

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WESTFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
December 13, 2022
Westfield Municipal Building

COUNCIL PRESENT: Roger McCullen, Denis Landry, Elizabeth Rowland, Wayne Boka, and Kristen Zaidi

COUNCIL ABSENT: Leland Pond, and Roger Watkins

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Gail Bollinger, Shawn Downey, James Streeter, Andrew Adams, Robin and Ed Presor, David Nudd, and Theresa McCullen

The meeting was called to order by Council President Denis Landry at 7:00 p.m. The pledge of allegiance was said. A roll call of members present was taken; Wayne Boka, Leland Pond, and Roger Watkins were listed as absent. Wayne Boka arrived at 7:02 p.m.

Visitors – Agenda Items

Shawn Downey of Larson Design Group was present with an update and items for Council to take care of.

Motion was made by Kristen Zaidi and seconded by Roger McCullen to approve Application for Payment #1 to Standard Pipe Services in the amount of \$65,598.12 with revisions. Those in favor were McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi and Landry. The motion was carried.

Wayne Boka arrived at 7:02 p.m.

Motion was made by Elizabeth Rowland and seconded by Wayne Boka to approve the corrected work order for Standard Pipe Services through November 22, 2022. Those in favor were Boka, McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi and Landry. The motion was carried.

Motion was made by Roger McCullen and seconded by Kristen Zaidi to approve the resolution and application documents for the PA Small Water and Sewer Program Grant of up to \$500,000. Those in favor were McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi, Boka, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Motion was made by Elizabeth Rowland and seconded by Kristen Zaidi to approve Change Order No. 10 (final) for Lobar in the amount of \$15,314.11 for installation of digester covers. Those in favor were Rowland, Zaidi, Boka, McCullen, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Motion was made by Kristen Zaidi and seconded by Wayne Boka to approve the WQM Permit Post Construction Certification. Those in favor were Zaidi, Boka, McCullen, Rowland, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Motion was made by Roger McCullen and seconded by Wayne Boka to approve Final Application for Payment No. 24 in the amount of \$24,215.34 for Lobar and Application for Payment No. 22 for Tra Electric in the amount of \$33,269.00. Those in favor were Boka, McCullen, Roland, Zaidi, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Motion was made by Elizabeth Rowland and seconded by Kristen Zaidi to approve the Substantial Completion Certificate for Tra Electric effective 12/12/22. Those in favor were McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi, Boka, and Landry. The motion was carried.

James Streeter addressed the Council regarding the budget. He does not feel the Borough has an “honest” budget because the cash on hand (fund balance) is not budgeted. He feels this money should “go into the pockets of the workers” and that the Council should have given higher raises in anticipation of inflation. Council members reminded Mr. Streeter that the wages are set in the union contract and the employees have not made any requests.

Mayor/Police Chief Report

Gail Bollinger referred to confidential correspondence from the ambulance association and Mountain Laurel Recovery Center that is for informational purposes for the Council.

Mr. Landry has been in touch with the CEO of MLRC about setting up a meeting with the Council and ambulance association for after the holidays.

There was discussion about giving part-time police officer Milfred Catherman a \$100 bonus for Christmas. Mr. Catherman has been faithful about filling in shifts as much as possible. It was noted he may be moving soon.

Motion was made by Wayne Boka and seconded by Elizabeth Rowland to approve a \$100 Christmas bonus for Milfred Catherman. Those in favor were Rowland, Zaidi, Boka, McCullen, and Landry. The motion was carried.

A letter of resignation has been received from part-time police officer Adam Wensel. It was noted that he has been with the department for 15 years. His letter was read aloud.

Motion was made by Wayne Boka and seconded by Roger McCullen to accept the resignation of part-time police officer Adam Wensel with regrets. Those in favor were Zaidi, Boka, McCullen, Rowland, and Landry. The motion was carried.

There was a discussion about the need for police officers in the department and the possibility of sponsoring a candidate. Andrew Adams knows of someone interested in attending the academy regardless of whether the Borough would sponsor him. The last graduating class from the academy in Mansfield had only seven graduates.

Mr. Landry pointed out that the Borough had only one applicant from the last round of advertising and wondered if the Borough should hire him as a part-time officer.

During the discussion Mr. Adams pointed out that re-certifying an officer is less expensive than sending someone to the academy.

Theresa McCullen brought up that someone (a female) recently came to the office who is interested in being sponsored by the Borough.

Minutes

Motion was made by Kristen Zaidi and seconded by Roger McCullen to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2022 council meeting. All were in favor; the motion was carried.

Financial Report

Motion was made by Kristen Zaidi and seconded by Wayne Boka to approve the financial report. All were in favor; the motion was carried.

2023 Budget

Motion was made by Elizabeth Rowland and seconded by Kristen Zaidi to approve the 2023 budget as presented. Those in favor were Boka, McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Waiver of Real Estate Charges Resolution

Resolution No. 2022-337 requiring a tax collector to waive certain additional charges for real estate taxes pursuant to act 57 of 2022 was presented for approval.

Motion was made by Elizabeth Rowland and seconded by Roger McCullen to approve Resolution No. 2022-337 as presented. Those in favor were McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi, Boka, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Sewer Rate Ordinance

Motion was made by Kristen Zaidi and seconded by Elizabeth Rowland to approve Ordinance No. 341 setting a new sewer rate (3 percent increase). Those in favor were Rowland, Zaidi, Boka, McCullen, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Tax Rate Resolution

Motion was made by Roger McCullen and seconded by Elizabeth Rowland to approve Resolution No. 2022-337 setting the tax rate for 2023 (no increase). Those in favor were Zaidi, Boka, McCullen, Rowland, and Landry. The motion was carried.

PMRS Resolution

Motion was made by Wayne Boka and seconded by Kristen Zaidi to approve Resolution No. 2022-338 to amend the contract and waive employee contributions (police dept.). Those in favor were Boka, McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Motion was made by Elizabeth Rowland and seconded by Kristen Zaidi to approve a slight increase in the MMO rate due to an error by PMRS. Those in favor were McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi, Boka, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Personnel

Mrs. Rowland announced that six applications were received for the DPW position. Four interviews were held; two of the applicants were outside of the residency requirement.

Mrs. Rowland said the committee recommends hiring Shahid Zaidi. When she called his current employer, they had many good things to say about Mr. Zaidi. He has completed all water license course work, and he just lacks one year of experience from getting his license.

Motion was made by Elizabeth Rowland and seconded by Wayne Boka to hire Shahid Zaidi for the public works position at a rate that is \$2/hr. less than the lowest paid public works employee. He will complete a probationary period as outlined in the union contract. Those in favor were Rowland, Boka, McCullen, and Landry. Mrs. Zaidi abstained. The motion was carried.

Mr. Zaidi's start date will be January 3, 2023.

Planning

Mrs. Zaidi is asking permission to have a mural painted by Kenneth Cobb on the east end of the municipal building. This would be funded by an Arts in Education Residency grant through the Bradford County Regional Arts Council. The following items are needed from the Council in order to secure the grant:

- Permission to paint the mural on the building
- Permission to fund raise to secure matching funds that are required
- Permission to use the community room for meetings
- Permission to list Westfield Borough as the host organization for the Arts in Education Residency – Mural by Kenneth Cobb project

Motion was made by Roger McCullen and seconded by Elizabeth Rowland to grant permission for a mural to be painted by Kenneth Cobb and funded by an Arts in Education Residency grant through the Bradford County Regional Arts Council. Motion includes permission to use the community room for meetings and to submit the grant application listing Westfield Borough as the host organization if permissible. Those in favor were Boka, McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Streets

Mrs. Rowland inquired about having a representative from PA DOT do a drive-around inspection of the streets with the committee for possible street work. This will be looked into.

Grants & Loans

Mr. Boka outlined a USDA grant application that has been submitted for the purchase of a new police vehicle. The grant has been approved and will cover 55 percent of the cost with an approximate \$27,000 cost to the Borough after sale of the old police vehicle. There were extra funds available which expedited the grant application. This is for a Chevrolet Tahoe.

Motion was made by Kristen Zaidi and seconded by Wayne Boka to approve ordering the Chevrolet Tahoe police vehicle as described above. Those in favor were McCullen, Rowland, Zaidi, Boka, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Andrew Adams explained that some of the equipment (mostly electronic) will be transferred from the old vehicle. This vehicle will be more marked and noticeable than the current vehicle. It was noted that the old police vehicle will be up for sale as soon as the new vehicle arrives.

Utilities

Mr. McCullen brought up that the estimate for the upgrade of the Mill St. pump station needs to be approved if it doesn't have to be bid out.

Motion was made by Roger McCullen and seconded by Wayne Boka to accept the proposal of Swarz Electric in the amount of \$21,237 if it does not have to be bid out and no other quotes are required. Those in favor were Rowland, Zaidi, Boka, McCullen, and Landry. The motion was carried.

Visitors – Comment Period

Robin and Ed Presor were present regarding an upcoming expansion to the Mountain Laurel Recovery Center. Mrs. Presor noted that there are more issues besides the noise and that limitations are needed.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Roger McCullen and seconded by Kristen Zaidi. All were in favor; the motion was carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.



Theresa McCullen
Assistant Secretary