

WILSON BOROUGH
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
April 24, 2017

The Second Meeting of April 2017 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:

Louis Starniri	Scott Palinkas
Tony Verenna	David Jones
James McGowan	Pamela Taylor
Daniel Schaffer	Russell Lipari
Leonard Feinberg	

ABSENT:

None

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. McGowan to approve the minutes from the April 10, 2017 Council meeting. Second by Mr. Feinberg. Council unanimously approved the minutes.

CAUCUS:

Council entered into a Caucus at 7:02 pm and exited at 7:46 pm. The purpose of the Caucus was to discuss personnel matters.

GUEST:

Mr. Mike Ortiz of 88 Bennett Street in Phillipsburg presented three proposals to Council which would allow his swim team, Lehigh Valley Aquatics, to use Meuser Pool for practice. Practices would be held during the hours the pool is closed to the public and the pool would receive fees for use. Mr. Ortiz agreed there would be no diving during these practices. Council decided to take the proposals into consideration and will get back to Mr. Ortiz at a later date with a response.

PRESENTATION OF MATTERS BY RESIDENTS AND TAXPAYERS:

Mrs. Marlow Wacik of 1532 Washington Street was present representing Friends of the Mary Meuser Library. She explained that the Recreation Board had discontinued its contribution to the Friends and requested that the Borough make the contribution so the Friends are able to continue holding Senior Bingo. Motion by Mr. Lipari to donate \$500 to the Friends of the Library. Second by Ms. Taylor. Council unanimously agreed.

At this time Mr. Verenna opened the floor to allow comments on the upcoming shade tree planting event. A few residents spoke to voice their questions and concerns.

Ms. Susanne Salter of 1934 Lehigh Street asked questions regarding timing of permits, species of trees, permits to trim and blocking sidewalks, costs of permits and decorative coverage around trees.

Mr. & Mrs. Monts of 1917 Northampton Street requested permission to remove a tree. They stated they are unable to physically and financially care for this tree and would like to give the tree to someone who does want it. Ms. Monts said they purchased their home because there were no trees to take care of.

Ms. Patricia Sterner said she believes there were execution problems with the Borough's plan. She said residents should be able to choose if they want to participate and they should also be provided with at least 30 days to respond.

Ms. Mary Ann Sofronie of 2417 Sycamore Street voiced her concern over leaf clean up and requested an on line news letter.

Mr. Paul Strickwerda of 1943 Fairview Avenue spoke in favor of the tree planting. He mentioned how property values rise, noise pollution decreases, oxygen is created and our children are shaded by trees. He also spoke of establishing a fund to help limited income residents care for trees.

Mr. Donald Barrett, Jr. of 725 S. 23rd Street recommended putting shade trees on the Borough's insurance.

Wilson Borough Baseball Association President John Burke and Vice-President Corrie Burke of 1807 Lehigh Street thanked Mr. Drake and his crew for doing a great job getting the fields prepared for opening day. Mr. Drake will be sanding the ramp at Jeffrey field to make sure it is no longer slippery. The batting cage will be looked at as a project for next year.

Mr. Lipari suggested that the Baseball Association run the Avona Concession Stand during school baseball games. The school has given permission.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

Ms. Garcia read a letter from Avona Volunteer Fire Co. requesting permission to block Balata Street from the intersection of Front and Balata Streets back to the alleyway on September 16, 2017 from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm for their annual Picnic. Motion by Mr. Lipari to allow the road closure. Second by Ms. Taylor. Council concurred. The Avona Volunteer Fire Co. will be required to obtain event insurance as well.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR:

Mayor Perruso requested a handicap parking space for Ms. Antoinette Kline of 1941 Lehigh Street. Motion by Ms. Taylor. Second by Mr. Starniri. Council unanimously agreed.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE BOROUGH MANAGER:

None

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

None

POLICE:

None

FIRE:

None

PUBLIC WORKS:

Mr. Jones said the Borough does do leaf cleanup in the fall and also has a relatively new street sweeper. At one point Council had tried to institute alternate side street sweeping but with parking being so difficult in the Borough it never happened. Mr. Drake added that if all residents on a block can get cars moved, Public Works will come by and sweep if notified. Costs involved with signage for sweeping can run into thousands of dollars. Mr. Drake and Mr. Jones will meet to discuss a plan.

PARKS AND RECREATION:

Motion by Mr. Jones to hire pool staff as follows: Jodi Brunstetter: Manager, Kaitlyn Casciole: Assistant Manager, Cecelia Bickel: Ticket Window, and John Whildin, Jr.: Ticket Window. Second by Mr. Schaffer. Council agreed.

Motion by Mr. Schaffer to hire pool life guards as follows: Brian Huber, Michael Whildin, Anne Marie Allen and Sara Bloss. Second by Mr. Palinkas. Council concurred.

Mr. Lipari thanked Mr. Drake for planting an eight foot Serbian Spruce at Meuser Park that will now be used for a tree lighting ceremony. Public Works is also working on obtaining a gazebo for the Park.

ATTORNEY:

Solicitor Margle said he had provided Ms. Garcia with agreements for LIDL to be finalized. Motion by Mr. Feinberg to authorize Ms. Garcia and Council President Verenna to execute the documents. Second by Mr. Starniri. Council agreed.

Mr. Verenna asked Mr. Margle what is happening with the removal of broken utility poles. Mr. Margle said Mr. Drake is working on obtaining pole numbers which will be sent to the PUC and then the poles will be removed.

Mr. Lipari questioned if there has been any progress on the Dixie building. Mr. Margle said Mr. Reibman has been very cooperative answering questions and has offered to have a few Council Members and Mr. Corriere tour the building. Mr. Jones asked that Mr. Reibman come to Council and answer questions. Mr. Margle will contact Mr. Reibman.

Mr. Starniri asked what is being done with the old bank building at 22nd and Northampton Streets. Mr. Margle said that Mr. Negro's asking price is set very high. The Borough could use eminent domain to acquire the building. They would need to have a public purpose for the building and would have to offer fair market value. This can be a lengthy process and may involve litigation.

COG:

None

MECAB:

Mr. McGowan said the next meeting will be in Whitehall Township on April 25th at 7:00 pm.

SHADE TREE COMMISSION:

Ms. Taylor, Chairperson for the Shade Tree Commission took some time to talk about the upcoming Arbor Day celebration and planting of 100 shade trees. She said this is a learning process for all, since the Commission was defunct for so many years. The process will get easier and better. Work began three years ago with Borough representatives, engineers and certified arborists. Areas were surveyed for tree placement and in February 2017 the Tree Vitalize Grant was awarded. Specific trees were chosen to not uproot sidewalks or interfere with wires. Trees are being planted in the public right of way and homeowners will receive a pamphlet about their tree. The celebration is being held on Saturday April 29th at 10:00 am in Meuser Park and the Community Center. All volunteers are welcome. Plans are in place to create a group to help care for trees of people who are unable to do so.

Mr. Starniri commented that he understands the Borough has the right to plant the trees but feels current homeowners are being penalized by having to care for a tree they don't want.

Mayor Perruso commended Ms. Taylor for all her time and effort getting the Shade Tree Commission back up on its fee.

Mr. Palinkas equated the trees to an extra tax on residents who will have to maintain the trees and be responsible for any damaged caused by them. He said the ordinance should be amended to allow residents to refuse a tree.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

ORDINANCES:

None

RESOLUTIONS:

Motion by Mr. Feinberg to approve Resolution #1228 – Authorizing the Borough Manager to Sign Documents for the DCNR Meuser Playground Grant. Second by Mr. Lipari. Council concurred.

Motion by Mr. Starniri to approve Resolution #1229 – In Opposition to the Elimination of the Community Development Block Grant. Second by Ms. Taylor. Council unanimously agreed.

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS:

Bills of \$134,501.97 were paid on a Motion by Mr. Schaffer. Second by Mr. Lipari. The bills were paid by a unanimous vote of Council.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Lipari made a Motion to adjourn at 9:16 pm. Second by Mr. Starniri and Council concurred.

JILL A. GARCIA
BOROUGH MANAGER