

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

**November 8, 2021**

## ***APPROVED***

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the Borough of West Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, was called to order at 6:33pm using Zoom videoconferencing, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

-Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Mr. Decker, Jr.; Council approved expenditures as presented. No discussion. Motion passed 6 - 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. James seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the Deposits and Receipts from October 2021. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Decker, Jr.; Council approved the minutes from the August 9, 2021, Council Meeting. No discussion. Motion passed 6 - 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Mr. James.; Council approved the minutes from the October 11, 2021, Council Meeting. No discussion. Motion passed 6 - 0.

-Upon motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Decker, Jr.; Council approved the Treasurer's Report for September 2021. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0

-Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Mr. James; Council approved the Treasurer's Report for October 2021. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0

**Public Comment (Agenda Items)** – Carl Pierson, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, mentioned there is a dead tree at the park on 9<sup>th</sup> Street and during a storm a lot of branches fell down. He asked about the new development going in, Laurel Hill, and asked if there were provisions to put fencing on top of the retaining wall as he noticed they were rather high and wondered about children climbing them. Solicitor Goudsouzian informed Mr. Pierson that the plans had been approved by the Laurel Hill engineer and our own engineer. (Mr. Pierson left the meeting at 6:41pm.)

**Engineer's Report** – Upon a motion by Mr. James seconded by Mr. Decker, Jr., council granted the release of funds from the Developer's Escrow in the amount of Three Hundred One Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty-Three Dollars and 22/100 (\$301,723.22) for completed work to date, based on the inspection of the Borough Engineer. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

**Office Report** – Mr. Mammana made a motion to approve meeting dates for 2022, as presented; seconded by Mr. Decker, Jr. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

-Mr. James made a motion to approve the sale of the old leaf vac and box for \$4400; seconded by Mr. Mammana. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

-Ms. Heebner reminded everyone that there was a zoning hearing on Monday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm for 84 Main Street; she also mentioned that CD rates are still really low and we still do better by keeping our money in the .2% interest bearing accounts at Fidelity.

**Sewer Report** – Mr. James reported that the EAJSA is experiencing a delay in their disk filter project. The disk filter is currently stuck in Italy, nothing is moving, due to do Italy dock workers protesting the vaccine mandate. The EAJSA will be purchasing a new pickup truck at a cost of \$33,000; it is expected to take 28 weeks until delivery.

**Ordinances, Resolutions and Policies** – Mr. Dees asked for a motion to approve the revised Ordinance 2021-29, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE PENALTIES FOR LATE PAYMENT OF SEWER AND REFUSE SERVICE. Motion was made by Mr. Mammana; seconded by Mr. Decker, Jr. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

-Mr. Mammana made a motion to approve the advertising of the 2022 proposed budget; seconded by Mr. Klaver. 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. Dees stated that most of what he had intended to discuss had already been covered. He noted that council would be discussing a noise ordinance in Executive Session and asked the public if they had any comments or concerns that they would like to share on that matter. No one responded.

**Police Chief's Report** – Chief Mahady reported that WEPD had 36 calls for service the past month; 12 Borough and three PSP tickets had been issued. In addition to the time Police Chief Mahady worked, 21 days were partially covered. Mr. Dees asked if there was any word on the incident on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street; Chief Mahady reported that all he could say at this time was that it was self-inflicted. Chief Mahady will check the security video for the earlier vandalism of a park bench at Gross Park.

**Mayor's Report** - Mayor DePaul stated that:

-he forgot to share last month, that a couple came to him wanting to be married that day.

-pictures were taken of leaf vac and box and it was sold on Municibid. He was not surprised that it sold for so much, \$4400, as it is a good machine plus we had the box included which most did not.

-on 9<sup>th</sup> Street, he noticed test holes had been drilled; he wants someone from UGI to come and fill them in before water gets in there and it freezes.

-the new leaf vac is having a few little “bugs” so far, which he feels you often get with new vehicles. When it is raised and lowered, oil leaks out, maybe from one of the valves. The vendor had a service truck come down and the technician spent a couple of hours going over it. It is ok to use for now, until the proper replacement part is in.

-he went to the Northampton County awards festival and had lunch with the DA; the DA gave the Borough \$5500 from the drug forfeiture money, toward the purchase of our new police car.

-he wondered what was happening with the list of sidewalks that need to be repaired.

### **Round Table** – None

### **Committee Reports**

**Business and Finance Committee** – The Committee finalized the proposed 2022 budget, which council had already voted to advertise. No meeting needed.

**Property and Roads Committee** – Mr. Klaver asked about the sidewalk list from his committee members. Mr. Bolash stated he had emailed his list to Mr. Klaver. Mr. Decker, Jr. said he was not sure what criteria he should be using to make his list, just how bad they had to be. Mr. Dees said he'd like a list of the five worst sidewalks in Mr. Decker's section. (Mr. Klaver had divided the Borough into 3 sections.)

-Mr. Klaver said he continues to see the Waste Management recycle truck leaving huge stains on the streets. They are unsightly, unsanitary and smell badly when it is hot. He notices them especially on a hill.

**Public Safety and Personnel Committee** – Mr. Dees reported that the committee met and talked about a police vehicle and vandalism at Gross Park. He had personnel matters to discuss in Executive Session.

**Legal and Technology Committee** – None

**Utilities and Fire Committee** – None

**Parks and Recreation Committee** – Ms. Heebner read the notes Ms. Jones Brown had sent to her: The committee will be holding a Holiday Light Contest; judging will be done December 16 - 18 by the committee and mayor and anyone on council that would like to join. Hopefully Mr. Decker will be able to get some gift cards for awards; if any council members would like to donate prizes, that would be appreciated as well.

-Mr. Decker, Jr. has offered to sand the drain by the basketball court and the committee will touch up the drain.

-Sharon Niko asked about donating a tree in her father's memory. They would like to know if there are any rules or policies on this process.

-Ms. Jones Brown wishes everyone a happy and healthy November and Thanksgiving. There is no meeting set for November; they will meet in December and that date will be set up at the December meeting.

**Grants and Public Relations Committee** – None

### **Unfinished Business** – None

**New Business** – Mr. James informed everyone that the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission will be holding a meeting on November 30<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm. He plans on attending and has the information if anyone else is interested.

**Public Comment (Open)** – Leon Stull, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, asked why we still are having virtual meetings when no one else is having them. Mr. Dees replied that our meeting room is very small, social distancing would present a problem, and with some who are anti-vaxxers, or may refuse to wear a mask, there could be a potential conflict. Until masks are no longer recommended in public gatherings, the borough will continue with virtual council meetings.

He also asked if the office was open to the public yet; he was told it is not. He said that 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, between Center and East is so dark that you cannot see at night, and it is an emergency route. He told Mayor DePaul that UGI was probably looking for gas leaks. Mayor DePaul said it had been several months and he felt they should have been filled in by now.

**Executive Session Entered 7:16pm – Exited 7:45pm**

Council discussed legal and personnel matters.

Upon exiting Executive Session, Mr. Mammana made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bolash, to approve the following pay rate adjustments starting January 2022:

Brandon Moffitt, public works helper, \$14/hr  
David Gehman, clerk \$16.75/hr  
Dane Thatcher, public works supervisor, \$20.50/hr  
Part-time police officers, \$22/hr  
Robert Mahady, Police chief, \$26/hr  
Joan Heebner, Borough Manager/Secretary/AORO, \$26/hr

No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

Mayor DePaul added that on Saturday night at 901 Ridge Street, a tree fell across the street and the sidewalk and had to be taken care of immediately. He called in Dane Thatcher, maintenance, and was able to get three volunteers, Mr. Mammana, Mr. Jim Jankowich, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor tenant at the address, to help clear up the tree. The cleanup took several hours. Mr. Dees thanked Mr. DePaul and the others for their work.

There will be a second meeting this month, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, to focus on a noise ordinance which Solicitor Goudsouzian will have ready for council at that time.

-Upon motion by Mr. James; seconded by Mr. Bolash, no discussion, Council voted to adjourn the meeting by a vote of 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Joan Heebner, Secretary/Manager

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