

The regular meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Sinking Spring was called to order on Monday, January 4, 2016 at 7:02 p.m. at the Sinking Spring Borough Hall by President James Pachuillo. After the Pledge to the Flag, Elizabeth Eagelman called the roll reflecting the following Council Members present:

James Pachuillo
T.J. Huckleberry
George Butkus
Denise Stine
Lisa Gantner
Tracy Peterson
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, and Elizabeth Eagelman who recorded the minutes of the proceeding.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 3, 2015 Council Meeting. Mr. Huckleberry made the motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Mrs. Peterson. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no visitors.

CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no correspondence.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS:

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the bills for December 2015. Mrs. Gantner made a motion to pay the bills, seconded by Mr. Huckleberry. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

WESTERN BERKS FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Mr. Pachuillo stated that Mr. Renshaw was unable to attend tonight's meeting and that his report is in everyone's binders.

REVITALIZATION:

Mr. Loth addressed Council and went over the BOSS 2020 Revitalization Committee 2015 Annual Report. He mentioned that Fourth Economy will be attending the Workshop meeting on January 27, 2016 and will have a pretty substantial report on the Market Study. He stated that he is hoping that they will be able to take the report to the RATS committee in Reading and convince them that if they give us the Phase Four Intersection at Penn Avenue and Shillington Road, which we need to make this work, then we can deliver a central business district that will benefit everybody. He mentioned that one thing that that we can do is send letters of support for this project to get on the TIP, individually and collectively, to Mike Rebert who is the District Engineer in Allentown. Discussion ensued concerning the TIP and federal funding. Mr. Ludgate stated that the stronger we lobby for our own interest the better our chances. Mr. Hoffa asked if they should contact Secretary Richards and if she would have any influence on this. He stated that she seemed very interested in what is going on here and that Senator Argall is very interested and between the two of them if we could get a letter of support from them it may help.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. Pachulo stated that the first item is to pass the Tax Ordinances for the General Fund, Fire Fund and Ambulance Fund.

Mr. Huckleberry made a motion to pass the General Fund Tax Ordinance with a rate of 6.19 mills; seconded by Mrs. Peterson. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

Mr. Huckleberry made a motion to pass the Fire Fund Tax Ordinance with a rate of .82 mills; seconded by Mrs. Gantner. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

Mrs. Gantner made a motion to pass the Ambulance Fund Tax Ordinance with a rate of .31 mills; seconded by Mr. Hoffa. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

The next item was concerning the R. G. Heckman property at 3932 Penn Avenue. Mr. Hart explained that Mr. Heckman was being charged for three (3) units for this property from August 2009 through August 2014. Mr. Heckman stated that there were only two (2) units but the census forms he filled out stated differently which is why he was being billed for three (3) units. Mr. Hart explained that we changed it back to two (2) units in September 2014 pending an inspection by the Code Enforcement Officer. He mentioned that the inspection finally took place and Mr. Miller confirmed that there are only two (2) rental units but mentioned that Mr. Heckman told him that the commercial garage in the rear used to be a butcher shop. Mr. Hart believes that should be the third unit. He stated that he sent a letter to Mr. Heckman on December 4, 2015 asking to schedule a meeting to inspect the garage to see if it is connected to the Sewer. He stated that Mr. Heckman has not responded and asked Council permission to go back to charging him for the three (3) units until he can prove that the garage is not connected to the sewer. Mr. Butkus made a motion to authorize Mr. Hart and the staff to bill Mr. Heckman for the third unit until we have confirmed proof that satisfies Mr. Hart that he has closed off that connection; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Pachuillo stated that the first item is a Resolution naming Mrs. Orlando as Mr. Orlando's beneficiary. Mr. Butkus made a motion to approve the Resolution; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

The next item was the Ordinance joining the Berks County Emergency Response Team (BCERT). Mr. Huckleberry made a motion to authorize the Ordinance; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the Treasures Report. Mrs. Stine made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report; seconded by Mr. Huckleberry. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

ROBERT LUDGATE SR. – BOROUGH ENGINEER

Mr. Ludgate stated that they did get a letter to PennDOT rejecting the bids for the Penn Avenue Pedestrian Safety Project that came in significantly higher than the money available. He mentioned that they are working with PennDOT on scaling back the project to something that would fit better with the money that is available. He stated that pending what goes on with PennDOT, the thinking is that we would still get the sidewalk on the south side of Penn and the last block of the Borough because that would be built with DCED funding. He stated that the PennDOT money could build around the Spring House on the north side of Penn, the Hull Street corner, and Wynnewood at the end where there are drainage issues to be fixed up as well as tying in the new sidewalk.

Mr. Ludgate mentioned that they are also trying to resolve the H & H Construction plan. He stated that they had a plan approved and built their project but not according to the plan that they had approved. He stated that it is in a very critical area for drainage and storm water management so Ludgate has insisted that they provide a new Storm Water Management Plan that has to go before the County Conservation District. He mentioned that a plan was provided but they have not seen a response from the Conservation District yet.

Mr. Butkus asked if we are looking at doing an additional Pedestrian Safety Grant since the bids came in so much higher. Mr. Ludgate stated that the program might reopen but at this point we do have the money that was allocated to the Borough and is still available as far as he knows per conversations with PennDOT.

SEWER ENGINEER – ARRO CONSULTING – BRAD SMITH:

Mr. Smith stated that they received a letter from System Design and Engineering who is the Engineer for Lower Heidelberg Township. He read the letter which states that they are asking for a written response regarding the status of additional connections to the Waste Water Treatment Plant for the area of the Township know as Knoll Faust Area. He stated that he wrote a response letter giving them their capacity purchased and advised them that only they know how they have allocated their capacity. Discussion ensued. Mr. Butkus made a motion to authorize Mr. Smith to send the letter; seconded by Mr. Hoffa. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

ELIZABETH EAGELMAN – ASSISTANT BOROUGH SECRETARY:

Mrs. Eagelman stated that she, Mrs. Bohn and Mr. Hart, and the Police Department wanted to thank Council for the Holiday Luncheon.

CHARLES HAWS – BOROUGH SOLICITOR:

Mr. Haws mentioned the Civil Services Commission and that there should be three members and since the Mayor had to step down the Borough needs to find someone to serve. Mr. Pachulo stated that we can put it out on the website. Mayor Cirulli suggested that it should be someone with law enforcement experience. Mr. Haws stated that the standing positions should be 2, 4 and 6 year terms.

MAYOR GARY CIRULLI:

Mayor Cirulli asked if we could look into going to Tablets because we are wasting a lot of paper for the meeting binders. Discussion ensued as to the benefits of having Tablets. Council authorized Mr. Hart to look into getting tablets and the cost.

TRACY PETERSON – LIBRARY:

Mrs. Peterson stated that the Library received a grant for \$5,000.00 from the Henry Jansen Foundation again this year.

DENISE STINE – PUBLIC SAFETY:

Mrs. Stine mentioned that the Police Contract should be signed by the Workshop meeting for Council to sign.

GEORGE BUTKUS – SEWER AND SANITATION:

Mr. Butkus asked Council to authorize Mrs. Egelman to double check the numbers because he believes that we can reduce the trash fees by 15%.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mr. Pachulo stated that they needed to go into Executive Session for a personnel issue and a property acquisition issue. Council went into Executive Session at 7:57 p.m.

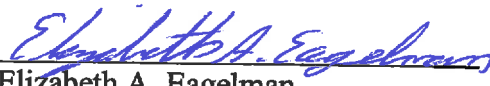
RECONVENE:

Council reconvened at 8:36 p.m. No Action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Butkus made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Elizabeth A. Egelman
Asst. Borough Secretary