

Minutes for the West Kittanning Borough Council special meeting held Monday, January 24, 2022 at 6:30pm at the municipal building at 229 Arthur Street.

Present: Henry Mores, President
Vince Cappo, Vice President
Bernie Bowser, Jr.
Mickey Langham, Mayor

Jim Sobiski
Bob Venesky
Jake Martin
Andrew Cypher, Solicitor

Absent: None

The meeting was audiotaped by Bob Venesky. The meeting was opened with the pledge of allegiance.

Public Comment:

None

Unfinished Business:

There were 3 letters of interest received for the vacant council member seat – Elizabeth Frederick, Michael Kunselman and Kevin Hetrick. Councilperson Venesky said he was impressed with Kevin Hetrick’s resume and feels he would be an asset to the borough. Councilperson Venesky made a motion to adopt the resolution appointing Kevin Hetrick as council member for a term to run through January 2024. Councilpersons Sobiski, Venesky and Martin voted in favor of the motion. Vice President Cappo and Councilperson Bowser opposed the motion. By a vote of 3 to 2, the motion carried. There were 2 letters of interest received for the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) position – Eric Kunkle and Nathan Johnston. Councilperson Martin works with Mr. Kunkle and highly recommended him for the position. Vice President Cappo made a motion to adopt the resolution appointing Eric Kunkle as the borough’s Emergency Management Coordinator. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Bowser. All were in favor and the motion carried.

New Business:

Mayor Langham explained that Greg Bowser will be done working February 11th, as he is moving to Florida. With Officer Pitzer working reduced hours, we need another officer. There was an ad placed in the newspaper for interested applicants to submit a resume. The information was also shared on Facebook. Three resumes were received. Councilpersons Venesky and Sobiski expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that the Mayor and President Mores asked Secretary Hileman to place an ad in the paper without council officially approving it at a meeting. Councilperson Venesky read an email response he got from the PA State Association of Boroughs that said neither the Mayor nor a single Councilperson should have the authority to take an action that would incur an expense. The Solicitor further clarified that, while it is preferable to have such an action approved at a meeting, council can simply not approve the hiring. There was a motion by Councilperson Venesky to advertise for a part time police officer with resumes to be submitted by February 4th. There was no 2nd for the motion. There was a motion by Councilperson Sobiski to look into having the Kittanning Police department provide coverage for the borough. Councilpersons Venesky and Sobiski voted in favor. Vice President Cappo and Councilpersons Martin and Bowser opposed the motion and it did not carry. Officer Pitzer said that a lot of departments are looking for officers now and there aren’t many qualified individuals available. He said the 3 applicants would all be good and he’s afraid if we wait too long, they will find employment elsewhere. There was a motion by Councilperson Martin to continue with the 3 resumes received and have the personnel committee review the resumes, interview the individuals and have a recommendation for the February 7th meeting. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Bowser. All were in favor and the motion carried. Vice President Cappo met with Steve Rusek with NexTier Bank about financing for a new truck. He got estimates on \$75,000 and \$100,000 loans for various lengths of time. There are not many vehicles available, especially through a Costars approved dealer. If we do not purchase from a Costars dealer, we have to get 3 bids and it’s nearly impossible to even find 3 different trucks. There was discussion about what kind of truck to buy and what material for the bed. Vice President Cappo found a chassis at Laurel Auto Group, which is a Costars dealer, for \$43,800. He also got a quote of \$55,900 from Stephenson Equipment, Inc. for the truck uplift package (the body, spreader, plow etc.). SEI, Inc. also

provided an estimate of \$15,500 for a brine tank, which is optional. There was a motion by Vice President Cappelto to sign the purchase orders for Laurel Auto Group for the chassis and SEI, Inc. for the uplift package. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Bowser. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Vice President Cappelto said there is not enough work for 3 guys in the street department during the winter and he would like to change Jeff Livengood's work schedule. He would still work 31 hours/week, but he would work weekends and some evenings. Solicitor Cypher suggested council enter executive session because this is a personnel matter.

Regarding the Pine Hill Road storm sewer project, Vice President Cappelto said the railroad company preliminarily approved the license application for the work that is on their property. The solicitor said the license is not a Right of Way and could technically be cancelled at any time, though that would be a rarity. He also explained that, per the Occupancy License Agreement, the borough would owe an annual fee of \$1,165, a one-time agreement processing fee of \$1,000 and an engineering review fee of \$1,750. The Contractor Right of Entry License Agreement also stipulates a fee of \$1,750. There are also additional insurance coverage requirements, including a Certificate of Railroad Protective Liability insurance. Vice President Cappelto said there is nowhere else for the water to run off. There was discussion about not doing anything, but the railroad could pursue action against the existing water run off set up. Councilperson Venesky suggested foregoing the grant and doing the work on our own; the street department already replaced a large section of storm sewer drains further up Pine Hill Road. There was a motion by Councilperson Bowser to proceed with the agreements from the railroad company and pay for the expenses from the ARPA funds. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Martin. Councilperson Venesky opposed the motion. All the rest were in favor and the motion carried. Vice President Cappelto said the white Ford Explorer is rusting out pretty badly. The estimate for repair is \$6,100 and the vehicle is only worth about \$3,500 (to sell it outright). Council may want to take action at the next meeting to put the vehicle out for bid.

There was more discussion about Jeff Livengood's schedule. There was a motion by Vice President Cappelto to change Jeff Livengood's work hours. There was a 2nd by Councilperson Venesky. Councilperson Sobiski opposed the motion. All the rest were in favor and the motion carried.

On a motion by Councilperson Bowser, seconded by Councilperson Venesky and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly J. Hileman, Secretary/Treasurer/RTKO