

BOROUGH OF WILMERDING
MINUTES OF THE DEC. 1, 2015 REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Stephen Shurgot at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the President.

ROLL CALL: KAREN PETERSON, present; REV. DOROTHY REEVES, present; MICHAEL TRKULA, present; STEPHEN SHURGOT, present; WILLIAM PRICENER, present; JOHN THOMAS, present; SANDRA SMITH, absent. MAYOR HENRY SLACZKA was also present.

MR. S. SHURGOT: at this time we will be conducting hearings for the demolition of 345 Welsh Ave., 349-353 Welsh Avenue and the vacating Lydia Street. Our Solicitor, Greg Evashavik, will be conducting the hearings.

The hearings were recorded by a court reporter.

M. TRKULA / J. THOMAS TO DEMOLISH AND LEIN THE PROPERTY AT 345 WELSH AVE. AND TO HAVE THE SOLICITOR PREPARE ADJUDICATION. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

M. TRKULA / J. THOMAS TO DEMOLISH AND LIEN THE PROPERTY AT 349-353 WELSH AVE. AND TO HAVE THE SOLICITOR PREPARE ADJUDICATION. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 5-0-1 WITH W. PRICENER ABSTAINING DUE TO A BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OWNER.

J. THOMAS / W. PRICENER TO VACATE THE REMAINING PORTION OF LYDIA STREET.

ROLL CALL: K. PETERSON, no; REV. D. REEVES, no; M. TRKULA, yes; W. PRICENER, yes; J. THOMAS, yes; S. SHURGOT, no. MEMBERS VOTED TO A 3-3 TIE. THE MAYOR WAS ASKED TO VOTE ON THIS MATTER. MAYOR H. SLACZKA VOTED NO. THE MOTION WAS DEFEATED TO VACATE THE REMAINING PORTION OF LYDIA STREET.

M. TRKULA / W. PRICENER TO ACCEPT THE MINTUES OF THE NOV. 10, 2015 MEETING AS PRESENTED. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

PETITIONS & MEMORIALS

MR. M. JAKUB, WESTINGHOUSE AVE.: why are there three firemen sleeping in the building. They have been living down there for the past three years. This is an extra cost for the borough, electric and gas, by letting them stay there.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we will refer that to the Public Safety Committee to set up a meeting with them to discuss this issue.

MS. B. ALEXANDER, OWNER OF 215 BRIDGE ST.: my tenants are having a problem with the parking. There are permit parking spaces in front of the building and in the alley there is a yellow line but these are not being enforced. If Banquets Unlimited has an affair going on their patrons park in the permit parking only and the police do nothing about that and the same with the alley. We need the police to start enforcing the permit parking.

CHIEF MATRAZZO: if the signs are there then we will tag and tow the cars.

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CORRESPONDENCE

1. Request for a handicap sign at 215 Bridge Street. All the necessary paperwork has been received and is in order.

K. PETERSON / W. PRICENER TO GRANT THE HANDICAP SIGN FOR 215 BRIDGE STREET. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

2. Received a request from the Turtle Creek COG seeking sponsorship to support their initiatives that strengthen our communities and improve the quality of life for residents.

K. PETERSON / REV. D. REEVES TO BUY A BRONZE SPONSORSHIP FOR \$200 TO SUPPORT COG AND THEIR INITIATIVES. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

3. Received a letter from Pauline Walsh requesting reappointment to the Planning Commission. Her term expires on Dec. 31, 2015.

K. PETERSON / REV. D. REEVES TO REAPPOINT PAULINE WALSH TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

4. Received a letter of resignation from Greg Jakub from the Zoning Board due to the fact that he is the newly elected Mayor.

M. TRKULA / W. PRICENER TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF GREG JAKUB FROM THE ZONING BOARD. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

5. Received a letter from John Marcoz to fill the open position on the Zoning Board.

M. TRKULA / W. PRICENER TO APPOINT JOHN MARCOZ TO FILL THE UNEXPIRED TERM OF GREG JAKUB ON THE ZONING BOARD. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC SAFETY – M. TRKULA: for the month of November Eastern Area Pre-Hospital Services responded to 64 calls and made 53 transports. Their average response time for emergencies was 7.2 minutes and for non-emergencies it was 9.85 minutes. I did not receive a report from the fire department. Chief Matrazzo will give the police report.

CHIEF MATRAZZO: for the month of November we responded to 174 calls and made 2 arrests. A summary of the calls are: 2 burglaries, 4 criminal mischief, 3 disturbances, 12 domestics, 2 drug investigations, 4 juvenile, 3 K-9 policing, 2 Megan's Law violations, 2 ordinance code enforcement, 4 parking complaints, 2 public intoxication, 3 suspicious activity, 2 suspicious persons, 5 thefts, 1 wanted person, 3 landlord ordinance and 8 tow tagged vehicles.

MS. K. PETERSON: Chief is it true that there were two drug overdoses in the past three weeks.

CHIEF MATRAZZO: no.

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MR. S. SHURGOT: our talks with North Versailles have stalled but we are in the process of restarting our own police department. We are negotiating with North Versailles for a one year contract. We do have a verbal agreement on a contract which includes a four percent increase.

W. PRICENER / J. THOMAS TO ACCEPT A ONE YEAR AGREEMENT WITH NORTH VERSAILLES PENDING THEY MEET OUR STIPULATIONS.

MAYOR H. SLACZKA: is one year the maximum and is it subject to early termination.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we asked for an opt out clause after six months.

MS. K. PETERSON: there are some things in the contract that are not acceptable.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we asked them to keep the contract as is. The State Police is not a viable option.

MS. K. PETERSON: what about the information I gave you on a private security firm.

MR. M. TRKULA: they wanted more money than North Versailles.

CHIEF MATRAZZO: there is not much they can do, they do not have any power of arrests.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: that is true, you would not be getting the same type of service.

MR. A. FRYDRYCH, WELSH AVE.: how far along are you in getting our own police department?

MR. S. SHURGOT: we are in the beginning stages. We did apply for a grant but it is on hold due to the budget crisis.

MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0 TO AGREE TO A ONE YEAR AGREEMENT WITH NORTH VERSAILLES PENDING IT MEETS OUR STIPULATIONS.

CODE ENFORCEMENT – W. PRICENER: for the month of November our code officer, Dave Buskirk, worked a total of 57 hours. He checked various properties for property maintenance complaints. Again, we need specifics. He prepared and delivered citations to the Magistrate's office. Attended hearing on the citations issued. Attended hearings in Common Pleas Court. Inspected and issued occupancy permits for the following rental properties: 100 Avenue U – Unit 10, 136 Card Ave., 210 Marguerite Ave. – Apts. 3-12-17 and 21, 512A Middle Avenue, 642 Middle Ave. and Units 31 and 32 in the Park House. Inspected and found deficiencies for property at 308 A, 308 D and 308 F Westinghouse Ave. inspected Unit 37 in the Faller Building. Met with the contractor several times at 220 Card Ave for a building permit for rear porch, roof and stairs. Inspected 406 Airbrake Ave. for the sale of the property. We did not receive a report from Louise.

MR. M. TRKULA: there has been \$315 due for rental licenses for the past few months. Are they taking these people to court?

MS. K. PETERSON: I believe that is part of the Kerrigan hearings.

MR. M. TRKULA: were the high weeds and grass ever cited. If not then we missed out on some money.

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MR. W. PRICENER: I agree that these people should have been cited. Why should the neighbors have to put up with this when they keep their grass cut?

PUBLIC WORKS – W. PRICENER: they are doing the daily pick up of trash, they are picking up leaves, filling pot holes and have put up the Christmas decorations. Cleaning up the leaves takes the bulk of their time.

ENGINEER'S REPORT: given at workshop.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we have a grant of \$100,000 for Ice Plant Hill and the County is trying to find some extra money to do this project. They are going to talk to the school district to see what they can contribute towards this. There will be an on site meeting with the County on Monday to try and open up one lane.

W. PRICENER / K. PETERSON TO OPEN UP ONE LANE OF TRAFFIC ON ICE PLANT HILL, WITH THE COUNTY AND ENGINEER'S APPROVAL, WITH HIGHER BARRICADES AND BLINKING STOP SIGNS. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

COG REPORT – K. PETERSON: we are going to be setting up another meeting with COG to discuss code enforcement.

BOROUGH PROPERTY – K. PETERSON: no report.

UTILITIES – REV. D. REEVES: no report.

PLANNING – REV. D. REEVES: we are looking into what the railroad is shipping in some of their tanker cars. It is an oil called Tar Sand Oil and it is produced in Canada and is highly flammable. This information will go under our Emergency Management section of our five year plan.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we have to update our Emergency Plan every two years.

SOLICITOR – G. EVASHAVIK: we have reached a tentative agreement with the WABTEC tax appeal. Their new assessments are for 2013 is \$3,195,000, for 2014 it is \$3,870,000, 2015 and 2016 it is \$4,431,200. They were reassessed at \$10,000,000 and paid the taxes on that amount so therefore a refund is due them. We are setting up a payment plan for their refunds over a five year period and there would be no interest charged.

M. TRKULA / K. PETERSON TO ACCEPT THE TERMS OF THE REFUND AGREEMENT.

MR. W. PRICENER: their assessment for 2013 and 2014 is below the appraisal that the school district and borough did, but it is above the appraisal for 2015 and 2016.

MR. J. THOMAS: WABTEC bent over backwards to help us out.

MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL 6-0 TO ACCEPT THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT.

FINANCE – J. THOMAS:

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

MR. J. THOMAS: everyone has received a copy of the proposed budget for 2016. It is a balanced budget of \$868,054.

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J. THOMAS / K. PETERSON TO ADVERTISE THE 2016 PROPOSED BUDGET. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

J. THOMAS / K. PETERSON TO ADVERTISE THE DEC. 15TH WORKSHOP AS A GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

RECREATION – S. SHURGOT: the children's Christmas party will be on Saturday Dec. 12th from 1 – 3 pm at Holy Angels Church.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

MS. K. PETERSON: I would like to thank the Mayor and Bill Pricener on a job well done. I know that you guys had the borough's best interest in mind. It was a pleasure working with you.

MR. W. PRICENER: I would like to thank Council for showing faith in me when you appointed me to serve on Council. I would like to thank the residents who wrote me in for Council and I appreciate the time I spent serving on Council. I will still be around to help the borough and support Council the best that I can.

MAYOR'S REMARKS – H. SLACZKA: silence speaks volumes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.