

March 5, 2008

The work session of the Riverton Borough Council was held on the above date. Mayor Martin presiding.

PRESENT: Council members Daniel, Brown, Cairns Wells, Smyth, Kinzler (arrived at 7:50pm) and Solicitor Bruce M. Gunn

ABSENT: Council member Cesaretti

The following statement was read by Mayor Martin:

Public notice of this meeting, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act has been given by the Municipal Clerk in the following manner:

(a) Having written notice of all meetings to be held in 2008 published in the Burlington County Times on December 30, 2007

(b) Posting written notice on the official bulletin board on January 4, 2008

Update Re: Bicycle/Pedestrian Study. In Mr. Cesaretti's absence, Mr. Brown reported that the committee met to review the study's recommendations. The committee also wanted to establish a list of projects that could be the basis of the Borough's application for the Safe Routes to Schools grant. The committee would like to see pushbutton crossings for pedestrians along the intersections of Broad and Cedar, Thomas and Elm. They would like the placement of two or three speed humps on the upper portion of Thomas Avenue, the placement of stop signs on Thomas at Highway and Park, paint Speed limit 25 on the road bed coming eastbound on Thomas Avenue and stripe a center line on the repaved section from the Borough line to approximately Park Avenue.

Another area of concern is the intersection of Harrison and Lippincott (designated on the safe routes to schools), the line of sight is not clear, and there are no markings in the street for children to cross. This area needs to be more pedestrian friendly.

Another area is the park which lacks pedestrian and handicapped/wheelchair accessible attributes at this time. The committee would also like sidewalks installed along Cedar Street, between Broad & 8th Street. They would also like the placement of a sidewalk along 8th to the playground area. Mr. Smyth stated that there could possibly be grant opportunities to address all of the above issues, such as Safe Routes to Schools or Centers of Place.

Discussion then took place regarding the possible placement of stop signs at the following locations in town: 4 way stop signs on 4th Street at Linden, Thomas & Lippincott, 2 way stop signs along Carriage House Lane and a 3 way stop sign at Thomas and Park. Chief Norcross stated that a representative from the Department of Transportation (DOT) would be coming down to take a look at the possible placement of the 3 way stop signs at Thomas and Park Avenue. Council acknowledged the need for these stop signs and asked the Solicitor to draft the required ordinances. The Solicitor will confer with the DOT to determine whether their approval is needed on the stop signs to be placed along 4th Street and Carriage House Lane as well. With the exception of the stop sign issues, it was the consensus of Council to attempt to seek grants to address all of the other issues raised here tonight. Mr. Smyth will contact the Bridge Commission for grant writing assistance.

Update Re: Riverton Improvement Association upgrade plans. Mr. Brown reported that he attended a meeting of the Riverton Improvement Association (RIA) on February 20. Work continues on the War Memorial. The RIA will be looking into upgrading the

8th street gateway to the park. The gazebo is scheduled to be painted by Pete Gray. The color scheme will be presented to Council before proceeding. It will be done in Victorian colors. Mr. Brown reported that we will be contacting Pat Bruner to ask her to work with Zachary Barth regarding his Eagle Scout project. She will assist Mr. Barth regarding what shrubs should be removed along the trail and creek and what type of plantings she would suggest. Some members of the RIA are also interested in putting up a banner on Main Street or at the gazebo touting the fact that Riverton was recognized as one of the top one hundred towns in New Jersey. This recently appeared in New Jersey magazine.

Shared Services, Grants, & Police Consolidation Study. Mr. Smyth reported that Mayor Martin, Mayor Gural (Palmyra) and Mayor Young (Cinnaminson) will be submitting a letter to the Bridge Commission requesting the submission of a grant application regarding the consolidation feasibility study for police consolidation. After the study is complete and it is determined what the costs and impact would be, it will be made public. Mr. Smyth stated that it would then go to a vote in each of the towns. Ms. Cairns Wells asked if all three towns have to approve the merger. Mr. Smyth responded no. Ms. Cairns Wells expressed concern over this since all the data would be based on a study of the three towns. Mr. Smyth commented that he thought we could incorporate some options in the study regarding these concerns.

Some other areas of concern were discussed, such as the length of a potential contract, which municipality would be the lead agency if the three Police Departments consolidate, what would happen if something went wrong with a potential merger and you want to have your own police force again. Council also discussed the recent police department consolidation between Woodlyn Borough and Collingswood. Chief Norcross commented that he would get a copy of the New Jersey State Police Association's white paper. This document has research on shared services, police consolidation, mergers, and contractual issues.

Mr. Kinzler asked if there would be a brainstorming part during the feasibility study. Mr. Smyth commented that that would occur. Dr. Daniel believes there will be more incentives to those towns that consolidate. John Shaw, former patrolman, urged Council to think of service. Presently we always have a Riverton police office in town. However, if we consolidate, that may not be the case.

Downtown Revitalization Grant. Mr. Smyth reported that the County Planner's Office is assisting us with the Request for Proposals portion of this grant. When completed and reviewed by us and our Solicitor, it will be submitted to the Delaware Valley Regional Commission.

Bell Zone Waiver Update. Mr. Smyth commented that this issue has been placed on the Federal Railroad Administration's docket and public comment is now being taken. Mayor Martin reported that representatives from New Jersey Transit will be coming in next week to talk to us about the bell zone waiver.

2008 Budget Update. Mr. Kinzler stated that our auditor has recommended a wait and see attitude to see how things develop. Council will be kept updated.

RESOLUTION 29-08

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN THE BURLINGTON COUNTY SHARED SERVICES FORUM (IN FULL IN RESOLUTION BOOK)

The above Resolution was read by title only by Mr. Smyth, who moved for its adoption. This was seconded by Ms. Cairns Wells. A poll vote was then taken. Dr. Daniel aye, Mr. Brown aye, Ms. Cairns Wells aye, Mr. Smyth aye, Mr. Kinzler aye and Mr. Cesaretti absent.

Discussion: Possible participation in the new Classic Town Initiative from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Smyth reported that 14 communities in Pennsylvania and New Jersey have been invited as pilot communities for this initiative. Riverton has been selected as the only town in Burlington County for this designation. Mr. Smyth explained that the focus of this initiative is related to marketing, business development, the creation of a media website and to promote these communities as a great place to live, work and play. Mr. Smyth stated that verbal authorization is needed at this time to proceed. A formal Resolution would also be required. Mr. Smyth further stated that a match of \$2,500.00 needs to be made by July 2008. Mr. Smyth requested that Council give a verbal approval at this point. It was the consensus to move forward with a verbal, and obtain additional information before a final commitment is reached.

Update Re: Zoning Ordinance Task Force & payment of bills for Planner, Tamara Lee Ms. Cairns Wells reported that the task force met on February 28th. The committee went through selected ordinances. Ms. Cairns Wells reported that the committee has not yet reviewed the Historic Society's proposed changes to our zoning ordinance. Zoning Board Chair, Kerry Brandt provided the committee with a proposed update to the Borough's present demolition requirement for consideration. Ms. Cairns Wells reported that the committee talked at length about the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) and the lack of enforcement they presently have. There was a general consensus amongst the task force committee that the ARC needs to have some more teeth. The committee acknowledged that the present people serving on the ARC are very knowledgeable.

Ms. Cairns Wells reported that the committee looked at lots in town regarding subdivisions. There are 32 lots in town that are over 32,000 square feet. A lot of these are clustered in one area. Ms. Cairns Wells reported that one of the things we could look at is increasing the zoning requirement from a 15,000 square foot lot to a 20,000 square foot lot. That would make some of these lots not sub-dividable. A request for a variance could be sought. Other things to look at are the bulk requirements, setbacks, how big of a structure (square footage size) you could put on a lot, side-yard and rear yard setbacks. Our planner has been very helpful during this process. Ms. Cairns Wells acknowledged that there is some confusion in our codes about these issues. The Committee will meet again in March, with some recommendations being made after that time.

Ms. Cairns Wells reported that our Planner has submitted two bills (a couple of hundred dollars) for her assistance with the committee. Ms. Cairns Wells asked how we will pay the Planner, since the zoning task force committee was not formed prior to our budget discussions. Kinzler stated that the next time we talk about the budget, this should be reviewed. For now, it was the consensus was to split these two bills between the Zoning Board and Planning Board's budget.

RESOLUTION 30-08

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AERIAL MOSQUITO CONTROL ACTIVITIES OVER THE BOROUGH OF RIVERTON DURING 2008 (IN FULL IN RESOLUTION BOOK)

The above Resolution was read by title only by Mr. Kinzler, who moved for its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Smyth. A poll vote was then taken. Dr. Daniel aye, Mr. Brown aye, Ms. Cairns Wells aye, Mr. Smyth aye, Mr. Kinzler aye and Mr. Cesaretti absent.

Update Re: State Aid cuts to the Budget. Mr. Smyth reported that we have received an advisory stating that municipalities under a population of 5,000 will not get any state aid (Riverton is losing \$146,000 in state aid). The bigger towns get a prorated amount reduced. Mr. Smyth stated that he would be attending a meeting tomorrow for communities with populations below 10,000 to discuss these budget cuts. On March 26th there will also be a legislative review budget hearing at Burlington County College. Mr. Smyth will also be attending this.

Mr. Kinzler stated that even with the proposed loss in state aid, we presently have ways to make the budget work without ultimately changing what was decided by Council a month ago. We will need to talk further and debate. Mayor Martin asked Mr. Smyth to be the point of contact on the budget issue with the League of Municipalities.

Mr. Smyth stated that the elimination of the state aid is to get municipalities to look at shared services. Mr. Smyth reported that there is also commission being formed to do a study to recommend the merging of towns some years down the road. Mr. Smyth stated that the town(s) would have to vote on the merger and can vote against this.

Meeting open to the public

Michael Heine, 206 Carriage House Lane suggested that even before the police consolidation feasibility study is made, we should look at the dollar base. We need to think about our identity, pride issues, safety issues in the town, and what a police department does for property values. We need to take a hard look at the cost issues and how we could generate additional revenue to help offset the costs of having our own police department. Mr. Heine believes that the only potential relief our residential owners have (at all) is through our commercial properties. Mr. Heine believes we have a depressed set of commercial rateables in town. Mr. Heine is of the opinion that if the commercial properties were better maintained, they would bring in more income for their owners, who would pay more in taxes, which would help support the costs of the police department. Mr. Heine believes his previously proposed property maintenance code would solve the problems of the commercial properties. Mr. Heine would like a committee to review this document.

Scott Reed, 421 Lippincott Avenue, believes Riverton already does a lot regarding shared services. He believes that the school can do more to reduce costs. Mr. Reed wants Riverton to stay Riverton.

Robin Riegers 627 Thomas Avenue also wants Riverton to stay Riverton.

Ms. Cairns Wells commented that if we do the police consolidation feasibility study it will put the issue to rest. Mr. Smyth commented that it is better to do the feasibility study with a third party consultant. Mr. Kinzler believes that this study is proper and should be done. The police budget is the single biggest expense we have. The police department is 25% of our spend. One out of every 4 dollars to run this Borough goes towards the police department. These are contracts that on average go up 10% each year.

Robin Riegers, 627 Thomas Avenue asked if by doing this feasibility study if the Borough is obligated to do a referendum on the outcome. Mr. Gunn stated that he didn't think there is a requirement for a referendum. The statutes would need to be reviewed.

John Shaw, 808 Third Street, stated that he doesn't want to see Riverton go away. The study itself would be good because it will show everything. Maybe it will show that the Police Department is already stretched and we cannot make anymore cuts there. Perhaps we can find another place to make cuts.

Frank Cioci, 318 Amy Way, Cinnaminson, New Jersey informed Council that Riverton is attracting businesses and professionals to locate in the Borough at Riverton Square and the Shoppes of Riverton. Mr. Cioci believes it's making the Borough look good.

John Shaw, 808 Third Street, suggested that when the study is done, Council should sit down to talk to the officers. Therefore, when the study's results are in Council will have better insight of what goes on out on the streets.

RESOLUTION 31-08

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING MURIEL ALLS-MOFFATT AS MUNICIPAL HOUSING LIAISON FOR THE BOROUGH OF RIVERTON (IN FULL IN RESOLUTION BOOK)

The above Resolution was read by title only by Ms. Cairns Wells, who moved for its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Brown. A poll vote was then taken. Dr. Daniel nay, Mr. Brown aye, Ms. Cairns Wells aye, Mr. Smyth aye, Mr. Kinzler aye and Mr. Cesaretti absent.

Preliminary agenda for March 12. The Clerk reviewed this with the Governing Body. **2008 Borough Directory** Mr. Smyth reviewed the draft and it looks good and should be distributed to the community next weekend.

Scott Reed, 421 Lippincott Avenue asked if the Post Office was going to be converted for affordable housing. There are rumors going around about this. Mayor Martin responded that nothing has even been brought up about this issue.

Robin Riegers 627 Thomas Avenue asked if the Post Office could be converted into a Borough Hall. Mayor Martin responded that the costs would be exorbitant.

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Brown moved that the meeting be adjourned. This was seconded by Ms. Cairns Wells, with all present voting in the affirmative.

Mary Longbottom, RMC
Municipal Clerk