

BOROUGH OF WILMERDING  
MINUTES OF THE NOV. 10, 2009 REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. by President S. Shurgot.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the President.

A moment of silence was observed for the men and women who were killed at Fort Hood.

ROLL CALL: M. TRKULA, present; J. FILIA, present; K. PETERSON, present; S. SMITH, present; G. JAKUB, present; J. THOMAS, present; S. SHURGOT, present.  
Mayor D. POMPOSELLI was also present.

S. SMITH/ M. TRKULA TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 6, 2009 MEETING AS PRESENTED. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 7-0.

PETITIONS & MEMORIALS

MS. D. GALLICK, AIRBRAKE AVENUE: I live in the row houses in the 400 block of Airbrake and we have been having a problem with an odor. It is a petroleum based odor and it is terrible. We have called the Health Dept., the DEP and the Fire Department. The Fire Department told us that it was in the sewer. It is coming in through the drains and we can't figure out how it is coming in.

MR. S. SHURGOT: in some of the older homes we found out that they do not have traps in their basements. With a trap it kind of stops the odors from going up into the house. I know the last time the Fire Department was there they told you to run the water to see if that would help.

MS. D. GALLICK: we did that and it seems to get worse. It even comes up to the bathroom on the second floor.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we will have our Engineer take a look at it and check with some of the other agencies

MS. D. GALLICK: I know that some people in the 500 block of Airbrake get that odor too.

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MR. R. DeMUTH, AIRBRAKE AVENUE: I live next door to her and we also get that odor in our house and it basically fills the whole house. The Fire Department told us to run the water, which we did. The problem is when you drink the water you can taste it in the water. I called the Health Dept. and they came and took some samples.

MR. S. SHURGOT: Susan, can you check with the water company to see what they found over there.

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MR. S. VOLPE, LYDIA STREET: a lot of people are asking me what is going on with the school. The school is used by the East Allegheny Athletic Association Cheerleaders Monday thru Thursday, there is a youth investment plan which uses the library and computers for two classes one day per week, Head Start has one class for two hours, there is a cyber academy which uses two rooms for about fifteen children, which are all East Allegheny students and they have in school suspension there every day. There is also no agreement, written or verbal, between Wilmerding Borough and East Allegheny. I don't know if the

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borough has any plans for the school or if they want to use it in the future. They are trying to get more organizations to use the building to offset their costs. It is up for sale but it is not on the market at this time.

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MR. D. PARISI, WESTINGHOUSE AVENUE: I would like to congratulate the Mayor and members of Council on being re-elected. May God bless you all and I hope you do a good job. On Halloween night I usually post myself at Westinghouse Avenue and Clara Street for a couple of hours. That night I was very proud of our borough because our town was patrolled and protected as I have never seen it. I want to congratulate you , Steve Shurgot, for having your trucks go around; John Thomas, for the fire trucks patrolling and I want to congratulate Chief Comunale, after a long day of duty, was patrolling Wilmerding in his patrol car. A special accommodation to Officer Steve Lasko who patrolled both sides of Wilmerding on foot. A terrorist wouldn't have had a chance that night. Also, I want to remind everybody that tomorrow morning we will have a Veteran's Day services here at 11:00 a.m.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. received a letter from Turtle Creek COG on the vector program. It would be fiscally irresponsible for the COG to continue to supplement this program. The vector has been running a deficit for the past several years. COG is proposing a closed program participant format where the cost of operation would be split among the participants. For example, if the 2010 vector budget is \$60,000 and there were 8 towns participating the cost per town would be \$7,500 and would entitle each town 14 days of service. Second, if we can establish a closed program we are still facing the challenge of the age and condition of our existing truck. It would be fiscally irresponsible to continue to pour money into such an old vehicle. In 2009 we have spent \$15,437 in repairs. Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate any grant funding that would offset the expense of purchasing a truck. That would require a significant financial commitment from the participating towns. Recognizing the need to comply with the nine minimum controls established by the DEP, I hope that the vector program assists you with your compliance. Please contact the COG by December 1<sup>st</sup> with your thoughts or willingness to participate in the vector program.

MR. S. SHURGOT: I have been talking to John on finance and we cannot match the price if we divide it up by the towns. I asked him to put that figure in the sewer fund budget.

MR. J. THOMAS: I talked to a neighboring community about this and they told me they are going for it. If you bring someone in from out of town to clean the sewers you are going to pay a lot more money.

MR. M. TRKULA: in talking with the Public Works Foreman we would never use it for 14 days.

MR. J. THOMAS: I guess you could find time to use it. Normally we only use it two or three days.

MR. G. JAKUB: at the last COG meeting they, theoretically, what to purchase a new vector truck because this one is falling apart. Hopefully, by getting commitments from the members they may be able to purchase a new one.

M. TRKULA / K. PETERSON TO RECEIVE AND FILE. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 7-0.

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2. received an application for a handicap sign at 214 Third Street. All the necessary paper work has been submitted and everything is in order.

J. THOMAS / K. PETERSON TO GRANT A HANDICAP SIGN FOR 214 THIRD STREET.  
MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 7-0.

3. received a notice that the Allegheny County Borough's Association general membership meeting will be held on Thursday Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> at Churchill Valley Country Club.

K. PETERSON / S. SMITH ANY COUNCIL MEMBERS OR MAYOR MAY ATTEND AS WE HAVE DONE IN THE PAST. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 7-0.

4. received a renewal of the dog catcher contract for 2010 and 2011. There are no changes in the contract and the Solicitor is reviewing this.

G. JAKUB / J. THOMAS TO RENEW THE CONTRACT UPON REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY THE SOLICITOR. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 7-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC SAFETY - G. JAKUB: there will be a police meeting between North Versailles Township and Wilmerding Borough Council on Thursday Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. at North Versailles.

CHIEF J. COMUNALE: last month we had 201 calls, which were down, 24 citations and 4 parking tickets were issued. Last month there was a question brought up about a dog incident on Airbrake Avenue with the pit bulls. The dog officer took action already and both dogs, one resided in McKeesport and the other one resided in Turtle Creek, and both were at this house on Airbrake. Both were cited under Section 501, harboring a dangerous dog. Once that comes to the Magistrate it will be his decision on whether the dogs are dangerous based on the criteria.

MR. G. JAKUB: I will finish up the rest of my report. The Fire Department responded to 8 calls and 2 community details. Eastern Area responded to 51 calls for the month and their average response time for emergency calls was 6.1 minutes and for non emergency calls was 7.45 minutes.

CHIEF J. COMUNALE: Office Lasko and Sargent DiCenzo worked for free on Halloween night along with myself.

CODE ENFORCEMENT - D. MILLER: everyone has received a copy of my report. I will answer any questions that you may have.

PUBLIC WORKS - G. JAKUB: I have put some of our used equipment that we have no use for on Craig's List, the tar buggy and the leaf blower, for sale. I would like to put our pick up truck for sale. That would include the plow and the spreader. The value for the truck, with the equipment, is between \$7,000 and \$8,500. It is a 2001 truck with 47,000 miles on it. It also has a brand new bed on it and it has been rust proofed.



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MR. J. THOMAS: I would like to get more information on what this contract entails, how it works and everything else. What would the actual contract be. Do we pay them or do we still pay Duquesne Light.

MS. K. PETERSON: once you agree to this then they will send you the contract.

MR. J. THOMAS: I went on the PUC website and they are not listed as a broker.

MS. K. PETERSON: they are listed but it is a separate thing. We can table this until we get more info.

MR. J. FILIA: I will withdraw my motion and we can table this.

MS. S. SMITH: how did we get this proposal.

MS. K. PETERSON: I am working for the company and I asked them to see what they can save us.

MR. J. THOMAS: do you have any other municipalities in the area that have signed up for this.

MS. K. PETERSON: I am working with about 25 municipalities and school districts. There are about 5 that have signed up.

MS. S. SMITH: how long have you been working for them.

MS. K. PETERSON: about two months.

MS. S. SMITH: so would it be fair to say that we can contact the ones who have signed up to see how much they have saved.

SOLICITOR - N. EVASHAVIK: no report.

FINANCE - J. THOMAS:

J. THOMAS / S. SMITH TO PAY ALL THE APPROVED BILLS. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 7-0.

MR. J. THOMAS: I gave everyone a copy of the proposal from Maiello, Brungo and Maiello concerning the contract to collect our delinquent real estate tax and possibly our delinquent garbage. We sent a copy to our Solicitor and they reviewed it and there are a couple of items that they questioned. Between now and our next meeting, because I want to get this done before the end of the year so that we have somebody under contract, to try and resolve these issues and hopefully we will have a contract for our December meeting. I will have figures for the 2010 budget at our workshop on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

BOROUGH PROPERTY - M. TRKULA: do we have the funds to purchase a new leaf machine.

MR. J. THOMAS: not right now from what I see.

MR. J. FILIA: if we sell something then we may have some money for that.

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MR. G. JAKUB: we also met with East McKeesport and they are cooperative as far as public works. Past that, we can't get any answer from Council. They feel that they would be used if they offer services, such as the salt situation, so we will continue to do public aid between the departments. We are also going to meet with Wall on the same thing.

RECREATION - S. SMITH: a few items that we have coming up are Veteran's Day services here tomorrow starting at 11 a.m., light up night will be on Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m., the children's Christmas party will be on Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. at the Castle and we will be having a house decorating contest. Also, crime watch will be on Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. downstairs. We will be having the election of officers at this time.

PLANNING - K. PETERSON: we wanted to see if we can put some money into the budget for the Planning Commission for their website, attend some conferences and updating the zoning map.

MR. S. SHURGOT: before we go into old business I was remiss at the beginning of the meeting. For the record we met in executive session with the Police Chief prior to the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

MR. J. THOMAS: back in the October meeting we discussed, through the Engineer's office, that we had to set aside \$9,900 out of our sewer fund to purchase CSO alerts for our sewer system under the mandate.

J. THOMAS / G. JAKUB TO PURCHASE THE CSO ALERTS FROM OUR SEWER FUND ACCOUNT WITH PAYMENT TO BE DUE NEXT YEAR. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS

MR. M. TRKULA: we were looking at condemning the house at 418 Westinghouse Avenue.

M. TRKULA / J. FILIA TO START CONDEMNATION PROCEEDINGS FOR 418 WESTINGHOUSE AVENUE. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 7-0.

MR. J. FILIA: with all the truck problems we are having as they go into Wall, can we put up a sign at the end of the bridge that they have to make a left except for local deliveries.

MR. S. SHURGOT: Chief, what would be a local delivery weigh limit for the trucks to go to one of the businesses. We have to set a weight limit.

CHIEF J. COMUNALE: you have a weight limit already. But, you have a lot of trucks over the weight limit that make local deliveries on a daily basis.

MR. S. SHURGOT: what if the sign said right turn only for local deliveries, all other trucks must turn left.

K. PETERSON / G. JAKUB TO POST A SIGN FOR TRUCK TRAFFIC, LOCAL DELIVERY ONLY.

MR. M. TRKULA: Chief, is this going to work.

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CHIEF J. COMUNALE: in theory it is going to work the same way we have a weight limit on Greensburg Pike. We have trucks stuck on First Street on a weekly basis.

MR. S. SHURGOT: the next truck that comes over the bridge and make a right and gets stuck there and dumps hazardous material in to the sewer they will get cited. It will work once the word gets out, that is how I feel.

CHIEF J. COMUNALE: you have to watch how you word the sign.

MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 7-0.

MR. S. SHURGOT: I would like to address some issues that were going around from some of our public officials and business owners in town. One business owner sent a letter to the editor of the Daily News. To begin, I think that every Council Member here, who lives in Wilmerding, does take Wilmerding to heart. One of the things that we do not want to do is raise taxes. Unfortunately, with the amount of non profits growing, with the County buying up property and making them tax exempt, with the amount of increase in the police contract, whether we went with that contract or not, we would have that same cost. As a taxpayer, I would not want a tax increase, but being a realist, if we want Wilmerding to survive we are going to have to take some steps to do that. It is not any of Council's fault that in 1992 the Airbrake decided to leave town and took our biggest revenue, all our parking lots away. I took exception to that article and I just want it on record that Council studied every measure possible to avoid a tax increase. If there is an expert out there that can tell us how to come up with \$50,000 for the budget without doing that please see any Council Member or come to the workshop. The second issue I want to address is by an official in town that stated that Council goes to Seven Springs for this workshop to interact with different communities and get knowledge. Wilmerding Borough does not pay for any spouses or significant other to go to Seven Springs. The borough pays for Council Members only and if you take a quest that comes out of your own pocket. You can go see Mr. Hartzell to see the records. That is absurd for someone to say that who sits up here at meetings every month. The next issue, people in town, regardless of what certain officials tell you, we have elected to go with North Versailles Township. We cannot compete with the amount of police cars that service Wilmerding, we cannot compete with the service by having one officer in town, possibly for a higher cost than what we are getting. That rumor is totally false. I hope I am speaking for all of Council and I just wanted to clear the air.

MAYOR'S REMARKS - D. POMPOSELLI: I hope to see you all here tomorrow morning for the Veteran's Day services.

MR. G. JAKUB: one thing I forgot to mention. On the sale of the garage, the property is still listed as exempt. Do we have to make a change or can we address that to the County.

MR. N. EVASHAVIK: the borough would just need to notify the County Assessor's office.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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