

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WESTFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
December 10, 2024
Westfield Municipal Building

COUNCIL PRESENT: Roger Watkins, Derek Eldridge, Michael James, Danielle Pierce, Beth Rowland, Doug Rowland

COUNCIL ABSENT: Holly Zengerle

OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Emmons, James Streeter, Donna Leschander, Officer Kyle Mack, Mayor Faun James, Lori Nelson

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by council president Roger Watkins. The Pledge of Allegiance was given. A roll call of members found Holly Zengerle to be absent. The visitors were addressed.

Visitors

Craig Emmons asked about the ATV signage and offered to help put them up when they arrive.

Larson Design Group

Shawn Downey with Larson Design Group sent a memo with updates on projects with several action items.

- Route 349 Project

PA DOT is requesting a Contribution Agreement for utility work on Route 349 with a 25% contribution by Westfield Borough. There are some water and sewer lines in conflict with the Route 349 project; PA DOT is requiring a 25% match for the replacement during construction. A resolution for water and a resolution for sewer approving such agreement are needed.

Motion was made by Beth Rowland, seconded by Danielle Pierce, to approve a Resolution for sewer utilities and a Resolution for water utilities authorizing a Contribution Agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for a 25% cost share for the project contingent upon review and approval of engineer Larson Design Group. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland, and Watkins. The motion carried.

MUNICIPAL/AUTHORITY RESOLUTION

In accordance with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Design Manual – Part 5, Chapter 8.1.C, the Borough of Westfield does hereby authorize the submission of the attached request for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to provide a 75 percent reimbursement to Westfield Borough for all costs, less any betterments, incurred in relocating our Sewer system facility affected by Highway Improvement Project of State Route 0349, Section 010 necessitated by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Highway Improvement in Tioga County.

Also, the President of said Municipality be authorized and directed to sign a Utility Reimbursement Agreement on its behalf and that the Secretary be authorized and directed to attest the President's signature on the Utility Reimbursement Agreement for this highway project.

A Change Order for the engineering agreement was previously approved. An amendment is needed due to a date change.

Motion was made by Danielle Pierce, seconded by Doug Rowland, to approve Larson Design Group Change Order #1 as amended. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland, and Watkins. The motion carried.

Mayor/Police Chief Report

Mayor James reported the police will qualify December 15.

The Christmas parade will be Friday – they are hoping for more entries than last year. The store fronts are decorated for the holiday and looks nice.

Minutes

Motion was made by Mike James, seconded by Danielle Pierce, to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2024 meeting as presented. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland and Watkins. The motion carried.

Financial Report

Council reviewed the report. Lori Nelson commented on the payment to Intuit for upgrading QuickBooks to Enterprise; this will save about \$500 per year.

Motion was made by Doug Rowland, seconded by Danielle Pierce, to approve the finance report with additions. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland, and Watkins. The motion carried.

PA DOT Route 349 Project

A contribution agreement for work on Route 349 has been received from PA DOT. It is the cost share for the borough for drainage and sidewalk work. Council would like to meet with Mara Johnson for more information on the project. Doug Rowland questioned what would happen if the borough could not pay.

TCAB

The Christmas dinner for the Tioga County Association of Boroughs will be December 18 in Wellsboro.

2025 Budget

The 2025 proposed budget was duly advertised.

Motion was made by Beth Rowland, seconded by Doug Rowland, to adopt the 2025 Budget. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland, and Watkins. The motion carried.

2025 Tax Rate

The real estate tax rate will remain the same for 2025.

TIOGA COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,
TO FIX THE REAL ESTATE TAX RATE FOR THE YEAR 2025

WHEREAS, Act 51 of 2019 amends the Borough Code, 8 Pa.C.S.A. §101 et seq., by establishing a new process for boroughs adopting an annual property tax rate that is not an increase from the previous year's property tax rate; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Westfield, Tioga County, will not increase its real estate tax rate for the year 2025; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 1310.1 of the Borough Code, 8 Pa.C.S.A. §1310.1, the Borough is permitted to adopt its tax rates by resolution rather than ordinance,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Westfield, Tioga County, Pennsylvania:

That a tax be and the same is hereby levied on all real property within the Borough of Westfield subject to taxation for the year 2025 as follows:

SECTION 1. Tax rate for general borough purposes, the sum of 3.80 mills on each dollar of assessed valuation or \$0.380 on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

SECTION 2. That any resolution, or parts of resolution, conflicting with this resolution be and the same is hereby repealed insofar as the same affects this resolution.

SECTION 3. This resolution shall become effective January 1, 2025.

Motion was made by Danielle Pierce, seconded by Beth Rowland, to approve Resolution No. 2024-356 fixing the tax rate for the year 2025 at 3.8 mills. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland, and Watkins. The motion carried.

2024 Audit

A proposal was received from Kirk, Summa & Co. to perform the audit for the year 2024. The cost is not to exceed \$8,100.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-357
A RESOLUTION APPOINTING AN INDEPENDENT AUDITOR
FOR THE BOROUGH OF WESTFIELD, TIOGA COUNTY,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 232 of the Borough of Westfield, Tioga County, Pennsylvania, has been enacted requiring the appointment of an independent auditor to examine the records of the Borough of Westfield; and

WHEREAS, an independent auditor needs to be appointed for the period January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Westfield, Tioga County, Pennsylvania, that the firm Kirk, Summa & Co., LLP, Certified Public Accountants, be appointed as the independent auditor for Westfield Borough for the period January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

Motion was made by Doug Rowland, seconded by Danielle Pierce, to adopt Resolution No. 2024-357 to appoint Kirk, Summa & Co. as the independent auditor to examine the records for the year 2024. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland, and Watkins. The motion carried.

Administrative Committee

Beth Rowland reported on a meeting held November 14 with the Army Corps of Engineers and Tioga County Conservation District regarding remediation of the Cowanesque River and tributaries. An application for the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Project needs to be submitted by January 1. Doug Rowland elaborated on the meeting and noted that the floodplain ordinance needs to be enforced. Municipalities will be liable for maintenance after the project is completed.

Motion was made by Beth Rowland, seconded by Doug Rowland, to participate in the watershed protection project and to submit an Application for the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Project. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland, and Watkins. The motion carried.

A new copier is needed in the office. Prices from Tioga Office Products were obtained as well as checking Staples. Some discussion was held.

Motion was made by Beth Rowland, seconded by Danielle Pierce, to allow the office to purchase a new copier with the cost to be \$500-\$600. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland and Watkins. The motion carried.

TextMyGov has contacted the office about subscribing to the program. Beth Rowland explained it would allow the borough to send messages. The cost is about \$1500 per year. The county has a program available free to municipalities, RAVE, but residents need to sign up for this service. Beth Rowland felt it would be a good investment. Kyle Mack reported that the ambulance used the county system for their support group. More discussion was held. This was tabled for more information

Personnel Committee

Roger Watkins noted that council still needs to look at long-term replacement for current employees to be trained as operators. Beth Rowland suggested looking into a possible training program with the school. Further discussion was held.

Planning Committee

Mike James noted that the floodplain ordinance requires a local floodplain administrator be appointed. Erb Inspections has been used as a third party. This was tabled.

Streets, Sidewalks, Buildings Committee

Roger Watkins reported no bids were received for repair to the community building. This will need to be re-bid.

Roger Watkins reported on a phone call with FEMA regarding Public Assistance for flood damages. There will be a site visit in January.

Vehicle & Equipment Maintenance Committee

David Nudd reported that the floor jack does not work. It was flood damaged. He noted that NAPA has one on sale this month. Roger Watkins noted that he feels the crew will continue to find damaged equipment.

Motion was made by Mike James, seconded by Derek Eldridge, to approve the purchase of a floor jack for the shop with a cost up to \$275. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland and Watkins. The motion carried.

Roller quotes were reviewed from last meeting. It was noted that the warranty for all quotes will be 1 year.

Motion was made by Mike James, seconded by Doug Rowland, to accept the bid of \$21,900 from Five Star Equipment for a BOMAG BW 900-50 roller. Those in favor were Eldridge, James, Pierce, D. Rowland, E. Rowland, and Watkins. The motion carried.

Roger Watkins reported on the lawn mowers. David Nudd has requested to replace the older tractor that was damaged in the flood. The other two mowers are working but were also flooded. Council asked for quotes for the next meeting.

Grants Committee

Lori Nelson reported that two LSA applications were submitted. One for a camera system to cover the parks and Main Street, and the other for sidewalk replacement on West Main Street.

Utilities Committee – nothing at this time.

Visitors – nothing

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Lori Nelson
Secretary/Treasurer