

**Mercersburg Borough Council Meeting
Borough Hall, Mercersburg, PA
July 6, 2015
MINUTES**

Attending: President Tom Suddeth, Vice-President Jeff Main, Mayor Jim Zeger, Treasurer Catalin Bonciu, Amy Burkot, Lisa McCoy, Jonathan (Jon) Kittredge, Borough Manager Dawn Scheller, Assistant Borough Manager Derek Stoy, and Solicitor Steve Coccorese

Absent: Donald Stoner, Engineer Lance Kegerreis, and Police Chief John Zechman

Guest: Danielle Hartz, Findlay Drive; Vickie Kieffer, Fayette Street

Press: Rachel Nichols, Mercersburg Journal

President Tom Suddeth called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the Mayor leading the Pledge of Allegiance. President Suddeth asked for Public Comments, none were made at this time.

MOTION: to approve the Meeting Minutes from June 1, 2015 and June 15, 2015 with one correction on page 1 correcting the motion approving the amount for the sale of the Tannery Property to \$15,500 was made by Jon Kittredge, second by Jeff Main, no other corrections were noted, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to approve the Treasurer's Report for the month ending June 30, 2015 was made by Catalin Bonciu, second by Jon Kittredge, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to approve the Bills Payable Invoice List for the month ending June 30, 2015 was made by Jeff Main, second by Catalin Bonciu, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to approve the transfers as recommended by the Accountant for the amount of \$50,000 from Operating to the Reserve to replenish funds transferred earlier in the year and to transfer \$44,143 from Operating to PLGIT to the Street Improvement Account was made by Catalin Bonciu, second by Lisa McCoy, a discussion occurred with questions regarding next year's budget and increasing the amount that is for the repayment of the loan as \$88,000 each year is not enough, both Dawn Scheller and Danielle Hartz reviewed some information regarding the budget and reviewed that details would be presented at the Finance Committee Meetings, a vote was taken, all ayes, motion carried.

President Suddeth asked for the Mayor's Report.

Mayor Zeger who recently returned from vacation brought taffy to share with Council Members, he thanked Amy Burkot for all of her efforts involving the Summer Playground Program as the program had more than 72 children registering. Mayor Zeger spoke about the Police Report and the disturbing amount of criminal activity taking place in the Borough. Zeger spoke about a recent hit and run and confirmed the Police department is enforcing curfews. Mayor relayed the request for Council to authorize the MOU with Over the Rainbow Children's Advocacy Center. He spoke highly of the organization and the work that they do.

MOTION: to approve the MOU with the CAC was made by Jeff Main, second by Jon Kittredge, Steve Coccorese reviewed that Sam Wiser did review this several months ago and he agreed with the changes that were made to the document, all ayes, motion carried.

President Suddeth asked if there was any additional questions for the Mayor or about the Police Report. Jon Kittredge asked why the Police Chief is asking for the Personnel Committee to interview when he wasn't aware that Council is

looking to hire anyone. Mayor responded that the Borough is in need to get some more policeman. Jon wasn't aware that the police department needed additional personnel and was concerned when Council had previously given the Chief the go ahead to hire someone who didn't even apply.

President Suddeth stated that Council needs to decide if they wish the Personnel Committee to interview a candidate. Catalin Bonciu commented that it would be nice for the department to have extra personnel, but had reservations speaking from a budget standpoint. Jeff Main reviewed that interviews are interviews and it would not be mandatory for Council to hire this person as they could decide to keep the information on file. Mayor spoke that this would be for a part-time position and Council can have as many part-time persons as they wish. Mayor reviewed that he has been approached by a few Council Members making the request to expand coverage of police protection for the town and it can't be done with the amount of personnel available now. Mayor commented that two people have applied, but only one would be brought before the Personnel Committee and the other may be brought forward at another time. Mayor stated that he believes the practice has always been to take them to the Personnel Committee and let them take a look at them and make recommendations. President Suddeth reviewed that he remembers the practice to always be that Council decides someone was needed, usually based on the recommendation from the Chief or the Mayor, then an ad was run, the department would collect applications, they would be forwarded to the Personnel Committee for review and then call in if they wanted to interview someone. Mayor stated that the Borough has had an ongoing advertisement and reviewed that the department used to have five part-time employees. He spoke that having additional part-time employees doesn't cost a lot as they would fill in for other employees who have other personal commitments. Lisa McCoy stated that the department could continue to collect applications that Council would not have to act on them. Jeff Main said that Council can't do the due diligent to determine what staff is needed for the Borough. President Suddeth reviewed his opinion that it should be the Borough Manager/Chief to bring the request to hire an employee before Council and then if Council decides it is necessary it would be sent to the Personnel Committee. Jeff Main restated his thoughts that he didn't see the harm in interviewing someone and keeping their information on file.

MOTION: to deny the Chief's request for an application interview was made by Jon Kittredge, no second was obtained, and motion failed for lack of a second.

Catalin Bonciu asked what Council Members thought. Lisa McCoy asked the Mayor about the intent of the request; if the Police Department's intent was to expand the budget to accommodate the new employee, or was the intent to be for scheduling convenience having more people to pull from using the same budget that was approved. Mayor answered that the intent is to have more employees available using the same budget numbers not expanding the cost of the department. Jeff Main spoke about the Fire Department and the available personnel to utilize when making the schedule. Steve Coccoresse clarified the questions concerning the bargaining unit. Council reviewed that they could set policy for the department direct the Mayor and Chief to only use any new part-time employees on an ad needed basis to fill in the schedule. President Suddeth reviewed that the Personnel Committee would hold the interview at the next committee meeting.

No Report from the Engineer or the Solicitor at this time.

Dawn Scheller reviewed the Borough Manager's Report that included an update on the Summer Playground Program with 75 children registered, the kids would be enjoying Safety Week with a visit from the Fire Company and Police Department, that the Borough has still not received the files from CCIS, a drafted resolution for Council's audio recordings be retained indefinitely would be presented for approval. She asked that Council reconsider the Personnel Committee's recommendation for the Employees Health Care Coverage cost and coverage. Dawn requested approval to attend the PSAB Fall Leadership Conference from October 16-18 in Pittsburg and for the associated costs related for to the conference and paid from the budgeted item 401.46 Meetings and Conferences.

MOTION: to approve Dawn Scheller to attend the PSAB Conference and expenses from October 16th-18th in Pittsburg was made by Jon Kittredge, second by Jeff Main, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: that the current insurance plan be offered to Full-Time Employees with the \$250 deductible, where the Borough/Water/Sewer Authorities would continue to pay the not to exceed amount of the current cost with a 1.5% cost increase for each year thereafter, any remaining difference for the health plan costs would be the responsibility of the full-time employee, any full-time employee who would choose not to pay the remaining cost and drop the plan would not receive additional compensation was made by Jeff Main, second by Catalin Bonciu, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to approve the Resolution 16-15 for Retention of Audio recording was made by Jonathan Kittredge, second by Catalin Bonciu, all ayes, motion carried.

Assistant Borough Manager Derek Stoy presented his report which included updates on Columbia Gas, Truck Purchase and build information. He reviewed that the Office was contacted by an Engineer of a Convenience Store Chain who would be interested in looking to purchase commercial property in Mercersburg, however due to current Zoning Ordinance restrictions their store size template and sign template exceed what is allowed in the Ordinance. They wanted to ask Council to consider a text amendment to the Ordinance that would update the wording in the Ordinance regarding Gas distributing Convenience Stores in the Borough. He shared that they would be willing to pay all costs incurred by the Borough regardless of the outcome. Derek noted that Borough Council could also complete a Map Amendment at this same time which would cost the Borough less than if it were completed separately, this would be for both the VFW Property and the Auto Parts Store. Council discussed this matter further and was in favor of moving forward with the text changes, but were divided with the proposed Map Amendment discussion.

MOTION: to authorize the Borough Solicitor to discuss directly with the interested party and request they provide the Borough with any and all proposed text changes to the Zoning Ordinance and to bring that information back to council was made by Jeff Main, second by Catalin Bonciu, all ayes, motion carried.

Borough Council did not have any questions regarding the PWD Report provided in the meeting packet.

The Beautification Committee update was provided by Amy Burkot who updated Council on the Tree Grant status. She noted that there was a tree tendering course which needed to have someone attend. Two volunteers were interested in assisting Amy with the project but they still needed to have someone with a horticultural degree or level of certification.

Catalin Bonciu reviewed the Finance Committee notes from the meeting and requested the approval for the recommendations. Copies of the Audit was distributed and the required advertisements were completed. They reviewed the upcoming meeting scheduling.

MOTION: to approve the 2014 Audit as presented and refer the Beautification Committee amount owed to UDAG and the consolidation of Recycling Account with another fund to be determined to the Solicitor for review/recommendation was made by Jon Kittredge, second by Jeff Main, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to begin the process to rescind the Per Capita Tax and authorize the necessary Ordinance to be Advertised for adoption of such was made by Jon Kittredge, second by Catalin Bonciu, members began discussion on whether they had enough information to make that decision now or if more time was needed regarding the collection of delinquent bills, after much discussion and a vote was taken, Tom Suddeth/Jeff Main/Lisa McCoy voted against the motion, and Catalin Bonciu/Jon Kittredge/Amy Burkot voted for the motion, a deciding vote was casted by the Mayor against the motion leaving the Per Capita tax in place as is.

Fire Board information was presented by Jeff Main who invited Council Members to attend the upcoming meeting scheduled for July 21, 2015 at 6:00 pm where they will review their 1 year, 3, year, and 5 year plans.

The Property Committee notes were reviewed and Jon asked Council Members to review the plans provided and bring feedback/comments to the next Council Meeting. Council reviewed the recommendation to request that the

Mercersburg Area Community Band move the equipment to one end of the building and ad locks to the back door to secure extra files. Mayor added that the building has a basement to the band building and all agreed that Derek would make those contacts with the community group. Catalin Bonciu reviewed the additional matters of the Judge's Safety Concern, the Borough Hall front doors and provided Derek with an additional resource to check into. Catalin Bonciu also presented the suggestion of a feasibility study on the building roofs not to exceed the expense of \$300-\$400. Council was in favor of this recommendation and did not make a motion at this time.

Technology Committee meeting notes were shared with Council, but no recommendations were made at this time.

The upcoming meeting schedule and upcoming meetings.

MOTION: to enter into the Executive Session at 9:15pm for collective bargaining unit matters was made by Catalin Bonciu, second by Jeff Main, all ayes, motion carried.

Regular session resumed at 9:20 pm.

MOTION: to adjourn at 9:21 pm was made by Catalin Bonciu, second by Jonathan Kittredge, all ayes, motion carried.

These meeting minutes have been transcribed and respectfully submitted by Dawn Scheller for approval with the use of her meeting notes and audio recording.

Date: _____ Motion Made By: _____ Second By: _____

