

FEBRUARY COUNCIL MEETING

February 6, 2017

The monthly meeting of the St. Clair Borough Council was held on Tuesday, February 6, 2017, in Council Chambers, St. Clair Municipal Building, 16 S. Third Street, St. Clair. The meeting began at 7:00 pm.

Mayor Richard Tomko administered the oath of office to John Houseknecht upon the presentation of his affidavit of residency. Houseknecht assumed his proper seat on council.

Answering the roll call were council persons: Joann Brennan, John Burke, Thomas Dempsey, William Dempsey, John Houseknecht, Michael Petrozino, James Larish and Mayor Richard Tomko.

Also present included Solicitor Edward Brennan, Engineer Brian Baldwin, Treasurer Carol Sutzko, Fire Chief Frank Uhrin, Police Chief William Dempsey, Electric Light Department Superintendent Michael Petrozino, and Stephen Pytak-Pottsville Republican Herald.

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Joann Brennan led council in a prayer.

Copies of the minutes of the previous council meetings have been given to borough council members and Mayor Tomko, are there any errors or corrections? The minutes stand approved.

Public Comment

No public comment

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Tomko stated:

Residents are warned, especially senior citizens, of reports of a rash of telephone scans, concerning home improvements, people posing as the IRS and health insurance. I warn them not to disclose any personal financial information such as social security numbers, bank account numbers and credit card information over the phone.

Also residents are reminded to lock all vehicles as a prevention measure. Lastly, the mayor will monitor the weather forecast for tomorrow and communicate with Deputy Street Superintendent William Umbenhour concerning the posting of Second Street.

On a motion made by Burke, seconded by Brennan, to accept the report; approved.

BOROUGH SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Brennan reported a meeting will be held later this month with the Police Civil Service Commission members concerning the revisions to the rules and regulations.

The solicitor did request an executive session to discuss union and police contracts.

The solicitor did meet with the buyer of the McGinley property. The court must be petitioned to approve the sale. In a related matter, the borough secretary informed him of the poor condition of 311 Broad Street which is also under conservership. In order to place it under the county demolition list, a court order is required. I will go to court asking for a formal order to demolish the structure.

A cell phone company, located in town, is in bankruptcy. The borough is providing electric power to them. We receive notice because they owe us money. We are monitoring them closely. The law is clear. We cannot terminate them for monies owed in the pre-petition debt. But, that does not mean they cannot pay going forward which is called post-petition debt.

On a motion made by Burke, seconded by W. Dempsey, to accept the report; approved.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

On a motion made by W. Dempsey, seconded by Brennan, to approve the report; approved.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**STREET DEPARTMENT REPORT**

On a motion made by Houseknecht, seconded by W. Dempsey, borough council unanimously approved the report and it was made part of the minutes by reference.

ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT REPORT

On a motion made by W. Dempsey, seconded by Petrozino, Borough council unanimously approved the report and it was made part of the minutes by reference.

Electric Light Department Superintendent Robert Petrozino secured additional samples and pricings for Christmas decorations. The deadline to order was extended to March 10th.

Superintendent Petrozino requested to meet in executive session to discuss personnel issues.

TREASURER'S REPORT

On a motion made by Petrozino, seconded by Burke, borough council unanimously approved the report and it was made part of the minutes by reference.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

On a motion made by W. Dempsey, seconded by Houseknecht, borough council unanimously approved the report and it was made part of the minutes by reference.

Chief Dempsey reported a Facebook page was created to help keep the residents informed.

Our policy regarding medial releases have been updated with the mayor's guidance. As of the beginning of the year, arrests made by the St. Clair Police Department have been released to the local newspaper.

TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT

On a motion made by Petrozino, seconded by W. Dempsey, the report was unanimously approved by borough council and was made part of the minutes by reference.

ZONING DEPARTMENT

On a motion made by Petrozino, seconded by W. Dempsey, the report was unanimously approved by Borough Council and it was made part of the minutes by reference.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

On a motion made by T. Dempsey, seconded by Burke, the report was unanimously approved by Borough Council and it was made part of the minutes by reference.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Rescue Hook & Ladder Fire Company request permission to hold a Boot Drive on March 11, 2017 between the hours of 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at the intersection of Hancock Street and Second Street.

On a motion made by Burke, seconded by Brennan, to accept communications; approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Councilman Burke inquired if the proposed Christmas Decorations pricing represents forty or fifty feet in length. Superintendent Petrozino stated

curb to curb on Second Street is 50 feet. The fifty foot decorations are an additional \$150.00 per line. If the forty foot section were purchased, the center would be hung in the middle of Second Street. Mayor Tomko suggested the council wife's and female employees form a committee to review the decorations and make a recommendation to council.

Councilman Burke expressed his opinion that all the decorations should be in uniformity meaning that one style should be selected. Councilman Burke contacted Carmen Slider, the person who donated the \$300.00. In her opinion, when they travel through the town the view is breath taking to look from one end to the other. If they were alternating strings of decorations, it would take away from that effect.

NEW BUSINESS

Council President Larish asked for a motion to approve the request of the Rescue Hook & Ladder Fire Company to hold a boot drive on March 11, 2017 between the hours of 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at the intersection of Hancock Street and Second Street. After discussion, the motion died. Council believed the location is a poor one which raised safety concerns as vehicular traffic could back up to Rt. 61.

On a motion made by Houseknecht, seconded by Burke, to exonerate Tax Collector William Umbenhaur from collecting the following taxes:
 312 delinquent per capita tax payers for \$1,716.00
 312 delinquent occupational tax payers for \$720.72
 and 217 delinquent real estate taxpayers in the amount of \$\$18,816.42
 And that these delinquent taxes be turned over to the proper collection agencies for collection; approved.

On a motion made by Houseknecht, seconded by Burke, to authorize the purchase of 76-LED light fixtures for a price of \$14,820 plus freight. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN WITH THE FOLLOWING RESULT: BRENNAN-YES, BURKE- YES, T. DEMPSEY-YES, W. DEMPSEY-YES, HOUSEKNECHT-YES, PETROZINO – YES, AND LARISH-YES. The motion was approved.

On a motion made by W. Dempsey, seconded by Brennan, to authorize the Borough Secretary and Office Manager to attend the Benicon Health fair on Thursday and Friday, March 9th and 10th. Authorization is given for one room lodging and meals; approved.

On a motion made by Petrozino, seconded by W. Dempsey, to authorize the borough secretary to reply to the Schuylkill County Tax Claim Bureau that borough council has no objections to the private sale of 218 N. Nichols Street and 300 N. Nichols Street; approved.

On a motion made by Petrozino, seconded by W. Dempsey, to authorize the fire police to assist the Pottsville Fire Police for traffic control on April 22, 2017 for the Yuengling Light Logger Jog; and assist the Girardville Fire Police on March 25, 2017 for the annual St. Patrick's Day parade; approved.

On a motion made by Houseknecht, seconded by W. Dempsey, to authorize the office manager to attend Edmunds Training on April 5th and April 6th; approved.

On a motion made by Petrozino, seconded by Brennan, to utilize U.S. Communities to purchase the playground equipment for the Third Street Playground Renovation Project in order to save money; approved.

Council President Larish called an executive session at 7:59 pm to discuss personnel issues.

The executive session adjourned at 8:30 pm

On a motion made by W. Dempsey, seconded by Petrozino, to rehire Janet Hinchey as a temporary clerk; approved.

Following the mayor's recommendation, Petrozino made a motion, seconded by W. Dempsey, to authorize the borough solicitor to revise Ordinance #393; A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN WITH THE FOLLOWING RESULT: BRENNAN-YES, BURKE- YES, T. DEMPSEY-YES, W. DEMPSEY-YES, HOUSEKNECHT-YES, PETROZINO – YES AND LARISH-YES. The motion was approved.

Council President Larish appointed Councilwoman Brennan, Treasurer Carol Sutzko along with the council members' wives and the office staff to select the new Christmas decorations and to make a recommendation to council.

Council President James Larish renamed the Standing Committees by replacing John Houseknecht to those listing Rebecca Kovich.

On a motion made by T. Dempsey, seconded by Brennan, to pay all bills and claims properly approved by borough council; approved.

On a motion made by T. Dempsey, seconded by Brennan to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 pm, council approved the motion.

**Roland Price, Jr.
Borough Secretary**

A special meeting of the St. Clair Borough Council was held to review issues and finance on Thursday, March 2, 2017 beginning at 7:00 pm.

In attendance were council members: Joann Brennan, Thomas Dempsey, William Dempsey, John Houseknecht, Michael Petrozino, James Larish and Mayor Richard Tomko. Absent was Councilman John Burke.

Others in attendance included Deputy Superintendent William Umbenhaur, Electric Light Department Superintendent Robert Petrozino, Treasurer Carol Sutzko, Police Chief William Dempsey, Fire Chief Frank Uhrin, and Joe Hafey.

Public Comment

No public comment

Deputy Superintendent William Umbenhaur reported the top layer of the garage roof blew off with the heavy winds. The electric light crew assisted in removing debris from the roof. The borough secretary took pictures and filed the insurance claim. The whole roof is bad. And the roof on the lower portion of the garage is in poor condition. A tar roofing material protected the metal roof. Three estimates were acquired to replace the roof all coming in over \$30,000.

Repairs to the swimming pool is tentatively scheduled for the third week in March as long as the weather remains warm.

Asphalt millings were placed on the garage's floor.

Councilman Petrozino inquired why the blue dump is being used to collect the ashes. Umbenhaur responded the red dump is usually used, but it was assigned to another task. .

Umbenhaur stated Councilman Petrozino directed him to lay one section of pipe at the top of the Gun Club Hill in the drainage ditch. This pipe will help the roadway from washing away. He did not want to install the pipe without all of council member's permission. Council agreed.

Councilman Petrozino stated our trucks are falling apart in front of our eyes. Rust spots on the vehicles should be painted. After salting operations the vehicles should be washed.

Electric Light Department Superintendent Robert Petrozino stated Pennalife tree trimming is in the area trimming trees for PPL. Basically, the trees are being trimmed in the area where super storm Sandy knocked down the

power lines. After negotiations, a price of \$6,000 was secured to trim trees along the borough's power lines along West Russell Street and Ann Street. Our crew is unable to reach these trees.

All of our equipment is off the Dodge Durango and we are in possession of the black vehicle.

The part-time office clerk is still off work due to her injury.

Next Thursday and Friday the borough secretary and office manager will be attending the BENICON Health Care seminar. The temporary office clerk will man the office for those two days. The office will be closed during lunch periods.

Petrozino reminded council that the deadline to order the Christmas decorations is Thursday of next week in order to receive the discounted price.

Mayor Tomko will recommend that a letter be sent to the local representatives endorsing the new Senate Bill authorizing the use of radar time devices by local police.

Treasurer Carol Sutzko reported a cash counting machine is being purchased for \$1,700. Funds were allocated in the budget for its purchase.

Police Chief William Dempsey commented on improving code enforcement in town to help with the quality of life issues that develop with no enforcement. The rental inspection ordinance should be strictly enforced.

Borough Secretary Roland Price presented the Secretary's Notes.
HOME Program

The monitoring of the HOME Program was conducted by DCED. All records were in good order and no issues noted.

Attorney Setley will again try to refinance the Borough's bond issue now that we are closer to the optional prepayment date.

The County of Schuylkill Demolition Department held a meeting last week to review the guidelines to receive funds to demolish a property. The property must be either condemned by a court order or owned by the municipality. A third category was added. A Code Enforcement official can condemn a property in compliance with the International Property Maintenance Code Section 110 and accompanied with a certification by the borough solicitor. This is not recommended for several reasons. We are looking at using these funds to demolish several properties including 311 Broad Street. I

would like to schedule a meeting with the solicitor in March to discuss the project.

The Sharp, Model MX-3550N, copier is priced at \$8,387.90. This is the copier the office staff is interested in purchasing. Its capabilities include scan to email or copy in color and reproduce at 35 copies per minute. This is costars pricing.

The Zoning Hearing Board has scheduled a variance hearing for Mr. Dean Padfield for a property located 119-121 E. Railroad Street, St. Clair. The hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, March 28th beginning at 7:00 pm.

An executive session is requested.

Councilman Petrozino stated funds were allocated in the budget to seal the cracks in the borough's streets. He believed a better solution is to invest the money into a regular sealer and do the job using our employees. The streets should be sealed every year. The price for a new sealer is approximately \$36,000. Council was in favor of the idea.

Council President James Larish called an executive session at 7:33 pm to discuss personnel issues.

The executive session adjourned at 7:42 pm.

The bills and claims submitted by Treasurer Carol Sutzko were reviewed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 pm.

Roland Price
Borough Secretary

Mayor's Report Newsletter Feb 2017

All residents and especially senior citizens are warned that telephone scams concerning home improvements, health insurance, and the Internal Revenue Service have been reported as being active in the borough. do not give personal financial information (eg. social security numbers, bank account numbers, or credit card numbers) over the phone if you are so contacted.

Remember to lock all vehicles parked on public streets or on private driveways as to lessen the opportunities for criminal activity.

(Vacant properties missed from last month)