

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 24, 2022

APPROVED

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the Borough of West Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, was called to order at 6:30pm using Zoom videoconferencing, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Roll was taken; Council President Paul James noted there was a quorum. Council members – Janie Jones Brown, Matthew Dees, Pete Mammana, and David Bolash were present. Council member Kenneth Decker, Jr. was absent. Mayor Daniel DePaul; Solicitors Steve Goudsouzian and Brian Panella 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, Steve Klaver and Andrew Flood were present.

-Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved expenditures as presented. No discussion. Motion passed 5 - 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved the Deposits and Receipts from December 2021. No discussion. Motion passed 5 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved the minutes from the January 3, 2022, Council Reorganization Meeting. No discussion. Motion passed 5 - 0.

Filling Vacant Council Seat – Two residents put their name in for consideration of the 2-year council seat vacated by Mr. James: Andrew Flood and Steve Klaver. Questions were first asked of Mr. Flood: Mr. Dees asked Mr. Flood why he had not put his name on the ballot for the vacant seat; Mr. Flood said he did not know it was vacant and by the time he was aware of the open seat it was too late to get his name on the ballot. Mr. James asked what skills Mr. Flood would bring to council. Mr. Flood stated he was involved in construction and a UPS driver.

Next, questions were asked of Mr. Klaver: Mr. James stated that Mr. Klaver had been on council for a little while. He asked what Mr. Klaver brought to council. Mr. Klaver stated that he was vigilant in looking out for things in the town. He stated that he keeps after people littering and defacing property; he wants to maintain the rural environment and keep it a quiet, clean environment. Mr. Dees asked why Mr. Klaver had not run for election. Mr. Klaver stated that he didn't know there was an opening.

Mr. James asked for nominations for a candidate to serve on council. Mr. Flood was nominated by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Bolash. Mr. Klaver was nominated by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown.

A voice vote was taken on Mr. Flood: Mr. Bolash, yes; Mr. Mammana, no; Mr. Dees, yes; Ms. Jones Brown, no; Mr. James, no.

A voice vote was taken on Mr. Klaver: Mr. Bolash, yes; Mr. Mammana, yes; Mr. Dees, yes; Ms. Jones Brown, yes; Mr. James, yes.

Based on the voting, Mr. Klaver became the new council member, filling the vacancy. Mr. James thanked Mr. Flood for his interest in the vacancy and hopes he will try again.

Public Comment (Agenda Items) – None

Engineer’s Report – Based on the engineer’s recommendation, Mr. Mammana made a motion to approve payment #2 to Kobalt Construction in the amount of \$40,050; seconded by Mr. Dees. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

Office Report – None

Sewer Report – Mr. James referred to a chart in Council’s packet, “EAJSA-Schedule for Major Projects in 2022”. He said that the EAJSA is always upgrading and mentioned the disk filter project. He shared that Lafayette College seniors are working on a project, a computer model of the whole system which would make it easier to pinpoint problems.

Mayor DePaul asked if the Borough would be receiving a rebate or did the Borough owe money. Mr. James replied that the Borough would be receiving about an \$8,000 rebate from the EAJSA.

Resolutions – Mr. Dees made a motion to approve Resolution 2022 – 02, to approve the disposition of records 2014-2017 as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual; seconded by Ms. Jones Brown. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Mammana made a motion to approve Resolution 2022 – 03, to approve the donation of \$9,000 to Mary Meuser Memorial Library as approved in the 2022 budget; seconded by Mr. Bolash. No discussion. Motion passed 5-1 with Mr. Dees dissenting.

Mr. Mamman made a motion to approve Resolution 2022 – 04, to approve the donation of \$150 to Suburban EMS as approved in the 2022 budget; seconded by Ms. Jones Brown. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

Solicitor’s Report – Solicitor Goudsouzian reported that he had legal matters to discuss in Executive Session.

President’s Report – Mr. James reminded everyone that the Statement of Financial Interests was in their packets and to please get it back to the office as soon as possible, even though it is not due until May. He stated that he plans to let the Committees stay the way they are; if anyone wants a change to get in touch with him. Mr. James stated that the government would send out four Covid testing kits per household.

Police Chief's Report – Chief Mahady stated that there were 47 calls for service. There were three calls for criminal mischief, three calls for theft/fraud. The Police Department issued 29 Borough citations, 12 warnings and 19 PA traffic citations. He also mentioned his concern that some people are not moving their cars after a snowfall, in order for Public Works to be able to clean up the area, leaving the streets and area around the cars messy. He does not want to rely on the 72-hour rule of not moving a vehicle, but feels it would make the area safer for walkers, etc.

7:02pm - Ms. Jones Brown left the meeting.

Mayor's Report - Mayor DePaul reported that he has been working with the Fire Company on the split from the Social Club as it may affect the Borough.

Round Table – Mr. Dees reported that a resident asked about a Public Works employee clearing out a personal car in the Borough to which Mr. Dees replied that the worker must have been doing it on his own time. He plans to speak to the Public Works crew directly as this would set a bad precedent. Mayor DePaul asked where this supposedly happened and Mr. Dees replied that it was up around 9th or 10th Street. Mayor DePaul stated that he was unaware of anything like this happening.

Committee Reports

Business and Finance Committee – None

Property and Roads Committee – Mr. Klaver asked if there was any word on the grant for the trestle removal. Mr. Dees said that we would probably not hear anything until the spring. Mr. Klaver asked about the situation with sidewalks and curbs, and it was agreed that any action would wait until winter was over.

Public Safety and Personnel Committee – None; Mr. Dees asked that when the list of the worst sidewalks and curbs was available, that it be shared with his committee.

Legal and Technology Committee – None

Utilities and Fire Committee – Mr. James is looking into information on the cost of a possible streetlight on Third Street. Mayor DePaul suggested that Mr. James check with the people that live there to see if they even wanted a streetlight there, that they may not want a light shining in their homes at night.

Parks and Recreation Committee – None

Grants and Public Relations Committee – Ms. Heebner reported that we are almost ready to close out the Police Car grant. We are just waiting for keyless entry to be installed.

Unfinished Business – Mayor DePaul mentioned again that he had not heard of any Borough employees cleaning a resident's car out on Borough time.

New Business – None

Public Comment (Open) – Mr. Pierson, 9th Street, has concerns with the Laurel Hill project. His concern is that there are 12-foot-high retaining walls, and the plans call for a fence on top of the walls. The plans state that the fence will be an eight-foot-high chain link fence or a 6-foot wood fence or a 6-foot alternate material fence. He asked what the alternate material fence could be. Ms. Heebner will check with the engineers and get back to Mr. Pierson when she receives an answer to this question.

Executive Session Entered 7:23pm – Exited 7:40pm

Council discussed legal matters.

-Upon motion by Mr. Dees; seconded by Mr. Mammana, no discussion, Council voted to adjourn the meeting by a vote of 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:41pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Joan Heebner, Secretary/Manager
