

The regular meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Sinking Spring was called to order on Thursday, November 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Sinking Spring Borough Hall by President James Pachuillo. After the Pledge to the Flag, Elizabeth White called the roll reflecting the following Council Members present:

James Pachuillo
T.J. Huckleberry
George Butkus
Denise Stine
Lisa Gantner
Tracy Peterson (Absent)
Brian Hoffa

Other officials present were: Mayor Gary Cirulli, Charles Haws, Borough Solicitor; Robert Ludgate Sr., Ludgate Engineering; Brad Smith, ARRO Consulting; Michael Hart, Public Works Director; Police Chief Lee Schweyer, Regina Shade, Borough Manager and Elizabeth White who recorded the minutes of the proceeding.

Mr. Pachuillo requested a moment of silence to honor those who serve us on a daily basis at home and abroad in the Armed Forces and our first responders.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 2, 2014 Council Meeting and the October 22, 2014 Workshop Meeting. Mr. Huckleberry made the motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

PASSING OF THE 2015 BUDGETS:

Mr. Pachuillo mentioned that the 2015 Budgets were advertised and laid open in the Borough Hall for ten (10) days that are required and we are able to pass the Budgets. He stated that there are Resolutions to adopt the 2015 Budgets and Ordinances to set the tax rates.

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the Ordinance setting the General Fund Tax Rate for 2015 at 6.19 mills which is unchanged from 2014 and also includes the .5 mills for the Capital Improvement Fund. Mr. Huckleberry made the motion; seconded by Mr. Hoffa. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the Ordinance setting the Fire Tax Rate for 2015 at .87 mills which is unchanged from 2014. Mrs. Stine made the motion; seconded by Mr. Butkus. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

PASSING OF THE 2015 BUDGETS (Cont.):

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the Ordinance setting the Ambulance Tax Rate for 2015 at .26 mills which is unchanged from 2014. Mr. Hoffa made the motion; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

Mr. Pachuillo mentioned that we also have a Rate Resolution for the Sewer which is a 25% increase. Mrs. Stine made the motion to pass the new Sewer Rate Resolution; seconded by Mr. Butkus. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to pass the Sewer Budget as advertised. Mr. Butkus made the motion; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to pass the General Fund Budget as advertised. Mr. Butkus made the motion; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to pass the Fire/Ambulance Budget as advertised. Mr. Butkus made the motion; seconded by Mr. Huckleberry. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

Mrs. Shade mentioned that the Smart Search Software is in the Budget for 2015 but the company is going to need some lead time. Mr. Butkus made a motion to authorize Mrs. Shade to start the process of purchasing the Software; seconded by Mr. Hoffa. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Council went into executive session at 7:10 p.m.

RECONVENE:

Council reconvened at 7:45 p.m. Mr. Hoffa made a motion to direct the Solicitor to prepare an agreement with the Berks County Redevelopment Authority to act as an agent for the Borough regarding the Columbia/Cacoosing/Penn Avenue intersection; seconded by Mrs. Gantner. Mr. Pachuillo asked for a roll call vote. AYES – 3 (Mr. Hoffa, Mrs. Gantner and Mr. Pachuillo), NAYS – 3 (Mr. Butkus, Mr. Huckleberry and Mrs. Stine), ABSENT – 1 (Mrs. Peterson). Discussion ensued concerning the Mayor breaking the tie or tabling the issue until next meeting. Mr. Haws stated that it would have to be a special meeting within ten (10) days. Mayor Cirulli broke the tie voting 'NO'. Motion did not carry.

Mr. Pachuillo stated that they are going to continue to look at other options to continue with the Downtown Revitalization.

VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Mike Rebert of PennDOT addressed Council concerning the Columbia/Cacoosing/Penn Avenue intersection and what they can and cannot help with. He mentioned that they are going out to bid on their Betterment project around this time next year and are willing to do at least the traffic signal portion of the Borough's project. He mentioned that the Borough was awarded a \$783,000.00 Grant towards the project. He stated that the funds can be used for acquisition of land, buildings and right-of-way easements and demolition of properties. He stated that the financial assistance requires a thirty percent match. He mentioned that this is an annual program so it is out there every year. He also mentioned that since this is a grant there are agreements that have to be put into place and that a commitment letter would need to be signed in order to move forward. He stated that the Borough would have to put out the money and submit the invoices for reimbursement. Mr. Ludgate mentioned that he was invited to attend the RATS meeting on November, 20th.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS:

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the bills for October 2014. Mrs. Stine made a motion to pay the bills, seconded by Mr. Huckleberry. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

WESTERN BERKS FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Mr. Weidner gave the report for October 2014.

REVITALIZATION:

Mr. Charles Coleman mentioned that they are working with Mr. Robert Hughes about getting a Christmas Tree. Mr. Hoffa stated that they met with Mr. Hughes and he has given the Borough a check for \$500.00 to put towards the decorations and purchase of the tree. He mentioned that Mr. Hughes has also agreed to allow the Borough to put the tree on his property next to the McDonalds and he is giving us coupons to hand out to the kids at the Open House. Mr. Pachuillo stated that we will send a Thank You letter to Mr. Hughes.

Mr. Coleman stated that he knows his committee would feel that we should move ahead with that project discussed earlier. He stated that we have to get on the TIP if we want to get the big intersection done and it would help if we did the smaller intersection to get that straightened out. He stated that he hopes Council can get behind the program.

Mr. Coleman mentioned that one person has filed an application for the Façade Improvement Program.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Pachulo mentioned that we have to appoint a Delegate for TCC/EIT merger. Mrs. Shade stated that Mrs. Diane Richards from the Wilson School District volunteered to be our Delegate again. Mr. Butkus made a motion to appoint Mrs. Diane Richards from the Wilson School District to continue representing us; seconded by Mrs. Gantner.

Mr. Pachulo mentioned that there is going to be a meeting on November 12th at 7 pm at the Conrad Weiser High School for the Betterment Project.

GEORGE BUTKUS – SEWER COMMITTEE:

Mr. Butkus mentioned that the sewer committee will be meeting one day next week.

LISA GANTNER – RECREATION:

Mrs. Gantner stated that the Holiday Open House will be December 10th at 7 pm and we will be expanding into the Library this year.

Mrs. Gantner asked about the road projects going on and if there are standards that have to be met when they repave because she thinks they are still too bumpy. Mr. Hart stated that there are standards and that Columbia Avenue is going to be resurfaced. He stated that South Hull street is already completed and was done to standard specs. He stated that is why we bumped South Hull Street up on our list to repave next year. Mrs. Shade stated that we should send the letters out to the residents about the curbing. Mr. Hart stated that there isn't a whole lot of curbing and most of it is Grande's so there shouldn't be an issue. He stated that we should have all the curbing done by June 2015. Mr. Butkus made a motion to authorize moving forward on this with the condition that all property owners have the curbing done by June 2015 or the Borough will have it done and put liens on their property; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

BRIAN HOFFA – ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

Mr. Hoffa stated that part of us joining the Pennsylvania Downtown Center was to have them help put together a Marketing Development Study. He stated that he is not sure what the fee for that is yet, but he would like to invite them here to take a walk through and give us an idea of what it would cost to do that and start to move forward with some of the issues.

CHARLES HAWS – BOROUGH SOLICITOR:

Mr. Haws mentioned the Spring Market Out Parcel Development Project and that Council granted preliminary final approval on the project subject to the Engineers Review letter. He mentioned that there was one note that needed to be added to the plan. He mentioned that the folks from Landcore, a consultant for the developer, got the plan together and brought it from New Jersey

CHARLES HAWS – BOROUGH SOLICITOR (Cont.):

today but was missing signatures and a notarization and they had to be taken back. He asked if we could make a recommendation that the Planning Commission plan to meet to reaffirm their action since it has been over the ninety days and so that they can sign the plans. He stated that Council can sign the plans at their next meeting on December 4th.

SEWER ENGINEER – ARRO CONSULTING – BRAD SMITH:

Mr. Smith mentioned that the NPDES Permit is still pending. He stated that the SCADA Project contractor has asked for a thirty day time extension because the project was to be completed by November 3rd and it is not because of a software issue. Mr. Butkus made a motion to accept the thirty day time extension; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

Mr. Smith also mentioned that the Reed Bed Cleaning Project is ready to be advertised with PENNBID.

MICHAEL HART – PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR:

Mr. Hart mentioned that they did a lot of interviews over the last two weeks to fill the Public Works positions and that he has two (2) people that are ready to jump into the role. He stated that contingent upon the background checks, he would like to hire Mr. Michael Papas and Mr. Steven Haller. Mr. Hoffa stated that he is uncomfortable hiring these people without having more information. Mr. Butkus asked if Mr. Hart had the resumes and if they could go into executive session so that Council could go over them.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Council went into executive session at 8:41 p.m. for a personnel matter.

RECONVENE:

Council reconvened at 8:49 p.m. Mr. Butkus made a motion to hire Mr. Michael Papas and Mr. Steven Haller at the Class 3 rate of \$15.25 per hour contingent upon the background checks and with a ninety day probationary period; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

Mr. Butkus also made a motion to authorize Mr. Hart or the appropriate person to contact the Union and get a clear definition of what the three (3) Classes are so they can be amended in the Contract; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

ROBERT LUDGATE SR. – BOROUGH ENGINEER:

Mr. Ludgate mentioned that he was contacted by a representative for a property owner of a downtown property and there is very preliminary discussions of a potential project taking a small piece of property from that area. He stated that when there is more information that is solid it should come in as a plan before the Planning Commission.

CHIEF SCHWEYER:

Chief Schweyer mentioned that he received a letter from District Attorney John Adams requesting a donation to Berks County Crime Alerts which we donated \$250.00 to last year. Mr. Butkus made a motion to donate \$250.00 to Berks County Crime Alerts; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

Chief Schweyer mentioned that over the summer we had some extensive vandalism done to vehicles in the area of Keller, Elwyn, Park and Clematis Street. He stated that the suspect has been caught. He also mentioned that tomorrow should be the last day for the Water Co. Project on Columbia Avenue. He stated that the new radios finally went into effect on Monday and seem to be working fine. He stated that one issue with the new radios in the cars is that they are unable to hear the Road Crew because they are scanning the main radio frequency, Berks. . Mr. Hart stated that we could buy standard radios like the road crew has for the Police cars. He stated that they are small and compact and to purchase the radio, antenna and install would be about \$600.00 per car and there are four (4) cars. Mr. Butkus made a motion to authorize them to start that process with an amount not to exceed \$2,500.00 and to coordinate installation with the Chief; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

REGINA SHADE – BOROUGH MANAGER:

Mrs. Shade mentioned that there will not be Workshop Meeting for November because of the Thanksgiving Holiday.

TREASURER’S REPORT:**General Account**

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Opening Balance – September 30, 2014 | \$744,393.24 |
| PLGIT | 9,122.47 |
| Invest | 29,236.02 |
| Recreation | |
| General | 75,317.68 |
| Capital Improvement Acct. | 107,301.39 |
| McDonald’s Escrow | 4,007.86 |
| Susquehanna Bank Acct. | 100.00 |
| Deposits as of October 31, 2014 | 102,126.92 |
| Checks Written | 284,144.11 |
| Payroll | 83,978.59 |

TREASURER'S REPORT (Cont.):

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| PENNVEST auto debit | 2,785.50 |
| To be Paid | <u>39,668.48</u> |
| Balance as of November 6, 2014 | \$661,028.90 |

Sewer Account

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Opening Balance –September 30, 2014 | \$875,176.92 |
| PLGIT | 61,457.20 |
| Invest | 322,944.26 |
| Deposits as of October 31, 2014 | 91,160.93 |
| Checks Written | 133,899.63 |
| PENNVEST auto debit | 15,243.07 |
| To be Paid | <u>3,829.48</u> |
| Balance as of November 6, 2014 | \$1,197,767.13 |

Liquid Fuels Account


| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Opening Balance – September 30, 2014 | \$327,111.01 |
| Invest | 30,777.75 |
| Checks Written | <u>15,213.16</u> |
| Balance as of November 6, 2014 | \$342,675.60 |

Mr. Butkus made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as printed and read; seconded by Mrs. Gantner. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Butkus made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


 Elizabeth A. White,
 Asst. Borough Secretary