

Minutes for the West Kittanning Borough Council meeting held Monday, December 6, 2021 at 6:30pm at the municipal building at 229 Arthur Street.

Present: Henry Mores, President	Jim Sobiski
Bernie Bowser, Jr., Vice President	Bob Venesky
Vince Cappo	Mickey Langham
Clyde Kline, Mayor	Paula Henry

Absent: None

The meeting was audiotaped by Bob Venesky. The meeting was opened with the pledge of allegiance. President Mores encouraged anyone in attendance to wear a mask in the future. He noted the rising number of COVID cases and deaths.

Public Comment:

Chris Beck (WKFD Fire Chief) was in attendance to discuss the lease between the fire department and the borough. The fire hall can seat up to 350 people, but there is not nearly enough parking to accommodate that many. Parking is also an issue during the youth football season. Members of the fire department have discussed using half of the existing softball field (the back half that's adjacent to the existing lot) for additional parking. They have discussed it with the football boosters, as the softball field is used for part of football and cheerleading practices, and they are ok with it. The fire department would like to amend the current lease with the borough to remove the softball field. The current lease is for a term of 30 years, beginning 6/1/2021. A lot of the WKFD members were not even aware a lease was signed at that time. Vice President Bowser said he is in favor and reiterated that parking is a nightmare. Councilperson Langham explained that the lease had to be for 30 years to satisfy DCNR requirements when the borough applied for a grant for playground equipment. President Mores stated that the fire department would then be responsible for cutting the grass. The borough employees currently do it. Councilperson Venesky asked who currently insures the football field and Mr. Beck said the football boosters do a season to season policy and the fire department has an umbrella policy for the full year. Mr. Beck said he is currently working on a new lease with the football boosters. He said they would also permit the kids from Grace Christian School to still use the field for activities. There were no objections from Council. There was a motion by Councilperson Henry to permit the fire department to proceed with a new lease removing the softball field from the borough's list of leased premises. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Cappo. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Councilperson Henry asked Mr. Beck to explain what happened with the recent vehicle accident on Pine Hill Road. He explained that the section of road on Pine Hill Road between Lincoln Street and Byers Avenue is basically ground down to nothing, meaning there is nothing for tires to grip. If road conditions are even slightly slick, that area is very dangerous. PA state police confirmed this, too. Two years in a row there has been an accident in the same spot around the same time of year where a vehicle overturned. Councilperson Cappo said he and the street department would take a look at the road there.

There was a motion by Vice President Bowser to approve the minutes from November's meeting with a 2nd by Councilperson Langham. All were in favor and the minutes were approved.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Kline read aloud the police report for November. There were 10 traffic citations and 4 written warnings. Officers are investigating 1 new unemployment fraud case involving attempted identity theft. They were able to stop the attempted identity theft by contacting the victim's creditors.

Councilperson Venesky said he stopped at Senator Pittman's office today to discuss the unemployment fraud cases our officers have been dealing with. The staff person said they would schedule a meeting with the Senator the next time he's in the Kittanning office.

Committee Reports:

Public Works: Councilperson Cappo discussed the Pine Hill Road storm sewer project. The easement application was sent to the railroad company and they cashed the check but have not given approval yet. Councilperson Cappo said the leaf vacuum worked out very well for leaf collection this year. The vacuum has been returned to Pat Ritrosky to store until next fall. Councilperson Sobiski said some folks still have leaves out. President Mores said the street department will try to get around and pick them up. Councilperson Venesky was asked by a resident if there could be a pickup schedule for next year where certain streets are picked up on certain days. Vice President Bowser suggested setting an end date for pickup. Council agreed those were good ideas and will keep in mind for next year. Councilperson Cappo would like to replace one of the older trucks and will check with the DCED about using the ARPA funds to purchase a new truck.

Finance/Insurance: Councilperson Langham said the finance committee met and reviewed the bills and everything looks good. She explained that the reason the November general fund balance is so much lower than October's is because the \$57,044.72 of ARPA money was transferred out of the general fund to the fund designated specifically for those funds.

Crime Watch: Councilperson Langham said the committee is printing informational pamphlets for borough residents. They will be ready in the near future and will be passed out to each home.

Unfinished Business:

Secretary Hileman explained that the proposed 2022 budget had been advertised and posted according to state regulation. There was a motion by Councilperson Langham to adopt the 2022 General Fund budget, as advertised. There was a 2nd by Vice President Bowser. All were in favor and the motion carried.

New Business:

The personnel committee recently met and discussed the development of a Covid policy to be added to the policies and procedures manual. Councilperson Cappo drafted the policy and Secretary Hileman read it aloud. Prior to the meeting, Secretary Hileman sent the policy to the Solicitor for review and he approved it from a legal perspective. There was a motion by Councilperson Langham to adopt the Covid policy with a 2nd by Councilperson Venesky. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Secretary Hileman presented a resolution to appoint the firm of Mechling & Heller LLP as the borough's solicitor for 2022. Their retainer increased from \$400 to \$500 and their hourly fee increased from \$100 to \$150. Council agreed that Andrew Cypher has done a great job of representing the borough thus far. There was a motion by Councilperson Cappo to adopt the resolution appointing Mechling & Heller LLP as the borough's solicitor for 2022. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Venesky. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Secretary Hileman presented a resolution fixing the tax rate for 2022 at 8.25 mills. This is required to be done every year, according to PA Borough code. There was a motion by Vice President Bowser to adopt the resolution fixing the tax rate for 2022 at 8.25 mills. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Henry. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Secretary Hileman explained that the contract with Waste Management expired on November 30th and we now have the option to terminate service with a 30 day notice. There was a motion by Councilperson Cappo to terminate the dumpster service with Waste Management. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Venesky. Councilpersons Henry and Sobiski opposed the motion. All the rest were in favor and the motion carried. There was a motion by Councilperson Cappo to proceed with Shumacher Refuse for trash service. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Henry. All were in favor and the motion carried.

There was a motion by Councilperson Langham to pay November's bills with a 2nd by Councilperson Venesky. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Letters to be Read:

Secretary Hileman read aloud a thank you letter from Mayor Kline to Officers Pitzer and Bowser for their service. All of council thanked Mayor Kline and Councilperson Henry for their years of service and wished them the best

for the future. Councilperson Henry thanked council for the book that was donated to the library in memory of her mother. She also thanked the community for electing her to serve on council. She also offered to continue to be the contact person for building rentals.

On a motion by Councilperson Venesky, seconded by Councilperson Sobiski and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 7:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly J. Hileman

Carly J. Hileman, Secretary/Treasurer/RTKO