

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WESTFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

August 11, 2020

Westfield Municipal Building

COUNCIL PRESENT: Gail Bollinger, Shaunta Vahey, Leland Pond, Roxann Weidman, Denis Landry, Ed Rodarmel, and Roger McCullen

COUNCIL ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Lorie Card, Mayor Elizabeth Rowland, Doug Rowland, James Streeter, Shawn Downey of Larson Design Group, Mike Baker, Tammy Baker, Joan Weidman, Victoria Magnotta, Kelley Niles, Dale Niles, Andrew Adams, Terry Dunham, and Theresa McCullen

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Council President Gail Bollinger. The pledge of allegiance was said. A roll call of members present was taken, and all members were present.

Visitors – Agenda Items

Before asking the visitors for their questions Mrs. Bollinger addressed them pointing out that the Borough has been applying for grants. Funding was received for a recent tree project, and the Borough has applied for funding for the wastewater treatment plant upgrade.

Mrs. Bollinger noted that the Council would like to attract new businesses to town. There are a lot of empty windows on Main Street. She also explained that there is a tax break for new businesses.

Lorie Card brought information for the Council regarding grants and COVID 19. She will distribute it after the meeting.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Shawn Downey of Larson Design Group was present to give the Council an update on the project. He announced that some construction activity has started. The head works is on site now. There is a holdup with Penelec as they have not given a start date for the electrical work.

Denis Landry pointed out that with these delays with Penelec nearly the entire construction season has been wasted. Mr. Landry is holding Larson Design Group responsible. Mr. Downey explained that there is no contractual basis to make Penelec respond faster. He is willing to make more phone calls and suggested that the Borough do the same.

Mr. Landry asked what the contractor will do about being so many months behind. He also asked about the \$50/day fines. There was discussion about Lobar asking for a time extension since it is not their fault.

Mrs. Bollinger asked how much of the setback is COVID related, and Mr. Downey was unsure. Mr. McCullen asked what will happen if PA DEP denies an extension. Mr. Downey said the penalties would continue to accrue. He and the Borough solicitor, Chris Lantz, need to clarify with DEP whether the penalties would continue to accrue if there is an extension.

There was discussion about a completion date for the project, but this cannot be determined not knowing the status with Penelec. Mr. Downey and Mr. Lantz are unclear of the status of the fines at this time.

Mr. Landry thanked Mr. Downey for attending the meeting and urged him to pressure Penelec. Mr. Downey will press Penelec and call Mr. Lantz in the meantime. Mrs. Bollinger suggested asking Representative Clint Owlett for assistance. Mr. Downey agreed and suggested calling Chuck Dillon at Senator Scarnati's office as well.

Mr. Landry noted errors in the 30 year payment schedule, and Mr. Downey agreed. Mr. Downey explained that the increase in rate percentages need to be corrected. He also noted that the Council does not have to adhere to the percentages in the schedule. This can be reviewed on an annual basis.

The building permit has been issued and paid for by the Borough; reimbursement will come from Pennvest.

Mr. Downey left the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Visitors – Agenda Items

None of the remaining visitors had anything to bring up.

Mayor/Police Chief Report

The mayor did not have anything at this time.

Solicitor's Report

There was no report from the solicitor.

Minutes

Motion was made by Denis Landry and seconded by Roxann Weidman to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2020 meeting. Those in favor were Landry, Pond, Rodarmel, McCullen, Vahey, Weidman, and Bollinger. The motion was carried.

Financial Report

Motion was made by Denis Landry and seconded by Shaunta Vahey to approve the financial report as presented. Those in favor were Pond, Rodarmel, McCullen, Vahey, Weidman, Landry, and Bollinger. The motion was carried.

Progress Report

There is no report this month because the foreman is currently off work.

Old Business

Church St. Property

The property located at 318 Church St. has been cleaned up by Terry Dunham and crew. He has submitted a quote for mowing the property for the rest of the mowing season. The price is \$35/cut or \$210 for the remainder of the season. The cost would be included in any lien that may be placed.

Mr. Landry pointed out that the tannery sidewalk needs to be cut.

Motion was made by Denis Landry and seconded by Shaunta Vahey to approve Terry Dunham's proposal to cut 318 Church St. property grass at \$35/cut or \$210 for the remainder of the mowing season. Those in favor were Rodarmel, Vahey, Landry, Pond, and Bollinger. Weidman and McCullen voted no. The motion was carried.

Baker Property 151 - W. Main St.

Michael and Tammy Baker were present as owners of a hair salon at 141 W. Main St. which is adjacent to a deteriorated building at 151 W. Main St. owned by James Baker. They are concerned that the building may fall on their building. They brought a letter from Erb Building Inspection dated April 11, 2019 in which the building is deemed an unsafe structure due to inadequate maintenance. Michael Baker asked what the Borough can do at this point.

It was explained that the Borough would have to take over the building and demolish it at a cost to the Borough.

Mr. Baker described the condition of the building saying that he can put his fist through the side of it.

Mrs. Bollinger promised that Council will see what can be done. She pointed out that two properties were taken care of this past month.

James Streeter told Council it should be the building inspector's responsibility. He questions how unsafe the James Baker building really is stating that the hair salon leans toward it.

The Planning Committee will meet before the next Council meeting. By using Borough ordinances and consulting with the BCO the committee will come up with a resolution for the problem.

Feral Cats

The mayor has been receiving complaints about feral cats in town. There is currently no monies budgeted for this. Mrs. Bollinger suggested getting together people from the community to form a committee. Lorie Card said she and Terry Wells could get together noting that they should work on the worst towns first. Ms. Card explained that the humane officer stepped down, and this now falls on other officials. Tioga County has the highest rate in the State for neglected animals according to Ms. Card.

Committee Reports

Administrative Committee – nothing

Personnel Committee – an executive session will be held at the end of the meeting.

Planning Committee – nothing

Streets Committee

Paving will begin next week Monday or Tuesday. Mr. McCullen reported that the committee needs to meet to make a recommendation on posting and bonding fees.

Utilities Committee – everything was discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

Insurance Committee – nothing.

Vehicle Maintenance Committee – nothing new

Insurance Committee – nothing

Visitors – Comment Period

Nothing further was brought up.

Executive Session

An executive session was called at 7:53 p.m. for personnel matters. There would be nothing to report afterwards.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.



Theresa McCullen
Assistant Secretary