

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 8, 2021

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 emergency.

Roll was taken; Council President Matthew Dees noted there was a quorum. Council members – Paul James, Pete Mammanna, David Bolash, Janie Jones Brown, Ken Decker, Jr. and Steve Klaver were present. 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, Leon Stull, and Paul Brown.

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

-Upon motion by Mr. Mammanna seconded by Mr. James; Council approved the Deposits and Receipts from February 2021. Motion passed 7 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Mammanna; Council approved the minutes from the February 8, 2021, Council meeting. Motion passed 7- 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved the Treasurer’s Report for February 2021. Motion passed 7 – 0.

Public Comment (Agenda Items) – None

Engineer Report – None

Office Report – Ms. Heebner reported that the audit was almost done; they are just waiting for a final letter. Ms. Heebner once again thanked Mayor DePaul for donating so much of his time to the Borough. She said he is practically working full time for the borough and figures his hourly wage is 65 cents. Mayor DePaul continued to spend many hours plowing and salting the roads and working on several of the vehicles. For those not on Facebook, she reported that Mayor DePaul and Mr. Mammanna went all over the borough and picked up almost all the trash that Advanced Disposal did not pick up due to the snow so that the borough could start with a clean slate rather than 2 or 3 weeks of trash laying around. Bean was called in to get rid of excess snow and Mayor DePaul kept track of their hours and the borough was able to get a \$575 refund on their invoice as the borough was incorrectly charged for extra time.

Sewer Report – Mr. James reported that the EAJSA, in addition to asking people to refrain from flushing rags, is also asking people to not dump their grease down the drain. When grease gets in the drains and gets cold it solidifies which increases more work by the technicians. They ask that residents capture and throw out grease rather than pouring it down the drain.

Solicitor's Report – Solicitor Goudsouzian discussed Resolution 2021-12. Mr. Mammana made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-12, A Resolution to Adopt an Addendum No. 1 to the 1988 Sewage Treatment Service Agreement between the Borough of West Easton and the Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority; seconded by Mr. James. No discussion. Motion passed 7-0.

President's Report - Mr. Dees:

- welcomed Mr. Steve Klaver to council.
- mentioned the snowstorm and said the Borough is doing the best it can with the resources it has.
- thanked Mayor DePaul for the good job he has done.
- stated that the Borough is still financially sound.
- reminded residents that if they want their local tax millage to remain at 11.7, as it has since 2016, the inconvenience of some tasks sometimes delayed, due to the lack of manpower should be expected, as in the case when we receive more than 2 feet of snow. Should residents decide that more personnel are needed, the council will have to hire additional workers, which will undoubtedly increase taxes. He pointed out that more workers would not necessarily accomplish the task of clearing snow after that last storm. He saw one community that was still clearing their public sidewalks a week after the event.

Police Chief's Report – Chief Mahady said that he was impressed as to how much work goes into running the borough. He mentioned the problems that disposable wipes are causing to the sewer system. He told council about working with PSP, warrants had been served that would help eradicate some of the drug activity.

Mayor's Report - Mayor DePaul reported that:

- he called another snow emergency and worked to get cars moved rather than having them towed.
- he stays with the mechanic when he comes down to work on equipment and vehicles.
- called Bean in to remove excess snow for 2 days.
- there is no FEMA money available for this year's snowstorms.
- one of the cutter blades fell off one of the snowplows.
- he had an update on UGI work on 10th Street: on the 10th and Low corner the line was so bad they decided to run a new line. He asked them to remove all the snow from the 200 and 300 block of 10th Street and they did. He feels UGI should have to chip in to repair all the roads they have ruined from their work.
- the Crown Vic police car was fixed through a recall and the Palmer SUV got 4 new tires and had the recall taken care of.

Round Table – Mr. Dees asked Mr. Pierson a couple of questions about his year-end report. Mr. Pierson said he would get back to him with answers.

Committee Reports

Business and Finance Committee – Mr. Mammana stated that interest rates are way down everywhere. He said we would earn more money by transferring the matured CDs back to our checking accounts at Fidelity Bank. Mr. James made a motion to transfer the matured Sewer CD of \$159,000+ from PLGIT into the sewer account at Fidelity Bank; seconded by Mr. Mammana. No discussion. Motion passed 7-0. Mr. Mammana made a motion to transfer the matured General CD of \$249,570+ from PLGIT into the Fidelity Bank General account; seconded by Mr. James. No discussion. Motion passed 7-0.

Property and Roads Committee – Mr. Klaver reported that at their meeting they discussed snow removal, UGI, paving and the Ridge Street garage.

Public Safety and Personnel Committee – None

Legal and Technology Committee – Mr. Dees thanked Mr. Bolash for his sharing his discovery on how to search all the codification PDFs at one time. Mr. Bolash said he would send the files to council. Zoom meeting was set for March 30th at 5:15pm.

Utilities and Fire – Mr. James said the committee worked on sewer rates and they will continue to work on the rates. Meeting set for March 24th, 6pm, at Borough Hall.

Parks and Recreation Committee – Ms. Jones Brown shared that her committee had scheduled a clean-up event for April 17th from 10:30-11:30am, meeting at Gross Park. A rain date of April 24th was scheduled if needed. Covid restrictions will apply, wearing masks and 6-foot social distancing.

Grants and Public Relations Committee – None

Unfinished Business – Mr. Dees asked if the spikes from the sidewalk had been removed; he was told that they had been. Mayor DePaul said that Jeff Murray from Williams Township replaced the light bulbs in the fire station with LED lights and that our mechanic should be able to save us money by doing a pre-inspection of vehicles. Mr. Bolash asked Solicitor Goudsouzian to explain what the “A.O.” in the codification book meant. He was told that it meant “Act Of”.

New Business – Mr. Paul Brown was in attendance and expressed an interest in being appointed to the Zoning Board. Mr. Mammana made a motion to appoint Mr. Brown to the Zoning Board; seconded by Ms. Jones Brown. No discussion. Motion passed 7-0.

-There was a letter of interest from Mr. Robert Adams to be appointed to the Zoning Board. Mr. James made the motion to appoint Mr. Robert Adams to the Zoning board; seconded by Mr. Decker, Jr. No discussion. Motion passed 7-0.

-Mr. James made a motion to allow Wilson Baseball and Softball Association the use of the field at Gross Park; seconded by Mr. Mammana. No discussion. Motion passed 7-0.

-Mr. Bolash made the motion to approve the spending of \$2189 for the purchase of Fortigate Firewall as presented by Curtis Scott; seconded by Mr. James. Motion passed 7-0.

Public Comment (Open) – Leon Stull, 2nd Street, once again questioned if zoning hearing procedures were being carried out correctly. He believed that there was going to be a zoning hearing the next day and he had not seen any ads for it. Ms. Heebner explained that there would be a hearing scheduled *soon*, not the next day. He questioned that zoning members were not being sworn in as he was. Solicitor Goudsouzian explained that zoning members do not need to be sworn in.

-Carl Pierson, 9th Street, asked if UGI provided the borough with drawings of where the new gas lines were being placed, in order to make it easier for PA one call markings.

Executive Session Entered 8pm – Exited 8:04 pm.

Council discussed legal matters.

-Upon motion by Mr. Mammana; seconded by Mr. James, no discussion, Council voted to adjourn the meeting by a vote of 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:04pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Joan Heebner, Secretary/Manager
