

## **TUNKHANNOCK BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Regular Meeting**

**September 4, 2014**

**Council President Stacy Huber called the Monthly Meeting of the Tunkhannock Borough Council to order in the Borough Building, 126 Warren Street, Tunkhannock, PA at 7:00 p.m. He led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**

**Present were: Mayor Norman Ball; Council Members Marshall Davis, Scott Douthett, Stacy Huber, Joseph Myers, Robert Robinson, Ruby Sands, and Wendy Sweppenheiser; and Borough Manager Dawn Welch. Absent: Council Member Ruth Vincenti.**

Others present: Wyoming County Press Examiner (WCPE) Editor Robert Baker; Citizens Patti Mead, Harold May, Linda Sherman, Ned Slocum, Susan DiStadio, and Mike DiStadio.

#### **Administrative Remarks:**

President Huber recognized two beloved members of this community: Mayor Norm Ball and his wonderful wife Peg, who just celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Both have given so much to this Borough and community, for dozens of years; and he wished to extend our sincere thanks and best wishes to Peg and Norm, with the hope for many more.

President Huber then provided a brief post script to our most recent meeting, specifically the public comment portion, as follows: the existence of this segment is based on long standing statute and practice. Thus, it is recognized as an important forum or means of communication between citizens and their elected representatives to (among other things) ask questions, to provide input on matters of concern or under consideration, or (as happened at last month) to air grievances. Everyone seated at this table recognizes and accepts this as part of their elected or assigned duties.

The overall process is a healthy methodology for all concerned, even when the feedback is less than flattering -- or even negative. The other side of the coin, however, is that it can be unfair, even personally damaging, when presented incompletely, erroneously, or in an *ad hominem* manner. As a case in point, last month, serious criticisms were lodged against our police department. At that time, the Mayor (at Council's request) committed to looking into the matter and reporting back. This was promptly done; and these allegations were thoroughly investigated and (via documented information) shown to be in error. That is to say, by any measure of which I am aware, our Department acted properly and professionally throughout the incident in question, as they are expected to do at all times. It is for that reason, in the spirit of fairness, that I wanted to make this statement a matter of record; and I thank all present for your understanding.

#### **Reading of Minutes and Bills:**

**On a motion by Marshall Davis, seconded by Scott Douthett, the minutes of the meeting on August 4, 2014, were approved. Motion carried unanimously.**

**On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded Joseph Myers, move to approve payment of the bills. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Triton Hose Company 1994 Ford Ambulance Bid Opening:**

1994 Ford Ambulance, Mike Veneziano, 145 Thomas Hill Road, Bellefonte, PA: \$502.06.

Due to this extremely low bid, Manager Welch will check with the Solicitor before proceeding.

**Public Privilege of the Floor:**

Linda Sherman expressed concern about the proposed silica transfer station and asked the Borough to talk to the Department of Environmental Protection about a baseline air quality monitoring study.

President Huber responded that we were first apprised of this project about six months ago, when we were invited to attend a multi-party (Railroad, PennDOT, Public Utility Commission [PUC], Eaton and Tunkhannock Townships, Municipal Authority, and others) meeting. Based on the discussions at that meeting, the Borough took prompt action (on matters for which we had legal standing) via letter to the PUC. This issue has been reported extensively over this time. The remaining items of contention were largely between the Wyoming County Planning Commission (PC) and Tunkhannock Township, and for which we had no standing. We did, however, attend a number of the subsequent PC hearings, which resulted in the decision that is now subject to litigation before the Court of Common Pleas. He then advised that we would look into the matter of the requested study.

**Finance and Administration Committee:**

Manager Welch reported that a Budget Committee meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2014.

President Huber reported that the Administration Committee would be working on policies for the other committees. (Policies for the Administration and Police Committees are already done.)

The Wyoming County Cultural Center's payments on their loan from the Borough are now approaching \$20,000 (\$19,853). Council's intentions for those monies were to establish a revolving fund to be used primarily for low interest loans to stimulate growth and enhance business/job opportunities in the downtown (business) district. Much will need to be done in terms of administering this program; but, as a starting point, President Huber requested that the Finance Committee review these matters and provide a recommended course of action to the Council.

**Department of Public Works(DPW) Committee:**

Committee Chairman Robert Robinson reported that: a) the DPW Committee met August 25th; b) Electronic Recycling is September 20th; c) we should consider a new dumptruck, which would cost around \$82,000, for 2016; d) Fall Clean-ups are scheduled for September 8,15,22,29 for Wards One through Four respectively; e) the Committee would like Council to consider only one clean-up project per year, which should result in considerable savings; and f) a proposal for sealing cracks in our streets was received from Vestal Asphalt Inc., for a minimum of 750 gallons at \$13.50/gallon.

**On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Joseph Myers, move to authorize Vestal Asphalt Inc., to do the crack-sealing, at a cost not to exceed \$14,000.00. Motion carried.**

**Building and Property Committee:**

Chairman Robert Robinson reported that Scranton Electric Heating and Cooling Service requested a time extension for the Furnace Replacement Project, due to the delayed delivery of the propane tank. Currently, only the painting of the floor and installation of the bollards for the tank remain. October 1, 2014 is the new anticipated completion date.

**On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Joseph Myers, move to approve Change Order #1, to extend the contract until October 1, 2014. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Riverside Park Commission:**

Mayor Ball reported that everything is in good shape.

**Police:**

Mayor Ball reported that, as requested, the Department will review, evaluate, and advise of the status of crosswalks within the Borough.

Chief Hardy presented a summary of the Police Report for the Month of August, 2014. Note: a copy of the report is on file in the Police Department.

**Planning and Zoning:**

President Huber reported there are no hearings scheduled this month.

**Council of Governments (COG):**

**On motion by Joseph Myers, seconded by Ruby Sands, move to appoint Skip Felker, Tom Milnes, Nicole Wooten, Al Henry, and Bob Hoyt to the COG Property Maintenance Code Appeals Board. Motion carried unanimously.**

**New Business:**

**WalnutHill/Wierzusz Project:**

President Huber reported that, this past February, the engineering firm representing developer Randy Wiernusz gave us a preliminary overview presentation of this proposed sub-division. Since that time, it has been further developed and forwarded to Wyoming County for review under their Sub-Division and Land Development Ordinance. As part of this process, the County has forwarded the proposal to the Borough for review and comment. In that regard, the Borough Planning Commission met Tuesday night and is now in the process of developing a formal response to the County. Additional portions of the proposal involve, among other things, municipal boundary locations, inter-municipal legal agreements, stormwater management, road openings/ownership, road and sidewalk construction, and other matters. For this reason, President Huber asked for a motion to refer the proposal to both our engineer and solicitor for review and comment.

**On motion by Joseph Myers, seconded by Ruby Sands, move to refer the proposal to the engineer and solicitor for review and comment. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Old Business:**

**Storm Water Committee:**

This *ad hoc* committee has not yet formally met; but members did attend a storm water informational WEBINAR, hosted by the PA State Association of Boroughs, yesterday. A follow-on meeting is scheduled for September 10, 2014.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Project/(Former) B & R Property:**

President Huber reported that we are continuing to monitor the status of the properties that were razed by Smart Recycling under the FEMA Demolition Project, most notably the former B&R Distributors building and grounds. Wyoming County EMA Director Gene Dziak, acting as the Borough's agent, has assured us that the deficiencies noted will be corrected. He did speak to Mr. Dziak who stated that there were no changes since last month and that he has asked for updated information from the the Wyoming County engineer (CECO Associates).

**Council Privilege of the Floor:**

President Huber commended Scott Kulah, who resides on McCord Street and who has been mowing grass at the FEMA properties.

**On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Marshall Davis, to go into executive session at 7:50p.m. for contractual matters, property, and personnel. Motion carried unanimously.**

**On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Scott Douthett move to go into regular session at 8:16 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.**

**On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Scott Douthett, move to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Welch

Borough Manager