

President Abby Wertz called the October 6, 2014 meeting to order at 7:30 PM with the pledge to the flag. Council Members present were Harvey Marshall, Ron Becker, Jr., Bob Pierce, Rod Soliday, Bill Langjahr and Mike Kocher. Also attending the meeting were Solicitor Andrew George, Mayor Randall Gartner and Manager Lisa Heilman. Citizens and visitors attending the meeting were David Randler, Vernon Bright, Tony Wirebach, Lori Brown, David Bright, Garry Degler, Brian Gottschall (Berks DES), Andy Beck (Edward Jones Financial), Emma Wenrich, Scott Wenrich, Erica Ziegler, Grayson Ziegler and Michael Wagner of the Reading Eagle. On a motion by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously carried, the meeting minutes of the September 2, 2014 Council meeting were approved as presented. On a motion by Mr. Langjahr, second by Mr. Pierce and unanimously carried, the meeting minutes from the September 21, 2014 workshop meeting were approved.

At this time, Mayor Gartner swore in Grayson Ziegler as the Borough's new Junior Council Person.

VISITORS & CITIZENS – Brian Gottschall of Berks DES addressed the Council on the reasons for the increase in the dispatching charges for 2015. He explained that there will be an 18% increase each year for the next five years. This is being done in an effort to make the 911 center cost-neutral. Part of the problem is that costs have risen while the revenue stream has remained flat, or actually decreased, in the last 20 years. They are strongly recommending that local officials contact their legislators and PSAB/PSATS groups to lobby for 911 funding reform. Andy Beck, of Edward Jones Financial, introduced himself to Council and advised them that he will be occupying the building at 2 East Penn Avenue (Twinchburger property).

All other visitors were observing.

MAYOR – No report.

SOLICITOR – Solicitor George advised Council that the Wernersville Borough Council has been given copies of the proposed Police Charter Agreement changes for their consideration (to be discussed at their October meeting).

ENGINEER – The Engineer's report included the preparation and submission of the annual MS4 report.

PLANNING COMMISSION – Next meeting, scheduled for October 15th, if needed. A letter was presented to Council from James & Brenda Williams of 313 South Freeman Street seeking an eight-month extension for the completion of the paving of their driveway. Mr. Marshall made the motion to approve the extension as presented. Mr. Pierce seconded the motion and Council unanimously approved.

MANAGER – Ms. Heilman reminded Council of the October 18th Shredding Event at National Penn Bank from noon to 4PM. Also advised Council that if anyone was interested in attending the Municipal Official's Breakfast at Kutztown on October 17th to let her know immediately so RSVP can be made by deadline.

POLICE CHIEF: Chief Schlichter advised Council that 95 calls were answered in the Borough by the Police Department in September. He also advised Council that the new speed sign, purchased by the COG, is in use.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

Finance/Administration – Ms. Wertz advised Council that 2015 budget work has commenced and finances are getting tighter, thanks, in part, to a 48% increase in health care costs (other options are being considered). The next meeting is scheduled for 10/29/14 at 7PM for anyone interested in attending.

Fire Protection/Safety – No report. Due to it being Fire Prevention Week (and the Fire Company is doing their door-to-door collection campaign), their monthly meeting will be held on 10/14.

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

Parks & Recreation – Mr. Becker reminded everyone that the Rec Board will be meeting on October 16th at 6:30 PM

Personnel: The Performance Evaluation process is nearly complete.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Marshall – Mr. Marshall advised Council that costs of Workers Compensation for the Volunteer Fire Department as allowed by law (Workers Compensation Act) may be shared with the other municipalities served by the Pioneer Hose Company. He explained that the Cancer Presumption Act may be impacting the cost greatly (nearly doubling, potentially) and it's time for the other municipalities to step up and pay their fair share. Manager provided documentation to Solicitor on how cost sharing may be calculated. Mayor spoke with audience to

advise them that this is just another “mandate” falling on local government, leaving us to figure out how to fund them.

Langjahr – Mr. Langjahr advised Council on the Trash COG’s progress on bidding out the next 3-yr. contract. He advised Council that there are nine companies vying for the contract and that the contract was put out several ways to bid. He sought Council’s approval to give the COG the okay to purchase our own recycling containers, which would considerably reduce the per-container costs. Council approved.

Becker- No report

Soliday- Mr. Soliday asked the status of the property at 19 South Robeson Street. Manager advised that property has gone back to the bank in a foreclosure process. He stated that the property is looking terrible with more boards going up on the windows. Manager will attempt to contact bank in possession of the property to determine their intent.

Pierce- Mr. Pierce advised Council that the Police Commission would be meeting at the Robesonia Borough Hall at 7PM on Tuesday, October 7th if anyone is interested in attending. Mr. Pierce sought the status of the complaint against 112 North Church Street, stating the rear of the property is still a mess. Manager will check with Kraft Codes Service to determine the status of the complaint and proceed from there.

Kocher- No report.

Wertz - Ms. Wertz advised Council that she received a letter of resignation, effective October 17, from Ron Becker. Mr. Becker will be leaving the Borough mid-October. Mr. Pierce made the motion to accept, with much regret, the resignation of Mr. Becker. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion and Council approved unanimously. Mr. Pierce made the motion to appoint Tony Wirebach, effective 10/18, to the seat vacated by Mr. Becker. Mr. Langjahr seconded the motion and Council approved unanimously. Everyone welcomed Mr. Wirebach. Ms. Wertz also advised Council that all doors inside the borough hall need to be locked, based on concerns presented by Donna McMullan, custodian.

Mayor Gartner: Mayor Gartner advised everyone there that Mr. Becker has been a huge asset to the community, committing many hours of community service every year. He thanked him for his commitment to the Borough and its residents. He will be missed by all.

Mayor Gartner also advised everyone that the Street Fair Committee will be holding a Cheese steak Night fundraiser at the Fire Company on Friday, October 17th from 5 to 9PM. Please support the Street Fair Committee.

NEW BUSINESS – It was suggested that articles regarding our new Junior Council Person, Grayson Ziegler, be submitted to the Borough News magazine and put in the Borough’s winter newsletter.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – The property at 101 Mountain Road has been sold and no response has been received to date on the letter sent to the previous owners regarding the vacating of the street. Solicitor George will be looking further into the legal ramifications if the street is vacated by the Borough.

COMMUNICATIONS-

- WRJA Meeting Minutes and Treasurer’s Report
- Monthly police report and Commission meeting minutes.
- Code enforcement report.
- Municipal Law Forum invitation, hosted by Kozloff-Stoudt, on October 29th.

On a motion by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Langjahr and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Attest:

Lisa Heilman
Manager/Treasurer
Borough of Robesonia