

**Oakmont Borough Council**  
**Minutes of the Regular Meeting**

**285 (Final)**  
**August 1, 2016**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Regular Meeting of Oakmont Borough Council was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Briney in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 767 Fifth Street, Oakmont, Pennsylvania 15139.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All those who were present and able stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Council Members Benusa, Coulter, Favo, Friday, Whalen and President Briney; Mayor Fescemyer; Solicitor Ott; and Borough Manager Jensen

Excused: Mrs. Facaros

Visitors: David Carroll, Jane Miller, Rose O'Connor, Craig Olson, Shelly Shadle, Dave Sullivan, William Wengerd and Mary Margaret Zoller

**BID OPENING**

**Rapid Fire Rectangular Beacon (RFRB)** - Manager Jensen opened the bids received for the Rapid Fire Rectangular Beacon (RFRB). The bids were sent to Wooster for review and recommendation. The Contract will be awarded September 6, 2016.

Mr. Benusa offered a motion to move ahead on this installation pending money source, time-line verification, and the Engineer's review of lowest responsible bidder.

Mr. Favo seconded the motion, which passed 6 to 0.

**REGISTERED COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no registered comments from the Public that evening.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

**Rose O'Connor** – Ms. O'Connor, a School Guard, wanted to know if Riverview School would be helping to pay for the Beacon Light (RFRB). President Briney said that since it is a safety issue, it is the Borough's responsibility. There was also discussion about the possibility of the Oakmont Bakery moving to Third Street and Hulton. This would create additional traffic safety issues.

**Mary Margaret Zoller** – Mrs. Zoller read a letter she had prepared regarding property next to her driveway at the end of Gum Way off Pennsylvania Avenue, that she felt was an eyesore. Mrs. Zoller would like the Tree Commission to complete the cutting down of an apple tree on Borough right-of-way that they previously authorized. Mr. Briney handed the matter over to the Borough Manager to resolve.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**July 5, 2016 Minutes** – Mr. Benusa offered a motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 5, 2016.

Mr. Whalen seconded the motion.

Mr. Whalen asked for a correction to the Minutes regarding his statement that Chief DiSanti had demonstrated license recognition cameras at the U.S. Open.

[N.B., As later stated, it was John Hudson who demonstrated the license recognition cameras at the U.S. Open.]

The motion passed, 6 to 0.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Ms. Jensen read an email, dated July 13, 2016, from the Oakmont Carnegie Library Director, announcing that the Library had been selected as the site to hold a Legislative Open House.

Ms. Jensen read a letter, dated July 20, 2016, from Patrol Officer David H. Brankley, announcing his resignation and retirement, effective July 23, 2016.

Ms. Jensen read a letter, dated July 22, 2016, from Senate Engineering Company stating that U&S Construction was the lowest bidder, at \$16,700.00, for the Intersection Restoration Project at Pennsylvania Avenue and Allegheny River Boulevard.

Ms. Jensen read a letter, dated July 25, 2016, from West Shore Home Improvement requesting permission to hold a “block party” on September 11, 2016, from Noon to 4:30 PM, at the west end of Pennsylvania Avenue. The Manager expressed concern that the purpose of this “block party” was commercial. Council directed Manager Jensen to find out how many people were expected, how parking is to be handled, and why they can’t hold the event on their own property, instead.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT’S REMARKS**

**OVFD Truck** – President Briney requested that Fire Chief Dave Carroll attend Oakmont Borough Council Work Session on August 8, 2016 in case Council has questions about purchasing a new fire engine. President Briney reported that the estimated cost for new vehicle was \$559,000. The Borough has \$90,500 set aside for the fire truck so far. The Fire Department is willing to provide \$150,000, plus fit-out costs, towards the purchase. Originally, Council had requested they pay half of the total costs.

**8th Police Officer** – Mr. Whalen said he had different calculations than what the Borough had given Council on the costs and benefits for a full-time police officer. He calculated a total of \$114,000 for a Full-Time Officer and \$57,000 for a Part-Time Officer. Full-Time Officers receive health and other benefits that Part-Timers do not.

Mayor Fescemyer announced the resignation of full-time Patrol Officer Chris Whaley. He indicated that Patrol Officer Whaley would be tendering his resignation letter shortly, and would be leaving in two weeks. The Police

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Department is now down two officers with another officer off on Workers Compensation.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

**License Recognition Cameras** – Solicitor Ott reported that, according to Dick Skrinjar at the District Attorney's office, the cameras are already up and operational in Oakmont, Harmar, Verona and Plum. The Borough does not own the cameras. The contractor will provide access to the cameras via Smart phones at a later date. Mayor Fescemyer thanked Solicitor Ott for her assistance. Mr. Whalen reported the server was at the County at this time. President Briney asked for a demonstration to Council. Chief DiSanti said he was anxious to do so for all interested parties.

Mayor Fescemyer thanked the Oakmont Borough Council for voting last year to run a Civil Service Exam, given the current situation regarding the lack of Patrol Officers.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**July Police Report** – Mayor Fescemyer said we would receive the July Police Report next week.

**July OVFD Report** – President Briney asked if there was anything the Borough should report to the public concerning the Fire Department. Chief Carroll wanted Council to understand that not all fires are structure fires.

**BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT**

**Update – Catch Basins and Sinkholes** – Sinkholes are appearing on a weekly basis, reported Ms. Jensen. Recent bids for three sinkhole replacements received came in at around \$15K each. She suggested that money for payment could be taken from the money set aside for curb repairs in Capital Fund (Roads). Mr. Favo said he did not want to spend any additional money on exploratory bids.

**Proposals for Sewage and Garbage Billing Contracts** – The Borough has received three proposals to do sewage and garbage billing for the Borough. An analysis will be prepared for Council's review. The current contract is up in October 2016.

**Riverview School District** – Manager Jensen referred to the proposed meeting between Riverview School District and Oakmont Borough Council. President Briney said he would like the meeting to be more of a workshop to discuss mutual concerns. He would like to hold off on scheduling the meeting, however, until the flashing beacon light was in place. Mrs. Friday has already informed the Riverview School District that the beacon light would not be in place for the start of school.

**Handbook Comments** – The Manager reminded Council that the Employee Handbook comments were due by August 8, 2016.

**COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS**

**July Warrants** – Mr. Whalen offered a motion to approve the Warrant List for June 2016, dated July 5, 2016, including expenditures totaling **\$334,551.72** for all funds:

<i>Fund</i>	<i>Amount</i>
General Fund	\$133,393.80
Boulevard Project Fund	\$4,367.50
Kerr Museum Fund	\$2,862.14
Library Fund	\$34,178.01
Liquid Fuels Fund	-0-
Sewer Fund	\$153,543.91
Capital Fund (Parks)	\$5,778.36
Capital Fund (Roads)	\$428.00
Capital Reserve Fund	-0-

Mr. Benusa seconded the motion, which passed 6 to 0.

**Environment**

Mr. Benusa congratulated Patrol Officer Brankley on his 39 years of service to the Borough and on his retirement.

He also asked when the Oakmont Recreation Board would be providing information on the kayak launch site. At Council's request, a memorandum was sent to the Recreation Board Chairman on July 18, 2016, requesting an update.

Mr. Benusa also reported stated that Verona Borough and the Allegheny Valley Railroad have both sought eminent domain for the Burrows junk yard in Verona, in an effort to clean up the site.

**Public Safety**

Mr. Coulter commended both Patrol Officers Brankley and Whaley for their years of service to the Borough.

**Hiring of Part-Time Patrol Officer Joshua W. Spessard** - Mr. Coulter offered a motion to approve the hiring of Part-Time Patrol Officer Joshua W. Spessard to active duty.

Mr. Whalen seconded the motion.

Solicitor Ott read a portion of the Borough Manager's authorities from the Code of the Borough Oakmont (Section 33-12), noting that it was legal to proceed with the motion to hire Patrol Officer Spessard.

Mrs. Friday noted that officers were required to live within 10 air miles of Oakmont, and asked if this should apply to part-timers, as well. Mr. Whalen said that this would limit recruitment, and Mayor Fescemyer and Chief DiSanti agreed. Mrs. Friday also noted that Officer Spessard's transcripts were missing from his application, which classifies the application as incomplete.

Mr. Benusa said he wanted all items requested in the application completed as soon as possible.

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Council Member Favo reminded those present of the YouTube video of Officer Spessard in which he had “lost his cool.” He said there had been other part-time officers hired in the past who had “severe baggage” which the Chief and Mayor chose not to share with Council before hiring. He noted that Officer Spessard had no previous history with the Borough, that this was a “bad pattern” to set, and that this was a potential liability for the Borough. For these reasons, Mr. Favo said he would not be voting to retain Officer Spessard.

Mr. Whalen said he had spoken to the Braddock Police Chief, who said Officer Spessard had not been let go by them. He resigned in order to work for Oakmont, instead. Braddock Borough gave Officer Spessard a verbal reprimand in connection to the YouTube incident.

On a called vote, the votes were as follows:

Mr. Benusa	Nay	Mrs. Friday	Yes
Mr. Coulter	Yes	Mr. Whalen	Yes
Mr. Favo	Nay	President Briney	Yes

The motion passed, 4 to 2.

**Patrol Officer David H. Brankley Resignation** – Mr. Coulter offered a motion to accept the resignation of David H. Brankley’s from the Oakmont Police Department, effective July 23, 2016.

Mr. Whalen seconded the motion.

Mr. Favo thanked him for his service, and President Briney commended him for example he set over the last 39 years. Mrs. Friday suggested that Patrol Officer Brankley be recognized at the 2016 Holiday gathering.

The motion passed, 6 to 0.

**Education/Recreation**

**Evening Hours at Oakmont Carnegie Library** – Mr. Coulter made a motion to approve the addition of two hours on Thursday evenings to the Oakmont Carnegie Library operating hours, at a cost not to exceed \$2,000.

Mrs. Friday seconded the motion.

Mr. Favo said he was not in favor of the additional hours, because the Oakmont Carnegie Library Board was required to work within their budget.

Mr. Coulter withdrew the motion.

**Public Works**

**2016 PA/ARB Intersection Improvements Bid** – Mr. Favo offered a motion to award the 2016 PA/ARB Intersection Improvements Bid to U & S Construction for a total bid amount of \$16,700.

Mrs. Friday seconded the motion.

Mr. Favo indicated the job would include exploratory work to locate a suspected leak in the area, which may cost more.

The motion passed 6 to 0.

**Administration/Culture**

**Bridge and Speed Limit Transition** – Mrs. Friday reported that PennDOT regulations for advance notice of a speed limit change from the Bridge to Hulton Road can only be posted if there is a 15 MPH decrease. Mrs. Friday explained to PennDOT that this was a school area, so they agreed to take this under consideration at their next meeting. Also, Mrs. Friday discussed signage to send trucks onto Allegheny Avenue and not allow them up on Allegheny River Boulevard with PennDOT.

**Historical Society** – Mrs. Friday said the Historical Society would like to put a Camp Wright Memorial, a Civil War encampment, on Borough property next to the Harvanek property at 231 Hulton Road. The Memorial will be mounted on a stone. President Briney said it would need further investigation with the Boulevard Project Board and Zoning Hearing Board.

**Technology**

**Council Chambers, Audio Implementation** – Mr. Whalen met with a vendor to look at IT for Council Chambers. He is putting together a plan and budget using the Comcast grant money. Mr. Whalen and Manager Jensen will meet to come up with a simpler mechanism to record meetings. He asked for any input about Council Chambers to be forwarded to him.

**MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

Mr. Favo requested Manager Jensen have sand put between the bricks between Porte Street and Hulton Road on Allegheny River Boulevard.

Mrs. Friday requested an update on the small space requested by Oakmont Harbors from the Borough to slightly enlarge their parking area. Mrs. Jensen said she would see where this was with PennDOT. When last she checked, PennDOT was trying to determine if a subdivision plan needed to be approved in order to accomplish this.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

**Craig Olson** – Mr. Olson said he was against West Shore having a block party. He said there would be no access for ambulance and fire trucks in the event of an emergency. Also, he requested signage prohibiting trucks from going from Hulton Road onto Allegheny River Boulevard. Mr. Olson was informed that signage was in the works for the Hulton corridor to accomplish this.

**Diane Sullivan** – Ms. Sullivan said she was concerned about the cut in hours and programs at the Library. She said the Library employees were dedicated and that the Library provided a wealth of information. President Briney noted that the Borough had already increased the 2016 Library Budget by \$50,000. Ms. Sullivan suggested that people could give offerings.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to conduct that evening, Mr. Whalen offered a motion to adjourn.

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Mr. Coulter seconded the motion, which passed 6 to 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Cooper Jensen  
Borough Manager

Transcribed by:  
Sharon L. Springer