

Minutes for the West Kittanning Borough Council meeting held January 6, 2020 at 6:30pm at the West Kittanning Municipal Building.

Present: Paula Henry	Henry Mores	Absent: None
Bernie Bowser, Jr.	Bob Venesky	
Jim Sobiski	Clyde Kline, Mayor	
Mickey Langham	Andrew Sacco, Solicitor	
Vince Cappo		

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Kline swore in newly elected council members Bernie Bowser, Jr., Mickey Langham and Jim Sobiski.

Mayor Kline accepted nominations for President, Vice President and President Pro Tem.

Paula Henry nominated Bob Venesky for President. Vince Cappo nominated Henry Mores for President.

Votes were as follows:

For Bob Venesky – Paula Henry, Jim Sobiski and Bob Venesky

For Henry Mores – Vince Cappo, Bernie Bowser, Jr., Mickey Langham and Henry Mores

By a count of 4 votes to 3, Henry Mores was nominated Council President.

Paula Henry nominated Bernie Bowser, Jr. for Vice President. Jim Sobiski nominated Bob Venesky for Vice President.

Votes were as follows:

For Bernie Bowser, Jr. – Paula Henry, Mickey Langham, Vince Cappo, Henry Mores and Bernie Bowser, Jr.

For Bob Venesky – Jim Sobiski and Bob Venesky

By a count of 5 votes to 2, Bernie Bowser, Jr. was nominated Council Vice President.

Bernie Bowser, Jr. nominated Bob Venesky for President Pro Tem.

All council members voted in favor and Bob Venesky was nominated President Pro Tem.

President Mores presided over the remainder of the meeting.

Public Comment:

Joe Mores (Harrison Street) said there is a lot of speeding and rolling stops on Harrison Street and asked if something could be done about it. He questioned why he frequently see the police officers talking on their cell phones while patrolling the neighborhood. Mayor Kline said there are no laptops in the police vehicles so a cell phone is their main method of communication. Mr. Mores said there are individuals at the playground well after dusk, which is when it is supposed to be “closed”. He said a lot of the berms in the neighborhood are crumbling and falling off. President Mores said there is only so much money for street projects and we do the best we can. Mr. Mores said the franchise fee agreement with Comcast is preventing healthy competition for cable providers in the Borough. President Mores said the franchise fee was signed in 2015 and is good for 15 years. Mr. Mores asked who is controlling the website. President Mores said it was previously maintained by Michele Cogley, but we will work to have control of it and have it updated by the end of February.

There was a motion by Councilperson Langham to approve the previous month’s minutes with a 2nd by Councilperson Cappo. Councilperson Sobiski abstained from the vote. All the rest were in favor and the minutes were approved.

Council entered executive session at 6:52pm to discuss legal matters. The meeting reconvened at 7:19pm.

Mayor’s Report:

Officer Pitzer read aloud the report for December:

Traffic – 7 citations, 10 warnings

Ordinance violations – As was requested by Council, the officers have been conducting a traffic study on Pine Hill Road from Carter Street to Butler Road. The study was completed and presented to council at the meeting.

The owner of The Hilltop bar appeared before Magistrate Owen on December 11th and plead guilty to 2 citations and not guilty to 1 citation. The public hearing is Monday, January 13, 2020 at 10:00am. Anyone interested in attending may do so and may also speak about the issue. All of the garbage has been picked up, as well.

Officer Pitzer said the website www.Nextdoor.com is sending out mailings to residents trying to sell various items and obtain your personal information. Please do not contact them or buy into their scheme. The state Attorney General's office is looking into the issue.

Committee Reports:

President Henry said the "lean to" built against the garage to house anti-skid is complete. Secretary Hileman reported \$1,733.81 as the total cost of the project. Council thanked Dave Trudgen for donating his time.

Unfinished Business:

Councilperson Henry mentioned the fallen tree on Summit Avenue. It fell onto a car on the same property and also landed partially on a neighbor's property. President Mores said the house is vacant and is scheduled to be up for tax sale in September. He said when the weather gets better, the street department will remove the part of the tree that is on the neighbor's property and the dirt alley that is owned by the Borough.

Councilperson Henry said Nancy Capone composed a thank you letter to the Baker Family Charitable Fund on behalf of the Borough for the \$1,000 grant for the fence around the basketball court. She was thanked for doing so.

Secretary Hileman will mail the letter.

Councilperson Sobiski said he did not think the budget was approved at December's meeting. Secretary Hileman pointed out in the minutes where the motion had been made, seconded and approved to adopt the 2020 budget, as proposed.

New Business:

Secretary Hileman explained that the Armstrong County UCC group requires council to appoint a municipal representative annually. Councilperson Venesky has been the borough's representative for the past few years. There was a motion by Councilperson Cappo to reappoint Councilperson Venesky as the Borough's representative on the Armstrong County UCC group. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Langham. Councilperson Sobiski abstained from the vote. All the rest were in favor and the motion carried. Secretary Hileman said the UCC group also asked West Kittanning Borough to appoint an Appeal's Board Designee. This individual cannot be an elected official.

Councilperson Venesky made a motion to appoint Robert Bower as the Borough's Appeal's Board Designee. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Cappo. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Secretary Hileman said the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan has been tentatively approved by PEMA and FEMA. Bob Bower and President Mores were involved in the development process with county officials. The Borough has historically adopted the county's plan as our own, in lieu of having to draft our own plan. There was a motion by Councilperson Cappo to adopt a resolution to accept the 2020 Armstrong County Hazard Mitigation Plan as the official Hazard Mitigation Plan of West Kittanning Borough. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Venesky. All were in favor and the motion carried.

There was discussion about the benefit of designating one person to communicate with the Solicitor and Bankson Engineers. This will minimize confusion around outstanding issues and hopefully save money. Councilperson Henry made a motion to designate Secretary Hileman as the sole person to communicate with Solicitor Andrew Sacco and Bankson Engineers. She will communicate with them via email and relay the information to council via email. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Venesky. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Councilperson Henry said the question has been posed – why is the Solicitor not present at every meeting? – and she wanted to offer some clarification. She said the majority of the time, Solicitor Sacco cannot offer an answer on the spot; he has to research the correct answer. She said it is not necessary to pay him to attend each and every meeting. We will communicate with him via email for any questions or issues that arise.

Councilperson Cappo thanked the public for voting him into office. He has goals for his tenure and will work to accomplish them over the next 2 years. He also said it is the year of the census and encouraged folks to fill it out. It helps out immensely for districting for Congress members and State Representatives and also in consideration of grant applications submitted by/for the Borough.

There was a motion by Vice President Bowser to pay December's bills with a 2nd by Councilperson Cappo. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Letters to be Read:

None

On a motion by Councilperson Langham, seconded by Vice President Bowser and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly J. Hileman
Secretary/Treasurer/RTKO