

Borough of Ben Avon Heights
April 14, 2009 Council Meeting

The regular meeting of the Ben Avon Heights Council was held at Shannopin Country Club at 7:30 pm.

Present: Council Members Berardi, Cuneo, Cuteri, Davis, Dickson, Grubbs, and Isherwood, Mayor Dismukes, Solicitor Vogel, Police Chief Micklos, Ben Avon Fire Chief Buckman, Webmaster Jason Brown, County Councilman Matt Drozd, and resident Greg Mihalko.

The March 2009 minutes were approved as distributed and the March Treasurer's Report was approved as distributed.

Volunteer webmaster Jason Brown discussed our website and noted the following recent improvements to the website: improved navigation and flow, committee section, and the ability to send email notifications/alerts to the residents. He mentioned the following possible additions to the website: *community facility information* along with map links for the park and voting venue, *education information* to include links to the elementary, middle and high school, *athletic association information*, *kid friendly venue information* to include links to places that kids like to go by age group (parks, ACORD Park, bowling, laser tag, Kennywood, etc.), *events calendar* which would be under the private section, and *Frequently Asked Questions information*. Mr. Brown also discussed the possibility of adding an events journal (post pictures from community events), directory listing and a bulletin board (babysitters, tools, etc.) all under the private (password protected) area of the website. Council discussed the possible additions to the website and determined that they do not want any private information (directory listing, pictures of the kids, etc.) to be posted on the website to protect the privacy of our residents. Council thanked Mr. Brown for volunteering to be our webmaster and for all of the time that he has put into improving the site. Mr. Cuteri and Mrs. Phelps volunteered to be the "implementers or overseers" of any new information for the website.

County Councilman Matt Drozd discussed some of the issues within Allegheny County that he supports. They include: North Shore Connector, consolidation of services, 5 year budget projections/strategic planning, and the Port Authority.

Resident Greg Mihalko discussed the poor condition of the curbs and catch basins along Briar Cliff Road noting that they should be addressed when the roads are repaved.

Police Report: Chief Micklos said that Ben Avon Heights had 3 police calls during the month including a disabled vehicle, an animal complaint and a magazine sale soliciting complaint. The magazine sales solicitation is a scam which they see every few years. The sales people often times have criminal records. The magazine subscriptions are paid for at the time of the sale; however the purchaser never receives any magazines. A community e-alert was sent out to the residents as soon as the Borough was informed of the scam. Chief Micklos explained that a permit is required for solicitation with the exception of politicians and religious groups.

The police were asked to talk to the residents along Wilson Drive about moving their reflectors so that they are not leaning into the roadway.

Fire Report: Fire Chief Buckman reported a quiet month in Ben Avon Heights.

Consent Decree: Engineer Gaus informed Council that 3 bids were submitted for the Year 5 CCTV Inspection on April 13, 2009. The lowest bid was submitted by Insight Pipe Contracting in the amount of \$5,962.55. State Pipe Services submitted a bid for \$8,647.55 and Robinson Pipe's bid was for \$9,637.20. A motion was made to accept the Insight Pipe Contracting bid of \$5,962.55 for the Year 5 CCTV Inspection. The motion passed. The contract requires the work to be finished by the end of this May. Mr. Gaus should be able to have a report of any deficits found by the June meeting. He told Council that the Borough is on schedule with all of the required deadlines.

Engineer Gaus provided Council with two Change Orders from Fleming Walker for the Contract A – 2008 Sewer Open Cut Repair Project. They include one in the amount of \$5,161.04 for 13 hours of extra digging in the Briar Cliff/Cambridge Road area and \$9,656.10 for 23 extra hours of digging at the Point Repair No. 3 location. Council authorized Engineer

Gaus to negotiate with Fleming Walker and then report back for approval.

Engineer Gaus informed Council of a sanitary sewer overflow problem on the property of 53 Newgate Road. In 2005, camera work in the area showed perfect flow within that line. In 2006 Verizon installed a new service pole to replace an older pole, which appears to have punctured the sanitary line, in effect causing the overflow. Mr. Gaus will work with Verizon to ensure that the sanitary line gets repaired. Verizon must prove that they did a PA One Call for the installation of their pole. If camera work becomes necessary, Verizon will be responsible to pay for it if they are found to have caused the problem.

Street Repaving: Mr. Davis discussed the street repaving program and provided Council with the following information - Past repaving was completed without first milling down the existing surface, causing many of the curbs to be deleted. The result, in some cases, has been storm runoff. Mr. Davis believes that the curbs and sidewalks are in more need of repair than the streets. He asked Council to think about the following questions: should we consider taking responsibility for all curbs and sidewalks, should we delete some of the sidewalks and widen some of the roads, should we add sidewalks, should we re-line Wilson with Belgium block, and finally, should we create a new curb standard? Council discussed the issues and decided that the Borough needs to come up with a Master Plan with regard to streets, curbs and sidewalks. The Master Plan should detail a set standard for sidewalks and curbs, as well as the proper width of the roads. Engineer Gaus will pull out the original BAH standards and discuss with Mr. Davis. Council will discuss this issue again in May, at which time we should know if we will be receiving the infrastructure grant. Council discussed the salt damage within the Borough and determined that the lack of curbs might be one of the major problems.

Mrs. Phelps provided Council with an estimate for replacing the worn signs within the borough. Originally Walt's Landscaping provided an estimate of \$1,835.00 to replace approximately 13 signs throughout the borough; however he informed Mrs. Phelps that he does not have the manpower to handle the job. Mrs. Phelps secured an estimate from Avalon Borough to replace the signs and was given an estimate of \$2,510.00. Avalon also suggested replacing 8 stop signs which are no longer reflecting properly at an additional cost of \$2,860.00. That estimate includes the installation of stop sign delineators which are now required by PennDot on all stop signs. Mrs. Phelps will obtain another estimate.

Mrs. Phelps provided Council with the zoning officer's report which confirmed that Mr. Olson properly relocated his potting shed in conformance with our Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Price also reported that he observed and confirmed that roughly 80% of a stone retaining wall is resting on the property adjacent to Mr. Olson's property.

Mrs. Phelps reported that the Briar Cliff/Clovelly Road retaining wall insurance claim might need the attention of our Solicitor since the claims process is moving very slowly. Solicitor Vogel asked Mrs. Phelps to provide him with the information and he will contact them.

Mrs. Dickson briefly discussed the Basin Brief newsletter which was produced by 3 Rivers Wet Weather. The article titled, "The True Cost of Municipal Collection System Management" brings up many good questions which Mrs. Dickson thought Council might want to consider. Due to the length of meeting, Council decided to resume this discussion next month.

Mrs. Phelps informed Council that she has had more Berkheimer complaints recently. Council asked that our Berkheimer representative attend our next meeting to discuss.

Action Item Review: Solicitor Vogel will look into the proper procedure for shutting the water off to the residents that are consistently delinquent in paying their ALCOSAN bills.

The Earth Day/Adopt-A-Highway Clean Up day is scheduled for Saturday, April 18, 2009 beginning at 9am.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy Phelps, Secretary/Treasurer