

**BOROUGH OF WILMERDING
MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 9, 2016 REGULAR MEETING OF BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Vice President Sandra Smith.

ROLL CALL: REV. DOROTHY REEVES, present; KAREN PETERSON, absent; LINDA KIRK, present; SANDRA SMITH, present; PAULA SHURGOT, absent; JOHN THOMAS, present; STEPHEN SHURGOT, absent. MAYOR GREG JAKUB was also present.

REV. D. REEVES / L. KIRK TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 5, 2016 MEETING AS PRESENTED. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 4-0.

MS. S. SMITH: at this time I will turn the meeting over to our Solicitor Greg Evashavik who will conduct the condemnation hearing.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: there are two properties that Council is considering tonight for demolition, they are 532 Airbrake Avenue, owned by Anthony and Grace Kelly, and 652 Middle Avenue, owned by Ronald Reagan. Title searches were done for each property and they will be labeled Exhibit "A". A notice of the condemnation hearing was mailed to the last known owners and to anyone who has an interest in the property and that will be labeled Exhibit "B". The hearing has been advertised and the property has been posted and we will take testimony to establish that. The Secretary's Certification will be labeled Exhibit "C". The Engineer's report and photographs will be labeled Exhibit "D" for each property.

MR. D. GILLILAND: 652 Middle Avenue is a two story brick row house. The front porch floor, roof and columns are rotted and in danger of collapse. The box gutters are leaking into the walls and there are no downspouts. The rear yard is full of debris and trash. The rear wall is unstable and is bowed out nearly twelve inches. There are two holes in the rear of the house where the bricks have fallen out. This structure is in danger of collapse which would damage the adjacent units.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: I would also like to report that there is a recorded lien against the structure from the I.R.S. We are required to wait sixty days from the date they received the notice to begin the hearing.

MR. D. GILLILAND: 532 Airbrake Avenue is a two and a half brick duplex. There are no downspouts or gutters and water is leaking into the walls causing the mortar to break away. The chimney is leaning and the windows are broken and there are eight rows of bricks that are shifting due to the loss of mortar.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: in your opinion what is your recommendation for these properties.

MR. D. GILLILAND: demolition is recommended for both properties.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: is there anyone here tonight that would like to give testimony on 652 Middle Avenue.

MR. R. REAGAN: I am the owner of 652 Middle Avenue and it has been my home since 1947. I recently had a roof put on and a front porch at a cost of more than \$20,000. Right now I am in a nursing home and then the VA will move me into my house in a month or two. This is my hometown and I want to stay in my home. I have the highest IQ ever tested at Duquesne University. I have written three books and one is on Wilmerding. I want to be here in Wilmerding, I do not want to be anywhere else. This is my home.

MRS. S. ZIBRAT, AIRBRAKE AVE.: I would like to ask Council if anyone checked to see if there were any taxes paid on that property.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: that is irrelevant to this hearing. We are dealing just with the structure.

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MR. J. PARRISH, AIRBRAKE AVE.: I own the house at 536 Airbrake Avenue, which is next to 532 Airbrake Avenue. I think that structure could be saved. Is the demolition company going to be bonded?

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: absolutely. Is there anyone else that would like to give testimony? Council, you have heard the recommendation from the Engineer and the presentation of the case. At this time you can make a vote on whether to condemn the structures as recommended or to let them remain as they are.

J. THOMAS / L. KIRK TO HAVE THE SOLICITOR PREPARE AN ADJUNCTION TO DEMOLISH THE STRUCTURES AT 652 MIDDLE AVENUE AND 532 AIRBRAKE AVENUE.

ROLL CALL: REV. D. REEVES, yes; L. KIRK, yes; S. SMITH, yes; J. THOMAS, yes. MOTION PASSED TO HAVE THE SOLICITOR PREPARE AN ADJUNCTION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF 652 MIDDLE AVENUE AND 532 AIRBRAKE AVENUE, 4-0.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: that concludes the hearing on the demolition. We will now continue with the regular meeting.

PETITION AND MEMORIALS

MRS. S. ZIBRAT, AIRBRAKE AVE.: I thought that you were going to have Middle Avenue repaved.

MS. S. SMITH: we are. We are just waiting on the contractor. Half of Middle Avenue, the 700 block, will be repaved, not the parking side but the other side.

MRS. S. ZIBRAT: is the playground on Airbrake Avenue going to get resurfaced and also we need cameras down there.

MS. S. SMITH: we looked into that and it will cost us \$38,000 to resurface that playground.

MRS. S. ZIBRAT: there are also a couple of dead trees down there that need to be removed.

MRS. E. BARRETT, HERMAN AVE.: there is a lot of traffic coming through the alley between my house and the school. There is no stop sign there and the one way sign is fifteen feet left of the intersection. No one stops there and they make a left and go the wrong way. Is it possible to put an arrow on the road making them turn right? I almost got hit by a car coming down there. There are a lot of kids that go into the school during the evening and I am afraid one of them is going to get hit.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH, WELSH AVE.: I was told three meetings ago that the curb on Wood Street would be taken care of. Water runoff is going on to my property.

Who is checking on code violations on grass and stuff like that?

MS. S. SMITH: that would be Michael.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH: I don't know who to go through anymore. I come down to the code office and I get mixed answers. If you turn a person in it takes forever, or at all, to get something done.

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MR. M. JAKUB: just come and talk to me.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH: what is the code enforcement office for? I thought she was the one you were supposed to go to if there were any violations. Evidentially there was some letters sent out because one of the properties the grass was cut.

On the delinquent taxes, who makes up the payment schedule on the taxes owed?

MR. J. THOMAS: Maiello, Brungo and Maiello our delinquent tax collector.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH: I see some of these payments and there is no way they are paying it off.

MR. J. THOMAS: I can't tell you what the conversation is between the delinquent collector and the owner. There has to be some kind of reasoning behind it. They question them on their income and so on and so forth. They cannot take food off of their table to pay their taxes.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH: the one individual I am talking about owes like \$30,000 in back taxes and he is on payments of \$30 or \$60 a month.

MR. J. THOMAS: no one owes \$30,000 in back taxes. If you got the list I think you got there are properties that no longer exist. You are looking at the delinquent garbage list.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH: they owe that much money in garbage.

MR. J. THOMAS: where is your \$30,000?

MR. A. FRYDRYCH: I am totaling up all the properties for one individual.

MR. J. THOMAS: he is on a payment plan. For the month of July he paid \$1,200. There is so much for each account.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH: what is the status of the court case that Sean Kerrigan appealed?

MS. S. SMITH: I believe the hearing is scheduled for September 28th.

MRS. M. MEIGHAN, FOURTH ST. N. VERSAILLES: I also have a question on the \$30,000 that is owed in garbage. Garbage has to be picked up and I have to pay for my garbage to be picked up and it seems like he is getting a free ride. Also, he is failing the occupancy inspections for the same properties that he also owes garbage on. Why do you allow him to rent out these properties? It seems like we are all paying while he is collecting rent. What is being done to collect these payments?

MS. S. SMITH: as you noticed he was turned over to our delinquent collector and we do not establish the payment fees.

MRS. M. MEIGHAN: there has to be a stop somewhere. If you deny him an occupancy permit then he cannot rent. If you fail the inspection you cannot move anyone in. I have seen numerous times where he has moved someone in, and that is a violation also.

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MR. G. EVASHAVIK: there are so many citations filed against that man. He is paying lawyers to defend him and the borough has to send us to prove our claims. You are right, if he doesn't have an occupancy inspection then he should not move someone in, but he does it anyway.

MAYOR G. JAKUB: what we can do now, since we passed Act 49, is to lien his personal property.

MR. M. JAKUB: why can't you take away his rental license?

MRS. S. ZIBRAT: they did it in Trafford.

MS. S. SMITH: we can try.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH: at 324 Commerce Street he failed five times on occupancy inspections. Do you have any idea why they failed? Was it for safety violations? You would think for one safety violation it could shut the whole apartment building down.

MS. S. SMITH: we do not know why they failed.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH: there is a problem on Welsh Avenue with a U-Haul, a tow truck and some other vehicles that parked up there and no emergency vehicle would be able to get through.

THE CHAIR RECOGNIZED STEVE SHURGOT AND PAULA SHURGOT ENTERING COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT 7:45 PM. MR. S. SHURGOT TOOK THE CHAIR.

MS. A. TUCKER, LYDIA ST.: is there any discussion on the permit issue for parking on Card Avenue.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we did not discuss that in our workshop.

MS. A. TUCKER: it is getting really bad up there. They are actually parking in front of Steve's garage and on his property now. They are parking on the yellow lines and anywhere they find a space, legal or not. I have called the police about this and they drive past and do not even tag them.

Also, John, this was addressed last year. When you go down here past the building and make the bend onto Station Street, they were all hanging out at the fire company, no fire call, and they were all parked on the corner, where you are not supposed to be parked, you can't see if any cars are coming up. Can you address that to them again, please.

MR. J. THOMAS: sure.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Received a request for a handicap parking space at 220 Card Avenue, apartment 3. I have received all the necessary paper work.

S. SMITH / P. SHURGOT TO GRANT A HANDICAP SIGN FOR 220 CARD AVENUE. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

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2. Received a request from the EA Touchdown Club to renew our stadium sign for \$50. This is the same as last year.

S. SMITH / REV. D. REEVES TO RENEW THE STADIUM SIGN FOR \$50. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL 6-0.

3. Received a request from the EA Soccer Booster for an ad in their program book. In the past we purchased a 1/2 page ad for \$25.

S. SMITH / L. KIRK TO PURCHASE A 1/2 PAGE AD IN THE EA SOCCER BOOSTERS PROGRAM BOOK FOR \$25. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC SAFETY – L. KIRK: for the month of July Eastern Area Ambulance responded to 59 calls and made 34 transports. Their average response time for emergencies was 7.4 minutes and for non-emergencies it was 8.0 minutes. They administered 2 Narcan.

For July the fire department responded to 28 calls, 14 calls were in town and 14 were out of town.

OFFICER SLIVKA: for the month of July the police responded to 193 calls and made 5 arrests.

CODE ENFORCEMENT – S. SHURGOT: everyone has a copy of the COG report and there were copies available in the hallway.

PUBLIC WORKS – P. SHURGOT: last month they did some mowing and weeding of the vacant lots, patched some potholes, started painting the curbs, sprayed some weed killer, bought a generator for when the traffic lights go out and order some signs. There were also two letters sent to the borough on the great job our public works guys are doing.

BOROUGH PROPERTY – S. SMITH: I have applied for a grant for \$1,000 for trees which was due by August 15th. I do not know when we will hear if we got the grant.

MAYOR G. JAKUB: there are two dead pine trees in the park on the Herman Avenue side.

SOLICITOR – G. EVASHAVIK: I have prepared an amendment to the ordinance which regulates park and the direction of Council. You have a draft of the ordinance for your review if you want to make any changes.

FINANCE – J. THOMAS:

J. THOMAS / P. SHURGOT TO PAY ALL THE APPROVED BILLS. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

MR. J. THOMAS: Joe and I met with a representative from PLGIT to discuss investing our money in a higher risk accounts. There are a couple of things on here that we can discuss at the workshop of possibly moving our money into a higher interest bearing account but there is a little more risk involved.

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RECREATION – P. SHURGOT: our National Night Out event was a success. I would like to thank all of Council and the Mayor and Joe for showing up. Also, the street department for their help in getting the tables and chairs back and forth. The next event will be our children’s Halloween party in the park. It is scheduled for Saturday October 29th.

PLANNING – REV. D. REEVES: we did not have a meeting in July. Our next meeting is in August.

OLD BUSINESS

MRS. P. SHURGOT: has any progress been made on the employees handbook.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we can discuss that at the workshop.

NEW BUSINESS

MS. S. SMITH: I would like to have the September meeting moved from September 6th to the 13th.

S. SMITH / J. THOMAS TO ADVERTISE THE MEETING CHANGE FOR SEPTEMBER FROM THE 6TH TO THE 13TH. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

MR. J. THOMAS: this was brought up several years ago and I think that it should be reinstated. I think Joe sent a letter to the road department and the fire department that Council would like to have an inventory of all the equipment they have.

J. THOMAS / S. SMITH TO SENT A LETTER TO THE STREET DEPARTMENT AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT REQUESTING AN INVENTORY OF ALL OF THEIR EQUIPMENT. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0

MS. S. SMITH: we would like to have a fall newsletter so if there are any councilmembers that would to put an article in the newsletter get it to Steve or me by October 7th.

MAYOR’S REMARKS – G. JAKUB: as most of you know we had a problem at 501 Westinghouse with the garage that was in there. Everything has been cleaned out and all the weeds and grass has been cut. At this point it looks 99% better than a month ago when there were cars and trucks everywhere.

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.