

BOROUGH OF WILMERDING
MINUTES OF THE SEPT. 4, 2012 REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Sandra Smith at 7:45 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Vice President.

ROLL CALL: MICHAEL TRKULA, present; REV. DOROTHY REEVES, present; KAREN PETERSON, present; SANDRA SMITH, present; JOHN MASON, present; JOHN THOMAS, present; STEPHEN SHURGOT, absent. MAYOR DOMINIC PARISI was also present.

MS. S. SMITH: council met in executive session prior to the meeting to discuss personnel issues.

M. TRKULA / J. MASON TO ACCEPT TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 7, 2012 MEETING AS PRESENTED. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

PETITIONS & MEMORIALS

MRS. M. MEIGHAN - FOURTH STREET, NORTH VERSAILLES: I own several properties in Wilmerding and I had a question on the Code Enforcement Officer. In July my property at 101 Card Avenue had three pieces of aluminum siding blown off. The insurance adjuster came out on August 15th and it is now repaired. I received two letters that I was in violation of the property maintenance code and I had thirty day to correct the problem or I would be fined \$1,000 a day. I called every one on Council and also Mr. Miller about this. I did hear from the council members but Mr. Miller did not return my call. There are several other properties in town that are in worse condition and nothing has been done to them for years. Is Mr. Miller citing these property owners too. I feel that he is harassing me and that he is not enforcing the codes on these other properties. I have pictures here of those properties and as you can see they are overgrown with weeds and some of the windows are broken.

MS. S. SMITH: I talked to the other council members and the Mayor and we understand that this was a form letter and that there are certain guidelines that you would have to adhere to. I know that you had storm damage on the house. He cannot reach out to everyone before the letter is sent. We are going to ask to see the letter and look at the language.

MRS. M. MEIGHAN: part of the problem is that no one follows up on the other properties. You need to put some teeth into your ordinances and start citing the ones that neglect your letters.

MS. S. SMITH: some of those properties we cannot find the owners and eventually we have to tear them down.

MRS. M. MEIGHAN: under the right to know law can I see who Mr. Miller has taken to court.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: most of it.

MRS. M. MEIGHAN: I understand that East Pittsburgh also has Mr. Miller as their Code Officer and they are having the same problems that you are having.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: council can only establish ordinances that set fines, Mr. Miller cannot set the fine. He issues a citation for a hearing before the Magistrate and if found guilty the Magistrate sets the fine.

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MR. S. VOLPE, CARD AVE.: I had tenants move in and out at the end of the month and I tried to get Mr. Miller to inspect it. He sent me a notice that I was in violation of Ordinance 1007 and I felt threatened by the letter. I set up inspections on two properties and I told him to get in touch with the tenant to schedule the inspection. Also, six months ago I asked the Chief if he could do a drug bust on one of my properties. He told me that they were already looking at the property. I also received a letter that I was in violation of Ordinance 979 for not having an occupancy inspection done when my tenants moved in. He sent a threatening letter that I had two 979 violations. I told him to read what the procedure is on what he has to do.

MS. S. SMITH: we will address this with Louise.

MR. S. VOLPE: she does not leave the office so how can she what the property looks like.

MR. G. EVASHAVIK: you are right about Ordinance 979, there is a procedure that has to be followed.

MR. N. MCCARROLL, COMMERCE ST.: I just want to thank you for letting me work with the public works department this summer. I love this town and thank you for the opportunity you gave me. I want to talk about some issues with the street department.

MS. S. SMITH: we do not talk about personnel issues at a public meeting. I would be willing to meet with you in private to discuss these issues. See me after the meeting and we can set something up.

MRS. G. HENRY, WATKINS AVE.: I am concerned about the safety on Watkins Avenue. I live in the back house and I do not see any patrolling back there. There are people walking the streets all hours of the night. Is it possible that there could be more patrols behind Watkins Avenue.

CHIEF V. DiCENZO: I talked to the guys on night turn and they are going to make more patrols back there.

MRS. G. HENRY: one night I was walking home and I heard this dog barking like it was hurt. I did not see anyone around and I was concerned about it. I did not know the address of the house but I called the police and told them to check on the dog. I gave them my address and told them it was about two or three houses down from me. I saw them come past but they did not stop at that house. Someone told me that they heard my address over the scanner. I thought that you do not give any names and address out over the radio.

CHIEF V. DiCENZO: we do not give out any names and addresses unless the officer needs more information and needs to talk to the people who called it in.

MRS. S. ZIBRAT, AIRBRAKE AVE.: last month I told you about a garage door on Middle Avenue that is falling down and I called Louise about that. It has been four months and nothing has been done. It is in the 600 block of Middle Avenue.

MS. S. SMITH: Louise needs an address so that she came send the property owner a notice to repair the garage door.

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MRS. M. MEIGHAN: doesn't Mr. Miller attend these meetings. He has not been here the last three months. Shouldn't someone from the code office be here. It seems that all the complaints concern them .

MS. A. M. TUCKER, LYDIA STREET: at 244 Card Avenue the weeds and grass has been cut once this year. It is overgrown and I have complained to Louise about ths. Has any letter been sent out to the owner to cut the grass and weeds. Also, if you are coming down Commerce Street and there is a car parked in front of the fire department, you have to go halfway into the street to see if any cars are coming.

MR. J. THOMAS: I know where you are talking about and I will mention it to the fire department.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. received a letter from the fire department asking if they can move the Christmas decorations to the empty George Westinghouse Days office so they can store some spare gear and spare equipment in the old police office. Also, as you may know the fire department recently purchased a new squad that is being housed outside the downstairs garage. This is not an ideal situation due to the fact the squad needs to be plugged in for power and should be kept inside. Once the spare equipment and gear are moved to the back room then we will have enough space to park the squad inside the upstairs garage.

K. PETERSON / J. THOMAS TO GRANT THE FIRE DEPARTMENT PERMISSION TO MOVE THEIR SPARE GEAR AND EQUIPMENT TO THE BACK ROOM AND PUT THE SQUAD IN THE UPSTAIRS GARAGE. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC SAFETY - M. TRKULA: Eastern Area Ambulance responded to 57 calls in August and had an average response time for emergencies of 6.5 minutes and for non-emergencies 7.1 minutes. Of the 57 calls 38 were transports.

In August the fire department had 25 calls and they assisted other companies 13 times while being assisted by other companies 20 times.

Everyone has a copy of Dave Miller's report.

I would like to send a thank you to Chief DiCenzo and Officer Silvis for attending our night out while they were off duty. The Chief will now give us the police report.

CHIEF V. DiCENZO: On September 29th from 10 am to 2 pm we will be having a prescription take back. Anyone that has old prescriptions can turn them in at the recreation center.

For the month of August we responded to 211 calls and made 7 arrests. A brief summary of the calls are: 3 animal complaints, 2 assaults, 2 criminal mischief, 9 domestics, 3 drug investigations, 14 juvenile related calls, 4 parking complaints, 2 public intoxication, 8 suspicious activities, 3 suspicious persons, 5 terroristic threats and 4 traffic accidents.

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PUBLIC WORKS - J. MASON: on August 31st our summer workers were done.

The dump truck is in need of repairs. We can either fix it or look into getting another truck.

The salt bin was completed on August 31st and now the roof needs to be put on. We received two bids.

J. MASON / M. TRKULA TO ACCEPT THE LOW BID OF \$14,256 FROM SPERANZO CONSTRUCTION FOR THE ROOF. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

ENGINEER - D. GILLILAND: bids will be opened in September for the demolition of the following sites: 74 Morningside, 14 Sprague Street and 715 Airbrake (Middle).

Received two quotes for the sanitary sewer modification at Pitcairn and Caldwell. The low bid was from State Pipe in the amount of \$8,400. The other quote was from Insight Pipe Contracting for \$11,900.

J. THOMAS / REV. D. REEVES TO AWARD THE PROJECT TO STATE PIPE SERVICES FOR \$8,400 WITH THE MONEY COMING OUT OF THE SEWER FUND. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

COG REPORT - J. MASON: no report.

UTILITIES - REV. D. REEVES: no report

PLANNING - REV. D. REEVES: we are trying to get some help on cleaning up the creek. We met with representatives from Congressman Doyle's office and Senator Brewster's office to try and get some funding.

We are also working on our Strategic Plan for Wilmerding and some possible uses for the Castle.

SOLICITOR - G. EVASHAVIK: Mr. Doyle Mitchell has appealed Judge Luty's ruling and now we have to wait and see what the appellate court does.

Dave Miller issued 60 citations against the Allegheny County Housing Authority in an attempt to resolve some issues that have been ongoing. The hearing was postponed and they have agreed that they will do something with the doors on the apartments. We are still working on the occupancy permits and inspections for the apartments. The Housing Authority asked for more time.

While we were there Mr. Thomas Altman of 452 Airbrake Avenue plead guilty for failure to obtain an occupancy permit and rental license.

PERSONNEL - S. SMITH: we are going to be looking at making a Public Works Supervisor position. We would like to bring Brandon on but we can discuss this further at our workshop.

RECREATION - S. SMITH: we had more than 150 residents for our night out activities. Everyone enjoyed the entertainment which was provided by Lee Alverson. A lot of people and organizations donated their time to make is a success. It is always held the first Tuesday in August. I am requesting \$400 to cover the cost. It is a nationwide event and this is the 29th year. It started out as just turning on your porch light.

We will be discussing our next event which will be Halloween.

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FINANCE - J. THOMAS:

J. THOMAS / K. PETERSON TO PAY ALL THE APPROVED BILLS. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

MR. J. THOMAS: right now the real estate taxes are in the penalty phase and we are under budget. So far 94% of the taxes have been collected.

We received a proposal from Equitable Energy for the purchase of gas for one, two or three years. Since the price of gas is going down I think we should just go for the one year agreement. It would go from 10/1/12 to 9/30/13.

J. THOMAS / K. PETERSON TO GO WITH A ONE YEAR AGREEMENT FROM EQUITABLE ENERGY FOR THE PURCHASE OF NATURAL GAS. THE AGREEMENT WILL RUN FROM OCT. 1, 2012 TO SEPT. 30, 2013. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

At the August meeting we received a proposal from Code Enforcement Associates to review any plans. This will be on an as needed basis and it will not cost the borough any money. The people submitting the plans will pay the fee.

J. THOMAS / J. MASON TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL FROM CODE ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATES FOR PLAN REVIEWS ON AN AS NEEDED BASIS. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

TAX COLLECTION - J. THOMAS: since we made the conversion over to one tax collector for the earned income tax and the local services tax our revenue has gone up from what was collected in the past.

BOROUGH PROPERTY - K. PETERSON: we received two quotes for the Wilmerding Sign. Banks Electric was the low bidder at \$4,218.20. The other quote was from BC Electric for \$4,500.

K. PETERSON / REV. D. REEVES TO AWARD THE WILMERDING SIGN PROJECT TO BANKS ELECTRIC FOR \$4,218.20 WITH THE MONEY COMING FROM THE DUQUESNE LIGHT GRANT. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS

MS. S. SMITH: ROX Performance Academy wants to put a program on in the park on October 27th. We will grant them permission to do so and also we would like to make this an all day event. We will contact the churches and different organizations to see if they would like to participate. The borough can sell food and drinks for a fund raiser for our community days.

NEW BUSINESS

MR. M. TRKULA: we got some estimates to cut down some trees on Sprague Street that are growing into the houses. The low bid came from Doug Krusper Tree Service for \$650.

M. TRKULA / J. THOMAS TO AWARD THE PROJECT TO DOUG KRUSPER TREE SERVICE FOR THE REMOVAL OF TREES ON SPRAGUE STREET FOR \$650. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

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MAYOR'S REMARKS - D. PARISI: I would like to comment on concerns that Margaret Meighan has. I feel that Dave Miller should be more respectful of the property owners when he sends out letters.

The Night Out activities were very good and well attended.

I regret that I could not be at the workshop on August 20th. My wife was not feeling well and I had to take care of her. She is doing better and she is with me tonight. I would have liked to participate in that meeting with Compass that night and I hope to attend any future meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.