

President Abby Wertz called the November 5, 2012 meeting to order at 7:30 PM with the pledge to the flag. Council Members present were Harvey Marshall, Ron Becker, Jr., Michael Kocher, Bob Pierce, Frank Schnee and Dave Rohrbach. Also attending the meeting were Mayor Randy Gartner, Solicitor Andrew George, Police Chief Scott Wagner and Secretary Lisa Heilman. Citizens and visitors attending the meeting were David Randler, David Bright, John Ravert, Crystal Connor and Karen Feick of the Reading Eagle. On a motion by Mr. Schnee, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously carried, the meeting minutes of the October 1, 2012 meeting were approved.

**VISITORS & CITIZENS** – John Ravert advised Council that two bids were received for the removal of four trees along Penn Avenue. Stoltzfus Professional Tree Service bid \$1300.00 and Murdough Landscaping bid \$840.00. Shade Tree Commission recommends awarding the bid to Murdough Landscaping. Mr. Marshall made the motion to award the bid to Murdough Landscaping based on the Shade Tree Commission's recommendation. Mr. Schnee seconded the motion and council approved unanimously. Mr. Ravert also advised Council that Stoltzfus will be doing some work in town in November (for a bid awarded several months ago) and suggested a deadline be given for all bid work in the future. Council concurred. Crystal Connor, of 520 West Penn Avenue, brought several complaints/requests to council. She asked if it would be possible to provide an additional street light behind her house on West Oak Avenue since she has had several vehicle break-ins in the last two months. She has also asked if a stop sign could be placed at the intersection of West Oak Avenue and Spruce Street. She explained that kids and neighbors living up on the hill speed down the road and do not stop before crossing West Oak Avenue and she fears for her elderly neighbor's safety. Council agreed to look into both matters. She issued a complaint about the condition of the property at 516 West Penn Avenue. She explained the property is a rental and is very unkempt. Weeds are overhanging the sidewalk, tree branches are thrown in the back yard. The front porch is rotting, etc. Secretary will check with Property Maintenance Codes Enforcement official to determine if this rental property was inspected during the current inspection cycle. Also, a letter will be sent addressing the weeds overhanging the sidewalk.

**MAYOR** – Mayor reminded everyone that a new street light costs more than just the initial installation. It costs approximately \$110/year every year thereafter. Mayor Gartner asked Council to consider placing Right Turn Only signs on North and South Church Street at Penn Avenue. He feels this is a dangerous intersection and this would reduce the number of accidents at the intersection. Council discussed the need for a traffic study in order to justify the requested signs. Mayor Gartner directed Engineer, David Bright, to check on the cost of a traffic study. Mayor Gartner asked Chief Wagner if any arrests had been made to date on the vandalism of the security camera. Chief Wagner reported that no arrests have been made but they do have leads. Council was notified that the camera was recovered but may be damaged. Mr. Marshall advised that the recovered or replacement bullet camera will need to be placed higher on the building to be kept out of reach. Mayor Gartner asked Chief Wagner police coverage has been increased since the recent vandalism. Chief Wagner told him it has been increased in the area and there has been no further activity. Mayor Gartner asked Council if they would be willing to take over the Friends of the Furnace property and contents should the Friends organization ever disband. Currently, their by-laws state that everything would go to the Tulpehocken Historical Society. Council said the Borough would be willing to take over the property since they felt the articles inside the museum building should stay in the Borough. Mayor Gartner will advise the Friends of the Furnace organization and the by-laws will be rewritten to reflect the change.

**SOLICITOR** – Solicitor George advised Council that he had just received the revised Promissory Notes for the public safety radio project for Western Berks EMS and would need to have them executed. He also advised Council that he had the necessary Local Government Unit Debt Act paperwork and resolution. On a motion by Mr. Becker, second by Mr. Pierce and unanimously carried, Council passed the resolution. Mr. Becker then made the motion to direct Solicitor George to draft a financial agreement between the Borough and Fire Company stating the Borough would pay the annual payment up front and be reimbursed by the Fire Company for half of the amount each of the five years of the agreement. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion and Council unanimously approved. Mayor Gartner wanted it noted in the minutes that the safety radios were just another unfunded mandate. Solicitor George advised Council he was asked to review an amendment to the parking regulations

during a snow event for the purpose of unifying Robesonia and Wernersville's ordinances. He will review and edit the amendment till the December meeting.

**ENGINEER** – The engineer's report was included in the packet and recommended Council appoint a representative to the Berks County MS4 Steering Committee. Mr. Pierce made a motion to appoint Kent Morey of Spotts, Stevens & McCoy. Mr. Becker seconded the motion and Council approved unanimously.

**PLANNING COMMISSION** – Next meeting is scheduled for November 21st, 2012, if needed.

**SECRETARY** – Secretary submitted a request to Council from Cathy Penta of CW Elementary for the use of the Council room on January 28<sup>th</sup> from 6PM to 8PM for annual Library Chat. They have requested a fee waiver as well. Council approved.

**POLICE CHIEF:** Chief Wagner has asked everyone to remind their friends and neighbors to report suspicious activity immediately. Mayor Gartner asked if the Western Berks Regional Police are still doing bicycle and foot patrols. Chief Wagner stated foot patrols are being done and bicycle patrols will be discussed at the next commission meeting.

**PAYMENT OF INVOICES-** Motion by Mr. Schnee seconded by Mr. Becker and unanimously carried, the bills were ordered paid as presented, including those paid prior to the meeting to avoid penalties.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS-**

**Finance/Administration** – 2013 budget work is complete and ready for advertising. Total budget for 2013 is \$1,329,708. No tax increase is needed. Mr. Schnee made the motion to retain the \$2,000 donation to the Western Berks Ambulance intact in the budget. Mr. Kocher seconded the motion. Mr. Schnee presented information to the Council indicating that Western Berks EMS is a non-profit organization. Mr. Pierce advised Council that their employees are union employees and he feels we should not support them. He also expressed his unhappiness over the way the bill for the radio project was presented. Mayor Gartner advised Council his reason for resigning from the board of Western Berks EMS after two years was because he did not like their financial practices. Ms. Wertz reminded Council of our recent outlay of \$1,877.78 for the new radios. Mr. Schnee suggested the Borough is in the best financial shape in a long time and he feels we can afford it. Mr. Marshall felt that it is a boon to our residents to have them located in the Borough. A roll call vote was taken. Marshall: yes; Becker: yes; Kocher: yes; Schnee: yes; Rohrbach: yes; Pierce: no; Wertz: yes. On a 6-1 vote, the decision was made to keep the \$2,000 in the budget for 2013. Next, a motion was made by Mr. Marshall to advertise the budget for 2013 for adoption at the December meeting. Mr. Becker seconded the motion and Council unanimously approved.

**Fire Protection/Safety** – Mr. Becker advised Council the next meeting would be November 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Rohrbach provided an article from the Borough News to Mr. Becker on available grant funding to fire departments.

**Streets/Highways/Sewer** – Meeting minutes from the October 15<sup>th</sup> meeting were included in the agenda packet.

**Parks & Recreation** – Mr. Becker advised Council that he will be meeting with Sue Williams from the Conrad Weiser YMCA Camp to discuss the possibility of them taking over the summer playground program. He will be discussing costs, etc. with her and report back to Council on his findings. He also advised Council that he had received another proposal from Security First for a surveillance system for the ball field pavilion. For the outer pavilion, \$1,498.00. Outside the restrooms, add \$554.00. Inside concession stand, add \$258.00. Since the weather is turning colder and most of the vandalism occurs in the warmer months, it was suggested Mr. Becker check with Security First if those prices could be held till spring. Mr. Becker will check and let Council know at December meeting.

**Personnel:** Performance evaluations are complete.

#### **COUNCIL REPORTS**

**Marshall** – No report.

**Schnee** – Mr. Schnee sought Council's permission to pursue the water run-off situation at 378 West Penn Avenue with Kraft Codes Enforcement. Council agreed. Mr. Schnee will follow up with Kraft Codes Enforcement.

**Becker-** No report.

**Rohrbach** – Mr. Rohrbach asked how the Zumbatomics classes were going. Secretary advised there are four or five kids attending regularly and they seem to be enjoying it tremendously.

**Pierce-** Mr. Pierce asked that a letter be sent to Ed Hong's tenant regarding blocking the sidewalk with his trailer. Secretary will send letter. He stated the Street Crew is doing a great job.

**Kocher-** No report.

**Wertz** - In light of the change to the Halloween parade and trick or treating night, it was suggested that whenever a change like that is made, Council and the Mayor should first be informed. Also, it should be posted to the Borough website (quickly), if possible. Mayor Gartner will look into what the Water Authority pays for their automated calling system.

**Mayor Gartner:** Mayor Gartner thanked everyone who came out for Burger Night to support the Fair Committee. Mayor Gartner expressed his disappointment over the roadwork done by EJ Breneman on Birch Street. He feels it should have been done differently and that it does not look good.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – Mr. Randler asked if new curb letters were going to be sent anytime soon. Many of the curbs look terrible. Many of these properties have already received two letters and done nothing about them. Mr. Marshall will gather a list and provide to secretary for follow up letters to be sent out before end of week. It was suggested that perhaps only a few should be sent at a time and if the property owner does not comply, the borough will make an example of them by following through and having the curb fixed and liens filed against the property owners.

**NEW BUSINESS** – None

On a motion by Mr. Rohrbach, seconded by Mr. Pierce and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 PM.

Attest:

Lisa Heilman  
Secretary