

A regular meeting of Bloomsburg Town Council was held Monday, March 24, 2014, beginning at 7:02 p.m. in Council Chambers, Town Hall, 301 East Second Street, Bloomsburg, PA. Present were Mayor Sandy Davis; Council Members Diane Levan, Sylvia Costa, Bill Kreisher, Fred Trump and Eric Bower; Town Administrator William Lowthert; Assistant Town Administrator Lauren Martz; Chief of Police Roger Van Loan and Solicitor Jack Mihalik. Absent were Council Member W. Carey Howell; Superintendent of Public Works John Barton; Code Enforcement & Zoning Administrator Ed Fegley; Director of Finance Lisa Laboskie; Fire Chief Bob Rupp; Environmental Services Administrator Charles Fritz, and Administrative Assistant Amy Seamans.

Mayor Davis reviewed the Ordinance amendment and explained that the revised appeal process would be an informal hearing before the Public Safety Committee. This would take place when a vehicle is improperly towed due to the lack of notice during a special snow condition. D. Levan wanted clarification regarding the appeal process and suggested that individuals requesting an appeal should appeal to the court directly instead of a Committee. B. Kreisher agreed that the appeal process should be handled through the court system, but the Ordinance revision at hand should be addressed at this time. He also suggested that the appeal process altogether be discussed in further detail at the next Public Safety Committee meeting.

ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 953 – AMENDING CHAPTER 15, PART 13 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES

On a motion by F. Trump, seconded by E. Bower and voted on unanimously, Council adopted Ordinance No. 953, amending Chapter 15, Part 13 of the Code of Ordinances relating to Special Snow Conditions.

Mayor Davis reviewed the Ordinance amendment and explained the revisions which were agreed upon by the Bloomsburg Landlord Association. Mayor Davis explained that additional discussions with the Bloomsburg Landlord Association need to be held to determine the administrative policies that the Code Enforcement Office will use going forward.

F. Trump requested to table the Ordinance revisions because he feels that the Non-Student Rental Ordinance altogether is burdensome and intrusive to landlords and tenants.

B. Kreisher stated that the Town and the Landlords have come incredibly far with these amendments. He continued to explain that these amendments relieve both parties of a lot of “red tape” and are incredibly beneficial for both groups. He also agreed that Administrative Policies still need to be defined, but believes that both parties can negotiate amicably. In closing he explained the difference between the Regulated Rental Ordinance (RRU) and the Non-Student Rental (NSR) Ordinance which included why it is beneficial to know who is living in the rental home. If a student is living there, the RRU Ordinance would apply instead of the NSR Ordinance.

Dana Kruleski, 254 W. Main St., expressed concern regarding what the Administrative Policies would entail and requests that the Ordinance Amendments not be passed without the Administrative Policies determined. She is specifically concerned with whose responsibility would it be to tell the Town of Bloomsburg who is residing in the structure. She is concerned that disclosing the identity of the tenant to the Town would be a violation of privacy.

J. Mihalik explained that there is no issue of privacy and it is the Town’s choice to determine if it will require tenants’ names. If the Town does decide to require tenants’ names and the tenant refuses to provide their name then the Town will refuse to issue the license and the structure will not be able to be rented.

Sara Laidacker, 52 Buckhorn Rd., feels that the Non-Student Rental Ordinance is too intrusive and that the tenant has the right to privacy. She is also concerned that the rental inspection ordinances will eventually lead to the inspection of private homes.

Oren Helbok, 705 East 5th St., wants to know why the exemption for parents remains in the ordinance, but all other relatives were removed

B. Kreisher explained that for estate planning purposes parents were the only relatives that remained exempt in the Ordinance. This exemption was upheld because many parents sign over their family home to their children when they get older.

Doug Chiado, 101 Arbutus Park Rd., does not understand why the exemption for parents occupying a rental remains in the Ordinance, but not children.

Robert Burgess, 461 East 8th St., agrees with F. Trump and feels that the entire Non-Student Rental Ordinance is too intrusive.

ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 954 – AMENDING CHAPTER 11, PART 2 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES

On a motion by D. Levan, seconded by B. Kreisher and voted on Four (4) (E. Bower, B. Kreisher, D. Levan and S. Davis voting “Yes”) to Two (2) (S. Costa and F. Trump voting “No”), Council adopted Ordinance No. 954, amending Chapter 11, Part 2 of the Code of Ordinances eliminating the requirement of a Certificate of Compliance and amending the definition of rental home.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 03-24-14.01 – DCNR GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION AUTHORIZATION

On a motion by F. Trump, seconded by D. Levan and voted on unanimously, Council approved Resolution No. 03-24-14.01 authorizing the submission of a grant application to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for a Streater Recreation Field Improvements Project.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 10, 2014 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

On a motion by S. Costa, seconded by F. Trump and voted on unanimously, Council approved the March 10, 2014 Council meeting minutes with no additions or corrections.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Doug Chiado, 101 Arbutus Park Rd., wanted to know where DCNR money comes from and how the Town would fund the rest of the project if we receive the grant award. He does not feel that taxpayer money should be used to match grant funds for Town projects.

D. Levan, explained that the Town has not and has no intention to raise taxes due to receiving grant awards with a required match. She indicated that the Town looks for alternative funding sources to use as a match or has returned grant awards if they could not come up with the matching required grant money. She also highlighted that these grants are incredibly competitive so if we did not apply for them, another municipality would be awarded this money.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

WILLIAM LOWTHERT
Town Administrator and Secretary