

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

December 14, 2020

APPROVED

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the Borough of West Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, was called to order at 6:37pm using Zoom videoconferencing, due to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

Roll was taken; Council President, Matthew Dees noted there was a quorum. Council members – Paul James, Ron Nixon, Pete Mammana, David Bolash, Janie Jones Brown and Ken Decker, Jr. were present. Mayor Daniel DePaul; Solicitor, Steve Goudsouzian of Goudsouzian & Associates; Borough Manager, Joan Heebner and West Easton Borough Police Chief, Robert Mahady were present. Members of the public in attendance: Carl Pierson.

-Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved expenditures as presented. Motion passed 7 - 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved the Deposits and Receipts from November, 2020. No discussion. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved the minutes from the November 9, 2020, Council meeting. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the Treasurer's Report for September, 2020. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Public Comment (Agenda Items) – None

Guest – Carl Pierson. Mr. Pierson wanted to bring to Council's attention a problem with the catch basins along Center and 9th Streets. He stated that during a recent bad storm 90% of the water flow was going into one basin and some of the catch basins are almost useless. He stated that the leaves/debris flowing from Wilson clogged up the basin and caused overflowing. He said that Center Street does not have much of a crown and if any roadwork is done in that area that should be taken into account. Any kind of disturbance pushes water to the center of the road. He believes the basins on Freemansburg, a Penndot road, are not doing their job; he believes that the system may be 100 years old. Mr. James offered to have the Utilities and Fire Committee take a look into the situation.

Engineer Report – None

Office Report – None

Sewer Report – Mr. James reported that the EAJSA is working on 2 different projects. One is an upgrade to pumps, and the other is due to people flushing rags, etc., and that is causing problems.

Resolutions - Mr. James made a motion to approve Resolution 2020 – 034, a Resolution providing for the fixing of the tax rate and collecting of an annual tax, remaining at 11.7 mills, for the calendar year 2021 for the Borough of West Easton, Northampton County, PA. Mr. Mammana seconded the motion. Motion passed, 7 – 0.

Mr. James made a motion to approve Resolution 2020 – 35, to adopt the 2021 budget. Motion passed, 7 – 0.

Solicitor’s Report – Solicitor Goudsouzian addressed the required ordinance by EAJSA to upgrade their rules and regulations. Mr. James made a motion to advertise the Ordinance amending the ordinances at chapter 18, “sewers and sewage disposal” to comply with updated requirements of the federal environmental protection agency. Ms. Jones Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed, 7 – 0.

President’s Report - Mr. Dees stated that the Borough's done well during the Covid-19 pandemic. As cases continue to rise, schools are closing early due to both students and staff getting sick. He urged everyone to stay vigilant, disinfect and continue to follow social distancing guidelines.

Police Chief’s Report – Chief Mahady reported that:

- he observed both the mayor and volunteer, Jim Jankowich, helping our maintenance man with the leaves and how nice that was to see.
- he noticed unhitched trailers parked close to stop signs, that people could not then see the stop signs. He thinks they should be parking further back so signs can be seen by motorists.
- he has concerns with some people with motorcycles covering them with black tarps with nothing reflective on them. He is concerned that others driving will not see them.
- he has been looking into the speed signs for the Borough. He has talked to other Police Chiefs and they are very happy with them. He has been in touch with Elan City and they have an offer of buy one get one free, at a cost of about \$5800 total.
- he swore in a part-time officer, Al Smith, who will begin working as soon as Council approves the policies and procedures.

Mayor’s Report - Mayor DePaul stated that:

- he attended a Nurture Nature Center meeting on hazards, including flooding on Lehigh Drive.
- he called the Game Commission to pick up a dead deer.
- he believes even when the pandemic is over the DUI Center will not be used by Northampton County as a DUI Center, thus no more income for the Borough. He said it will be and has been used for training sheriffs.
- he attended a meeting with UGI by the pressure station. UGI plans on doing work on Low, Palmer, 9th and Ridge Streets. He asked that they take care of Front Street as well.
- there was a recall from Ford on one of the police cars; he asked about having \$3,000 worth of repairs done by a retired mechanic, in addition to the recall. It was decided Ms. Heebner will look into how best to have that covered under our insurance, whether as an independent contractor or as an employee.

Round Table – Mr. Nixon announced he intends to resign from Council.

Committee Reports

Business and Finance Committee – None

Property and Roads Committee – None

Public Safety and Personnel Committee – A Zoom meeting was scheduled for 5:30pm on December 28th. They will discuss the possible part-time employment of a mechanic and the speed signs suggested by Police Chief Mahady.

Legal and Technology Committee – None

Utilities and Fire – Mr. James reported that they will continue to work on sewer rates. They will wait to schedule another meeting.

Parks and Recreation Committee – Ms. Jones Brown reported that:

-the Committee is in the midst of the Holiday Light Contest; the judging will take place this weekend. She thanked Mr. Decker, Jr. for getting gift cards for prizes for the contest. The committee has purchased signs for the yards of the winners.

-Ms. Jones Brown donated signs for the Rock Garden.

Grants and Public Relations Committee – None

Unfinished Business – None

New Business – None

Public Comment (Open) – None

Executive Session Entered 8:17pm – Exited 8:21 pm

Council discussed personnel matters and litigation.

-Upon motion by Ms. Jones Brown; seconded by Mr. James, no discussion, Council voted to adjourn the meeting by a vote of 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:24pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Joan Heebner, Secretary/Manager
