

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON
COUNCIL MEETING

AUGUST 8, 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 Matthew Dees, Robert Lewis, Henry Nodoline and Tom Nodoline. Council members Ron Nixon and Paul James were absent. Also present were: Mayor Gerald Gross; Interim Borough Manager, Peter Rossi; Solicitor, Steve Goudsouzian; Borough Secretary, Joan Heebner and Borough Senior Clerk, David Gehman. Members of the public in attendance: Trude Hargraves, Leon Stull, David Bogusky, Peter & Bonnie Mammana, Jim & Elaine Jankowich, Janie Jones Brown, Robert Vaughn, Sandi Rossi, Nick & Linda Voigt, Kevin Christie and Bruce Walter.

A motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. Dees; Council approved check #15305 through #15327 from the General Fund Account.

Mr. Dees questioned check #15311 and check #15323. Mr. Gehman explained that check #15311 was the portion of unemployment the Borough was responsible for a Council member. Check #15323 is the payment for the monthly service agreement on the copier/scanner.

Motion passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. Dees, second by Mr. Lewis; Council approved check #2006 and #2007 from the Sewer Fund.

Motion passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. Dees, second by Mr. Lewis: Council approved the Deposits & Receipts for July 2016.

Motion passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. Dees, second by Mr. Lewis; Council approved the minutes from the July 11, 2016 meeting.

Motion passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. H. Nodoline; Council approved the minutes from the July 25, 2016 meeting with correction.

Motion passed 5-0

A motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. H. Nodoline; Council approved the Treasurer's Report for July 2016.

Motion passed 5-0.

A motion by Mr. T. Nodoline, second by Mr. Dees; Council approved to refer the Treasurer's suggestions to the Finance Committee for review.

Motion passed 5-0.

Public Comment –

Mr. Bob Vaughn of Spring Street had two concerns to bring up to Council. Mr. Vaughn's first concern was the train trestle over Spring Street. He has noticed that there are teenagers constantly on the trestle. He asked Council if the trestle could be fenced off to prevent anyone from falling off the trestle or being hurt. He also asked how safe the trestle is for traffic driving under it.

Mr. Vaughn also commented on the speed of most traffic down Spring Street. The posted limit is 15 mph yet most traffic travels between 50-60 mph, he estimated.

Ms. Jones-Brown of Avona Street mentioned that she has seen teenagers throwing things off the trestle.

Ms. Jones-Brown let the Borough Council know that she is West Easton's representative for the Mary Meuser Library.

Ms Jones-Brown also brought to the attention of Council that her payment for her property taxes was never received by the Borough's tax collector. She stated that the check was cashed and she had to hire an attorney to recoup the monies lost due to the theft and forgery.

Mayor's Report –

Mayor Gross wanted to discuss appointing someone as the Emergency Management Coordinator for the West Easton. He stated that Council President Dan DePaul and Council member Tom Nodoline had gone through the training and were qualified to assume the position. He also suggested looking at some of the neighboring

municipalities to see if their Emergency Management Coordinator would also be willing to do the job for West Easton.

Mayor Gross mentioned the Borough's sewer system is over 50 years old. He stated the additional monies that are in the Sewer fund are necessary if there is an issue. A catastrophic problem could literally bankrupt the Borough if the money wasn't available.

The Mayor who had been spearheading converting the Borough's street lights to LED mentioned that the American Medical Association has done a study comparing the old lights to LED. He again suggested that the Borough use a test area before converting all the street lights over to LED.

The Mayor also requested Council to include money in next year's budget for National Night out. The event was always well received in the Borough and he would like to see the event restarted in the Borough.

Mayor Gross personally paid to have a soil sample tested from the front yard of the Borough's municipal building by Penn State University. He passed the results on to the Property Committee.

Lastly, Mayor Gross commented on the need for either Wilson Borough or the City of Easton police provide coverage within West Easton. He commented that many residents are dissatisfied with the coverage provided by the State Police.

Council President DePaul commented that the representatives from the Borough are talking to representatives from Wilson Borough regarding police coverage. Paul James is looking into the conversion of the street lights to LED.

Mr. Rossi stated he spoke to numerous people regarding the Emergency Management Coordinator position. He spoke to Bill Bogari, Jr. and also to the Assistant Fire Chief for the Borough. He also spoke to several people holding the position for other area municipalities and no one was willing to oversee West Easton. Mr. Rossi mentioned that the burden will fall on the Mayor and Borough Council.

Mr. Nodoline suggested speaking to the new Wilson Fire Chief since the former Chief recently retired.

Engineer's Report –

Chris Geary from Barry Isett & Associates stated that the contract with AMS has been signed. UGI has until August 15, 2016 to complete their work within the Borough and make sure repairs to the streets have been done.

Mr. Rossi expressed his concern about towing vehicles because the Borough has no police officer that can complete the necessary paperwork to have vehicles removed from the Borough's streets.

A motion by Tom Nodoline, second by Bob Lewis; Council approved Barry Isset and Associates to inquire about the cost of replacing the damaged pipe rather than repairing the damaged pipe.

Motion passed 5 – 0.

Tom Nodoline asked about registering for MS4 training in Scranton.

Solicitor's report –

Solicitor Goudsouzian stated that in executive session he will discuss the condemnation of Ridge Street property and the Mezzacappa litigation.

Office Report -

The first item for discussion is the Life Insurance for elected officials. Council decided to table discussion until next meeting and have the Finance committee come up with a plan/policy for handling payment of the premium.

A motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. Dees; Council approved Steve Klaver to replace Paul James on the Zoning Appeals Board.

Motion passed 5 – 0.

Mr. Lewis asked that his travel request be approved for the Fall conference in October. Mr. Lewis also requested that a seminar for Basic Budget held in Gettysburg be approved. Council delayed the approval until September 12, 2016.

Ms. Heebner told the Borough Council that commercial property owners were sent letters requesting their tenants. Business letters will then be sent out to the companies that reside in the commercial owned properties.

President's Report –

Mr. DePaul sent photographs to the Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce to show how the matching grant was used.

Committee Reports –

Finance Committee – Scheduled meeting for Thursday, August 18 and Thursday, August 25 at 1pm. The Finance Committee will be working on the 2017 Budget and also discussing the possible buyout of the truck lease.

Highway/Property Committee – Scheduled a meeting for Thursday, August 11th at 6pm.

Public Safety/Personnel Committee – Will be meeting with Wilson Borough Council on Monday, September 19th to continue discussions on Police protection.

The Personnel Committee recommended to Council that Joan Heebner replace Interim Borough Manager, Pete Rossi.

A motion by Mr. H. Nodoline, second by Mr. Dees; Council appointed Joan Heebner as the Borough Manager.

Discussion – Mr. T. Nodoline asked the Personnel Committee if the position was advertised and how many applications were received. He also wanted to know how many people were interviewed for the position.

A voice vote was taken: Mr. DePaul – Yes, Mr. Dees – Yes, Mr. T. Nodoline – No, Mr. Lewis – Yes and Mr. H. Nodoline – Yes. Motion passed 4 – 1.

The Personnel/Public Safety Committee scheduled a meeting for Thursday, August 11th @ 5pm to cover personnel issues and litigation.

Legal/Newsletter/Computer Committee – set meetings on Thursday, August 18th @ 2pm and Thursday, August 25th @ 2pm. The committee will be discussing the new quality of life ordinance.

Utilities Committee – Webinar is available on street lighting at the end of the month.

Recreation – None.

Grants - None

Old Business -

The dedication of Gerald W. Gross Park is tentatively scheduled for September. Mr. T. Nodoline stated that he was waiting on three signs being made through the prison system.

Mr. T. Nodoline said that the dedication of the Louis Niko Park formerly the Ninth Street Park would not take place until next year.

The Borough has purchased the portable generator that was approved by Council.

New Business -

Mr. Rossi had previously spoken to a representative from UGI in regards to the gas service on Spring Street. He originally was told that it was a low pressure line but has since found out that the line is a ¾" line. The UGI representative said that they could upgrade the line to 1 ¼" so that the it could support the proposed generator the Borough was looking into purchasing.

Additional Public Comment

Trude Hargraves of Second Street asked about the Mezzacappa litigation. Ms. Hargraves wanted to know when the court date was because she wants to attend the proceedings.

Bruce Walter of Ninth Street commented that he understood that the City of Easton had a policy that if a utility company dug up the street they were required to replace the corner sidewalks with ADA approved ramps. He asked if the Borough could look into this policy.

Council Entered Executive Session at 9:45pm.

Council Exited Executive Session at 10:10pm.

A motion by Mr Dees, second by Mr. Lewis; Council approved to pay Ms. Heebner \$24/hr as Borough Manager for up to 35 hours per week.

Motion passed 4 – 1. Mr. T. Nodoline was the dissenting vote.

A motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. Dees; Council approved Pete Rossi to be a paid Consultant for the Office staff.

Motion passed 4 – 1. Mr. T. Nodoline was the dissenting vote.

A motion proposed by Mr. Lewis to pay Pete Rossi, \$30/hr for his consultation. There was no second of the motion. Motion died.

A motion by Mr. H. Nodoline, second by Mr. Dees, Council approved a rate of \$35/hr for the consultation fee for Mr. Rossi.

Motion passed 4 – 1. Mr. T. Nodoline was the dissenting vote.

There will be no second meeting for the month of August.

A motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. Dees, Council voted to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:15pm.