

**BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 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 and Mr. James noted there was a quorum. Council members Matthew Dees, Robert Lewis, Pete Mammana, David Bolash, Desiree Lake, Jeff Breidinger, Jr. and Junior Council member, Nathaniel Kober were present. Mayor, Daniel 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, Bruce Walter and Drew Zavada.

Upon motion by Ms. Lake, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved checks #16912 through #16978 from the General Fund. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved check #2073 through #2074 from the Sewer Fund. No discussion: Motion passed 7 - 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Breidinger; Council approved the Deposits and Receipts from December, 2018. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved the minutes for the December 10, 2018, Council meeting. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved the December 2018 Treasurer's Report. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Public Comment – None

Engineer's Report - None

Office Report

-Ms. Heebner spoke about the meeting with officers of Merchants Bank. The meeting was an annual review of our banking relationship. Any concerns were expressed with the officers and they in turn offered setting the Borough up to pay bills online at no cost to the Borough. A tentative meeting was set for a later date.

-Ms. Heebner explained to Council that the Borough office was contacted on Wednesday, January 2nd regarding the meeting on Thursday, January 3rd at the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC). The meeting was mandatory if the Borough expected any funding for the next 20 years for projects. Mr. Gehman attended the meeting.

-Mr. Gehman explained that the meeting was to update the Lehigh Valley 2030 plan. The LVPC had an open invitation to anyone – municipality, group or individual to submit project ideas for Future LV – The Regional Plan. Projects would then be evaluated and listed in priority. There is a limited amount of money available for these projects. Each project will be scheduled a 5 minute time slot to present to the Commission their ideas in March. Solicitor Goudsouzian suggested that the Borough present something.

Policies, Resolutions and Ordinances

-Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Breidinger; Council approved a donation to the Safety First Volunteer Fire Company in the amount of \$20,000.00. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0. Mr. James mentioned there was more set aside for the Fire Company if there were shortfalls later in the year.

-Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved a donation to Mary Meuser Library in the amount of \$8,700.00. Discussion – Mr. Dees commented that Wilson Borough has increased its donation to the library. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana: Council approved an additional donation to the Mary Meuser Library in the amount of \$300.00. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Mr. Bolash; Council approved a donation to the West Easton Scholarship Fund in the amount of \$1,000.00. No discussion. Motion passed 7 - 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved a donation to Suburban EMS in the amount of \$150.00. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Breidinger; Council approved the disposition of records from 2008 – 2013. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council proclaimed April 2019 as “Pennsylvania 811 Safe Digging Month.” No discussion. Motion passed 7-0

Solicitor’s report

-Solicitor Goudsouzian provided each Council member with a printed copy of the Borough ordinances which have been updated. An electronic copy was provided to the Borough Manager. Mr. Goudsouzian told Council to review the documents prior to the next Council meeting.

-Solicitor Goudsouzian stated he had a series of matters for litigation to be discussed in Executive Session.

President’s Report

-Council President Paul James wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mayor’s Report

- Mayor DePaul thanked Mr. Gehman for attending the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Lehigh Valley Future meeting. The Mayor stated that Mr. Mammana and he attended the Mitigation meetings held for the previous 18 months.
- The Mayor asked if the cost for trestle study was \$25,000.00. Ms. Heebner confirmed.
- Mayor DePaul commented that he felt the Borough did not need to spend the money to have a sewer study done. He cited examples of area municipalities who have raised their rates without a study.
- Mayor DePaul told Council that the portable radio for the Emergency Management Coordinator is in the Borough office to be picked up. The radio came from Williams Township and was given to Safety First Volunteer Fire Company. The radio has been programmed and is ready for use.
- Mayor DePaul stated that the Borough's Police Consultant is home with the flu.

Mr. Dees asked for clarification of the Sewer rate increase from the current amount of \$3.70/per 100 cubic feet to \$5.50/per 100 cubic feet. Solicitor Goudsouzian stated that it is hard to believe that a municipality would increase their sewer rates without doing a study first.

Round Table

Mr. Dees stated that he met with the Director of the Mary Meuser Library and suggested that the library apply for the Keystone Library Grant. Mr. Dees has set up a "Go Fund Me" account for matching amount the Library is required to raise. He stated that all donations are tax deductible. Mr. Dees also sent letters to all the Council members encouraging them to make a donation.

Council President James reminded everyone to complete their Ethic Financial Statements and return them to the office.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee – Mr. Lewis had nothing to report and no meeting was scheduled.

Highway/Property Committee – Mr. Bolash had no report but scheduled meeting for Thursday, January 17th at 6:00 pm, Thursday, January 24th at 6:00 pm and Thursday, January 31st at 6:00 pm.

Mr. Lewis asked how much was being spent for the park. Approximately \$20,000.00 was being spent (\$10,000 grant with \$10,000 matching funds coming from a different grant). Ms. Lake commented that bids should be apples to apples.

Public Safety/Personnel Committee – Ms. Lake scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, January 29th at 6:00 pm.

Legal/Newsletter/Computer Committee – Mr. James scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, January 23rd at 6:00 pm.

Utilities Committee – Mr. Mammana scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, January 30th at 6:00 pm.

Recreation Committee – Mr. Breidinger had nothing to report but scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, January 23rd at 5:30 pm.

Grants Committee – Mr. Dees did not schedule a meeting but informed Council he will attend a meeting at the Northampton Court House on Wednesday, February 6th to learn about the qualifications on the new casino grants.

Old Business –

The new recycling bins are anticipated to be delivered to residents in Spring 2019.

New Business –

A discussion was had on a Facebook post by Tricia Mezzacappa on her official West Easton Borough Constable page referring to District Attorney John Morganelli. Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Breidinger; Council approved the Borough Solicitor to draft a letter to be sent to the District Attorney Morganelli condemning the conduct of the West Easton Constable. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Additional Public Comment

Leon Stull – Second Street – Mr. Stull told Council that his water problem with his sidewalks still exists and is not going away.

Drew Zavada – Ridge Street – Mr. Zavada asked what the status of the Police force is. Mr. Dees replied that the station needs to be completed and equipment needs to be purchased.

Executive Session Entered 7:26 pm – Exited 7:50 pm

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Ms. Lake; Council approved the Solicitor to perform action necessary to initiate action in the Court of Common pleas. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Ms. Lake, seconded by Mr. Lewis, Council approved the Solicitor to take necessary actions to collect monies due and owed. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Ms.Lake, seconded by Mr. Breidinger; Council approved the Solicitor to take the necessary actions to enforce Ordinance #966. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council voted to adjourn meeting. Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

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