

**BOROUGH OF WIND GAP
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Wind Gap Borough Council on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Council President George Hinton, at which time he reminded those present that the meeting was being recorded. In attendance were Council members Dave Hess, Steve Bender, David Manzo, Jeff Yob, Patrick Webber and Alex Cortezzo. Also, in attendance were Mayor Wesley J. Smith, Borough Solicitor Ronald Karasek, Borough Engineer Brian Pysker, and Borough Manager Louise Firestone.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were heard at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Dave Manzo to approve the January 3, 2022 minutes and seconded by Patrick Webber. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Tortoise and Hare 5K Race

On motion by Alex Cortezzo to approve the Tortoise and Hare Run / Walk and to send them a letter of approval and seconded by Dave Manzo. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

2. Slate Belt Regional Police Commission

On motion by Dave Manzo to appoint Dave Hess as the Wind Gap Borough Representative for the Slate Belt Region Police Commission and seconded by Jeff Yob. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

On motion by Dave Manzo to appoint George Hinton as the Alternate Wind Gap Borough Representative to the Slate Belt Regional Police Commission and alternate to Dave Hess and seconded by Patrick Webber. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

3. Engineering Approval to Conduct Fieldwork on Constitution

On motion by Jeff Yob to authorize the Engineer Borough to do field work for Constitution Avenue in order to access potential repairs to the infrastructure and road surface and provide a cost estimate and seconded by Alex Cortezzo. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

4. Municipal Complex/Park Camera Upgrade

On motion by Dave Manzo to authorize Louise Firestone to explore the bid process for the cameras at the Municipal Complex and park camera upgrades and seconded by Jeff Yob. Roll call vote taken. Council agreed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Verizon Cell Tower Land Lease Agreement – Attorney Karasek reported that the lease agreement discussion was pending until Council heard back from Verizon regarding the real estate tax issue. In the lease agreement it stated that if the Borough were to lose their tax-exempt status, Verizon would only be responsible to pay for the amount of taxes related to the actual area being utilized for the cell tower, which would put the tax burden of the remaining taxable property on the Borough. Attorney Karasek would recommend if the Borough is going to move forward, there should be subdivision for the land necessary for the cell tower. He does not see any other reason why you could not proceed.

Jeff Yob asked if we should advertise for competitive quotes from other cell carriers for leasing that property. Attorney Karasek said obtaining bids from other carriers would be a decision made by Council.

George Hinton asked how big of a process would it be to subdivide. Brian Pysher said that Verizon has done the engineering field work and environmental studies of the property, but it would take some time to go through the planning process and make submission to both the Zoning Hearing Board because they would have to obtain several variances to be in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and the Planning Commission for approval. Brian added that Council should remember that there is an access agreement with Mr. Goffredo for the property behind the municipal property. Jeff asked if we would expect someone leasing the property to pay the fees for the division. Brian said that Verizon is aware that they will have to go through the land development process and obtain variances and that there will be fees associated with those processes. Attorney Karasek said that if the Borough proposes subdividing the lot and Verizon is agreeable, this may not all be required, but the Borough would have to investigate if a second use can be putted on the property. Brian said they did not seem concerned that it was not permitted by right, they were going to need a variance for relief from the stand-alone cell tower ordinance.

On motion by Jeff Yob to advertise land to erect a cell tower, response back in thirty days and seconded by Dave Manzo. Roll call vote taken. In favor: J. Yob, S. Bender, A. Cortezzo, D. Manzo, P. Webber. Opposed: D. Hess, G. Hinton. In favor: 5 – 2.

2. Slate Belt Regional Police K9 Unit – Dave Hess reported that the Slate Belt Regional Police department, for the past year, has been discussing the need and feasibility of beginning a K-9 Unit. Waste Management came forward and offered to fund the entire start-up of the unit, which is approximately \$68,000. The majority of the cost would be the vehicle that is retrofitted to carry the animal which will also have the ability to transport a prisoner. The cost of the animal is approximately \$14,000, the rest of the cost is associated with training of the officer and canine. Currently, the only out-of-pocket cost to the Commission will be the insurance which has been quoted at \$459.00 a year. The SBRPD did a power point presentation and invited a K9 trainer and a K9 unit to a SBRPD Commission meeting. Wind Gap needs to make a formal decision on whether to support the K9 Unit. As long as Waste Management is around, they will continue making a donation to offset the ongoing costs associated with the K9 unit. Traditionally, every K9 Unit is funded through donations, whether that may be veterinarian bills, food or other incidentals so the monetary cost to the department will be minimal.

On motion by Jeff Yob to approve and support the Slate Belt Regional Police Department K9 Unit and seconded by Dave Manzo. Roll call vote taken. In favor: A. Cortezzo, D. Hess, G. Hinton, D. Manzo, P. Webber, J. Yob. Opposed: S. Bender. Motion carried: 6 – 1.

Committee Reports

George Hinton informed Council that historically, Councilmembers have volunteered to attend other meetings and report back at the mid-month Council meeting. However, after not receiving an overwhelming commitment to attend these other meetings, he is proposing that going forward, a written report be provided to Council prior to the mid-month meeting. The report would include any substantial information from EMS and the Fire Company, tipping fee funds received from Waste Management, the Wind Gap Area Athletic Association and the Borough's involvement in Slate Belt Rising and the Slate Belt Regional Comprehensive Plan.

The Slate Belt Regional Police Department will still be presented, along with any updates from Emergency Management, which by the way Dave Hess is doing a great job. George expressed his desire to have Dave remain in charge of that committee.

The Zoning Officer will continue to attend a monthly meeting to provide any updates and answer any questions along with the Street Leader, Rich Fox, attending meetings to inform Council of street related projects and concerns.

The Planning Commission which he and Dave Manzo sit on will provide ongoing information regarding plans that will come before Council.

Municipal Authority, Dave Manzo sits on that committee and will provide information to be included in the written report.

Mayor Smith will be at the Slate Belt Council of Government (COG) meetings and the Slate Belt Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan.

Please forward any information to be included on the monthly report to Louise or Deb and they will compile the information.

Dave Manzo said the only issue he would have and should be part of this is projects that would cost the Borough money. George said that in those cases, like zoning professionals, he would like the committee to put their finding down and report back to the rest of Council. Dave Manzo said the committee is Steve, Jeff, George, Louise, and himself. Alex Cortezzo asked that the Fire Company and EMS give a general overview and submit it with the agenda just to let us know what is going on and then that information would be public knowledge. Dave Manzo also asked that the report be submitted prior to the meeting so they have it the Friday before the meeting to review and ask questions.

MAYOR SMITH REPORT

Mayor Smith reported that he attended the Multi-Municipal Plan virtual meeting. They did the first read through of the comprehensive plan of the goals, policy and actions of the Steering Committee. This will be an ongoing discussion throughout the year. He also spoke with Frank Brooks the Grant Administrator of Northampton County and they will set up a time to meet with the rest of the Economic Development Team to introduce himself and to see what grants are available for Wind Gap. COG meeting is set to meet on January 26th.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Dave Hess said it is an even year so the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) must be updated and he is in the process of completing all the updates. The plan will be on the mid-month agenda to be passed by resolution in February. As a reminder and for the new elected officials, everyone is required to have completed NIMS 100 and 700 online training which is located on the FEMA website. If you have any questions or need assistance let him know. Wind Gap passed a resolution years ago to become NIMS compliant.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Dave Manzo to adjourn the meeting of January 18, 2022. Council agreed unanimously. The meeting of January 18, 2022 adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Louise Firestone, Borough Manager