

# **BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**May 11, 2020**

## ***APPROVED***

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the Borough of West Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, was called to order at 6:39 pm 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, Dave Bolash, Pete Mammana, Janie Jones Brown and Ken Decker, Jr. were present. Council member, Ron Nixon was absent. Mayor Daniel DePaul; Solicitor, Steve Goudsouzian of Goudsouzian & Associates; Borough Manager, Joan Heebner and Borough Police Chief, Robert Mahady were present. Members of the public in attendance: David Bogusky, Leon Stull, Kenneth Teske, Robert Harzil and Lex Wilkinson.

- Upon motion by Ms. Jones Brown, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved checks #17589 through #17611 from the General Fund. No discussion. Motion passed 6 - 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved payments #A5235 through #A5256 from the General Fund Online bill pay. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved payments #X0057 through #X0059 from the General Fund Online payments. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved activity from 4/9/2020 through 5/11/2020 from the Debit account. No discussion: Motion passed 6 - 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved payment #B5017 from the Sewer Fund. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the Deposits and Receipts from April 2020. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Ms. Jones Brown; Council approved the minutes from the April 13, 2020 Council meeting. Motion passed 6 – 0.
- Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Mr. James; Council approved the Treasurer's Report for April 2020. Motion passed 6 – 0.

**Public Comment (Agenda Items) – None**

**Engineer Report – None**

**Office Report**

-Ms. Heebner informed council that so far the COVID-19 pandemic does not appear to have impacted our tax revenues. Mr. Dees added that we will probably see a decline in the DUI resident fee income.

### **Sewer Report**

-Mr. James reported that EAJSA has approved a study, at a cost of \$33,000+ on a leaky main in the Lehigh River, previously repaired at a cost of approximately \$100,000.

### **Policies, Resolutions and Ordinances** - None

### **Solicitor's Report** - None

### **President's Report** -

-As of today, the Borough of West Easton remains at a standstill when it comes to planned projects for 2020.

-Our usual social events are requiring cancellation, due to social distancing guidelines.

-The borough may lose approximately a quarter of the yearly revenue from the Work Release Center, due to the lack of residents in the facility, following what is believed to be a temporary move ordered by the County Executive.

-Because West Easton has no debt and has floated no bonds, with recent Council administrations securing grants for projects and being fiscally responsible, the borough remains on sound financial footing and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

-West Easton has a healthy reserve and despite any lost revenue due to the pandemic, we will emerge from this crisis stronger than some other communities in the Lehigh Valley, who are already reporting financial problems.

-Mr. Dees requested the Committee Chairs to hold their committee meetings if they have business that needs to be addressed. Meetings can be held using Zoom, just as this one is being done. While we may not be able to take up all matters, there are still a number of them that can be addressed and possibly resolved.

### **Mayor's Report**

-Mayor DePaul reported that there are no residents at the DUI Center now and that there will probably not be any there until the end of June, beginning of July.

-He reminded everyone that there is free drive-through testing in the parking lot of Easton Hospital, with Tuesday being the last day. He was tested and had his results in 24 hours.

### **Round Table**

Upon a motion made Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Mammana, Council voted to accept Bill Concolino's resignation from his Emergency Management Coordinator position. Discussion was had. Motion passed 6-0.

Ms. Jones Brown reminded everyone to look out for each other;

- thanked Dane, David and Joan for keeping the borough going.

-reported that due to the current conditions any formal Memorial Day ceremony would have to be canceled.

-informed everyone that the LINC'S Center is giving out food each Monday, 9am-11am for people struggling, one box per family per month

- let us know that there are "blessing boxes" (that look like little houses on poles) that have food in them; one is located in front of Mary Meuser Library.

Mr. James stated that he also got tested at Easton Hospital. He stated that he was happy to see Chief Mahady driving around the Borough. He also thanked Bill Concolino for his efforts as EMC for the Borough. He appreciated all the time and effort that Bill put into being our EMC.

### **Committee Reports**

**Business and Finance Committee** – A motion by Mr. Mamanna, seconded by Mr. James; Council approved rolling over two CDs for no more than a year at the best rate when they come due in June, 2020. Discussion was had. Motion passed 6-0.

**Property and Roads Committee** – Mr. Bolash will look into getting in touch with Bubba and Sons about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street sidewalk situation.

**Public Safety and Personnel Committee** – Chief Mahady reported that:

- still need to work on parking citations and fines.
- residents should be calling 911 or the non-emergency number instead of his personal cell phone.
- hopes to have a full rollout; he's been working under a soft rollout for a while.
- people set off fireworks at park; sent up lanterns.
- six cameras are installed at the Police Station.
- so far issues reported to him have been taken care of with a simple discussion.
- given out about 50 warnings; most people have complied with just warnings.

**Legal and Technology Committee** – Mr. Bolash discussed:

- looking into Wilson zoning ordinance to review.
- that he'd like to get the work product used on codification.

**Utilities and Fire** – Mr. James mentioned:

- need to talk to Fire Chief about their status; hopefully schedule a meeting with Chief Bogari.

**Parks and Recreation Committee** – Chair, Ms. Jones Brown discussed:

- plans for National Night Out are uncertain at this time.

Ms. Jones Brown made a motion to open the park common area, keeping social distancing in mind, but that the playground equipment and basketball hoops remain closed to the public; Mr. James seconded the motion. Discussion was had. Motion passed 6-0.

- Ms. Jones Brown asks that everyone continue to collect red, white and blue bottle caps and hold them until a later date.

**Grants and Public Relations Committee** – None

**Unfinished Business** – None

**New Business** – None

**Public Comment (Open)**

– Kenny Teske – Asked if the Borough was happy with IQ Fibers. Mr. Dees replied that IQ Fibers appears to have met the ordinance regarding noise levels, therefore the Borough is satisfied. Mr. Teske then asked about getting a transcript of the hearing, Solicitor Goudszouian informed Mr. Teske that he could get information from Judge Yetter’s office.

-Leon Stull – Asked if he will find out what is decided after executive session. Mr. Dees said that a decision would be made following Executive Session.

-Lex Wilkinson – co-owner of Dubs on 5<sup>th</sup>, asked if when we go to yellow, still maintaining social distancing, if he could put a few tables outside to serve more people until the problem is mitigated. Solicitor Goudszouian suggested that council look into it and get back to him.

**Executive Session Entered 8:15pm – Exited 8:57 pm**

-Mr. James made a motion that the Borough would like to explore alternative solutions to replacing the sidewalks at 306 2<sup>nd</sup> Street; Mr. Bolash seconded the motion. Discussion was had. Motion passed 6-0.

-Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Mammana, no discussion, Council voted to adjourn the meeting 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Joan Heebner, Secretary/Manager