

WILSON BOROUGH
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
December 26, 2016

The Second Meeting of December 2016 of the Council of The Borough of Wilson was held in the Guy B. Tomaino Public Safety Building at 2040 Hay Terrace, Easton, PA. President Verenna called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call followed.

PRESENT:

James McGowan
Leonard Feinberg
Tony Verenna
Daniel Schaffer

Scott Palinkas
David Jones
Pamela Taylor
Louis Starniri

ABSENT:

Russell Lipari

Also present were: Fire Chief Joseph Sipel, Police Chief Steven Parkansky, Solicitor Stanley Margle, Director of Public Works Gregory Drake and Code Officer Paul Corriere.

READING OF THE MINUTES:

Motion by Mr. Schaffer to approve the minutes from the December 12, 2016 Council meetings. Second by Mr. Feinberg. Council unanimously approved the minutes.

GUEST:

None

PRESENTATION OF MATTERS BY RESIDENTS AND TAXPAYERS:

Many Borough residents were present to voice their displeasure with the proposed 4 mil tax increase and budget items included in the increase.

Some comments:

Mr. Adesh Oddessy of 1531 Washington Street asked why salaries were not raised slowly.

Mr. Alex Adams of 2111 Birch Street suggested that the Borough increase the pay of the lowest paid clerk.

Mr. Donald Barrett of 730 S. 23rd Street suggested the pool be closed.

Mr. Shawn McCormick of 28 N. 18th Street said the Borough needs to cut costs and increase productivity.

Mr. Charles Wacik of 1532 Washington Street said many people need to be able to pay their taxes in installments.

Many other residents spoke out as well. Some requested to close the pool and library while others insisted those items are things the Borough residents want and need. Most complaints were directed toward what many felt were the unfair raises for the office staff. Ms. Taylor defended the salary increases and explained they make up a very small percentage of the tax increase.

Mr. Starniri said the he will vote no for this budget and take another look at the budget. He also said that it was easy for the press to capitalize on wage increases for headlines. He believes that Council was presented with wish lists from the department heads and that no one was told to cut their expenses.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

Ms. Garcia read a request from Kate Hug/Dell's Kitchen asking for use of the pavilions at Meuser Park for their second annual Basketball Tournament. The days requested were June 10 and 11. It was mentioned that Dell's was supposed to donate to improve the basketball courts after last year's tournament. Motion by Mr. McGowan to see if Dell's has done or will be doing any improvements. Second by Mr. Feinberg. Council concurred.

A request was received from Susan Kalkhuis-Beam, with the American Red Cross. The Red Cross will be working with Wilson's Fire Department to place smoke detectors in Borough homes on January 16, 2017. Ms. Beam requested used of the Community Center on January 9 or 10 to hold a volunteer information meeting. Motion by Mr. Schaffer to allow use of the Center, with fees waived. Second by Ms. Taylor and Council unanimously agreed.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR:

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE BOROUGH MANAGER:

None

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

None

POLICE:

None

FIRE:

None

PUBLIC WORKS:

Mr. Drake told Council that the Borough will potentially receive a \$75,000 grant through Senator Boscola's office to remove the Bocce Court at Meuser Park and install a new playground. There is no requirement for matching funds and Public Works will provide the labor.

PARKS AND RECREATION:

None

ATTORNEY:

Mr. Margle said Mr. Drake has provided him with a list of damaged utility poles in the Borough. He will be working with Palmer Township's solicitor to send out a letter requiring said poles to be replaced.

The Solicitor reported he has not yet done follow up letters to Council President Verenna's letters to Mr. Reibman who owns the Dixie property or Mr. Negroa owner of the old bank at 22nd and Northampton. He suggested Mr. Corriere not be sent out to handle inspections and violations at this point. Motion by Ms. Taylor to have Mr. Margle send letter to both property owners regarding conditions of the properties and future intentions. Second by Mr. Starniri. Council unanimously agreed.

Attorney Margle asked Mr. Corriere what has taken place with the illegal sewer hookup at the Stanley Street property owned by Mr. McGouldrick. Mr. Corriere said he had received a verbal response and a backloader is on scene. Mr. Drake asked that he be notified when digging begins.

Mr. Margle reported that he is still working on the RFP for the billboard/scoreboard at Fisk Field. He is making sure all legal aspects are met so that any challenges can be successfully avoided.

COG:

None

MECAB:

Mr. McGowan said MECAB will be on vacation until after the New Year.

OLD BUSINESS:

Motion by Mr. Starniri to reject the proposed 2017 budget as submitted. Second by Mr. McGowan. Yes votes cast by Mr. Starniri, Mr. McGowan, Mr. Feinberg, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Palinkas. No votes cast by Mr. Verenna, Ms. Taylor and Mr. Schaffer. Motion carried by a 5 to 3 vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Garcia advised Council that there can be no spending until a budget is passed. Payroll and utilities are the only exceptions.

Mr. Schaffer presented Council with copies of the Recreation Boards new by-laws.

ORDINANCES:

Ordinance #780 – 2017 Real Estate Tax Rate effectively voted down due to the budget being rejected.

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution #1225 – Salary Resolution effectively voted down due to the budget being rejected.

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS:

Bills of \$111,567.31 were paid on a Motion by Ms. Taylor. Second by Mr. Starniri. The bills were paid by a unanimous vote of Council.

CAUCUS:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

There will be a special meeting to be advertised for Thursday December 28, 2016 at 6:00 pm to address the 2017 budget.

Mr. Starniri made a Motion to adjourn at 7:59 pm. Second by Ms. Taylor and Council unanimously agreed.

JILL A. GARCIA
BOROUGH MANAGER