

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON
COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 26, 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. Nathaniel Kober, Junior Council member, was 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, Leon Stull, Trude Hargraves and David Bogusky.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved checks #16361 through #16394 and the list of On-line payments from the General Fund Account. Discussion was held. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved check # 2049 from the Sewer Fund Account. No discussion. Motion passed 7 - 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Dees; Council approved the minutes from Council meeting held on February 12, 2018. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Guest – Christine Mildner of Barry Isett and Associates, Inc.

As per Doug Brown, the survey has been completed and the plans should be completed within the next 1 – 2 weeks for the sidewalks around Gerald W. Gross Community Park.

Ms. Mildner continued with the grant discussion for completing the application for the Rails to Trails through the Borough. Ms. Mildner stated that the long range plan is to have the D & L Trail completed from Hugh Moore Park and connect with the Appalachian Trail. The Borough can obtain letters of support from the D & L Trails, Northampton County and also the Wildlands.

The next step in the process is obtaining a grant to do a structure assessment on the trestles that span Iron Street and Spring Street. The grant would be a 50/50 matching grant. The Borough would need to put up \$25,000. The estimated amount of the assessment would be approximately \$50,000 and Wilson Borough would pay their portion. Mr. Dees stated that Wilson Borough would pay one quarter of approximately \$25,000.

Ms. Mildner said the inspection would involve full inspection of the trestles. It would determine the weight bearing on the timbers and access the footings. It would also determine what could be preserved or need to be replaced. The inspection would follow PennDOT regulations and there would be no cores drilled.

The trail would be 8 - 10-foot-wide and would serve as a multi-purpose trail.

The inspection would be first phase of the project. The second phase Mary Himmelberger is currently working on and can also be combined with D & L contributions. The deadline for this year's grant would be March 30, 2018 at 4:00 pm. ‘

Ms. Mildner stated that the Borough would need to provide a commitment letter confirming their participation in the project. She noted that working with the Borough of Wilson could also save money since Wilson has paving equipment.

Ms. Heebner commented that the Borough could obtain a DCED grant or a county grant.

Guest – Rob Mahady

Mr. Mahady commented that he is currently in the telephone call phase in forming the police department. Mr. Mahady has spoken with Ron Hulsizer of Northampton County 911 and is setting up a meeting with him in regard to what is needed by the County. He stated the County reached out to him once the County received the ORI number from the PA State Police.

Mr. Mahady stated that he spent time reviewing the webinar provided by PSAB and found the information to be helpful. He mentioned that he has received an application for a part-time police officer.

Councilman Dees asked if the contract was signed by Mr. Mahady. Mr. Mahady confirmed that it was signed.

Councilman Dees asked if it was possible for the part-time police department be up and running in six or nine months time. Mr. Mahady stated that would be "phenomenal." He indicated there were many things that still needed to be done and discussed, but it would not be unreasonable. Mr. Mahady stated that the state requires a Police Chief be sworn in by a County Judge

Ms. Heebner said that until the Police department is up and running there is no enforcement. Solicitor Goudsouzian agreed.

Mayor's Report –

The size of the pole barn that is being considered for our Municipal Maintenance Building still needs to be determined. The building needs to be able to handle at least 12 foot high garage doors.

Mayor DePaul stated that Councilman Mammana and he attended the February LVPC mitigation meeting and were given two additional forms that needed to be completed for the Borough.

Mayor DePaul asked about the estimates for replacing the guardrail at East and Third Streets.

Mayor DePaul attended the meeting for the Rails to Trails. The property for the trail is owned and currently maintained by the Borough.

Mayor DePaul stated that he received several telephone calls regarding Councilman Dees visit to County Council. Councilman Dees replied that he went to the County Council meeting as himself not as a Council person from the Borough of West Easton. Mr. Dees continued that he wanted to make the County Council aware of the trouble the residents have had with the DUI Treatment Center such as parked cars on Borough streets, the abundance of trash laying around on Main Street, the verbal abuse that residents have dealt with and the increasing number of walk-aways from the center.

Mayor DePaul said that he has already met with representatives from the Treatment Center. He noted that the Treatment Center now has a sheriff directing traffic during the busy hours in the morning.

Mayor DePaul also stated that he was meeting with the County Executive on Thursday, March 1st at 1:00 pm and that Borough Manager, Ms. Heebner would also be attending the meeting with him.

Solicitor's report –

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

Office Report –

Mr. Gehman handed out paperwork to Council members and the Mayor in regards to the Elected Officials Insurance. Mr. Gehman explained the paperwork and asked if everyone could return the paperwork back by the next meeting. Mr. Gehman also explained to Council members that the insurance is through PSAB. The program was started in 2002 and the Borough has participated since its inception. PSAB does not consider the payment of insurance premiums as compensation.

A discussion was held, and it was decided that the Public Safety/Personnel committee would take a look into the insurance.

Ms. Heebner told Council that she would like to send out an expanded newsletter to residents with the second quarter utility billing. The newsletter would cover basic information that all residents should know.

Ms. Heebner also reported that long-time resident; Leon Stull has provided the office his resignation letter from the Zoning Hearing Board.

Finally, Ms. Heebner extended a thank you to Borough resident, Jim Jankowich, for volunteering to help Dane Thatcher with work being done at the Police Station.

President's Report –

President James mentioned that the annual PSAB Conference would be held at the Hershey Lodge, June 10 – 13. He would appreciate input by May.

Policies – None

Resolutions – None

Ordinance – None

Round Table –

Councilman Dees thanked Mayor DePaul and Councilman Pete Mammana for filling in and attending the meeting regarding the trestles in his absence. Mr. Dees explained he was assigned a last minute work assignment by his employer.

Council President James asked Council to consider what funds to use for matching funds for the grant to be used for the inspection of the trestle.

Upon review of the estimates for the guardrail repair, the estimates were providing different lengths of guardrail repair and also varying lengths between support posts. Council asked if the estimates could be redone using the same length of repair and the distance between support posts.

Committee Reports –

Finance Committee – Committee chair, Mr. Lewis stated that the Finance Committee did meet and decided not to have the CDs being held at First Commonwealth be rolled over.

Mr. Lewis asked to schedule a Finance Committee meeting on Wednesday, March 7 at 5:30 p.m.

Highway/Property Committee – Committee chairperson, Henry Nodoline noted that we have received one estimate for the roof on the Municipal building.

Ms. Heebner asked for the specific specifications that are required for an estimate for the roof.

Mr. Nodoline also asked for estimates for a generator at the Municipal building.

No meeting was set for the Highway/Property Committee.

Public Safety/Personnel Committee – Committee chairwoman, Ms. Lake stated the committee met and reviewed a personnel issue.

Ms. Lake scheduled a Public Safety/Personnel Committee meeting for Wednesday, March 7 at 6:00 p.m.

Legal/Newsletter/Computer Committee – None.

Utilities Committee – Committee chairperson, Pete Mammana, stated that the committee met and listened to a presentation by David Bush on service charges and discussed the possibility of a rate study. Mr. Mammana scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, March 6 at 6:30 p.m.

Recreation – Jeff Breidinger, Jr, Committee chairman, stated that the committee did not meet. Mr. Breidinger scheduled a Recreation Committee meeting for Wednesday, February 28 at 6:00 p.m.

Grants Committee – Chairman, Mr. Dees will be attending a pre-application meeting for the upcoming Recycling grant on Thursday, March 1 at 11:15 a.m. at the County building.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Breidinger; Council agreed that the new recycling bins should be blue. A brief discussion was held. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Old Business –

Dane Thatcher reported that the Police Station is coming along.

New Business – None

Public Comment

Trude Hargraves of Second Street – asked if there aren't historical grants available to cover the cost of the trestles. She stated that she is sure the trestles have not been registered as "historical."

Ms. Hargraves asked why Council was considering changing the way the sewer charges are billed. Council President commented that the Council was just reviewing the fees and looking for a fairer way to charge.

Ms. Hargraves asked the Solicitor if the case between the Borough and Tricia Mezzacappa has been resolved. Solicitor Goudsouzian stated the matter is not resolved. He provided that a decision was made by the Commonwealth Court in the Borough's favor and the case now goes back to the Court of Common Pleas.

Councilman Breidinger brought up Wilson Recreation T-ball. Mr. Gehman said he spoke with Wayne Deemer, who has run the T-ball program and was told he was not returning this year. Mr. Gehman also spoke with Scott Palinkas who is the head of the Wilson Recreation Board and he was told that sign-ups are currently going on and they fully expect to utilize the field at Gerald W. Gross Community Park.

Ms. Heebner stated that the Borough should receive a formal letter from the Wilson Recreation Board requesting use of the field and also provide insurance information.

Entered Executive Session – 8:17 p.m.

Exited Executive Session – 9:25 p.m.

Councilman Dees reminded Council that on Thursday, March 8 at 5:30 p.m. a tour of the West Easton Treatment Center was available. In addition to Councilman Dees the following were interested: Council President James, Council members Mammana, Lake and Breidinger.

Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved to adjourn.

Meeting ended 9:28 p.m.

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