

**BOROUGH OF WIND GAP
545 East West Street
WIND GAP, PA 18091
610-863-7288
FAX 610-863-1011**

The Council meeting of the Borough of Wind Gap on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Council President Dave Hess, through Zoom Video Conferencing. Louise Firestone informed everyone that the meeting was being recorded.

A verbal roll call was taken by Borough Manager Louise Firestone – participating via Zoom computer link or Zoom phone link were Council members Steve Bender, George Hinton, David Manzo, and Joyce McGarry. Also participating were Borough Solicitor Ronald Karasek, Borough Engineer Brian Pysher, and Borough Manager Louise Firestone. Absent was Mayor Mitchell D. Mogilski Sr., Councilmen Mike McNamara and Jeff Yob.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. W2A Design Group – Dave Drake came before Council with updates on the Maintenance Garage. He said the building is 97% complete. John Goffredo, NuCor Management, will be sending him a new schedule which indicates a potential completion date of the end of the first week of December. The other prime contractors are supposed to be done by the end of next week. Joyce McGarry said she was at the site last night and there seems to be a lot more work to be completed along with quite a bit of punch list items. Dave Drake said they have not done a punch list yet, but as soon as John tells them they are ready for a punch list, one will be completed. Steve Bender asked Dave to address the situation with the mechanical room and how it came about that all the items that were to be in there could not fit and was this an error in the design process? Dave Drake said that one has to admit that an error occurred somewhere. They did go around several times and asked the contractors for their input on that situation, but they did not receive any input. He said that W2A will cover the cost of the change order for this and credit the Borough. W2A Designs admits there was an error.

George Hinton had a conversation with John Goffredo because he previously made the motion to not pay the sheetrock bill which was included in the Pay Request for \$42,000 because NuCor never finished the sheetrock portion of the invoice. John's comment to George was that if W2A authorized payment of the bill and forwarded the bill to the Borough, the Borough had no right to hold that check. His opinion was that the bill should not have been forwarded to the Borough to pay if you, the architects, did not think that the sheetrock was an issue. Ultimately, the sheetrock was completed and NuCor did receive payment. George questioned where the garage door opener is located. Dave Darke will look into that item. Steve Bender asked, with the two weeks remaining in the schedule, do they meet weekly to get an update. Dave Drake said they have zoom meetings with the contractors, Louise, and Brian to get updates. John Goffredo is supposed to be coordinating with all the contractors, as the prime general contractor. Brian Pysher said the next building meeting is on November 25 2020 and that meeting would give everyone a good idea of the timeline for completion. Dave Drake made the offer to Council to feel free to make individual punch list items and they will be glad to add to their list.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Dave Manzo to approve the November 2, 2020 minutes and seconded by Joyce McGarry. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Animal Control Service Agreement (ACO) - Louise Firestone reported that Plainfield Township and Pen Argyl Borough have approved the Animal Control Services Agreement with Pibbles and Paws. This past year the fee was \$1.00 per resident for the Borough or \$2,818. She has a report for the year and there is not much activity for dogs being picked up in Wind Gap. Unless we have some type of an agreement, the Slate Belt Regional Police Department and the Borough would have no where to go with our dogs without the Animal Control Officer. The proposed 2021 agreement will be discussed next month.

2. Approval of Resolution for Local Share Account Fund (Gaming Grants) Secure Building, Fire Company, Ambulance Corps – Louise Firestone reported that the deadline for the Local Share Account Fund - Gaming Grants for Monroe and Northampton County is November 30. She needs a motion to approve submitting the grant applications.

On motion by George Hinton have the Borough Manager submit the Gaming Grant Application on behalf of the Fire Company, Ambulance Corp, and Slate Belt Regional Police Department and seconded by Dave Manzo. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Budget - Louise Firestone reported that the Borough was notified from the County that the assessed value of the Borough is down \$181,000 from the prior year - 2019. Currently to balance the 2021 budget at \$1,880,028, we would need to take \$193,300 out of savings, this is a rough number. Until the Apartments at Dream Lehigh Valley is completely occupied the revenue generated from the real estate tax and any potential earned income tax. She did check when it was a quarry, Mr. Muschlitz was paying about \$1,000 of taxes, Walden III in comparison as a built facility, pays almost \$12,000. The plan in 2021 is to move the Street Department into their garage and then sell 29 Mechanic Street and the Borough Garage, so revenue would be generated from that sale along with the properties being added to real estate property tax income. Dave Woglom, from Lafayette College, did an initial survey of the municipal managers at the beginning of the pandemic to find out how everyone was running their municipalities. He did a follow-up recently, the majority of the municipalities determined that now would not be the time to raise taxes. She thinks that with everything going on, the Borough has sufficient funding that it will not be a major detriment but that is for Council to determine.

On motion by George Hinton to approve the 2021 budget at 16 mills with no increase and seconded by Dave Manzo. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

Dave Hess said he does agree, if there was ever a year to not raise taxes, next year is the one. George Hinton said that this is why he made the motion because prior to the budget coming out, he was of the opinion that at the least a half a mill increase would be needed, but given the extensive hardship we are all experiencing this year Council should not increase taxes. Attorney Karasek reported that because there was no increase in millage, there was an act passed that if there is no increase in millage, it may be able to be done by resolution and without an advertised ordinance. He will check on that, either way it can be adopted at your December meeting or workshop meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. EMS – Dave Manzo reported that the Ambulance responded to 76 calls, 13 ALS calls and 13 BLS calls in Northampton County, 2 ALS calls and 15 BLS calls in Monroe County, 32 non-emergency transports, and 1 standby. Response time is 2.1 minutes.

2. Fire – George Hinton reported that the fire company has been continuing to have bingo and other small fundraisers. The Ladder Truck is coming along, everything has been tested, and mechanically everything is good and currently the truck is being wrapped to be red and white. The Auxiliary and Fire Company are looking at doing some type of tree lighting at the Social Hall. The previous committee wrote a check for just shy of \$600.00 that they had in their account to the Fire Company so they have starter money to do the tree lighting. They are trying to get some ideas to have that as a safe and social distancing event.

Dave Hess asked George to get the copies of the ladder certifications and testing to the office.

3. Regional Police – Dave Hess reported that for October, the Police Department responded to a total of 458 calls for service, 144 were for Wind Gap.

Officer Muccione has successfully completed her Drug Recognition Expert training. She will be present at an upcoming Commission meeting to provide a synopsis of the course as well as the benefits of having her as a DR expert in the department.

Their next meeting is Thursday, Louise will be attending.

4. Emergency Management – Dave Hess reported that he mentioned NIMS training at one of our previous meetings. He did give Louise the link to the FEMA website. Borough Officials are required to have a basic level of NIMS training. The courses are on-line, they are less than an hour. He believes there are two for Council positions. The Mayor did complete his and provided his certification to the office. He hopes everyone could have them completed by the first quarter of 2021.

There was a briefing today from the Pennsylvania Department of Health about the pandemic, there are no further restrictions that were handed out for Pennsylvania. The number of positive tests are going up and we will monitor it and ramp it up again if necessary.

5. Zoning – Steve Bender reported that the committee will meet with Deb and Louise regarding any zoning issues.

Deb Harbison reported that Plainfield Township dropped off the plans for the Minor Subdivision Plan for Detzi Property. Once the plans are approved and signed by Brian Pysher, the Borough Engineer, they will be ready for Council and the Planning Commission signatures. A resident is interested in renting 403 S. Broadway, she would like to put a Small Gift Shop there. A Zoning Variance application was sent to the Lawyer for TEG Logistics, they are interested in putting a truck repair shop & truck parking at 62 N Broadway. Roshawn Kerdzaliev, ScoreCard, was sent applications for Planning and Zoning, but they have not been completed as of yet.

6. Planning – Dave Manzo reported that there is a meeting scheduled December 3rd for a Sketch Plan Review for the Billboard on Male Road. They are looking to move the billboard.

7. Municipal Authority – Dave Manzo reported that the main issue that was discussed at the last meeting was about JERC. Louise got a letter out to the Sewer Authority regarding the issue of the pumping station.

Louise Firestone reported that the Borough did get copied on a letter that was generated from Attorney Molnar to the Municipal Authority's Auditor. It appears that they have not received from their Auditor, the audit of 2018 or 2019. The Authority is requesting that the audit be completed by December 15th. The Authority is required to provide the Borough with their annual audit.

8. Streets – George Hinton reported that Jeff Yob was going to get together with Rich Fox regarding the leaf vac. They have been using the leaf vac from the COG. The Street workers have been here at the municipal property bringing the ground up to grade between the concrete slabs on the west side of the building so the fire trucks and ambulances can get out in between the two buildings. Dave Hess reported that Jeff was in favor of looking at repairing our leaf vac. The main problem with it is that it is simply too small and the engine cannot keep up with the work load that is required. Putting the same engine back will result in this happening again. George will follow up with Rich. He did talk to him on what he thought about the leaf vac from the COG and he said he was very impressed with it since it works very well. Maybe we have to weigh out that option cost wise.

9. Park/Athletic Fields – George Hinton reported that he meet with Dave Albanese and Rich to discuss the power going to the fieldhouse building. Dave Albanese cut the braker in the main panel up on the tennis court and removed the panel from the field house wall. He told Rich that after the leaves, we can search around to find out where that wire ran underneath the basketball courts. When they can, they will pull completely pull out that wire. Dave Hess reported that the Borough was unknowingly paying for the electric service to the fieldhouse.

Walking Trail – Louise Firestone forwarded everyone pictures provided by the contractor. Additional work was required because as the pictures show, they were not sure if the water was due to a high-water table on South Lehigh or if there could have been issues with a water line. They are on schedule to be completed prior to the December 7, 2020 Council meeting.

10. Tipping Fees – Louise Firestone reported that there is nothing new to report.

11. C.O.G. – George Hinton reported that at the last meeting the COG was looking for a place to store the various items that they got with grants. They had a zoom/person meeting and it was difficult from a Zoom stand point. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 2020 and unfortunately, he cannot make that meeting. Dave Hess asked if they discussed if they need these items since they have no place to house them. George said that when they got the two leaf vacuums, they were significant in size and useful. Unfortunately, they purchased them knowing that Wind Gap, Pen Argyl, and Bangor all had their own leaf vacuums. The purpose of paying a daily fee is for a fund that would go for any repairs.

12. Slate Belt Rising – George Hinton reported that they spoke about the fish store in Wind Gap, they are supposed to get a face lift which is still in the process. They spoke about year end and there were flags purchased for the merchants in Wind Gap. You can check out the flag at Café on Broadway. This will dress up the Borough and announce that they are open. This will be all uniform and look great when it is done along 512 and Broadway. There is no meeting in December.

13. Multi-Municipal Plan – Louise Firestone reported that the last zoom meeting did not work. They will not meet potentially until March of next year.

14. Mayor's Report – Mayor Mogilski was absent.

15. International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) – Dave Manzo reported that he went through the first book of ordinances, back to the creation of the Borough. He did sit with Louise to discuss the first book. He will go through the second book of ordinances and again sit with Louise after Thanksgiving. This is moving along but it is a slow process.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Dave Manzo to adjourn the meeting of November 17, 2020. Council agreed unanimously. The meeting of November 17, 2020 adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Louise Firestone, Borough Manager