

MARCH COUNCIL MEETING

March 7, 2017

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

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, Ken Diehl and Joe Haffey

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

Ken Diehl commented on the Police Department Facebook page. It is a great idea and a way for these people to get the recognition they deserve.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Police Chief Dempsey introduced the newly hired police patrolman Vincent Bennett to council members. Mayor Tomko administered the oath of office to Patrolman Bennett.

Mayor Tomko stated according to a recent article in the Pennsylvania Borough's Association magazine that Pennsylvania is the only state in the nation where the local police are prohibited from using radar for responsible speed timing technology. The mayor pointed out that Pennsylvania has the worst record of speed related fatalities. So therefore I urge and recommend that Borough Council communicate with our local representatives to support SB251. Enactment of this bill would allow local police to use radar. On a motion made by Petrozino, seconded by T. Dempsey, to accept the report; approved.

BOROUGH SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Brennan reported the borough engineer send him an email concerning a complaint from the residents at the Woodland Terrace Development that eighteen wheel trucks are using their j-breaks coming down off the Burma Road. The borough does not have an adopted ordinance prohibiting their use.

The borough secretary sent a message concerning the ownership of the fire hydrant located in front of the Wal-Mart store located at the Coal Creek Commerce development. The original agreement was the hydrants were to be turned over to the borough, but before the agreement could be executed Reading Anthracite changed attorneys.

The borough engineer provided good ideas for inclusion of the amendments to the zoning ordinance. Solicitor Brennan asked permission from council to have the planning commission meet and review the recommended changes.

The borough secretary provided an email requesting his opinion if the replacement of the borough garage roof can be replaced on an emergency basis. Seeing there is a metal roof above the structure, his recommendation is to put the repairs' out on formal bid since the costs exceed the bidding threshold. The prevailing wage act will apply to this project.

The solicitor did meet with the Police Civil Service Commission members. The commission members did respond in writing approving the proposed changes. The changes will be made and the ordinance advertised for next month's meeting.

The state mediator did call regarding the teamsters union contract negotiations. He would like to meet with the negotiating committee sometime later this month. Council President Larish volunteered to attend the meeting being the borough's representative. Additionally, Solicitor Brennan recommended the teamster's union pension plan be notified that, the borough will take the option to make the pension plan payments under the terms of the expired agreement.

In regard to the police negotiations, the borough should appoint the borough's arbitrator. This issue can be discussed further in executive session.

Demolition Program information was forwarded by the borough secretary. A court order to demolish the 311 Broad Street property should be easy. It may be a more difficult task in regard to the other properties mentioned.

A preconstruction meeting was held at the Woodland Terrace Development site. I will tweak the agreement between both parties. Previously council voted on accepting it.

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

ENGINEER'S REPORT

On a motion made by T. Dempsey, seconded by Burke, to approve the report; approved.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

STREET DEPARTMENT REPORT

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

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

Chief Dempsey expressed his opinion that the borough should explore options on posting a weight limit on East Hancock Street. A noticeable increase in large truck traffic was noted. A weight limit does exist from Hancock and Second Street west leading onto Wade Road. The Hancock Street Bridge is posted for 36-ton weight limit. Borough Engineer Brian Baldwin stated weight limits can only be posted if it is structurally related in order to protect the life of the roadway or bridge.

TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT-No report

ZONING DEPARTMENT – No Report

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

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.

The Phoenix Fire Company will be purchasing another brush/utility truck to replace the jeep. It is a 1995 Ford, four-wheel drive vehicle. The fire chief requested that the maintenance costs, that the borough provides, will be transferred from the old jeep fire apparatus to the new 1995 Ford bush/utility truck.

COMMUNICATIONS

The St. Clair Police Civil Service Commission met to review possible amendments to the rules and regulations. The commission voted and unanimously approved these amendments and is presenting them to Borough Council for consideration.

The Community of Caring Christians, consisting of five local churches, is requesting permission to hold the annual block party on September 9, 2017 from noon until 5:00 pm. Permission is requested to close North Mill Street from Hancock Street to Franklin Street. A certificate of insurance would be provided.

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

OLD BUSINESS

On a motion made by W. Dempsey, seconded by T. Dempsey, to approve the purchase of the Sharp, Model MX3550N copier for \$8,387.90. 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 Petrozino, to authorize the drafting of an ordinance upgrading the St. Clair Police Civil Service Rules and its advertisement; approved

On a motion made by Petrozino, seconded by T. Dempsey, to authorize the borough engineer to apply for a \$30,000 recreational playground grant; approved.

NEW BUSINESS

On a motion made by Houseknecht, seconded by W. Dempsey to approve the request of the Community of Caring Christians to hold their annual

block party on September 9, 2017; along with their related requests pending submission of a certificate of insurance for the event; approved.

On a motion made by W. Dempsey, seconded by Petrozino, to appoint Solicitor Edward Brennan as the borough's arbitrator in the police interest arbitration; approved.

On a motion made by W. Dempsey, seconded by Burke, to purchase twelve Victorian style swag Christmas lights, 56-feet in length, for \$14,280 plus a small charge for the additional six feet of garland for each swag.

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 authorized the borough secretary to advertise the sale of the 2007 Dodge Durango police cruiser in the April newsletter.

On a motion made by W. Dempsey, seconded by Petrozino, to authorize the purchase of fire alarm wire in the amount of \$2,981.50; approved.

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

The executive session adjourned.

On a motion made by Burke, seconded by T. Dempsey, to authorize Borough Secretary Roland Price and Alfred Benesch to prepare a bid package to repair the garage roof; approved.

On a motion made by Petrozino, seconded by T. Dempsey, not to approve the Schuylkill County Tax Claim request to accept the proposal for a private sale of the Kimberly Davenport property located at 378 N. Mill Street to Sahara Ibrahim of Jackson, NY; approved.

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 8:36 pm, council approved the motion.

**Roland Price, Jr.
Borough Secretary**

Mayor's Report

March 2017

① according to the Pa. Boroughs association's March publication of "Borough News", Pa. is the only state in the nation whose local police are prohibited from using Radar for reasonable speed timing technology. Furthermore, Pa. has the worst record in the country for speed-related fatalities; therefore, I urge the Borough Council to communicate with Sen. David Argall & Rep. Neal Goodman asking them to support SB 251 introduced by Sen. Randy Vukobratich which ~~will~~^{would} allow municipal police officers to use radar.