

BOROUGH OF WEST EASTON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 11, 2019

APPROVED

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the Borough of West Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, was called to order at 6:30 pm by Council President Paul James in Council Chambers of the West Easton Municipal Building, 237 Seventh Street, West Easton, Pennsylvania.

Roll was taken and Mr. James noted there was a quorum. Council members Matthew Dees, Robert Lewis, Pete Mammana, David Bolash, and Jeff Breidinger, Jr. were present. Council member, Desiree Lake and Junior Council member Nathaniel Kober were absent. Mayor, Daniel DePaul; Solicitor, Steve Goudsouzian of Goudsouzian & Associates; Borough Manager, Joan Heebner; Borough Senior Clerk, David Gehman, Borough Treasurer, Carl Pierson and Borough Maintenance Supervisor, Dane Thatcher were present. Members of the public in attendance: Bonnie Mammana, Leon Stull and Trude Hargraves.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved checks #16984 through #17029 from the General Fund. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Mr. Dees; Council approved check #2075 from the Sewer Fund. No discussion: Motion passed 6 - 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Mr. Lewis; Council approved the Deposits and Receipts from January 2019. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the minutes for the January 14, 2019, Council meeting. Mr. Dees questioned the general wording of a motion. Ms. Heebner replied that the wording was correct. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved the January 2019, Treasurer's Report.

Discussion – Mr. Breidinger asked if the amount of money on hand was sufficient. Mr. Dees asked Mr. Pierson what balance the Borough should maintain. Mr. Pierson stated that the balances are excessive and more than comfortable. Mayor DePaul agreed with the recommendations that were set forth in the Treasurer's notes. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Public Comment

-Trude Hargraves of Second Street – Ms. Hargraves stated that the Borough is again in litigation with Tricia Mezzacappa. Solicitor Goudsouzian stated that it was correct. Ms. Hargraves referred to a report on WFMZ News that that Governor Wolf was trying to pass a bill

to charge municipalities for State Police protection. Mayor DePaul stated that he had the answer in his report.

-Carl Pierson of Ninth Street – Mr. Pierson asked about codification.

Engineer's Report - None

Office Report

-Ms. Heebner asked Council for a motion to adopt the current Right-To-Know fee schedule from October 2018.

Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded to Mr. Lewis; Council adopted the current Right-To-Know fee schedule. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Policies, Resolutions and Ordinances - None

Solicitor's Report

-Solicitor Goudsouzian has potential litigation to be discussed during Executive Session.

-Mr. James stated that all Council members received a printed copy of the codification to read and make changes. Mr. Dees asked if changes should be sent to the legal committee. Mr. James asked that all changes or suggestions be forwarded to him directly.

President's Report

-Mr. James mentioned the email from the Northampton County District Attorney John Morganelli stating that the Borough of West Easton was receiving \$10,000 for the Police Department.

-Mr. James asked Council members to continue to review the 3-ring binder containing the Codification and to pass onto him any corrections or suggestions.

-Mr. James commented that the Borough has received a report on the railway/trestle. Mr. Dees asked if the report is part of the Public Record yet.

-Ms. Heebner asked Council to approve the final payment due to Dutchman Contracting for the Pole Building.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council approved final payment to Dutchman Contracting in the amount \$4,890.15.

Discussion – Mayor DePaul asked if the Borough received a site plan from Dutchman Contracting. Ms. Heebner stated, “No.” Motion passed 5 – 1. Dissenting vote, Mr, Dees

Mayor's Report

-Mayor DePaul stated Governor Wolf has introduced a bill requiring municipalities to pay for State Police coverage. Depending upon the size of the municipality, the municipality can be charged from \$8/resident to \$166/resident. Mayor DePaul said currently there is not enough support for the bill to be passed.

-Mayor DePaul mentioned a post on Facebook about furniture underneath the train trestle on Main Street. The furniture consisted of a couch, television and microwave. Mayor DePaul contacted the property owner of 73 Main Street and told him he needed to have the furniture removed. The furniture was moved by the next day.

-Finally, Mr. DePaul commented on purchases he recently made with the Borough's debit card. Mayor DePaul stated that the Borough's equipment requires maintenance. He was able to save the Borough money on recent purchases such as the fuel pump for the leaf blower, replacing the power steering pump on the Jeep, replacing the motor lift on the bed of the new truck and replacing the spinner on the salt spreader on the old truck.

Round Table - None

Committee Reports

Finance Committee – Mr. Lewis had nothing to report. Council President James suggested that a meeting be scheduled to discuss additional investment in CDs. A meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 6:00 pm.

Mr. Gehman told Council that the officers at Merchants Bank stated they would like us to contact them to see if they can match any CD rate rather than just pulling the money from Merchants Bank.

Highway/Property Committee – Mr. Bolash asked Council their preference in having a water feature included in the final proposal. Council agreed to have a water feature but one that was self draining. Solicitor Goudsouzian stated that Council needed at least three proposals to be considered.

-Mr. Bolash expressed concerns about a water feature. First, a maintenance issue and secondly, the Springhouse and metal fencing. Dane Thatcher was asked about maintenance of the Springhouse and he stated that the fencing is needed to keep out garbage from being thrown into the pond.

-The following meetings were scheduled for the committee to hear final proposals.

Thursday, February 21, 2019 at 6:00 pm

Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 6:00 pm

Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 6:00 pm

-Mr. Bolash will work with the Borough office in contacting the landscapers to schedule their presentations.

Public Safety/Personnel Committee – Committee chair, Desiree Lake was absent so Mr. Dees scheduled the following meetings

Thursday, February 21, 2019 at 7:00 pm with Rob Mahady

Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 7:00 pm with Bill Concolino

Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 7:00 pm with Rob Mahady

Mr. Dees said the Committee would like to meet with Mr. Concolino to restart the process of purchasing an emergency generator for the Borough.

Legal/Newsletter/Computer Committee – Mr. James scheduled a committee meeting on Wednesday, February 20 at 6:00 pm. He stated that the committee would take a look at the landlord ordinance and propose changes.

Mayor DePaul asked the Solicitor what power the Borough currently has to enforce or make rental properties safer. Solicitor Goudsouzian stated that is why he included the Landlord ordinance in the codification. Currently, the Borough is powerless to enforce code infractions.

Utilities Committee – Mr. Mammana scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 6:00 pm

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Breidinger; for Council to approve the Sewer Rate study to be done by Keystone Alliance.

Discussion – Ms. Heebner commented that there would be no income in the Sewer Fund for up to six months when the rate is changed from a flat rate to usage. Mayor DePaul stated that the Borough's rate is the lowest in the region. Mr. James asked for a voice vote. Mr. Breidinger – No, Mr. Bolash – No, Mr. Mammana – No, Mr. Lewis – Yes, Mr. Dees – No, Mr. James – Yes. Motion failed 2 – 4.

Recreation Committee – Mr. Breidinger did not schedule a meeting. Mr. Breidinger spoke about the Easter Egg Hunt. He stated that some of the improvements they were working on – to improve the signs used or an alternative was to rope off the areas used by each age group.
-Mr. Breidinger was hoping to do something for Mothers' Day – hopefully get a florist involved maybe get additional rain barrels to be given away.
-Mr. Breidinger reported to Council about the Wilson Recreation Board meeting which he attended. Mr. Breidinger reported that the meeting date for the Wilson Recreation Board will be changed and they voted on changes to the by-laws.

Grants Committee – Mr. Dees scheduled a Grant Committee meeting for Tuesday, February 26, 2019 at 6:00 pm to discuss two new grant opportunities.
- Mr. Dees reported that he had completed the survey on SurveyMonkey.com in regards to the trail through West Easton for the LV Intermodal Projects.

Old Business –

-Mayor DePaul asked about the abandoned cars around Niko Park.
-Mr. Dees asked if the Police Station could be wired for internet and telephone.

Upon motion by Mr. Dees, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council authorized the Borough Manager to have the Police Station wired for internet and telephone. No discussion. Motion passed 6 - 0.

New Business – None

Additional Public Comment

Rob Mahady – Police Consultant – Mr. Mahady stated that he is currently looking at office equipment for the Police Station. He has spoken to the County communications director and is also looking at an RMS System as far as a Computer Software program for the department.
-Mr. Mahady also stated that he is working on Policy and Procedures for the Police Department.

Bill Concolino – Spring Street – Emergency Management Coordinator – Mr. Concolino stated he spoke with the State Police about the possible removal of cars during a snow emergency.

-Mr. Mahady suggested two vendors in the local area that could be helpful to the Borough with car removal.

Trude Hargrave – Second Street – Again, asked about playground equipment. She noted that the existing equipment is several years old.

Carl Pierson – Ninth Street – Borough Treasurer – Mr. Pierson wanted to compliment the Mayor and Council for doing a good job. Mr. Pierson, as a former engineer, also asked if he could have a copy of the trestle report to look over.

Executive Session Entered 8:05 pm – Exited 8:28 pm

Upon motion by Mr. Mammana, seconded by Mr. Breidinger; Council authorized the Solicitor to take the appropriate steps in regards to 601 East Street. No discussion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Upon motion by Mr. Breidinger, seconded by Mr. Mammana; Council voted to adjourn meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
David W. Gehman, Borough Senior Clerk