

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WESTFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
Westfield Municipal Building
November 14, 2023

COUNCIL PRESENT: Roger Watkins, Roger McCullen, Zachary Smith, Elizabeth Rowland, and Constance Cummings

COUNCIL ABSENT: None (two vacancies)

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Gail Bollinger, James Streeter, Kyle Mack, Andrew Adams, Shawn Downey, Stevens Lambert, Jr., Teresa Olofson (arrived at 7:17 p.m.), Robin and Ed Presor (arrived at 7:20 p.m.), and Theresa McCullen

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Council President Roger Watkins. The pledge of allegiance was said, and a roll call of members found everyone to be present. There are two vacancies on the Council currently.

Mayor/Police Chief Report

Motion was made by Beth Rowland and seconded by Zachary Smith to approve the purchase of body armor for police academy cadet Kyle Mack. Those in favor were Cummings, McCullen, Rowland, Smith, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

The vest has already been ordered, but an official motion to purchase it was needed.

Motion was made by Zachary Smith and seconded by Constance Cummings to approve hiring cadet Kyle Mack contingent upon successful completion of the police academy. Those in favor were Rowland, Smith, Cummings, McCullen, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

Solicitor's Report

The solicitor was recently consulted about Ron Schiffler's request for a private road called "Schiffy Lane" which would give access to his proposed RV park. The solicitor recommends that Council give him authorization to review and prepare a right-of-way that would benefit the Borough. The current proposed right-of-way infringes upon Davis Park, and the solicitor feels Mr. Schiffler has enough land without involving the Borough. Mr. Schiffler could ask for a variance; however, he is not interested in pursuing that.

Motion was made by Beth Rowland and seconded by Constance Cummings to authorize Christopher Lantz to prepare a right-of-way agreement for Schiffy Lane that will not infringe on any Borough owned structures. Those in favor were McCullen, Rowland, Smith, Cummings, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

Minutes

Motion was made by Constance Cummings and seconded by Beth Rowland to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2023 meeting. All were in favor; the motion was carried.

Financial Report

Motion was made by Zachary Smith and seconded by Beth Rowland to approve the financial report. All were in favor; the motion was carried.

Old Business

Mrs. Rowland reported that the committee did meet about the proposed resident survey from Constance Cummings. She gave a rundown to the Council members of what questions will be asked, and everyone was in agreement to send it out in an upcoming water/sewer billing.

Shawn Downey of Larson Design Group was present to give an update to Council on current projects. Repairs to the sewer line on State Route 349 (Church St.) before paving is close to \$1 million. Mr. Downey emphasized that now is a good time to apply for Pennvest funding. The application is due February 7, 2024, and the funding will be announced April 24, 2024. Council members agreed to table action on the Pennvest funding to the second meeting of this month (November 28th).

Mr. Downey gave a rundown on various funding. He noted that the “bones” of the Pennvest application are basically together already.

A resolution is needed for the LSA grant (Local Share Assessment) in connection with the sewer rehabilitation project.

RESOLUTION NO. 346

Authorized Official Resolution

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Westfield Borough of Tioga County hereby requests a Statewide Local Share Assessment grant of up to \$1,000,000.00 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for the Sewer Rehabilitation Project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Applicant does hereby designate Roger Watkins, Council President, and Lori Nelson, Secretary/Treasurer, as the official(s) to execute all documents and agreements between the Westfield Borough and the Commonwealth Financing Authority to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested grant.

I, Lori Nelson, duly qualified Secretary of the Westfield Borough, Tioga County, Westfield, PA, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution duly adopted by a majority vote of the Westfield Borough at a regular meeting held November 14, 2023 and said Resolution has been recorded in the minutes of the Westfield Borough and remains in effect as of this date.

Motion was made by Elizabeth Rowland and seconded by Zachary Smith to approve Resolution No. 346 in connection with the Statewide Local Share Assessment grant. Those in favor were Rowland, Smith, Cummings, McCullen, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

A letter is needed for PennDOT authorizing Larson Design Group as the Borough's engineering consultant.

Motion was made by Zachary Smith and seconded by Constance Cummings to approve a letter to PennDOT authorizing Larson Design Group as consultant for the Borough. Those in favor were Smith, Cummings, McCullen, Rowland, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

New Business

- 2024 Fire Agreement

The proposed 2024 fire agreement from Crary Hose Company has been presented to Council for review and acceptance. There is a \$1,500 increase from last year which was explained by Andrew Adams.

Motion was made by Beth Rowland and seconded by Constance Cummings to approve the 2024 fire agreement with Crary Hose Company. Those in favor were Cummings, McCullen, Rowland, Smith, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

- Insurance Proposal

Stevens Lambert of Gannon Associates was present with the 2024 insurance proposal. He said there has been a significant increase in the premium due to the upgrade at the wastewater treatment plant. There was also an increase with the addition of the police Chevy Tahoe. Mr. Lambert covered many topics as he went through the insurance proposal including fire company events that are held in the community room. These should be scheduled in writing to the Borough; all events have to be logged. Mr. Lambert also mentioned that if alcohol is served in the building at events the Borough may wish to consider an event policy. He referred to dram laws, and said this additional policy is very inexpensive.

Council discussed adjusting some of the deductibles. Mr. Lambert will work up new figures and submit an adjusted premium within a couple of days.

The insurance proposal will be brought up at the second meeting of this month, November 28th, for approval. The renewal date is December 2.

- Audit Proposal

A resolution is needed to approve hiring the auditor. There was an \$800 increase in the fee from last year.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-345

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, 2023 to December 31, 2023:

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, 2023 to December 31, 2023.

Motion was made by Zachary Smith and seconded by Beth Rowland to approve Resolution No. 2023-345 appointing an auditor for the period January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. All were in favor; the motion was carried.

- Proposed 2024 Budget/Millage Rates

Mr. Smtih explained the millage for next year.

Motion was made by Zachary Smith and seconded by Beth Rowland to accept the rate of 3.4629 as revenue neutral. Those in favor were McCullen, Rowland, Smith, Cummings, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

Motion was made by Zachary Snith and seconded by Constance Cummings to approve setting the millage rate for 2024 in Westfield Borough at 3.8 mils. Those in favor were Rowland, Smith, Cummings, McCullen, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

Motion was made by Zachary Smith and seconded by Constance Cummings to approve the proposed 2024 budget for Westfield Borough. Those in favor were Smith, Cummings, McCullen, Rowland, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

There was a brief discussion about the upcoming sewer rates. It had been proposed to raise it 3 percent (\$2) for next year.

Motion was made by advertise for adoption the sewer rate ordinance reflecting a 3 percent increase (\$2) for 2024. Those in favor were Cummings, McCullen, Rowland, Smith, and Watkins. The motion was carried.

Committees

- Personnel/Negotiations Committee

Mrs. Rowland reported that negotiations took place recently, and they are very close if not settled on both the DPW/clerk contract and Police contract. The committee is awaiting the proposals back from the union. The committee hopes to have something to vote on by December 31st.

- Planning/Fire Committee

Mr. Watkins reported that a fire hydrant has been replaced at the corner of Church St. and Elm St. Mrs. Rowland inquired as to whether the fire company could give Council some training in fire extinguishers.

Mr. Watkins gave a report on the sidewalk grant.

Contance Cummings asked if anyone has reviewed the dangerous structure ordinance. Mr. Watkins pointed out that an enforcer needs to be designated. Ms. Cummings said she has talked with Jay Erb, and he will do it without charging the Borough.

Ms. Cummings would like to know if anything has been added to the budget for safety equipment. Ms. Cummings brought up that although municipalities are not currently regulated by OSHA they could be in the future if the law gets passed. She has done extensive research into safety equipment that meets OSHA standards, and has printed off information on Industry Standard OSHA and the Center for Disease Control guidelines. The office staff will look up what safety training and equipment the employees have already, etc. Ms. Cummings would like to look at all safety equipment.

- Utilities Committee

The service and maintenance agreement with Hach Company for probes at the sewer plant is due for renewal. The cost is between \$8,000 and \$9,000. David Nudd was consulted about the agreement, and he said he feels it is an unnecessary cost as the crew members know how to maintain them. Mr. Downey agreed. Council agreed to not renew the agreement.

Training

The office staff would like to participate in Quickbooks online trainings. Quickbooks for Beginners is November 6, 2023 and Preparing your Quickbooks for Year-end is December 7, 2023. There is a \$25 fee for each training.

Motion was made by Beth Rowland and seconded by Constance Cummings to approve Quickbooks training sessions for the office staff as described. All were in favor; the motion was carried.

Visitors

Robin and Ed Presor discussed the ongoing water runoff issues from Mountain Laurel Recovery Center. Someone pointed out that the Conservation District should be involved.

Ms. Cummings received a complaint from someone about snow removal on Main St. and the huge humps of snow often left between the street and sidewalk. She would like to see our crew at least clear the snow from the handicap areas if nothing else. Mr. McCullen pointed out that the crew *does* shovel the handicap areas.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Theresa McCullen".

Theresa McCullen
Assistant Secretary