

Regular Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2024

President Bob Tate called the meeting to order. All members were present. Janet Helbig moved to approve the August minutes and was seconded by Jake Lou Little. Janet Helbig moved to accept the agenda as is and was seconded by Jake Tate. Both motions were passed all in favor. Lou Little moved to hear the citizens present at the meeting and was seconded by Janet Helbig. The motion passed all in favor.

Citizen's Comments

Candace Frantz, in behalf of the Corner Tavern, 214 W 3rd Avenue was present to announce that a fundraiser for the Bodaki Alloi Family was being held at the Tavern, outdoors on Sunday. She requested permission to block off West 3rd Avenue from 37th Street Extension to the end of the Corner Tavern parking lot to allow tents to be set up. Approximately 100-150 people are expected. They are planning for live music, and a seafood boil will be served at the cost of \$40 per person; burgers and hot dogs will be provided at \$20 per person. She also asked that perhaps traffic control could be provided so that attendees could safely cross 37th Street. Chief Johnson also commented that they should consider having security.

Janet Jurich Pico, 3767 West 5th Avenue said that the former West Mayfield Foundry is an absolute disaster. When is something going to be done about it? President Tate said that the owner has applied for a demolition permit so steps are being taken to clean up the property. She also asked if maybe someone from the borough could pick up a large brush pile at her neighbors since we aren't permitted to burn. Unfortunately we can't do that because everyone will be asking for their brush to be picked up.

Susan Wood, 3524 West 3rd Avenue just wanted to say that family and friends are very important and there is nothing more important than safety.

Kevin Farkas, 3706 West 8th Avenue wanted to make a comment about Senate Bill 525, the Vexatious Requestors bill. There are 2 challenges stating that it is against the Constitution so please consider that prior to making a vote on the request from Senator Vogel.

Kevin Farkas, Fire Service Review Committee Report – The committee has posted an executive report of 29 pages at FSRC Online that has also been printed and given to council to review. The full report that has been compiled over 8 months is 249 pages long and is also posted on FSRC Online. The Executive Report lists 36 recommendations that have been unanimously approved by the committee. (Ciara Fraser 5 comments – committee has no experience in firefighting. Shame on council if we listen to this.) These recommendations can either be accepted, rejected or modified. Based on the extensive research, the recommendation of the committee is to decertify the fire department. The committee has little faith that the fire department could meet the necessary fire service standards and expectations of a serious corrective action plan due to staffing, management, finances performance and competence issues. Therefore, the committee

rejects the idea of a corrective action plan. The committee does not have the power to decertify the fire department. That decision will have to come from council. The committee strongly encourages the Mayor, members of council, municipal officers, fire service officers, emergency management coordinator and all citizens of the borough to read this report in its entirety and to give it serious consideration. Any revisions must be factual. **(This is a brief and hopefully enough of a synopsis of the report given PJJ)**

The West Mayfield fire department did not participate in any of the meetings held by the committee but various fire department members from various municipalities provided information and professional studies were done. Unanimous agreement by the committee with the findings and every recommendation: Licia Cogley –agree; Kevin Farkas – agree; Janet Helbig – agree; Janet Pico – agree; Bob Kaib – agree; Tracy Popovich – agree; Jeff Seybert – agree; Bob Tate – agree, Sue Woods – agree.

Some findings: No fire department agreement on record; ISO rating – no report; fire hydrants – no report given to council; public safety is problematic; ordinances are outdated; Fire & Police committee is not structured.

Motion to return to the regular order of business was made by Bill Heaton and seconded by Lou Little. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Streets, Lighting & Bridges; Building, Grounds and Equipment – Jake Tate – Craig Street Alley is still under construction – send our guys out to mill it out and turn it into gravel. We will add more gravel if needed. We are going to slope the road to make it better – water is flowing; put in pipe. Could we ask what it would cost to have the paving company do the milling on Harbison Road?

The trees hanging over the backstop at the park became an emergency because the roots got lifted up. We rented a lift to take care of it.

Roads are being patched, the salt shed is fixed. The storms caused an influx of tree branches, etc. that had to be taken care of.

Bill Heaton – report on paving – Widmer and Youngblood okayed the change order; Penn DOT approved.

Fire & Police – Lou Little – 3721 W 6th Avenue – mother-in-law called in and said the owner had a gas leak. County was called – when the fire department arrived at the house, the owner said there was no gas leak and there was a dispute going on with his mother-in-law. No other calls were received for the month.

Sewers & Sanitation - Bill Heaton – Craig Alley between West 4th & West 5th – called Robinson Pipe to camera it and they were only able to camera 188ft before they hit a blockage. There is supposed to be a manhole 400-500 feet out. The line needs to be dug up and replaced. It's only 5-6 feet deep so our guys should be able to do the work. They need to be sure the proper fall is achieved and there may be 5-6 tap-ins along the way.

The storms wreaked havoc on the MS4 work. Brian was able to retrieve the pieces and re-stacked them. Slots are there to shore it up. We will need to maintain this as best we can.

Emergency Management – Consider this as my official notice that I will be stepping down as emergency management coordinator at the end of this year. Eli Kosanovich is the assistant emergency management coordinator and has all of the qualifications to assume the role beginning January 1, 2025. This will be voted on at the next council meeting.

Finance & Litigation – Jason Heaton – none

Ordinance – Jeff – we need to consider an ordinance to accept the International Property Maintenance Code. Tina Lampus – ICC has the books at a cost of \$59 but we need to know which jurisdiction we are in. I went to see Representative Jim Marshall and he said to pick whatever I want. I spoke with the New Brighton and you have to be a member if you want updates to the code. This could keep us more current for code enforcement and we may be able to appeal some antiquated ordinances.

Parks & Recreation – There were two shelter rentals for the month of September and one is scheduled for October. The Street Light at Boden & Rock has still not been fixed. Contacted Duquesne Light and they have just been too busy because of the storms.

Solicitor – Joe Budicak – none

Mayor – I attended the Beaver Falls Neighborhood Watch Meeting – a spokesperson from the Women’s Center of Beaver County was the speaker. The Shell Plant donated money to the women’s center to build a new building.

Electric golf carts are legal on roads but you must have a license.

Chief Johnson – none

New Business

Streets, Lighting & Bridges; Buildings & Equipment – Jake Tate – Leaf Pick-Up to be determined. The equipment is ready – will let Kevin know when the dates are decided. The Chevy dump needs brakes and rotors – approximately \$850 for all 4. Bill Heaton moved to permit Brian to get brakes & rotors and was seconded by Lou Little. The motion passed all in favor.

The handle of the F550 - the latch to open the tail gate is broken – about \$130 to fix.

Prep for winter – the little truck has no power steering and needs exhaust work – about \$500 to put it back together.

The big salter needs bearings replaced about \$20 each. We need a 5 gallon bucket of fluid film for winter protecting the equipment.

The street department employees asked to have insurance considered for them. Will discuss and get back to them. There is nothing in the handbook that addresses insurance.

Fire & Police – Lou Little – Replaced the air conditioner in the building; rental of the building. I would like to comment on Kevin’s Committee – The fire department told Kevin that we couldn’t make the meeting night and he couldn’t work out another date for the meeting – he said it was too late. Bill Heaton provided all council members and Kevin a report of fire calls which he didn’t have prepared on the night of the meeting. The fire department realizes that there are issues. Only 6 members live in the borough. Bill would like to try to fix the department from within and said that if more residents would join the department they would be able to fix things more easily. The department went door to door in the borough and got over 200 signatures stating that they didn’t want to lose the fire department and wanted to help. Bill noted that you can’t decertify the fire department but you can eliminate it.

In answer to the question regarding Fire Fighter 1, it takes time. It is not required by the state. Mutual aid is always called for structural fires. Beaver Falls doesn’t come. The assistant Beaver Falls chief said that we don’t care about our citizens. We would not sign an agreement with Beaver Falls because we were told that we would have to pay for the truck and per man. Beaver Falls charges the insurance companies but it is covered in your policies. There was dissention about these comments. Beaver Falls could be there in five minutes. We have 4 departments that respond to mutual aid and all are qualified. The Mayor said council is what it is – the problem was always with fire department members. Fire Service Review Committee meetings were always available for fire department members but they never attended. Bill said that the determinations of the FSRC Committee were based on a survey that 41 people responded to. He asked how many of the committee of 10 were respondents – all of them and their spouses. That covers 20 residents; he also asked Kevin if 20% of the respondents were non-residents and Kevin said yes. How could he then say that 70% of the borough residents were in favor of the FSRC recommendations? At this point, President Tate said to have a Town Hall Meeting to continue this discussion and anyone who is interested should attend. The meeting will be held on Monday, September 30 at the West Mayfield Volunteer Fire Department. The ad will be placed as such: A Town Hall Meeting for the Discussion of Fire Department Issues will be held on Monday, September 30th at 6 pm

Sewers & Sanitation – Bill Heaton – none

Finance & Litigation – Jason Heaton – He will be providing a list of all residents who have not paid their garbage bill. Aiken is very upset about this.

Ordinance – Jeff Seybert – weeds on the alley behind Jimmy Brooks need taken care of; hedges at 43rd Street left onto West 8th; Craig Street

Parks & Recreation – Janet Helbig – there may be a possible agreement with the new sports complex. There is a meeting.

Mayor – Trunk or Treat will be held on Saturday October 12 – rain date, October 13th. The Borough Christmas Party will be held on December 14th at the new sports complex.

Solicitor – Ordinance will have to be adopted for Fire Department payout – insurance.

Code Enforcement Report – Cars have been moved; grass – alley behind W 3rd need to be taken care of.

A budget meeting needs to be set up for October so that the preliminary budget can be approved at the November meeting. The meeting will be on Wednesday, October 30 at 6 pm.

Approval was given to pay bills and ratify purchases made by committees.

Bill moved to adjourn at 8:45 pm and was seconded by Jason. The motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia J. Lansberry
Borough Secretary