

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 11, 2019

APPROVED

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the Borough of West Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, was called to order at 6:30 pm by Council President Paul James in Council Chambers of the West Easton Municipal Building, 237 Seventh Street, West Easton, Pennsylvania.

Roll was taken and Mr. James noted there was a quorum. Council members Matthew Dees, Robert Lewis, Pete Mammana, David Bolash, and Desiree Lake were present. Council member, Jeff Breidinger, Jr. and Junior Council member Nathaniel Kober were absent. Mayor, Daniel DePaul; Solicitor, Steve Goudsouzian of Goudsouzian & Associates; Borough Manager, Joan Heebner; Borough Senior Clerk, David Gehman; Borough Treasurer, Carl Pierson; Borough Maintenance Supervisor, Dane Thatcher; William Concolino, Emergency Management Coordinator and Rob Mahady, Borough Police Consultant were present. Members of the public in attendance: Bill and June Smith, Jim Jankowich, Leon Stull, Bruce Walter, Trude Hargraves, Nancy Stout, Rob Lichtenwalner, Bonnie Mammana and Brian Lutz.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Dees; Council approved checks #17030 through #17079 from the General Fund. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved on-line charges to the General Fund. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Mammana: Council approved charges made through the Debit Account from January 1 through February 28, 2019. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved check #2076 through #2077 from the Sewer Fund. No discussion: Motion passed 6 - 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Dees; Council approved the Deposits and Receipts from February 2019. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the minutes for the February 11, 2019, Council meeting. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the February 2019, Treasurer's Report. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Public Comment

William Smith – Main Street – Mr. Smith stated that Sefcik was parking at least one if not two trailers on Adamson Street. Mr. Smith said that the problem began last week. Mr. Smith also went on to say that another business on Adamson Street was bringing mud onto the street from their extended parking area.

Nancy Stout – Second Street – Ms. Stout expressed concern with neighbors not clearing snow off their sidewalks following a storm and also commented that some of her neighbors do not secure their trash cans and when it is windy the trash is all over the neighborhood.

Trude Hargraves – Second Street – Ms. Hargraves asked when the new recycling bins will be issued to the residents. Mr. Dees responded sometime in the spring. Ms. Heebner commented that the lead time is 45 days from order to delivery.

Guest – Lori Metz

Ms. Metz of Carriage House Landscape Design and Daniels Landscaping presented her vision of the West Easton War Monument Park which included a self draining water feature. A discussion was held.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the construction of the design by Lori Metz and Daniels Landscaping for the West Easton War Monument Park – Phase 1 at a cost of \$18,200.00.

Discussion – Ms. Lake asked about having the water from the spring tested. Ms. Lake also inquired on the warranties on the water pump and also the liner/basin. Ms. Metz stated that the guarantee would be 3-5 years for the pump and 20 years for the liner/basin. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Ms. Lake, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved the testing of the spring water. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

It was also discussed that the contract would need to be signed by Mr. James and be paid according – 1/3 at signing, 1/3 when 50% completed and 1/3 at completion.

Engineer's Report - None

Office Report

Ms. Heebner talked about the three quotes for the removal of trees and shrubs from the War Monument Park. The lowest quote was from Big Mike's Tree Service in the amount of \$1,350.00.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved Big Mike's Tree Service to cut down trees and shrubs from the War Monument Park. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Mr. Gehman reported that the annual DCED Audit has been completed and filed with the state. There were no unusual findings found in the audit.

Mr. Gehman asked Council to approve using the Billpay feature offered by Merchants Bank. There is no charge to the Borough for using this feature and should help reduce check printing and postage costs for the Borough.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the use of Billpay from Merchants Bank to use for paying vendors of the Borough. Discussion – Mr. Dees asked about cost. Mr. Gehman replied no cost. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Ms. Heebner discussed CD rates that were received from PLGIT. Merchants Bank was asked if they could match the rates but could not.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved investing \$250,000 from the General Fund in a CD with PLGIT at a rate of 2.95% for 2 years. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Dees; Council approved investing \$150,000 from the Sewer Fund in a CD with PLGIT at a rate of 2.85% for 2 years. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Mr. Gehman brought up one final point of discussion. The office has received several complaints from parents taking their children to Gross Park. The parents have complained that they have found broken glass placed on some of the equipment. Ms. Heebner has suggested that Dane Thatcher check the equipment daily. A camera system was discussed.

Policies, Resolutions and Ordinances - None

Solicitor's Report

Solicitor Goudsouzian had litigation to be discussed during Executive Session.

President's Report

Council President, Paul James, told Council that PA Association of Boroughs is providing a seminar on Rental Property Inspections. The seminar is being held on Wednesday, April 3rd, April 10th and April 17th at various locations in the state.

Mr. James expressed “thanks” to Dane Thatcher for the good job done on cleaning up the streets after the latest snow storm. Ms. Heebner mentioned and thanked Mayor DePaul for volunteering to plow snow during the recent storm.

Mayor's Report

Mayor DePaul told Council that the Borough has received the check from District Attorney, John Morganelli's office. Mayor DePaul is also speaking with a Northampton County executive to get additional funds.

Mr. DePaul also warned Council members to use precaution in regards to arming and disarming the security alarm at the Borough Municipal building. Mr. DePaul said he was told by the State Police that the next time they respond to the alarm that the Borough would be fined.

Round Table

Mr. Dees asked about the installation by the security company scheduled for March 18th. Mr. Gehman offered to contact Hi-Tech Security Services to reschedule.

Ms. Heebner stated that she was meeting with a representative from Brown & Brown to discuss updating the Borough's insurance policy.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee – Mr. Lewis stated that CDs have already been discussed. No meeting was scheduled.

Highway/Property Committee – Mr. Bolash stated there was no meeting needed since the monument proposal was approved.

Public Safety/Personnel Committee – Committee chair, Ms. Lake deferred to Mr. Dees regarding the committee's previous meetings. Mr. Dees provided a brief review of information covered. Ms. Lake scheduled meeting for Tuesday, March 19 at 6:00 pm and Tuesday, March 26 at 6:00 pm

Legal/Newsletter/Computer Committee – Mr. James stated that the committee met and discussed the ordinance for rental properties. Mr. James set a committee meeting for Thursday, March 14th at 6:00 pm

Utilities Committee – Mr. Mammana told Council that the previous meeting was canceled. Mr. Mammana scheduled a new meeting for Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00 pm

Recreation Committee – No report

Grants Committee – Mr. Dees stated the committee met to discuss two grant opportunities. The first opportunity was not feasible for the Borough because of the cost involved. The second grant, by DCNR, would cover up 100% of material and professional fees for improvements to parks. The deadline for submissions is April 10, 2019. Possible uses – ADA ramp for access to the park, additional work to be done at the War Monument Park or the purchase of new playground equipment for Gerald W. Gross Park.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved apply for the DCNR grant spending up to \$20,000.00. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Old Business –

Mr. Concolino told Council that there is a NIMS training class on April 3rd at the Northampton 911 Center. Mr. Concolino stated that this training is for all elected officials and staff. He also stated that it will be increasingly difficult to obtain PEMA funds if the Borough officials and staff are not certified.

Mr. Concolino, West Easton Emergency Management Coordinator, reported to the Borough Council on the four quotes that he has obtained for the emergency generator. Mr. Concolino was asked if he could get quotes for the same equipment, Mr Concolino replied he could not because these contractor sell different makes of generators. Mr. Concolino gave the same specifications to all and he provided their quotes. Mr. Concolino also commented that one stumbling point was the requirements being placed by the Borough's Code Enforcement Officer.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded Mr. Lewis; Council approved the Safety Committee to purchase an emergency generator up to \$20,000.00.

Mr. Concolino stated that he will be attending training in Reading for Emergency Management Coordinators. He asked the Borough to cover his expenses for dinner and mileage. He said there will be no charges for lodging.

New Business

Mr. Lewis presented a travel request to attend the Annual Conference for the PA State Association of Boroughs to be held in Hershey, PA on June 9 – 12, 2019.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved the travel request to the Annual PA State Association Boroughs Conference in Hershey, PA. Discussion – Ms. Lake asked Mr. Lewis if he was going to bring back information and provide a report to Council. Mr. Lewis said he would. Motion passed 5 – 1 (Mr. Dees dissenting vote).

Mayor DePaul discussed a meeting to be held on Tuesday, March 12th at 7:00 pm at Mary Meuser Library concerning mitigation. The public is invited.

Additional Public Comment

Carl Pierson – Ninth Street – Borough Treasurer – Mr. Pierson had several concerns. First of all, Mr. Pierson stated that there two manhole covers that need to be raised. The first was in front of 93 Main Street, the second in front of 304 Ninth Street. Mr. Pierson also said that the manhole that is located at the Ninth Street Park may need to be backfilled to avoid damage to the Borough's lawnmowers.

Mr. Pierson also asked about the Codification. He asked Solicitor Goudsouzian what percent of the Codification was done. Mr. Goudsouzian replied 100%. He went on to state that once

Council has reviewed the document, his staff would again review the information with any changes and advice. Once Borough Council is satisfied, the document will be advertised and then voted on.

Trude Hargraves – Second Street - Ms. Hargraves also asked about the litigation against Ms. Mezzacappa. Solicitor Goudsouzian stated that the matter went to trial today and the judge dismissed the matter.

Brandon Lutz – Spring Street – Mr. Lutz expressed concern about vehicles being parked in Spring Alley. He stated that the people parking in the alley walk down to the West Easton Treatment Center. Mr. Lutz also stated that he has contacted the Deputy Warden in regards to the parked cars and the residents of the treatment center. Mayor DePaul asked if he could have a copy of information and that he would take care of it.

Executive Session Entered 9:00 pm – Exited 9:07 pm

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the exclusion of Robert Lewis to Executive Session in matters pertaining to Tricia Mezzacappa. No discussion. President James asked for a voice vote. Mr. Mammana – Yes, Mr. Bolash – No, Mr. Lewis – Abstained, Mr. Dees – Yes, Mr. James – No, Ms. Lake – Abstained. Council was tied 2-2; Mayor DePaul cast the tie-breaker vote. Mayor DePaul - Yes

Executive Session Entered 9:10 pm – Exited 9:25 pm

Mr. Lewis exited at 9:16 pm.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council voted to adjourn meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:26 pm.

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