

President Abby Wertz called the January 5, 2015 meeting to order at 7:30 PM with the pledge to the flag. Council Members present were Harvey Marshall, Tony Wirebach, Bob Pierce, Rod Soliday, Bill Langjahr, Mike Kocher and Junior Council member, Grayson Ziegler. Also attending the meeting were Solicitor Andrew George, Mayor Randall Gartner, Police Chief Bill Schlichter and Manager Lisa Heilman. Citizens and visitors attending the meeting were David Randler, Streets Supervisor Garry Degler, Frank Schnee, Vernon Bright, David Bright, Fire Chief Gerry Ochs of the Pioneer Hose Co. #1, Mike martin of the Fire Police, Leo (Skip) Weaver, Erica Ziegler and Steve Doyle of the Reading Eagle. On a motion by Soliday, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously carried, the meeting minutes of the December 1, 2014 Council meeting were approved as presented.

On a motion by Pierce, second by Mr. Langjahr and unanimously carried, meeting minutes of the December 16, 2014 Workshop meeting were approved.

VISITORS & CITIZENS – Fire Chief Gerry Ochs presented Council with the 2014 Annual Fire Report. He noted, specifically, that of the 331 total fire calls, 99 of those were in Heidelberg Township, 54 were in Robesonia Borough and 27 were in North Heidelberg Township. The balance was assists to other municipalities. A total of 62 of the total calls answered were motor vehicle accident response calls. Leo (Skip) Weaver introduced himself to the Council and explained that he is Vice Chairman of the Western Berks GOP. He reported that the territory has been split up to allow for a more efficient operation. All other visitors were observing or asked to speak later.

MAYOR – Mayor Gartner thanked all the great volunteers and volunteer organizations whose time and services help make the Borough a better place to live.

SOLICITOR – Solicitor George presented Ordinance 2015-1 as follows:

Ordinance 2015-1

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF ROBESONIA, BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
ESTABLISHING AND FIXING THE TAX RATES UPON REAL PROPERTY WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF
ROBESONIA AND ESTABLISHING AND FIXING DISCOUNTS AND PENALTIES FOR THE SAME FOR
THE BOROUGH OF ROBESONIA FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2015.

The tax rate for 2015 has been increased .25 mills to 4.65 mills.

On a motion by Mr. Langjahr, second by Mr. marshall and unanimously approved as presented, motion carried.

The following appointments for 2015:

- PLGIT and National Penn Bank- Robesonia Branch- as the Borough's depository
- Andrew S George and Kozloff Stoudt as Borough Solicitors at a rate of \$200/meeting, \$150/hour for partner, \$100/hour for associate
- Technicon Enterprises II, Inc. as Borough Zoning Officials at an hourly rate of, \$93.00/senior engineer, \$80.50/engineer, \$49.50/zoning officer, \$42.75/clerical
- Spotts, Stevens & McCoy as Borough Engineers at an hourly rate of \$122.00/Senior Engineer, \$112.00/engineer, \$42.00/clerical.
- CIA (Jerry Farro) as Borough's Building, Plumbing, Electrical, Mechanical, Accessibility and Commercial Building Inspector.
- Kraft Code Services as the Borough Property Maintenance Code Enforcement Officials
- Frank Schnee as Assistant Zoning Officer
- Robert J. Davidson & Associates, LLC as Borough Auditors at a rate of \$4,750.00/ yr.
- Lisa Heilman as Borough Manager/Secretary/Treasurer
- Kenny Bright to a 5-year term on the Robesonia-Wernersville Municipal Authority (2019)
- Robert Pierce, 5 year term on the Robesonia Muncipal Authority (2019)
- Frank Schnee, 5 year term on the Robesonia Planning Commission (2019)
- Tom Hartman, 5 year term on the Shade Tree Commission (2019)
- Terry Williams, 3 year term on the Zoning Hearing Board (2017)
- Western Berks Planning Commission representatives: Randy Gartner, Jeff Gerhart and Frank Schnee as alternate; 1 year term. **Next meeting to be held on 1/15/15 at 7PM at Womelsdorf Borough Building**
- Mayor Gartner, Tony Wirebach and Mike Kocher; 1 year term on the Western Berks Regional Police Commission

On a motion by Mr. Pierce, second by Mr. Wirebach and unanimously carried by Council, all appointments were approved as presented.

President Wertz asked for a motion to approve the 2015 Fire Police Roster as presented by Fire Police Captain Mike Martin. Mr. Langjahr made the motion, Mr. Wirebach seconded and Council passed unanimously.

Solicitor George provided Council with a bit of update on the ACRE lawsuit, brought against the municipalities involved in the Western Berks Joint Zoning Ordinance by then Attorney General Tom Corbett. The lawsuit has been ongoing for 9 years and is still not resolved. Since Heidelberg and North Heidelberg had insurance to cover many of the legal expenses to defend this action, their attorneys have taken the lead on this matter. Solicitor George advised allowing their attorneys to continue to lead in this battle. He advised Council that the four solicitors of the municipalities are planning a conference call the week of January 12 to discuss the matter.

ENGINEER- The Engineer's report included work done with Norfolk Southern regarding the proposed railroad communication tower. David Bright thanked Council for the 2015 appointment of Spotts, Stevens & McCoy as the Borough's engineers.

PLANNING COMMISSION – Next meeting, scheduled for January 21st, if needed. Mr. Schnee thanked Council for the 5 year appointment to the Planning Commission. Should he complete this 5 year term, he will have served on the PC for 45 years!

MANAGER – No report.

POLICE CHIEF: Chief Schlichter reported that the PD answered 72 calls in Robesonia in the month of December, bringing the total for 2014 to 1,024 calls answered.

PAYMENT OF INVOICES- On a motion by Mr. Marshall, second by Mr. Pierce and unanimously carried, the bills were ordered paid as presented, including those paid prior to the meeting to avoid penalties.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

Finance/Administration – No report

Fire Protection/Safety – No report.

Streets/Highways/Sewer – Meeting minutes from the December meeting were included in the agenda packet.

Parks & Recreation –A meeting will be scheduled in February for any organizations interested in using the ball field for the 2015 season. Mr. Vernon Bright asked if any bids had been sought for the spraying of the ball field for 2015. Mr. Marshall advised he would pursue obtaining those bids.

Personnel: No report.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Marshall – Mr. Marshall advised Council that he obtained three telephonic bids to remove an old, dying maple tree along Ash Street (off of Maple Avenue) that is pulling up the street. He made the motion to award the bid to the low bidder, Stoltzfus Tree Service, for \$540.00. The other two bids received were Summer Mountain Tree Service for \$650 and Murdough Landscaping for \$710. Mr. Pierce seconded the motion and Council approved unanimously. Letter will be sent to the high bidders notifying them they did not receive the bid award.

Wirebach - Mr. Wirebach graciously offered to pick up whatever projects Mr. Becker could not complete upon his resignation from Council.

Langjahr – No report.

Soliday- No report.

Pierce- Mr. Pierce asked if another vote could be taken on the withdrawal of Robesonia from the Western Berks Regional Police Commission to reaffirm the vote taken at the December meeting since not all Council members were present at the meeting at which the vote was taken. Mr. Kocher asked if he could speak before a revote was taken.

Kocher- Mr. Kocher feels we have the very best 24/7 police protection we can afford at this time. He reported that Robesonia residents are paying \$149.88/resident/year for our current police coverage. That amounts to .42/person/day for our coverage. Sinking Spring residents are currently paying \$183.75/resident/year for their coverage and that does not even include their healthcare costs. Lower Heidelberg residents are paying \$182.13/resident/year. He feels we are getting the most value for our money in the current situation. He suggested, at best, we would only be able to provide part-time coverage if we were to go back to having our own department. And we would have to utilize state police to cover much of our evening/overnight hours. The Pennsylvania State Police only have two cars out for the entire county at night. Many of our nuisance calls would go unanswered. Mr. Kocher reported that of the 1,024 calls answered by our Police Department last year, 508, or

nearly half, were not answered between the hours of 8AM and 5PM. Of those 508 calls, 210 of them were between the hours of 11PM and 8AM.

Mayor Gartner suggested we had to look at controlling the future costs or operation this department and the only way that would happen was if Wernersville and Robesonia worked together to make that happen. There were benefits given in previous contracts that will cost us a considerable amount in the future, and will never be gotten back. Working together to mitigate those expenses by controlling costs in other areas is the only way to ensure this department remains a viable option to providing cost effective coverage.

Mr. Kocher suggested that Chris Boylan, the Commission Chairman, as well as other Wernersville members, would be willing to sit down with Robesonia to discuss some of these concerns.

Frank Schnee, at this time, reported that he had been following this situation in the recent newspaper articles and that his recommendation would be to present Wernersville with a list of key issues that we would like to meet with them to discuss.

At this time a re-vote was taken by roll call to determine Council's position on withdrawing from the WBRPC:

Soliday- yea	Langjahr- yea	Pierce-nay	Wertz-yea
Kocher- nay	Marshall- yea	Wirebach- yea	

On a 5-2 vote, the original motion to withdraw was upheld.

Wertz – No report.

Ziegler- No report.

Mayor Gartner: Mayor Gartner asked Streets Supervisor Garry Degler to take a look at a pothole at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Linden Street.

NEW BUSINESS – No business

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Council directed Solicitor George to take a look at the legislation that allows the cost sharing of Workers Compensation Insurance with other municipalities sharing in the services of the Volunteer Fire Department. Mr. George will report back to Council by Finance Meeting date (January 28th) on the different ways in which these cost calculations can be divided among the municipalities.

COMMUNICATIONS-

- WRJA Treasurer's Report and meeting minutes for November.
- Monthly police report and Commission meeting minutes.
- Code enforcement report.
- Letter from Mark Spotts regarding police issues and his willingness to volunteer to serve in any capacity to help resolve the issues.

On a motion by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Langjahr and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Attest:

Lisa Heilman
Manager/Treasurer
Borough of Robesonia