

BOROUGH OF VANDERGRIFT
MINUTES OF THE VANDERGRIFT COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 5, 2024

The Council of the Borough of Vandergrift met in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 7:00 pm, with President Holmes presiding. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jody Sarno	Christine Wilson
Marilee Kessler	Rae Ann Bruner
Tom Holmes	Bryan Young
Daisha Clayton	

OTHER OFFICIALS:

Lenny Collini, Mayor	Stephen J. DelleDonne, Secretary
Shae Kraft, Solicitor	Theresa Geltz, Assistant Secretary
Lucian Bove, Engineer	Joseph Caporali, Police Chief

MINUTES:

The Minutes of the May 6, 2024 meeting were approved by motion of Mr. Sarno, second by Mrs. Wilson. Motion carried.

VISITORS:

A motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Mrs. Kessler, to hear from visitors at this time. Motion carried.

Debbie Green, 118 15th Street, stated that a call was made to 911 regarding patient during the Artsfest and questioned if there was a designated route for ambulance to this area for emergencies.

Ms. Bruner stated that there was sufficient space during the event for emergency responses.

Don Detar, 213 Lowell Street, stated there exists hedges on the 200 Block that are blocking the sidewalk. He also stated that across the street of the 200 block of Lowell Street exists low hanging tree branches.

A motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Mrs. Wilson, to return to the regular order of business. Motion carried.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Collini thanked all involved in providing a success Artsfest event for the town.

A motion was made by Mrs. Wilson, second by Mrs. Kessler, to accept the Mayor's Report. Motion carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

The Secretary presented letter from Westmoreland County Dept. of Planning & Development stating that the Department is accepting applications for the 2025 Community Development Block Grant Program. (See page 2-A)

A motion was made by Mrs. Wilson, second by Mr. Sarno, to direct the Borough Engineer to submit the aforementioned CDBG application by September 30, 2024. Motion carried.

CODE OFFICER'S REPORT:

The Secretary stated the Code Officer issued 44 notice violations, 1-Citation and attended a Court hearing in July.

A motion was made by Ms. Clayton, second by Mrs. Wilson, to accept the Code Officer's Report. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE:

Exhibit 1-A: Lisa Dormire, Artfest.

Subject: Letter of thanks and support of the Artfest to the Vandergrift Borough Council.

REGULAR & STATED BILLS:

A motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Mrs. Kessler, to pay all stated and approved bills. Motion carried.

Douglas W. Chew
Vice-Chairman

Sean Kertes
Chairman

2-A
Ted Kopas
Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
A DIVISION OF THE
WESTMORELAND DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL
FIFTH FLOOR, SUITE 520
40 NORTH PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
GREENSBURG, PA 15601



TELEPHONE: (724) 830-3600
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TO: Westmoreland County Municipalities and Agencies

FROM: Westmoreland County Department of Planning & Development
Community Development Division

SUBJECT: 2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Applications

DATE: July 22, 2024

Westmoreland County is now accepting applications for the 2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. Any municipality or agency that plans to submit a project for 2025 CDBG funding consideration must submit an application to this office by **September 30, 2024**. The 2025 program year begins May 1, 2025, however all projects must first be evaluated and inspected by CD staff, approved by the Westmoreland County Commissioners and submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for final approval. **Therefore, it is essential that the application is submitted to us no later than September 30, 2024.**

Prior to submittal, please review the application carefully to ensure that all requested information is included. Incomplete applications will not be considered. If a project was previously submitted and not chosen for funding, a new application must be submitted that contains updated cost estimates, maps, etc. to be considered for 2024 funding. Furthermore, please be aware that HUD has released new low to moderate income survey data based on the American Community Survey 2016-2020 (ACS). Information regarding census tract data may be found here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/acs-low-mod-summary-data/>. **Please review your census tract data carefully, as it may have changed from the last 5-year ACS estimate.**

A copy of the 2025 Application and *Guide to the CDBG Program* is included with this notice; both may also be found at <https://www.westmorelandcountypa.gov/3280/Community-Development> under "Construction Forms & Documents".

Should you have questions concerning this notice, please contact any Community Development staff member:

Janet Parker	(724) 830-3650	jparker@westmorelandcountypa.gov
Jennifer Woodling	(724) 830-3615	jwoodlin@westmorelandcountypa.gov
Kerry Smartnick	(724) 830-1398	ksmartn1@westmorelandcountypa.gov
Amanda McDivitt	(724) 830-3651	amcdivit@westmorelandcountypa.gov

Thank you.

Lisa Dormire <lisa.dormire@gmail.com>

7/30/2024 10:42 AM

Artfest

To theresageltz@vandergriftborough.com • tholmes@vandergriftborough.com

Hello - I am hoping the letter that follows can be actually read at the next Council meeting rather than just being entered into the record. I am not able to be there as I am traveling but would have been otherwise. Thank you for your help!

Lisa

Dear Vandergrift Council and residents of Vandergrift,

On behalf of the Vandergrift Improvement Program and the Vandergrift Artfest, I want to sincerely thank you for your support of this year's Artfest. The event went very smoothly and all who attended seemed to have a great time. In some online groups for vendors, I've seen vendors say this is their favorite festival of the year because it is so much fun and the hospitality is great.

There was a lot of anxiety over the new event policies enacted this year, but we found the Borough to be very supportive and there were no barriers to the success of this event. In fact, this year's engagement with Council was probably stronger than ever.

The Vandergrift Police Department was extremely supportive in helping to create a safe and functional event. My 7 am phone call about vehicles parked within the pre-approved perimeter was met with immediate response. We have done our diligence through slips on meters and notes on residential doors to let people know the hours of closure, and so we are very grateful that our police help to clear the area so that we can begin setup.

The businesses in town were amazing in their support. From decorated windows, to food and beverage specials, to generous financial support -- we are very grateful. Although our numbers of visitors were down a bit this year - probably due to the heat, most of our businesses report having a good day and continue to stress how essential festivals like this one are for introducing people to Vandergrift and all that we have to offer.

I have heard the question, "What do they do with all of the money that they make?" and I'd like to go on record that this is an event done out of love with very little, if any, profit. By the time we keep vendor fees low, rent tents, potties, pay for insurance, sound techs, etc., we are fortunate to break even. Last year's modest proceeds were used to buy new holiday lights for Grant Avenue, and if we have any proceeds this year, they will again be used for the good of the community.

I have now been a resident of Vandergrift for 12 years, and have chaired the Artfest project for five. I love living in this town, and the joy of helping to make Artfest happen and working with the Vandergrift Improvement Program. Thank you for your leadership and cultivating a town where creativity and community are welcome.

Lisa Dormire

226 Franklin Avenue

STREET & SANITATION REPORT:

Chairperson Wilson reported that a clogged sewer line will need to be repaired at 109 Walnut Street. She explained that the problem exists to the Borough's line and that is the responsibility of the Borough.

A motion was made by Mrs. Wilson, second by Mr. Sarno, to proceed with the sewer line repair at the aforementioned address. Motion carried.

Mrs. Wilson reported that Norfolk-Souther Railroad removed the tree along 9th Street.

Mrs. Wilson stated that she is recommending that Council abolish curb-side collection of recycled material. She explained the reasoning for this decision as follows:

1. The recycling truck will not pass inspection and possible repairs could amount to \$15,000 to \$ 20,000.
2. Over 80% of the residents do not participant in the recycling program.
3. Cost of maintance and fuel expense of the truck.
4. Will allow extra man-hours to perform work other that collection of recycled materials.

Mrs. Wilson therefore recommended the selling of the recycling truck on Municibid and purchasing 3 dumpsters at the maintenance garage for collection of recycled materials.

A motion was made by Mrs. Wilson, second by Mrs. Kessler, to eliminate curbside collection of recycled materials, on a trial basis, effective September 1, 2024. Motion carried

A motion was made by Mr.Sarno, second by Ms. Clayton, to accept the Street & Sanitation Report. Motion carried.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Engineer Bove presented and reviewed his monthly engineer report. (See page 3-A)

In regards to Item 7-411-413 Linden St. proposed parking lot, Engineer Bove stated that the owner has not filed for a zoning variance.

A motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Mrs. Wilson, to advertise for bid on the Grant-McKinley Avenue street reconstructin project with bids to be opened at the September 3rd meeting. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Mrs. Kessler, to accept the Engineer's Report. Motion carried.

3-A

boveengineering@comcast.net

7/31/2024 11:16 AM

Engineer agenda items for August 5, 2024

To Stephen DelleDonne <vgborosec@comcast.net> • Tom Holmes <tomholmes@vandergriftborough.com> Copy
Larry Loperfido <ldl@gllawyers.com> • Shea M Kraft Esquire <smk@gllawyers.com> •
Christine Wilson <christinewilson1782@gmail.com> • Marilee Kessler <marileekessler@vandergriftborough.com> •
Daishaclayton <daishaclayton@vandergriftborough.com> • jodysarno@vandergriftborough.com •
Lenny Collini <lennycollini@vandergriftborough.com> • raeannbruner@vandergriftborough.com

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please see my requested agenda items below for the Monday, August 5, 2024 Council meeting:

1. Olmsted Commons Park Development Project –Awaiting agreements, bonds, etc. from Contractor to schedule Preconstruction Mtg., submitted Scope and Funding Request.
2. 2024 Liquid Fuel Patching Project – pre-construction meeting held July 31st. Work to start soon.
3. Grant Avenue & McKinley Street & ADA Ramp Reconstruction (CEAP Grant) **Request Authorization to Advertise.**
4. Ninth Street Retaining Wall Replacement Project (CEAP Grant) Preliminary Engineering.
5. Columbia Avenue Parking Lot Rain, Gardens & Tree Pits – Storm Sewer Confirmed & Inspected, in good condition to receive flow. WCD Plans to be revised.
6. Subdivision Plan – California Avenue Proposed Vacation Subdivision Plan reviewed and comments provided. Anticipate Planning Commission Meeting.
7. 411/413 Linden - (former Moose Lodge) Proposed Parking Lot, Plan Review, Driveways, Stormwater Management, ZHB Hearing
8. 2024 CDBG Project – Plans, Specifications, Engineering near complete. Awaiting authorization to advertise from County Planning Dept.
9. 219 – 225 Grant Avenue Partial Building Collapse – Exterior Inspection Report & Owner Notice of Unsafe Structure Conditions submitted (cert. mail receipt received)
10. Casino Theater Phase 2 – Proceeding with Plans and Specs.
11. PNG Gas Line Replacement Projects
 - a. Franklin Avenue Project – On hold
 - b. Sherman Avenue Project Phase 2 (Sherman, 6 St. and 11th St.) Complete
 - c. Washington Avenue Project (Hancock, Custer, 16th, 15th and Washington) Near Complete
 - d. Fourth Street Project –Complete
 - e. Sherman Avenue Project Phase 1 - Commenced
 - f. Columbia Avenue (11th Street) Project - September
 - g. Grant Ave. & McKinley Crossings Project – Under construction
 - h. Longfellow Street Project 2025 (CDBG)
 - i. Indiana Ave. - Spot (grass)
 - j. Longfellow Street - 2 Spot Repairs (grass)
 - k. LaBelle Vue Project –Under design
 - l. Carolina Avenue - Spot (grass)
12. MAAT Agreement for LaBelle Vue Road Sewer Connection – No update
13. Parking Pad – 118 Homles (no response)
14. Any Engineering related Items added to the agenda

BUDGET & FINANCE REPORT:

Chairperson Clayton stated that each member has been provided a copy of the General Fund Budget, the Pool Fund Budget, and the State Aid Fund Budget.

Mrs. Clayton requested that a discussion on the Game of Skills Ordinance to determine whether number of locations for these machines be capped.

A motion was made by Mrs. Wilson, second by Mrs. Kessler, to accept the Budget & Finance Report. Motion carried.

POLICE & PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT:

Chairperson Kessler reported that Joel Aston has submitted a letter of resignation from his position as a part-time police officer in order to accept a full-time position with another department.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kessler, second by Ms. Clayton, to accept Mr. Aston's resignation. Motion carried.

Mrs. Kessler reported that Bethany Allera, who recently resigned as a full-time officer, has indicated that she is willing to work as a part-time police officer for a period of time in order to help with the scheduling difficulties.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kessler, second by Mr. Sarno, to hire Bethany Allera as an extra police officer serving on a part-time basis for the Borough from time to time on a hourly or daily basis as needed.

A motion was made by Mrs. Wilson, second by Mr. Sarno, to accept the Police & Public Safety Report. Motion carried.

BUILDING & GROUNDS REPORT:

Chairperson Sarno reported that the "V" structure has been installed at the Grant Avenue side of the Municipal Building and that floral has also been planted.

Mr. Sarno stated that he is working on the A/C problem at the Police Station.

A motion was made by Ms. Clayton, second by Mrs. Kessler, to accept the Building & Grounds Report. Motion carried.

TREE & LIGHT REPORT:

Chairperson Bruner reported that approximately 25 trees around town have been trimmed by the Borough workers.

Ms. Bruner stated that the tree at 321 Hancock Avenue has been put on hold due a scheduled sidewalk replacement work. She also reported that the lights have been replaced at 157 Sherman, 102 & 195 Pennsylvania Avenues.

A motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Ms. Clayton, to accept the Tree & Light Report. Motion carried.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT REPORT:

No Report

RECREATION REPORT:

Chairperson Young requested that Council approve the transfer of \$7,500.00 from the Tree Fund to the General Fund for the purpose of placing a 50% payment towards the construction of three (3) "Pickle Ball Courts" within the basketball courts at Kennedy Park. He explained that once funds are received from a grant, the \$7,500 will be transferred back to the Tree Fund.

A motion was made by Mr. Young, second by Ms. Clayton, to approve the aforementioned matter. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Ms. Clayton, to accept the Recreation Report. Motion carried.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Kraft requested that Council call an executive session for the purpose of discussing a litigation matter.

In regards to elimination of curbside collection of recycling materials, Solicitor Kraft stated that Council will need to amend the current ordinance that regulates this matter.

A motion was made by Mrs. Wilson, second by Mr. Sarno, to direct the Solicitor to prepare an amended to the ordinance that regulates this matter. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Mrs. Wilson, to accept the Solicitor's Report. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Sarno stated that the Borough needs to take action in regards to the delinquent sewer recovery bills. He informed Council that there exists a delinquency amount of \$316,191 for the past 120 days. He recommended that a letter be sent to the property owners advising them that if the bill is not paid in full within the time frame set in the letter, the Borough will pursue available resources which may include filing a citation at the magistrate's office, filing a lien against the property or having the water shut off.

A motion was made by Mr.Sarno, second by Ms. Clayton, to approve sending a delinquent letter regarding the aforementioned matter, with approval of the Solicitor. Motion carried.

Mrs. Kessler stated that the installation of the "V" at the Grant Avenue side of the Municipal Building was paid for by the V.I.P.

At 8:08, a motion was made by Mrs. Wilson, second by Mrs. Kessler, to call an executive session of Council for the purpose of discussing two litigation matters. Motion carried.

At 8:30, a motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Mrs. Wilson, to return to the regular of business. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Ms. Clayton, second by Mrs. Kessler, to employ the service of the CPA firm of Kitay, Lawrence, Rauker & Associates. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kessler, second by Ms. Clayton, to proceed with a settlement between the Borough of Vandergrift and Anthony DePanisis relative to his workmen compensation matter. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Mr. Sarno, second by Mrs.Wilson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

