisburg and that he is planning to have these two courses for Gettysburg. Mr. Bladen said that Dave Sanders is the Emergency Management Coordinator for the Borough of Gettysburg and has done a great job in keeping the records up to date, unlike some of the other municipalities.

Public Comment (Restricted to items appearing on the agenda – not tabled items)

Randy Wallett representing Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, 44 Chambersburg Street said that they were disappointed when they learned recently that they could no longer place bags on the meters themselves in front of the church for Sunday services. He said that it was a disaster on Sunday when the spaces were not reserved for the people with mobility issues. For many years the church was allowed to place eight bags on the parking meters in front of the church to help the elderly and handicapped people get into church easily. He said that they would place the bags on at 7:30 AM and remove them after the 10:30 AM service that concluded before noon. They are asking that Borough Council to reconsider the placement of bags on the meters by the church members.

Susan Thresher Business Manager for St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, 25 West High Street said that parking in front of the church is a necessity as there are many senior citizens and people with mobility issues that need to have parking close to the church for easy access. The congregation has approximately 2000 people and we should respect their freedom of religion.

Current and Old Business

- 1. PBS 2016-12 Sidewalk Ordinance Revisions**
 - a. Section f. Lincoln Square Management**
 - b. Section g. Lincoln Square Center Circle**

Manager Gable read the section of the Policy Briefing Summary (PBS) that was updated by him and Planning Director Whitmore on March 19, 2024 as follows: “Lincoln Square sidewalks are entirely located within public right-of-way with interaction of PennDOT maintenance affecting the various cartways, and the Borough’s Parking Department management of on-street parking around the circle. While portions of the right-of-way may be platted to individual property owners, the use and enjoyment of those lands encumbered by a right-of-way cannot be withheld by the affected property owner. Lincoln Square sidewalk is unique in that certain maintenance activities are conducted by the Borough. This arrangement has created an environment whereby it may be practical for the Borough to provide all maintenance within the square with the expectation that activities associated with the circle and square’s sidewalks be sanctioned by the Borough. By providing an ordinance, the Borough of Gettysburg could agree to maintain and repair sidewalks in Lincoln Square, as these facilities could be better developed to provide more space to community groups, outdoor dining, first amendment zones, and other unique economic development activities. The Lincoln Square Center Circle Policy (**Exhibit 4**) established June 12, 2017 includes section 2 which states the following regarding use of the inner circle: Due to health, safety and welfare considerations, it is the general policy of the Borough that no temporary or permanent structures, displays, plantings or landscaping, in addition to the existing conditions identified in section 1. above, shall be installed or placed on or in the center circle of the Lincoln Square traffic circle or roundabout. Notwithstanding the foregoing policy, the Borough may from time to time consider the installation and placement, and either install or place or direct to be installed or placed additional structures, displays, plantings or landscaping on or in the center circle, including structures or displays associated with Borough-sponsored special events. No additional structures, displays, plantings or landscaping shall be installed or placed on or in the center circle if such installation or placement would pose a safety hazard to vehicles or pedestrians. As shown above, the ability to place additional installations in the circle is limited, and there is no enabling provision or application suggestion to allow for organizations or potential applicants to seek permission to install temporary improvements within the circle. Provision is provided by the policy to allow that “the Borough may from time to time consider the

installation and placement, and either install or place or direct to be installed or placed additional structures, displays plantings or landscaping on or in the center circle, including structures or displays associated with Borough-sponsored special events.” Staff recommends that Section 2 of the policy be amended to clearly indicate if non-Borough sponsored events or other temporary installations are permitted and to provide that a written application is to be made to the Borough Manager to approve such temporary installations. If desired by the Borough Council, the special events permit application could be expanded to include these requests. Additionally, there are currently only six (6) Borough-sponsored special events/activities, by way of an appropriation in the approved and adopted 2024 budget. They are: a) 4th of July Celebrations at GARA; b) New Years Eve on Lincoln Square; c) Halloween Parade; d) A Gettysburg Christmas Festival; e) Memorial Day Parade; and f) Remembrance Day Parade. It could be argued that as such, by sanctioning these events in the adopted budget, and by authorization currently noted in **Exhibit 4**, these organizations could petition the Borough to erect a temporary display on the Square in support of the event sponsored by the Borough. All other events would need some sort of approval process if the Council so desires.”

Manager Gable said that Council will need to decide if they want to add a section for colored lights. He pointed out that Borough Staff would be responsible for placement of items in the Lincoln Square/Circle and not the special event organizers. He asked if the Borough Council wishes to enact an ordinance to establish the procedures and maintenance.

Councilman Carr said that the Borough maintains the square and circle and the public works crew clears the snow and not the property owners. He would be in favor of this and determining the policy and procedures.

Councilman Bales asked who makes repairs to the sidewalks on the square. Manager Gable responded that the Borough maintains the square.

Councilman Berger asked how often signs are placed in the square. Manager Gable responded it does not happen very often.

Councilman Carr said that that he does not approve of signs and banners on the square because it is a distraction for traffic going around the circle and they must be attentive to the pedestrians.

Solicitor Eastman explained that if Borough Council is legislating this then it must be done by enacting an ordinance, and if it is a policy that they approve then it can be done by a resolution.

Manager Gable responded that the Council should enact an ordinance regarding the management of Lincoln Square.

2. Stevens Run Channel Wall Ownership

Borough Engineer Clabaugh gave a presentation on the Seven’s Run Channel Wall Assessment that outlines the Tiber Walls that need to be repaired or replaced (see attached). He said that if the Borough Council wants to take ownership of these walls then a policy would need to be written. The Tiber Walls repair costs are approximately \$5 million to \$7 million dollars. He noted that Mike Malewicki Chairman of GBSWA has done extensive research of old Borough meeting minutes and other records and found it to be clear that the Borough does have ownership of some of the Tiber walls. He said that it would be best to make the top priorities first, which include West Middle Street and East

Water Street which are the most serious walls in need of repairs.

Manager Gable said that the Gettysburg Borough Storm Water Authority (GBSWA) would help with funding this project.

Councilwoman Lawson said that it would be difficult to determine if the property owner or the Borough owns the Tiber Walls.

Solicitor Eastman said that a title search of all properties would need to be completed to determine who owns the Tiber Walls. He noted that if the Borough would take by condemnation then appraisals would need to be completed.

Borough Council discussed the importance of repairing these dangerous Tiber walls as quickly as possible and felt that it is too costly to place on the property owners.

3. PBS 2019-09 Gettysburg Welcome Center (GWC) Construction and Management

Planning Director Whitmore explained the zoning issues regarding the parcel and said that the project will need to be reviewed by both the Zoning Hearing Board for a variance and the Planning Commission. Borough staff will be developing the subdivision and land development plan for the project with the anticipation for approvals to occur by May 22, 2024.

He said that Main Street Gettysburg and the Borough of Gettysburg announced on March 15, 2024 that construction money in the amount of \$1,272,436 for the Welcome Center was approved and appropriated by Congress as part of the Congressionally Directed Funding in the FY2024 Federal Budget. He said that Main Street Gettysburg partnered with the Adams County Community Foundation to create an endowment with the goal of securing \$1 million to fund the operational costs for the Welcome Center in Perpetuity.

President Matthew Moon gave a shout-out to Jill Sellers, President of Main Street Gettysburg, and everyone involved with working on securing these funds.

New Business

1. Temporary Reservation of Metered Parking Spaces for Museums

Manager Gable said that museums and churches are not allowed to place bags on the parking meters. He said that they could get a permit for meter bags but the Borough Staff would place them on the parking meters.

President Matthew Moon commented that on Sunday mornings, there is free parking at the parking meters until 1:00 PM.

Councilman Berger said that Sundays are a religious day and he feels that churches should be allowed to place bags on the parking meters themselves as they have in the past.

Councilwoman Lawson said that she sympathizes with the churches and asked, “where is our common sense.” She said that we need to reach a compromise.

Councilman Carr said that there are other freedoms: Religious, speech, political, etc. and they should all be treated the same. He said that the rate to reserve a meter bag should be increased to pay for staff to place the bags on the parking meters.

Councilman Bales said that there needs to be continuity for everyone.

Manager Gable said that the Council could choose to have two handicapped spaces placed in front of all the churches.

President Matthew Moon said to table the discussion on churches at this time and continue with the museums.

Manager Gable gave a brief history stating that there are three museums; the Shriver House, Gettysburg Diorama and Civil War Trails that pay \$150 per year for temporary reserved parking spaces.

Councilman Carr said that it is a tough situation but he would advocate that everyone is to be treated fairly.

Councilman Bales said that we need to make it equitable for all of these types of businesses. He asked if there is software that could be programed for partial-day usage since the Borough's current software does not allow it.

Parking Manager Fissel explained that staff must bag the meters in advance to secure the spaces for the business. She said that there is no revenue lost because those reserving the spaces are paying an hourly rate for the whole day. She noted that the Borough's software does not allow spaces to toggle back and forth between reserved and unreserved spaces.

Councilwoman Sanders said that we cannot differentiate between museums, buses, etc. and said that Council should follow the staff's recommendations.

Linda Atiyeh, owner of The Upper Crust, 26 York Street said that she reserved eight spaces for two buses at a cost of \$144 which were only there for approximately one hour. She said that having to pay for a whole day for each space makes it cost-prohibitive with the new parking pilot program.

President Matthew Moon responded that after months of discussion Borough Council adopted the Parking Pilot Program at your insistence.

2. Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

Manager Gable explained that this company will work with both the Borough and Main Street to secure better relationships with state leaders and to secure more financial support. The Borough needs to have a better outreach with Harrisburg and Washington legislators to apply for grants and garner their support. The proposal from Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies for their services is a monthly retainer fee of \$6,000. He said that the Gettysburg Storm Water Authority is interested in this service and that the Gettysburg Municipal Authority may also be interested in partnering and sharing the cost of this service. Either party may terminate the service with thirty days written notice.

After Council discussion, the consensus was that everyone was pleased with this service and feels that it will be helpful in securing funding for Gettysburg.

Public Comment (Open to items currently tabled or not listed on the agenda)

Nancie Gudmestad, owner of Shriver House, 309 Baltimore Street said that for the past twenty-seven years she has been allowed to place the parking meter bags for the reserved bus parking spaces and remove them when not in use without any problems. She asked that she be allowed to continue doing so to avoid the loss of meter revenue when the buses are not parked. She said that she only uses the two spaces from April through October. Ms. Gudmestad said that she had a bus last week and paid for parking until 8:00 PM, but the meter bag was removed by the Borough staff at 7:00 PM.

Parking Manager Fissel responded that when Ms. Gudmestad got the permit for March 18th, the time was from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM so the Parking Enforcement Officer removed the meter bag at the correct time.

Mark Murphy, Pastoral Council Chair for St. Francis Xavier Church, 25 West High Street said that it was short notice that they only learned about the parking change on Friday. He said that it is difficult to treat all the organizations the same because there are different elements involved.

Adjournment

President Matthew Moon dismissed the meeting at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Sara L. Stull
Borough Secretary