Trafford Borough Discussion Meeting Minutes
November 21st, 2023

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order 6:30pm

2. Moment of Silence & Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call done by Nina Mulnix

   Council present: Councilmember Bayko, Councilmember Cardiff, Councilmember Corrales, Councilmember Dapra, Councilmember Perovich, Councilmember Shoub

   Council not present: Councilmember Cole

   Other staff present: Mayor Llewellyn, Borough Manager Peticca, Borough Secretary

4. Alcosan Representative- Kim Kennedy Director of Engineering: Alcosan Q&A

Representatives from ALCOSAN spoke and discussed various topics, and a review of their operations.

Kim Kennedy provided a background on the clean water plan, and how it pertains to wastewater. There are four components that are negotiated with the EPA and the department of justice. The first one being regionalization. The good news for Trafford with the line known as T29-A10 has successfully transferred. The next piece of good news with this identified line, it once flowed into a neighboring municipality's line and Trafford paid an annual fee that is now no longer happening, and that fee will go away starting in January. The second is the green revitalization of our water ways, this is the grant program that allows ALCOSAN to remove water that doesn't belong in the sewers. The third component is plant expansion, there is currently only one wastewater treatment plant. That plant has the capacity to treat 250 million gallons per day, starting in 2029 the plant will have the capacity to treat 600 million gallons per day on the same equipment. It will be an increment process over the next six years to reach that 600-million-gallon goal. The fourth and final component are the new regional tunnel systems, there will be three tunnel systems created. It will become a parallel collection system. This first phase of these four components must be completed by the year 2036. These components are why you see rate increases every year. Documents were provided to outline items in this discussion.

The sewage rates in 2024 will be as follows: For the service fee (flat rate) is $23.41 and the gallons per 1,000 gallons for usage will now be $11.41.

A resident asked if the sewage bill rates will increase every year through the project completion (through 2036). What will the percentage be?

Answer: Kim Kennedy said their board of directors approved a 7% annual increase through 2026. This was done in a 5-year increment starting back in 2022. It is unknown what or if an increase will take place past 2026. Criteria and data need to be gathered over the next few years.

A resident asked how long was ALCOSAN out of compliance prior to meeting the consent order? And when did the rate increases go into effect?

Answer: The first consent decree was brought to ALCOCA in 2008, but after negotiations it was lodged in 2020. Technically it was 2008. The first-rate increase went into effect in 2014. The rate increase was 17%, followed by an 11% increase in 2015, 2016, 2017, then starting in 2018 through 2026 it was 7%.

A resident asked how much were people paying for the sewage services before the rate increases? Why was there such a huge gap in the timeframe?

Answer: There was a lot of confusion during those first phases, and there was litigation. There was justification that was needed before fees could be charged. The agencies also didn't understand the processes. We are more sewer educated now than back in 2008.

A resident asked if there are documents and budgets available for the public to see? The members that sit on the board of directors are they paid positions?

Answer: The budget can be found on ALCOSAN's website, under documents, and the board members are volunteers. Three of the seven members are appointed by the county executive, three members are appointed by the mayor of the city of Pittsburgh, and one member is appointed by both the county executive and the mayor.

A resident asked how many residential customers and how many industrial customers does ALCOSAN service? And do the resident customers have a different rate than industrial customers?

Answer: There are approximately 800,000 residential customers and there would need to be some follow to answer the question about the industrial customers. There are separate rates for industrial accounts because there is a little more involved in processing their water.

A resident asked if all 800,000 residential customers of ALCOSAN all pay the same rate.

Answer: There is a grant opportunity that residents can apply for assistance to aid in paying their sewage bills. It is an income-based credit, based on the federal income guidelines.

The ALCOSAN representatives urged all residents to attend the open house that ALCOSAN provides tours of the plant which is planned for September 14, 2024.

ALCOSAN also recommended reviewing their website for updated and new information.

a. 2024 Budget – Rates & fees, playground program pay rate.

The proposed budget for 2024 is 2.1 million.

Rates & Fees

The borough anticipates raising the price on the Manchester Room rentals for 2024, the increases will affect the Resident and Non-Resident Rentals along with Wedding Rentals. The proposed price increases are as follows:

Resident Sun-Fri is currently $200.00, increasing to $300.00.
Resident Saturday is currently $300.00, increasing to $400.00.
Non-Resident Sun-Fri is currently $250.00, increasing to $350.00.
Non-Resident Sat is currently $350.00, increasing to $450.00.
Wedding Rental is currently $850.00, increasing to $950.00.

All other rentals fees will stay the same (non-profit, meetings, funeral) and there will be no increases to the beverage service.

Playground

The employees that are hired through PTARC for the playground program are offered a wage of $15.00 per hour in the neighboring municipality. When they are hired for Trafford their rate of pay is $12.00 per hour, which is lower in comparison. It was suggested that we budget for those employees to be hired at a more appealing wage of $14.00. The outcome was to place the funds in the budget and make a motion to approve at the December council meeting.

Grant Opportunities in the budget

1. The LSA Grant- funds are being utilized for the repair of the Cavitt Parking Lot. The LSA grant is a state grant, the engineering cost $73,841.00 and we don't have a match requirement.
2. ARPA Funding- funds are being utilized for Bluff Street Sewer project. This grant is from the county and is awarding $201,000 to the borough. Our engineering estimate was $313,897.00. The match to that would be taken from the sewage fund.
3. CDBG Block Grant- funds applied for would fund the 6th street playground project. If awarded there is a 15% match. The estimate for the project is 223,000.00 and would be a two or more-phase project.
4. Low Volume dirt road Grant- funds would be utilized for stormwater improvements on Hird Road. This grant is from the Westmoreland Conservation District. Our engineering estimate was $150,000.00. This would require a $10,000.00 match and would be completed in two phases.
5. Greenways Trail and Recreation Grant- funds would be utilized for a walking trail with a bike lane and ADA compliance.

Camera's

It was discussed that there is a need for additional cameras in the borough considering recent vandalism that occurred at the Fairmont Playground. Three additional cameras were proposed to

purchase for installation. It was mentioned that the money that is spent on wages for Public Works to clean after the vandalism and the material used, a camera cost could offset the other expenses. Items addressed adding additional cameras would be the electricity needed to power the camera, and the cost involved (a cost was quoted from previous camera installations that were around four to five thousand dollars). A resident suggested/asked if utilizing local businesses or asking residents to help fundraise for the cause or by donation.
It was strongly recommended to place an estimated amount of $15,000.00 in the budget for cameras.

Mayor Llewellyn pointed out some addition/subtraction errors with the budget spreadsheet that was being reviewed.

A resident asked about the Greenways trail grant and what location of focus it would be for. The location is at the BY park and it would be to repair and make improvements to the existing walking trail and bike lane. It was asked if the grant is not awarded but if the matched funds are in the budget can some smaller improvements be made. (An example given of adding some new limestone) It was stated that some limestone can be purchased.

The other revitalization project we are working towards is to beautify Cavitt Avenue, with a grant opportunity in 2024. Theare still in the beginning stages and gathering information on this grant, the deadline to apply is September of 2024.

A resident asked a question about the BY trail and how it connects into Trafford, and why it was never expanded. It was stated that the railroad still owns the neighboring property. The borough has attended some meetings about connecting the trail in some capacity.

During the open dialog a resident asked what is happening with all the vacant homes in Trafford, can anything be done about them. A response was given that the houses are privately owned, it is not borough property so there isn't any control as to what happens to those properties. There is a vacancy registration form and fee that the borough requires to be on file to help in those situations. Another question was asked, what is code enforcement's role in this process can she fine these properties, to answer the question not for being vacant. If there are code violations or anything that falls under the property maintenance code can be addressed through code enforcement. A specific property was mentioned in the discussion, and the borough is still trying to contact someone from that LLC. There is a running list of properties that is reviewed and discussed with code monthly.

b. Proposed Zoning Ordinance

Open discussion began about the zoning changes proposed at the last council meeting. If any decision is to be made, we can move forward if there are any revisions to the proposed changes they would need to be re-presented to the planning commission. Questions presented by councilmembers in the discussion were: Is there a deadline, and why can't voting occur on individual changed items. Questions were answered, there is no deadline however the business district overlay and the LERTA tax sit idle. The items cannot be approved separately because it's

the actual changes in the zoning map it all falls within that ordinance. If there is a vote for no to the zoning changes does that cancel out the LERTA. For some additional clarification
The planning commission has already approved the proposed changes, if there are changes it goes back to the planning commission, and they meet as needed.
It was decided to have further discussions on the zoning changes.

A resident made a statement that she strongly opposes the zoning changes.

Residents asked questions about the maps listed on the county website, and information that was gathered from a phone conversation with a person from the county office. The questions asked were: Why are there differences between the coding on the tax map, why is one property that is an R-3 zoned and listed as C for commercial. The answer to the question is that it is council's understanding that is still zoned as an R-3.
If that information is incorrect then someone from the borough should make sure that the information is correct with the county, especially for future reference.
The outcome was that the information will be verified with the county from the borough.

A resident from the Shaddow Wood area addressed concerns that have gone unanswered about work and excavation being done on a neighboring property. Who can answer our questions about the safety of our homes, the erosion of the land, the damage to our foundations.

- What information are we entitled to know about.
- How are we to know if the property owner follows the borough and the nature of the work being performed.
- If a permit is issued, doesn't it need to be posted and visible.
- Shouldn't someone be examining the property before issuing a permit.
- The borough's engineer stated there was a

Answer: The permit that was issued to the property owner was an excavation permit to change the scope of the driveway. The property owner received a placard to display if asked. Some additional questions were answered throughout the meeting regarding the activity happening at the Urban property. The borough's engineer did provide a consultation on this property pertaining to sewage connection, and the location of where the tap is if and when there would need to be connection. The is no additional information at the borough to indicate that there are any other plans to construct anything on that property.

A resident spoke about how a zoning board member was consulted about the proper procedure when a permit is issued. The questions were brought up at a previous council meeting and went with no explanation or follow-up. The information given by the zoning board member was that an approved permit needs to be posted, even if there is no structure.

Residents asked questions about why the zoning board members were not notified of the zoning changes?

Answer: The Zoning Board and The Planning Commission are two separate parts. The zoning board is to oversee variances, there had been emails and communication pertaining to the public hearing and the meetings.

Residents continued to voice their concerns about the zoning changes and brought up their suggestions to develop other land in South Trafford vs their properties. They strongly verbalized their opposition.

The residents made several mentions about a map with the county that they were reviewing online to gather some of the information discussed in the meeting, however there was conflicting and confusing information between the borough's zoning map and the tax map. The borough manager stated she would contact the county for some clarification.

Answer: The purpose of the zoning changes that have been proposed is that it would give a chance for redevelopment in Trafford for the future, as it is the only developable land in Trafford. It was mentioned that by having these meetings it gives everyone a chance to consider all the information and concerns.

Answer: It was suggested that all zoning changes be reviewed over the holiday before moving forward with any decisions.

c. Holiday Happenings Parade Route

The holiday parade route will be coming over bridge onto Brinton down to First Street where the parties in the parade will exit the route. Parking will be available on Cavitt Avenue, any on-street parking spaces, and any borough lots except the library lot. The event is on December 2nd, 2023. There will be Santa and cookies to follow the parade in the Manchester Room. Anyone interested in volunteering can reach one of the TECDC members.

d. Any other borough business for discussion

A resident asked what was happening with the VFD litigation. A response was provided: The borough is still awaiting the ruling from Judge Smail.

The residents wanted some clarification on the activity that takes place with the business that is being conducted on the fire department's side of the building. It has been noticed that utilities are being used at the taxpayers' expense. How is the fire department allowed to run a business there?

Answer: That is why the borough is involved with the litigation. Some councilmembers commented that the borough has spent a lot of money on this litigation, and it should never have happened.

A resident asked about the sidewalk that is owned by the Fire Department, is there any action being taken for him to repair?

Answer: That is currently in the court system with Judge Tyburski. The Fire Department was found guilty, but they then appealed the decision, and it stands in the court of common pleas.

A resident addressed speeding concerns on 7th Street. Why are there not more speeding tickets being issued. The number of vehicles that speed through there even the school buses.

Answer: There have been speed studies conducted throughout the borough, and the results from that study show that 95% of the people cited or pulled over are the residents that live on the street or nearby. Another study can be conducted.
The borough also is looking into purchasing speed signs to monitor and deter motorists from speeding.

A resident asked if there is an ordinance or rule in Trafford about feeding wildlife- especially deer? There is a neighbor that continues to feed the deer in the community, it is creating a concern. It has been addressed to the neighbor with no resolution. The game commission recommends not feeding the deer but there really isn't anything they can do to prevent someone from doing such.

Answer: This situation has been discussed in the past, this is something that would be hard to prove and hard to enforce. The proposed solution to this issue could come from an ordinance being passed, and then further proof with evidence to be upheld by the magistrate. For example, if it was caught on someone's video surveillance and then one could pursue a civil matter at the local magistrate.

A resident commended the Public Works Department for their efforts during the fall season and leaf collection, they did a nice job.

A resident asked if at the top of the street of Homewood Avenue where it abuts Short Street, could there be a sign placed to indicate that opposing traffic does not stop. There have been near collisions taking place because motorists aren't aware.

Answer: Yes, the borough can look at that.

5. Adjournment
    a. Announce the next Regular Council meeting for Tuesday, December 5th, 2023, p.m. in Council Chambers
    b. Move to adjourn: Councilmember Shoub
    c. Second: Councilmember Corrales
    d. Discussion: The time was missing from the announcement; the meeting will take place at 7p.m.
    e. Vote: 6, 0, 1 (Absent)

Respectfully submitted.
Nina Mulnix Borough Secretary