

**Borough of Carlisle**  
**Workshop Meeting Minutes**  
**March 1, 2023**

Present at the meeting: Councilors Hicks, Mellen, Perry, Stuby, Deputy Mayor Landis and Mayor Shultz. Also present were: Borough Manager Armstrong, Assistant Borough Manager Snyder, Water Resources Director Malarich, Sustainable Community and Economic Planning Director Woolston, Parks & Recreation Director Crouse, Fire Chief O'Donnell, Public Information Coordinator Taylor, Dickinson College Student Ambassador Fisher-Henson and Borough Secretary Stone

**I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Shultz called the Workshop Meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Borough Council voted 6-0 to approve Councilor Hicks' to participate in the Workshop meeting via Zoom. (Mellen/Landis)

**II. Citizen to Be Heard**

Mr. James Evans, 157 B Street, Carlisle, Pennsylvania conveyed to Council that residents are being double charged for trash on their utility bills. He noted that residents are also bothered that a full quarterly trash charge was placed on their January utility bill and was not prorated since the program did not start until January. Mr. Evans also explained there is a disconnect between the tax records and the Borough's records with single properties showing as a double residence and receiving double trash billing.

Borough Manager Armstrong explained that property owners have received two trash charges on their utility bills because the property information received from the County Assessment office listed single properties as being two units. Manager Armstrong advised that residents can contact the County Assessment Office or request the Borough's codes department to do an onsite inspection to have their record corrected and their bill adjusted.

Finance Director Juday reported that approximately 15 properties have been identified and the process to correct the billing has begun.

Mr. Evans recommended placing a notice on the website and social media to make property owners aware that this situation is occurring.

Councilor Stuby inquired if utility billing could be changed to monthly billing. Discussion ensued among staff noting that they will look into that option. The initial reason for changing to quarterly billing was staffing, but since meter reading is mostly electronic, monthly billing could be considered. The reasoning for monthly billing would be so residents could detect if they have a water leak. Water Resources Director Malarich explained that since the recent inception of new water meters, it allows the borough to detect if a large quantity of water is being used in a residence and the property owner is then notified.

**III. Meeting Minutes**

A. Borough Council voted 7-0 to approve the February 1, 2023 Workshop Meeting Minutes. (Landis/Perry)

#### **IV. Public Works Committee**

##### **A. Fairground Avenue Parking**

Borough Council voted 7-0 to adopt Resolution 03-01-2023-01 providing for a temporary lift on parking limitations at all times along the west side of Fairground Avenue from W. Penn Street north to the railroad crossing. This action shall be for a trial period of not more than ninety (90) days. (Perry/Stuby)

#### **V. Public Safety Committee**

##### **A. Special event request "Shelling of Carlisle Civil War Reenactment"**

Borough Council voted 7-0 to approve the closure of the first block of West High Street from Hanover Street to Pitt Street from 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. and the Square from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. extending to first block of West High Street, East High Street, North Hanover Street and South Hanover Street on June 10, 2023 to commemorate the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "Shelling of Carlisle." Approval is contingent upon the receipt of a valid Certificate of Insurance form naming the Borough of Carlisle as an additional insured and the applicant reimbursing the Borough 100% of the variable and 10% of the fixed costs associated with this event along with Penn DOT approval. (Shultz/Hicks)

Courtney Cauthon and Chris Jones representing the 160<sup>th</sup> Shelling Commemoration committee, remarked the event will draw positive attention to the community and downtown businesses. They have a lot of support from the community, local businesses and organizations such as The Sons of Union Veterans, The Cumberland County Historical Society and The National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg. They thanked the community for their support for this event.

#### **VI. Sustainability & Community Planning Committee**

##### **A. Chicken Ordinance**

Borough Council voted 7-0 to modify Chapter 80 regarding keeping of chickens as it relates to performance standards and fees. (Hicks/Landis)

Sustainable Community and Economic Planning Director Woolston, provided an overview of the recommended ordinance changes. Following are the proposed changes:

- Discontinue the requirement for an annual permit.
- Reducing the 60-foot minimum separation between a coop and any adjacent residential structure to a 30-foot minimum separation from any adjacent residential structure containing a dwelling.
- Removing the 5,000 square foot minimum lot size.
- Revising the standard for placing the coop only in rear yard of the lot

Deputy Mayor Landis entered in the record a letter sent from Kelsey Mummert, 125 West Louther Street, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The letter is attached to these minutes.

Traer Beaudette, 14 Princeton Drive, Carlisle, Pennsylvania expressed her appreciation for the Borough taking this topic seriously. She inquired as to how the 30 foot setback was decided and how many people could take advantage of keeping chickens with this change.

Mr. Woolston replied that the setback was based on standards adopted by other municipalities. He noted a spot check was performed in the Borough and the biggest impact will be the change in lot size which will permit more residents to keep chickens.

Deputy Mayor Landis expressed her gratitude for Mr. Woolston expediting this change in time for residents to legally obtain spring chickens. She noted there will be continued discussions on urban agriculture in the Borough.

**VII. New Business**

Mayor Shultz introduced a recommendation to review the intent of the current rental housing ordinance to specify and limit the degree of a related family member renting a property. There was a consensus among council to move forward with the review.

**VIII. Public Comment**

No public comment was heard.

**IX. Adjournment**

There being no further business or public comment, the meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

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Sean M. Shultz, Mayor

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Joyce E. Stone, Borough Secretary

Dear Carlisle Borough Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspectives on Article III 80-8, related to backyard chicken keeping! My husband, Ben, and I are excited to welcome a small flock of chickens to our backyard this year. We've picked out the Salmon Faverolles as our ideal hen. They're known to be friendly, comical, and a good choice for small spaces. Unfortunately, due to one of the current requirements outlined within Chapter 80, we do not meet the requirements set by the ordinance.

Code 80-9C(1)(b) requires a minimum lot size of 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup> for backyard chicken keeping. According to Cumberland County's Property Mapper, our lot size is 4,680 ft<sup>2</sup>. We are 320 ft<sup>2</sup> shy of the requirement. After perusing the Property Mapper, we see many other lots would also be impacted by this requirement. Not everyone has the financial means to purchase (or rent from) a property that meets that lot size requirement. Shippensburg and Mechanicsburg Boroughs do not require a minimum lot size for backyard chicken keeping. The Borough of Shippensburg requires the coop/run be 30-ft setback from residential dwellings. The Borough of Mechanicsburg, however, does not require a setback from residential dwellings but does require the chicken coop/run be placed at least 5-ft from property boundaries. I kindly request that the Borough Council consider reducing or outright removing the minimum lot size requirement, as well as reducing the 80-ft setback requirement. Both amendments would better align Carlisle's ordinance with others in Cumberland County and allow a greater number of residents to keep backyard chickens.

The fees for Keeping of Chickens and Zoning permits are nearly cost-prohibitive for us as a single-income family. An annual Keeping of Chickens Permit fee of \$50 is burdensome, especially considering the other costs required to acquire, house, feed, and properly care for a flock. Additionally, it was not until reviewing the chicken keeping permit application that I realized the additional Zoning Permit (with an additional \$50 fee) is required to place the coop/run on our property. Reducing the permitting fee or extending it to cover multiple years would be beneficial to us and others on limited incomes. For example, the Borough of State College requires a \$30 zoning permit and \$30 license that is good for three years. If a resident shows proof of completing a course on chicken keeping, the \$30 license fee is waived.

Additional amendments within the ordinance that could enhance the experience of backyard chicken keeping in the Borough include:

- Allowing proper composting of chicken waste/bedding for home garden use. This would reduce waste going to the landfill and ease the burden on Carlisle's municipal waste services.
- Allow for free ranging chickens during the day within a fenced-in yard. Free-ranging chickens would be better able to eat any pests in the backyard and be overall happier and healthier.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide comment on the current ordinance that allows backyard keeping of chickens within the Borough. We hope that amendments to the ordinance can enable us and others access to the joys of urban chicken keeping.

Gratefully,

Kelsey Mummert  
*Resident at 125 West Louther Street*