

Windber Borough Council

Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2009

Opening:

The special meeting of the Windber Borough Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. on December 1, 2009 in Council Chambers by Anthony Turcato.

Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

Present:

Council members in attendance were Ray Dibattista, George Ledney, Sonya Pekala, Mike Winas, Jim Furmanchik, Simon Ohler, and Anthony Turcato. Mayor; Art Palumbo, Borough Manager; Casey Durdines and Solicitor; Jeff Berkey were also present.

A. Open Issues

Mr. Turcato opened with an invitation to entertain motions for advertising various budgets of the borough. Sonya Pekala made the motion to advertise the General Fund Budget for 2010 in the amount of \$1,303,176.31. George Ledney seconded the motion.

Questions/remarks:

Furmanchik:

Mr. Furmanchik wanted the record to show that he felt it would be in the best interest of the Borough both operations wise and financially to eliminate the Borough Manager position of Casey Durdines and to reinstate the Administrative Assistant position of Robin Gates.

Roll call vote: Pekala, yes. Ledney, yes. DiBatiste, yes. Furmanchik, no. Ohler, yes. Winas, yes. Turcato, yes. Motion carried, 6 - 1.

Sonya Pekala made the motion to advertise the Sewer Fund Budget for 2010 in the amount of \$317,100. Ohler seconded the motion.

Questions/remarks:

Mayor Palumbo asked if any part of that budget money was set aside for emergencies or upcoming projects. Pekala stated that there was \$123,923.00 left after expenditures for those purposes.

Roll Call vote: Pekala, yes. Ohler, yes. Furmanchik, yes. Winas, yes. Turcato, yes. DiBattista, yes. Ledney, yes. Motion carried, 7 - 0.

Pekala made the motion to advertise the Liquid Fuels Budget for 2010 in the amount of \$88,281.67. Ohler seconded the motion.

Questions/remarks:

DiBattista asked how much of the budgeted amount was for paving. The answer was \$55,000.

Roll Call vote: Pekala, yes. Ohler, yes. Furmanchik, yes. Winas, yes. Turcato, yes. DiBattista, yes. Ledney, yes. Motion carried, 7 - 0.

Ledney:

Mr. Ledney wanted to inform council that he was contacted by the Progress Fund, who owns the Coal Heritage Building on 15th Street in Windber, that the Miners Museum was going to be closing due to lack of patronage. Therefore, the building is going to become available for purchase.

Ledney asked that a motion be made to council for permission for himself to negotiate the possible purchase of the Coal Heritage Building as a replacement for Windber Borough Offices. Also, Mr. Ledney would like to be able to contact the Solicitor, Jeff Berkey and Borough Manager, Casey Durdines to consult on any issues that arise.

Pekala made the motion as Ledney stated it. Winas seconded the motion.

Questions/remarks:

Furmanchik asked Durdines what his position on this matter was. Durdines stated that he thought it was worth exploring but he wanted to add to the motion, that he could take relevant borough personnel with him to inspect the building. The motion was amended to contain the provisions to do this.

Palumbo:

Palumbo wanted to know what the original agreement was pertaining to the Coal Heritage Building. Vicki Heitschew told Council that Coal Heritage received \$112,000 in grant money that they used to buy and upgrade the building. They then turned the building over to the Progress Fund who now owns it.

Turcato presented the motion to Council. All in favor. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Discussions were held about the condition of the current Municipal Building and if there is an option of moving the Borough Offices temporarily to the Community Building. No decisions were made at this time.

Turcato:

Municipal Authority Board requests that Patty Russell be appointed to fill the vacant seat on the board. Ohler moved for approval. Ledney seconded the motion.

Questions/remarks:

DiBattista asked if all seats were filled after this appointment is approved. Turcato answered yes.

Turcato presented the motion to Council. All in favor. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Furmanchik:

Mr. Furmanchik wanted the record show that despite his "yes" vote for approval of Patty Russell's appointment to the vacant seat on the Municipal Authority Board, he is strongly against the Municipal Authority taking over management of the Recreation Department.

Palumbo:

Mr. Palumbo wanted the record to show that he, as Mayor of Windber, is taking the same position as Mr. Furmanchik; being against the Municipal Authority taking over management of the Recreation Department.

Turcato:

The Municipal Authority Board requests that informal meeting be held in the month of December with the Borough's Recreation Committee to discuss issues regarding Windber Recreation Park. Borough Council all agreed that this was suitable on did not necessitate a vote.

Discussion was held about how to handle recreation; regionalization, grant monies, etc. The possibility is there, that the pool at the park may not open.

B. New Business

Durdines:

Council needs to approve the motion for Herbert CPA & Associates and The Payroll Department for services to process bookkeeping and payroll. Costs: \$1,500 per month for bookkeeping and \$1,844.56 per year for bookkeeping services. The firm requires a one year contract from December 1, 2009 through November 30, 2010 at a total cost of \$19,844.56.

Questions/remarks:

Ohler asked if this individual working for said company signs any checks. The answer was no. Ohler stated that he wants check and balances in the system, and that this would make that happen. Furmanchik was "absolutely opposed" to the recommendation.

Ohler moved to approve the motion. Pekala seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Ohler, yes. Pekala, yes. DiBattista, yes. Ledney, yes. Furmanchik, no. Winas, yes. Turcato, yes. Motion carried, 6 - 1.

Ohler made the motion to appoint Herbert CPA & Associates as the Treasurer for Windber Borough. Ledney seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Ohler, yes. Pekala, yes. DiBattista, yes. Ledney, yes. Furmanchik, no. Winas, yes. Turcato, yes. Motion carried, 6 - 1.

Solicitor Berkey:

Requested confirmation of what the millage is so that there is no confusion. No one confirmed it. Durdines said that he would look it up after the meeting.

Furmanchik:

Asked Council if the annual Christmas Luncheon for Borough Employees was still going to be held this year. Council said yes, Durdines would be in charge of it.

C. Public Comment

Barry Jerley:

Wanted to know if the Budget could be reopened after it is approved. Solicitor Berkey told him yes, but only by following specific procedure within a specific amount of time. Durdines stated that the time limit was within 10 days.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at [time] by Anthony Turcato. The next general meeting to adopt the budget will be at 6:00 p.m. on December 22, 2009 in Council Chambers.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Cheryl M. Denk

Borough Clerk