

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON  
COUNCIL MEETING

APRIL 11, 2016

**APPROVED**

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the Borough of West Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Council President Dan DePaul in Council Chambers of the West Easton Municipal Building, 237 Seventh Street, West Easton, Pennsylvania.

Roll was taken and Council President noted there was a quorum. Present were Council President Dan DePaul, Council Members Ron Nixon, Matthew Dees, Henry Nodoline and Robert Lewis. Council Members Thomas Nodoline and Louis Niko were absent. Interim Borough Manager Pete Rossi; Solicitor Steve Goudsouzian and Carl Pierson, Treasurer were present. Mayor Gerald Gross was absent. Harry O'Toole, Erin O'Toole, Pete & Bonnie Mammana, Leon Stull, Bruce Walter, Sandi Rossi, Trude Hargraves, Ashley Nemeth and Tod Rissmiller were members of the public in attendance.

A motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. H. Nodoline; Council approved check # 14892 through #14943 in the General Fund.

Discussion – Mr. Dees questioned ck# 14938 regarding what the lumber was purchased for. Mr. Rossi responded that the lumber was used to board up the Ridge Street property because the windows were broken out of the structure and the structure needed to be secured.

Motion passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. Dees; Council approved checks #1947 and #1948 from the Sewer Fund. Motion passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. H. Nodoline, second by Mr. Dees; Council approved Deposits & Receipts for March 2016. Motion passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. Dees and second by Mr. Lewis, Council approved the minutes for March 14, 2016

Discussion – Mr. Dees had corrections. Page four, third paragraph – Council approved Solicitor's office to move forward with codification; that was done at a previous Council meeting. Page six, third paragraph, second sentence – Actual response was there should be a chain of command and Council member requests should go to the Borough Manager. The Borough Manager can make the decision if the request can be

handled informally or if the request should go to Council. Page 9 first paragraph: The appropriate government agent should be agency.

Motion passed with changes passed 5-0

A motion by Mr. Dees and second by Mr. Lewis, Council approved the minutes from March 28, 2016.

Discussion – Mr. Lewis asked for a change in the minutes on page 5. Mr. Lewis stated he wanted to make sure that the report had been forwarded to Barry Isetts and Associates.

Motion passed with changes passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. H. Nodoline and second by Mr. Nixon, Council approved the March 2016 Treasurer's Report. Motion passed 5-0.

### **Public Comment –**

Nancy Stout of Second Street asked Council to address the issue of water runoff. From the removal of the dip from Keystone Avenue and Second Street and with the installation of the handicap ramps, the water runs down the street and right up the sidewalks. Residents on Second Street are constantly cleaning up water and debris off their sidewalks and literally this is destroying their sidewalks. Council President DePaul told Ms. Stout that the Borough is applying for a grant to rectify the problem with the water runoff. Mr. H. Nodoline knew exactly where the water was coming from and Mr. Dees said that Council has walked the streets several times.

Pete Mammana of Tenth Street informed Council that there were two teenagers walking across the trestle.

Trude Hargraves of Second Street stated that her trash problem has been resolved.

Wayne Deemer of Wilson T-Ball: Mr. Deemer asked if the organization could do work to the field and put in a base path and pitcher's circle. He stated that the Wilson Recreation Board would clean up the field and do other maintenance. Mr. Dees asked if they were also putting bases down. Mr. Deemer replied no. Mr. Nixon commented that previous Councils had always shot the idea down. Mr. Nixon suggested that we look at the prior meeting minutes to see why Council would not approve.

A motion by Mr. Lewis and second by Mr. Nixon; Council approved Wilson Area Recreation Board to put in a base path and pitcher's circle at the park.

Discussion - Mr. Dees asked who the organization would be working with at the Borough. Solicitor Goudsouzian suggested that a plan be presented be run through

Dane or whomever. Mr. Rossi asked if seed would be thrown down at the end of the season. Mr. Deemer replied no, that the base path would be permanent.

An amended motion by Mr. Lewis and second by Mr. Dees; Council approved Wilson Area Recreation Board to put in a base path and pitcher's circle at the park with the supervision and approval of Dane Thatcher or Pete Rossi with a plan. Council also asked that if the field is no longer used for baseball that the field be returned to its original condition.

Amended motion passed 5-0.

### **Mayor's Report –**

None

### **Engineer's Report –**

None

### **Solicitor's Report –**

Solicitor Goudsouzian stated that there are two items that need to be discussed during an Executive Session. The first item pertains to Ms. Mezzacappa and the second is regarding the Condemnation of the Ridge Street property.

### **Office Report –**

Mr. Gehman reported the review of the 2015 Audit was completed by the office and has been sent to the Auditor for their review. He expected the Auditor's response in the next few weeks.

Mr. Gehman also stated that EZ Micro was coming to install the new server. They will first install the necessary equipment and then install the server. Once the server is up and running they will complete the connection with the desk top computers which are in the office.

Interim Borough Manager, Pete Rossi, brought to the Council's attention that Liberty Mutual has a Crime Protection policy that will cover the bond and insurance for everyone involved including anyone who would take deposits to the bank. The bonding for the few individuals would have been considerably more than what the Borough will pay for the Liberty Mutual policy.

Mr. Rossi brought up the West Easton Scholarship Fund. He stated that he was looking through past resolutions and the Borough Council in the past would donate \$500 a year to the fund. Members of the Scholarship Fund had stopped into the

Borough office and asked for a list of businesses in the Borough. Any West Easton resident that attends Wilson Area High School is eligible.

A motion by Mr. Dees, second by Mr. Lewis, Council approved a \$500 donation to the West Easton Scholarship Fund. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Rossi also took a call in regards to part-time police. The caller mentioned that there is legislation pending in Harrisburg that the State Police could start charging for protection to a municipality.

Mr. DePaul asked when the audit was completed. Mr. Gehman stated that the numbers have been turned over to the auditors and they are in the process of reviewing the audit.

Mr. Gehman also asked Council for approval to establish a separate account for Debit purchases to limit exposure. The new account would have a limit of \$2,000. The account would also be replenished like a "petty cash" fund.

Borough Treasurer, Carl Pierson, commented that his recommendation was to retain the cards in the office and the cards are not to be carried around by an individual. He suggested that Council set a policy for use of the Debit account cards.

A motion by Mr. Dees, second Mr. Lewis; Council approved to fund a new bank account, titled Debit account, for purchases that need to be made by a debit card. Motion passed 5-0.

Council President DePaul decided that the Policy can be written up and then presented to the Solicitor for his review.

Council President DePaul discussed a Lehigh Valley Coalition grant. The grant is a matching grant. The Borough would need to put up \$1,000 to receive the \$2,000 grant. He would like to apply for the grant and if approved he would use the funds available to replace benches that have been broken. Upon his initial review the \$2,000 would be used for three benches and three bicycle racks. Council voted to table the discussion until next Council meeting.

### **Council Roundtable**

Mr. Nixon asked the status of the rededication of Keystone Park to Gerald W. Gross Park. The company that does the signs for the Borough offered to donate a sign. No one knew of status.

### **Committee Reports**

**Property Committee** – Mr. H. Nodoline asked what the condition was of the train trestle. Mr. Rossi stated that there is a split tie on the trestle that needs to be taken care of in the near future. Mr. Rossi hoped that when the tree work is done for the Borough they could use the bucket truck to check out the split railroad tie.

Mr. H. Nodoline also commented that all roads need to be crack sealed. The cheapest alternative would be for the Borough to rent the equipment and do the work themselves but you need two workers to operate the equipment. The company that rents the equipment would also suggest businesses the Borough could contact to do the work for the Borough.

Mr. Dees suggested that we get a list of streets in the order of necessity before proceeding.

Mr. H. Nodoline said the main point he was trying to make is that the Borough needs to hire someone for at least the summer to help Dane Thatcher, the Borough's maintenance worker.

**Legal/Newsletter/Computer Committee** – Mr. Dees reminded everyone that Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup> would be the electronic recycling day at the Nazareth Intermediate School.

The Borough website has been updated with the address of the Municipal building. A link for the property tax rebate has been added to the website.

The newsletter is being prepared for mailing on May 2nd and if anyone has anything to put into the newsletter they should speak to the Borough Manager.

Mr. Lewis wanted to remind everyone that the primary election is on Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>.

## **Old Business**

Mr. Gehman just wanted to bring to the attention of everyone in attendance that a West Easton Borough resident was recently burglarized by someone who impersonated an employee of the Water Authority.

## **New Business**

None

## **Other Public Comment –**

Erin O'Toole questioned the amount the Borough was spending on computer equipment and also computer software. Mr. Rossi and Mr. Gehman explained that the additional computer equipment being purchased was for a new server and the

installation of that server. The money that was spent last year was for a refurbished server and the software provider felt the Borough was asking for trouble by installing new software on an old/unknown computer. The new software is also suggested by the state as the “official” software for the municipalities to use.

Harry O’Toole asked when the Borough website would be up and working. Mr. Dees said that the Borough’s website, [www.westeastonborough.com](http://www.westeastonborough.com) is up and working and his own personal blog [westeastonpa.com](http://westeastonpa.com) expresses his own opinion. Mr. O’Toole wanted to know if the Borough’s ordinances and resolutions were available online. Solicitor Goudsouzian stated the Borough is currently undertaking the process of codifying their resolutions and ordinances. Once the process is completed, a company by the name of E-codes can provide resolutions and ordinances online.

Mr. DePaul had one final piece of business which was a travel request for Mr. Lewis to attend a seminar for Zoning.

A motion by Mr. H. Nodoline second by Mr. Nixon; Council approved the travel request for Mr. Lewis to attend a seminar on Zoning.

Discussion – Mr. Dees wanted to know the total cost of the seminar. It is for three successive Wednesdays and the travel would be to Doylestown. Mr. Gehman replied that the current rate for mileage is the 2016 IRS rate of 54 cents/mile.

### **Council Entered Executive Session at 8:45pm**

### **Council Exit Executive Session at 9:25pm**

Solicitor Goudsouzian stated the need for the Executive Session was for discussing the status of the Condemnation of the Ridge Street property and the documents filed by Ms. Mezzacappa. Solicitor Goudsouzian will be in court on Friday regarding these documents. No formal decisions were made in the Executive session.

A motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. Dees; Council approved Solicitor Goudsouzian to attempt to find a solution with Ms. Tricia Mezzacappa including having her sign a release. Motion passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. Nixon, second by Mr. H. Nodoline, Council approved to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0.

Meeting adjourned 9:27pm.