

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 14, 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; President, Mr. James noted there was a quorum. Council members Matthew Dees, Robert Lewis, Pete Mammana, David Bolash, Janie Jones Brown and Ronald Nixon were present. Junior Council member Nathaniel Kober was absent. Mayor Daniel DePaul; Solicitor, Steve Goudsouzian of Goudsouzian & Associates; Borough Manager, Joan Heebner; and Borough Senior Clerk, David Gehman were in attendance. Members of the public in attendance: June & Bill Smith, Bonnie Mammana, Leon Stull, James Jankowich, William Bogari, Jr., Rich Nagy, Trude Hargraves and Nancy Stout.

Guest – William Bogari, Jr. – Fire Chief – Safety First Volunteer Fire Company

-Mr. Bogari spoke to Council in regards to the monetary needs of the fire department for 2020.
-Mr. Bogari stated that the fire company has begun separation from the social club and hopes to have the separation complete by early 2020. The reason for the separation is the “poor” financial position of the social club.

-Mr. Bogari broke down the request of \$70,000 from the Borough for the fire department.
-Mr. Bogari credited the Ladies Auxiliary for their financial assistance.

-Discussion – Mr. Dees asked Mr. Bogari if the members will generate money through fund drives, such as boot collections. Mr. Bogari responded, no, that there are only 10-11 active members.

-Mr. Dees asked if a monthly report could be provided to Council showing how the monies are spent. Mr. Bogari stated that was possible.

-Mr. Dees asked if there is a time requirement for when a fire truck has to be replaced. Mr. Bogari stated that it is suggested every 20-25 years. Mr. Bogari stated the fire company has a truck from 1996 but it runs fine and currently there are no plans to replace it.

-Mayor DePaul asked if the fire company needs \$60,000 with an additional \$10,000 as a cushion.

-Mayor DePaul asked if the fire company and social club separate who has “control” of the liquor license. Mr. Bogari stated that the social club will have control of the liquor license and the license is a “club” license. A “club” license is not like a retail liquor license.

-Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved checks #17401 through #17444 from the General Fund. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved payments #A5003 through #A5027 from the General Fund Online bill pay. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

- Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved online charges X0026 through X0029 to the General Fund. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown: Council approved Debit Account charges from September 10, 2019 through October 14, 2019. No discussion. Motion passed 7-0.
- Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Mr. Dees; Council approved check #B5001 and #B5004 from the Sewer Fund. No discussion: Motion passed 7 - 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the Deposits and Receipts from September 2019.
- Discussion – Mayor DePaul asked if any monies have been received from the work release. Ms. Heebner replied not yet; the County pays rent quarterly and would send the Borough a check for the most recent quarter. Motion passed 7 – 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved the minutes for the September 9, 2019, Council meeting. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved the Treasurer’s Report for September 2019. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Public Comment

Leon Stull, Second Street – Mr. Stull expressed concern about a hole in the crosswalk at Dubs on Fifth. Mr. Stull stated that the hole is over a UGI valve box and is concerned someone will fall. Secondly, Mr. Stull asked Council what is being done about his sidewalk. Mayor DePaul suggested that the Borough get three bids from contractors and let them decide what needs to be done.

Trude Hargraves, Second Street – Ms. Hargraves stated that she has video of the work that was done on Second Street.

Jim Jankowich, Ninth Street – Mr. Jankowich asked about the lease for the Police Department if the fire department would close, merge or consolidate. Solicitor Goudsouzian stated that would be no issue since the agreement would transfer to the new owner.

Engineering Report – None

Office Report

- Ms. Heebner asked Council to approve the Bean, Inc. Contractors Snow Removal Proposal.
- Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Dees; Council approved the Bean, Inc. Contractors Snow Removal Proposal. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0
- Ms. Heebner discussed the letter received from Mr. Pierson offering assistance in scanning drawings in the Borough vault room for electronic storage. Mr. Dees suggested that Ms. Heebner get a cost estimate from Mr. Pierson.
- Ms. Heebner also reminded Council and the public that the Borough will collect items for VALOR to distribute every fourth Saturday of the month to homeless veterans and others. Ms. Heebner stated non-perishable food and gently-worn clothing are needed.

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 reminded everyone to get out and vote on Tuesday, November 5th.
-Mr. James also welcomed Mr. Ron Nixon to Council replacing Mr. Breidinger, Jr.

Mayor's Report

Mayor DePaul met with the Public Safety Committee and asked for a motion to have Mr. Mahady appointed as the Chief of Police.

Round Table - None

Committee Reports

Finance Committee – Mr. Lewis stated the committee has met and is in need of information from the Highway/Property Committee. Mr. Bolash deferred to Mayor DePaul in regards to the roads requiring work. Mr. Lewis scheduled the following meetings for the Finance Committee Wednesday, 10/ 16 @ 6:30 pm; Thursday, 10/24 @ 6:30 pm; Wednesday, 10/30 @ 6:30 pm

Highway/Property Committee – Mr. Bolash stated the committee has reviewed the Wilson Zoning ordinances and the committee recommends that the Borough adopt Wilson's or parts of the code as the Borough's. He stated that Wilson's codes more closely match our needs than what the Borough currently has. No meeting was scheduled; the Wilson zoning book was given to Legal to look over (Paul James).

-Mr. Gehman asked Mr. Bolash if a decision had been made on returning funds held in escrow to UGI for repair to our streets. Mr. Bolash stated that he and Mr. Mammana reviewed the streets and felt they were good. Mayor DePaul stated that the Borough Maintenance Supervisor, Dane Thatcher thinks UGI should redo all of Third and Fourth Streets.

Public Safety/Personnel Committee – Ms. Jones Brown stated that the committee has met with the Police Consultant, Mr. Mahady and the committee has a recommendation for cell phones for the Police Department.

-Upon motion by Ms. Jones Brown, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved a contract with Verizon for three cell phones and two hotspots with a charge of approximately, \$220/month. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Ms. Jones Brown confirmed that Mr. Mahady is ready to be sworn in as the Borough's Police Chief.

-Upon motion by Ms. Jones Brown, seconded by Mr. Dees; Council authorized the hiring and the swearing in, in the appropriate way, of Robert Mahady as the Borough's Chief of Police. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Ms. Jones Brown scheduled meetings for the Public Safety and Personnel committee.
Monday, October 21 @ 6:30 pm; Wednesday, October 23 @ 6:30 pm

Legal/Newsletter/Computer Committee – Mr. James stated the committee did meet and tackled about one-third of the Codification. Mr. James scheduled another meeting for Tuesday, October 29 @ 6:30 pm

Utilities Committee – Mr. Mammana confirmed the committee met and discussed the cost of recording the sewer line of \$21,250. He also stated that the committee is looking into the cost of recording the lines shared with the Borough of Wilson.

-Mr. Mammana scheduled a committee meeting for Tuesday, October 22 @ 6:30 pm

Recreation Committee – No report

Grants Committee – Mr. Dees stated no meeting was necessary until the Borough receives information on “no match” grants.

Old Business - None

New Business - None

Public Comment

William Smith – Main Street – Mr. Smith wanted to know what the Borough Engineer had to say about Mr. Stull's issues with his sidewalk and curb.

Trude Hargraves – Second Street – Ms. Hargraves agrees that we need to support the Fire Company. She asked if a millage increase would be necessary. A brief discussion was held regarding a “fire” tax. Solicitor Goudsouszian did not recommend a fire tax.

Executive Session Entered 8:15 pm – Exited 9:04 pm

-Upon motion by Ms. Jones Brown, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council authorized the Borough office to pay up to \$5,000.00 for the Fire Company insurance once proper paperwork has been received. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Nixon; Council voted to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

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