

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON
COUNCIL MEETING

JANUARY 22, 2018

APPROVED

The second 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 Paul James 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 Paul James, Council members Matthew Dees, Robert Lewis, Henry Nodoline, Pete Mammana, Desiree Lake and Jeff Breidinger, Jr. were present. Mayor, Dan DePaul; 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 and Leon Stull.

Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Mr. H. Nodoline; Council approved check #16297 through #16325 from the General Fund Account.

Discussion – Council member Dees questioned the Mayor on the amount of check #16311. Mayor DePaul stated the amount originally quoted was for materials and did not include the installment and inspection.

Council member Lewis asked what does check #16037 cover. Ms. Heebner replied it is liability insurance for volunteers who do help with activities in the Borough. Mr. Breidinger asked if that would also include Event insurance. Ms. Heebner replied that is entirely different.

Motion passed 7 - 0.

Public Comment –

Leon Stull of Second Street – Mr. Stull had three items to discuss. First of all, he commented that Dane did a good job clearing the snow from the latest storm.

Secondly, he is concerned that holes being dug by contractors are sinking after being filled in. He believes the contractors are not filling and tamping the holes properly.

Lastly, Mr. Stull is concerned with the resurfacing of the roads that were done in 2016. He stated that the cracks that were sealed on Keystone Avenue have reappeared and are about a ½ inch wide.

Council President James asked where the holes were. Mr. Stull replied, on Fifth Street. Ms. Heebner asked if the holes being filled were temporary or permanent. Councilman Nodoline commented that the holes should be dug out 8 inches on either side.

Dane Thatcher said that Great Western has two different bosses and he thought they were doing 6 inch lifts.

Engineer's Report – None

Mayor's Report –

Mayor DePaul stated that Council set the commercial sewer rate in 1975 and it has not been changed.

Mayor DePaul also stated that he has spoken to the PennDOT subcontractor in replacing the guardrail on East Street to Third Street.

Mayor DePaul asked for volunteers to attend the meetings being held on January 30, July 31 and October 30 by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) in regards to the importance of the 2020 Census. Council President James offered to attend the January 30 meeting. Councilman Lewis also offered to register.

Mayor DePaul was approached by businessman, George Johnson in regards to the public hearing that was held in conjunction with the January 8 meeting. Mr. Johnson asked since his property is zoned, High Industry, is his property able to host the same things that Low Industry can hold.

Solicitor Goudsouzian suggested that Borough officials not issue their own opinion but refer the question to the zoning officer.

Mayor DePaul updated Council as to the status of the Police Department. He noted that he called the PA State Police and found out that the Borough's paperwork had not been reviewed. The representative that was handling the paperwork found it in a supervisor's office. It has since been reviewed and any missing information was provided. The Borough is still waiting for its ORI number.

Mayor DePaul also met with the head of the West Easton Treatment Center. The Mayor discussed dropping off and picking up people inside the gates, having people available to do work for the Borough and having traffic exit the parking lot by turning right and heading towards Lehigh Drive.

As to the Police Department building, the Mayor referred to the list he provided at the previous Council meeting for the work being done and referred to rumors about him hiring someone to help get the work done.

Mayor DePaul stated others had been hired without Council approval, including Hunter Velekei.

Councilman Dees stated Hunter Velekei was hired by Council and he was required to take a drug test. Contractors were given approval by Council to perform their jobs. Councilman Dees also reminded the Mayor that Title 8 gives Council the right to hire or fire and not the Mayor. Councilman Dees stated that Mr. DePaul should present his candidate to Council.

Council Members Lake and Breidinger stated they would like to see his resume or application before agreeing to hire him or if he was being hired as a subcontractor making sure that he has the proper insurance and credentials.

Solicitor's report –

Solicitor Goudsouzian stated he had nothing to report other than what needs to be discussed in Executive Session.

Office Report –

Borough Manager, Ms. Heebner discussed Carl Pierson's offer to update the Storm Sewer drawings for the Borough. Ms. Heebner stated that many of the Borough's drawings were previously done by Mr. Pierson. He estimated that the job would cost \$200 - \$300.

Upon motion by Ms. Lake, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved to have Carl Pierson update the Borough's Storm Sewer drawings.

No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

President's Report –

Council President James stated that he has planned a meeting with Shawn Sefick of The Hubcap Store on Wednesday, January 24. He plans on discussing the removal of the 10 trailer loads of tires and the continued sales of furniture, bicycles, landscaping products and other items. He hopes to develop a follow-up plan to make sure the work is being done.

Ms. Heebner asked Mr. James if he was meeting with just Shawn or Shawn and his father. Mr. James replied that he believed it was only with Shawn.

Policies –

Council President James asked that copies of the Travel Policy be distributed to all Council members prior to the next meeting so that it can be reviewed and discussed at the next meeting.

Resolutions – None

Ordinance – None

Round Table –

Mr. Dees gave statistics reported by The Express Times on the number of residents that skipped out at the West Easton Treatment Center. 2014 – None, 2015 – one, 2016 – four, 2017 – eight. In 2015, they came in front of Council to increase the number of beds from 100 to 150.

Council President James recommended hiring the person that Mayor DePaul had in mind to do work at the Police Station. He also commented that all Council members have now seen the building and the condition of it and the work needs to be done so that we are ready to go when the Borough receives its approval.

Councilman Dees asked to see his job application. Mayor DePaul stated he was a certified contractor.

Solicitor Goudsouzian suggested having a plan in place in hiring.

Council members, Ms. Lake and Mr. Dees asked if he had liability insurance if anything would happen.

Council President James asked Mayor DePaul for his candidate to provide a quote and show proof of insurance.

Mayor DePaul stated that would depend on whether if he is still available.

Borough Manager, Joan Heebner asked if Dane can proceed with the work himself. Council President James stated “Yes.”

Committee Reports –

Finance Committee – Committee chair, Mr. Lewis stated that the Finance Committee has meet and brought the new committee member up-to-date. There were a few minor adjustments to the budget. Councilman Dees asked that the budget not be closed and he would discuss changes in Executive Session.

Mr. Lewis asked to schedule a Finance Committee meeting on Thursday, January 25 at 5:30 p.m.

Highway/Property Committee – Committee chairperson, Henry Nodoline commented that the alleyways are not being salted. He also stated that he believes salting streets prior to the beginning of a storm assists initially in keeping the roads clear. Mr. Nodoline said that the Emergency Route streets are being done first.

Mr. Nodoline scheduled a Highway/Property Committee meeting on Friday, January 26 at 10:00 a.m.

Public Safety/Personnel Committee – Committee chairwoman, Ms. Lake stated the committee met on January 17 and reviewed objectives. No meeting was scheduled

Legal/Newsletter/Computer Committee – None.

Ms. Lake asked Council members if she could switch with someone for her seat on the Utility Committee. Mr. Lewis offered to give up his seat on the Legal committee. Council President James agreed with the switch.

Utilities Committee – Committee chairperson, Pete Mammana, stated that the committee met on January 10 and discussed sewer rates and discussed adding trash to the responsibilities of the Utilities Committee. Mr. Mammana scheduled a meeting for Thursday, January 25 at 6:15 p.m.

Recreation – Jeff Breidinger, Committee chairman, met on January 16. Mr. Breidinger stated that they brainstormed when they met and would also like to set up a meeting with Betsy Wagner and Donna Stamets. Mr. Breidinger also stated he would like to meet with the Safety First Ladies Auxiliary in regards to the Easter Egg Hunt.

No meeting was scheduled.

Grants Committee – Chairman, Mr. Dees mentioned that the Grant Committee will be meeting with Mary Himmelberger of Barry Isett & Associates on Friday, January 26 at 10:00 a.m. Joining in the meeting will be representatives from the D & L Trails and Scott Palinkas from Wilson Borough Council.

Old Business –

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved Jeff Breidinger travel expenses to attend the PA Association of Borough's Boot Camp for newly elected offices

No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved Robert Lewis travel expenses to attend the PA Association of Borough's Boot Camp for newly elected offices

No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Breidinger; Council agreed to cover reasonable expenses for Junior Council member, Nathaniel Kober.

Mr. Lewis withdrew his motion.

Councilman Breidinger asked if the two vehicles have been repaired.

New Business – None

Additional Public Comment

Bonnie Mammana of Tenth Street – Ms. Mammana asked Council how the Borough had hired the people who had assisted the Borough when there was the issue with the computers.

Councilman Dees replied that the Council approved the people that were used when the Computer issues arose.

Leon Stull of Second Street – Mr. Stull asked Council if they had ever considered permit parking for Main Street to eliminate parking issues with residents at the West Easton Treatment Center.

Mayor DePaul stated that as to a follow-up to his meeting with the head of the West Easton Treatment Center, residents that are allowed to drive to the treatment center should be parking inside the gates of the treatment center property.

Mr. Stull also stated that he was considering putting in a bypass meter. He wanted to know why a licensed plumber would be required to install the meter.

Entered Executive Session – 7:52 p.m.

Exited Executive Session – 8:16 p.m.

President James stated that legal and personnel matters were discussed during the Executive Session.

Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved the Solicitor to proceed with legal matters as directed.

No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved to adjourn. Meeting ended 8:17 p.m.

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