

Meeting Minutes
State College Borough Council
Work Session
April 8, 2019

The State College Borough Council met on Monday, April 8, 2019 in the Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA 16801 in a work session. Mr. Myers called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Present:

Evan Myers, President
Jesse L. Barlow
David J. Brown
Catherine G. Dauler
Janet P. Engeman
Dan Murphy

Absent:

Theresa D. Lafer
Donald M. Hahn, Mayor

Also Present: Thomas J. Fountaine, II, Borough Manager; Sharon K. Ergler, Assistant Borough Secretary; Edward LeClear, Planning Director; John Gardner, Chief of Police; Deborah A.S. Hoag, Director of Public Works; Jim May, Director of the Centre Regional Planning Agency; and media and interested Borough residents.

Mr. Myers commented about how Council addressed the tragic shooting that occurred almost three weeks ago during last week's meeting. He said that each member offered their heartfelt thoughts, but more than just talk was needed and everyone needed to put the shooting into national context. He stated that people of color, especially young, black men were on the receiving end of police shootings at a disproportionate rate. He said that the incident was immediately turned over to the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) for an independent investigation, but that many felt that it was just police investigating police. He said he did not know what the outcome will be, but this process must be transparent. He urged the PSP and the Centre County D.A. (D.A.) to be as forthcoming as possible. He expressed that we needed to find peace and there needed to be justice when dealing with race and the challenges of mental illness. He pledged that at a future work session, Council will begin to address these issues and hoped that the community will heal and will confront the evils of racism regardless of the findings.

Mr. Fountaine echoed Mr. Myers' comments. He stated that he did not have any updates from the PSP and the D.A., but that the investigation will be ongoing.

Shortly after Mr. Fountaine finished stating his remarks, a group calling themselves "We Are Not" entered the room. They handed out information sheets of their demands while singing and chanting, asking for justice for Osaze Osagie's death. Then the group laid down on the floor in Council Chamber.

Mr. Myers' asked the people who were protesting on how long they intended to protest. He stated it would help Council decide whether to continue with their agenda for the evening. He said that some of Council understood the angst, concerns, and fears of the people who came to protest, but also that other folks already came forward with their thoughts and that those people needed to speak during the public hour, or the meeting would need to be adjourned. He proposed not adjourning meeting to allow the protestors an opportunity to speak. He said that Council would wait another few minutes if the protestors wanted to speak during the public hour. After a few minutes, Mr. Myers commented that, not without irony, he participated in a sit-in on Old Main as a student in 1969. The sit-in protested the Vietnam War and the distinct lack of black students at Penn State even though the Penn State administration pledged to recruit 1,000 black students but only managed to recruit 300 students. He stated that he felt proud to participate in the sit-in and to represent this community. He said he felt concerned about the incident that happened three weeks ago but understood why people felt the way that they do, and he adjourned the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon K. Ergler
Assistant Borough Secretary

Prepared by: Melissa J. Krug, Administrative Assistant