

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON
COUNCIL MEETING

SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

APPROVED

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the Borough of West Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, was called to order at 6:30 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. Council President Dan DePaul, Council members Matthew Dees, Robert Lewis, Pete Mammana, Thomas Nodoline and Paul James were present. Henry Nodoline was absent. Mayor, Gerald Gross; Solicitor, Steve Goudsouzian of Goudsouzian & Associates; Borough Manager, Joan Heebner; Borough Senior Clerk, David Gehman; and Borough Maintenance Supervisor, Dane Thatcher were present. Members of the public in attendance: Bonnie Mammana, Gordon Speigle, Trude Hargraves, David Bogusky, Drew Zavada, Jeff Breidinger, Leon Stull and Jerry Heebner.

Mayor Gross read opening comments remembering September 11, 2001 to begin the meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. James, second by Mr. Lewis; Council approved check #16018 through #16088 from the General Fund Account.

No discussion. Motion passed 6 - 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, second by Mr. Lewis; Council approved check #2037 through #2038 from the Sewer Fund Account.

No discussion. Motion passed 6 - 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. James; Council approved the Deposit and Receipts for August 2017.

No discussion. Motion passed 6 - 0.

Upon motion by Mr. James, second by Mr. Mammama; Council approved the minutes from the August 14, 2017 meeting with corrections

Council President added additional information he wanted into the minutes.

Motion passed 5 - 1. (Mr. Lewis was the dissenting vote.)

Upon motion by Mr. James, second by Mr. Lewis; Council approved the Treasurer's Report for August 2017.

No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Public Comment –

Leon Stull of Second Street – Mr. Stull asked, "How many full time employees does the Borough have. Council President DePaul stated "None."

Mr. Stull stated he heard a rumor that the Borough was considering paying benefits to their employees.

Mr. Stull also commented on the amount of poison ivy and sumac growing on the hillside near the swing set at Gerald W. Gross Community Park.

Council President DePaul stated that sumac can be pulled bare handed as long as you stay away from the root ball. Mayor Gross agreed.

Jeff Breidinger of Third Street – Mr. Breidinger asked when the Second Street project was expected to be completed. He was told at the end of the week.

Mr. Breidinger tendered his resignation as the Borough representative to the Wilson Recreation Board. Mr. Breidinger stated that he had a career opportunity that he could not pass up.

Trude Hargraves of Second Street – Asked if the property at the corner of Third and Iron which has structural damage has been cited. She stated that the porch has a canvas covering over it and the sidewalks and curbing are crumbling.

Gordon Speigle of Tenth Street – Raised a question on the resurfacing condition of Tenth Street.

Council President, DePaul, stated the owner of the company told him that the final finish was done to save the road surface.

Engineer's Report – None

Mayor's Report –

Mayor Gross stated that Dane Thatcher, Borough Maintenance Supervisor, has a tough job. The Borough Council should be prepared to back Dane up. The bank at G.W. Gross Park is not a one man job that the work should be done by a crew. He recommended hiring an additional person to help Mr. Thatcher while the weather is still good.

Secondly the Mayor again requests that Council find someone to fill the Emergency Management Coordinator position. The Mayor feels that the responsibilities of this position should not fall on the Office staff.

Mayor Gross agrees with the formation of a part-time Police department but he would like Council to make public the financial numbers behind the Police Department.

Lastly, Mayor Gross mentioned that Nathaniel Kober who had attended several of the Borough's Council meetings has earned his Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts. He also noted that Nathaniel Kober was interested in being a Junior Councilman but no one ever contacted him.

Council President DePaul replied to the Mayor's report. Mr. DePaul said that if Dane needed help he could speak up. Secondly, Council has actively sought someone to fill the Emergency Management Coordinator position. Mr. DePaul stated that he has talked to numerous people outside of the Borough plus it has been in every Borough newsletter and only one person has indicated that they would be interested. Finally, Council is developing the 2018 budget including line items for the Police Department.

Mayor Gross suggested that the Borough send out letters to area volunteer fire companies.

Matt Dees stated that if a disaster would occur a fireman from another community would like be committed to his own community to provide relief or assistance.

Upon motion by Mr. T. Nodoline, second by Mr. Lewis; The Emergency Management Coordinator position should be advertised in the Morning Call & Express Times for one day a week for one month.

A discussion was held.

Ms. Heebner told Council that it was more than \$1,500.00 to advertise for the Police Captain position in the Morning Call for three days. Mr. DePaul asked Ms. Heebner to get more information for the next meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Mammana; second by Mr. Lewis; Council decided to table the discussion until the next Council meeting.

Motion passed 6 – 0.

Councilman Dees suggested that if Nathaniel Kober was still interested in being a Junior Councilman he could maybe attend the November Council meeting.

Solicitor's report –

Solicitor Goudsouzian stated that during the Executive Session he would bring Council up to date regarding pending litigation. The Solicitor also made reference to the letter that was sent out to Council regarding the Mezzacappa litigation; all briefs have been submitted to the Appellate Court. The next step is the Appellate Court will schedule a hearing date and then make their decision.

Office Report –

Borough Manager, Ms. Heebner had several important dates to remember.

10/6 – Deadline for submissions for the fourth quarter newsletter

10/30 – Halloween Parade

10/31 – Trick or Treat – 6pm – 8pm

Ms. Heebner also stated that the road work on Seventh Street will be delayed until spring 2018 due to the fact that UGI will be digging up Seventh Street and Center Street.

Ms. Mammana asked if the areas that were scraped on Seventh Street could be filled in. Dane Thatcher replied that it would be best to be filled in with hot asphalt.

President's Report –

Council President DePaul stated due to the disagreement between Council members at the previous meeting the Council has had a Travel policy in place since 2008. Mr. DePaul passed out a copy of the current policy to all of the Council members to read, review and revise and be prepared to discuss at the October meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, second by Mr. Mammana; Council approved applying for a grant through the Monroe County Casino for the Public Works Building.

Discussion – Mr. Lewis questioned section 2 if Mr. DePaul is always going to be the signing/contact person. Solicitor also stated that the Borough Council can also decide to have an additional signatures required to apply for the grant.

Motion passed 6 – 0.

Policies – None

Resolutions – None

Ordinance – None

Round Table – None

Committee Reports –

Finance Committee – Chairperson, Robert Lewis had no report from the Finance Committee. Mr. Lewis scheduled meetings for Wednesday, September 13 at 6:45 pm and Wednesday, September 20 at 6:30 pm.

Highway/Property Committee – None

Public Safety/Personnel Committee – Council President DePaul scheduled a Personnel Committee meeting for Tuesday, September 12 at 10:30 am immediately followed by a Public Safety meeting following at 11:30 am.

Legal/Newsletter/Computer Committee – Committee chair, Mr. James scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, September 13 at 6:30 pm

Utilities Committee – Committee chairperson, Pete Mammana, asked to schedule a Committee meeting for Tuesday, September 26 at 6:30 pm. Topics for the meeting will be the street lighting project and also a follow-up on Sewer rates.

Recreation – None

Mayor Gross wanted to thank Jeff Breidinger for his help on the Wilson Recreation Board and also offered to assume Jeff's position after the first of the year.

Grants Committee – Chairman, Mr. Dees, stated that the Committee filed the paperwork for the Monroe County Casino Grant for the Municipal Building to be built on Ridge Street and at the present time they have halted the proposal of putting a Gazebo across the street from the Municipal building.

Council President DePaul asked Borough Manager, Ms. Heebner, what on the list was going to be purchased prior to the end of the Grant period.

Ms. Heebner replied at anything that qualified for the grant would need to be purchased by September 30th. Ms. Heebner also stated that she is working on a list to be provided to the County of qualifying purchases. She estimated the amount the Borough would get back is over \$6,000.00

Old Business –

Mr. Lewis asked if some of the monies for the Open Space grant could be used to have the ivy removed from the playground. Mr. DePaul replied that would be considered maintenance.

Mr. Lewis suggested a fence to be installed in the park along the hillside.

Mr. Lewis submitted a travel request for consideration.

Upon motion by Mr. James, second by Mr. Lewis; Council approved Mr. Lewis to attend the complete Fall conference and Mr. James was attending just one day (Saturday).

Motioned passed 6 – 0.

New Business – None

Additional Public Comment

Trude Hargraves of Second Street – Offered assistance with the Halloween Parade.

Leon Stull of Second Street – Mr. Stull asked the Solicitor who is responsible if one of the residents damages the paper alley. Solicitor Goudsouzian stated it would be a personal claim between the property owner and the person who caused the damage. The Borough does not get involved.

Entered Executive Session – 7:50 pm

Councilman Thomas Nodoline left at 7:52pm

Exited Executive Session – 8:12 pm

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the Solicitor to draft the appropriate response to the application for Conditional Use for its failure to comply with the rules.

Motion passed 5 – 0.

Council President DePaul commented that the Palmer Chief of Police will help with hiring the Borough's Chief of Police.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, second by Mr. James; Council approved to pay Mr. Lewis' travel request for attending Police Civil Service Procedures in Lycoming County on September 28, 2017

A discussion was held.

Council President DePaul requested a voice vote – Mr. James – Yes, Mr. Lewis – Yes, Mr. Mammana – Yes, Mr. Dees – No, Mr. DePaul – No.

Motion passed 3 – 2.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis; seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council voted to adjourn meeting.

Motion passed 4 – 0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
David W. Gehman, Borough Senior Clerk