

REGULAR MEETING OF WELLSBORO BOROUGH COUNCIL
February 14, 2011

Council President Joan Hart called the regular monthly meeting of the Borough Council for the Borough of Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, to order with a quorum of six members present at 6:00 p.m., Monday, February 14, 2011 in the council room of the John E. Dugan Fire Station Municipal Building, 28 Crafton Street, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania.

PLEDGE TO FLAG- The pledge of allegiance to the American Flag was given by all present.

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

The following elected officials of the Borough of Wellsboro were present

Mayor James Daugherty

First Ward Council Member- Michael Wood

First Ward Council Member- Rudolf Scharf

First Ward Council President- Joan Hart

Second Ward Council Member- John Sticklin

Second Ward Council-Vice President- John E. Wheeler

Second Ward Council Member- Terry Bryant

APPOINTED OFFICIALS:

The following appointed officials of the Borough of Wellsboro were present

Superintendent of Public Works- Mark Dieffenbach

Superintendent of Water & Sewer Plants- Daniel Brought

Police Chief- Jim Bodine

Secretary/Treasurer- Susan Keck

Assistant Secretary- Florence Martino

PRESS:

Wellsboro Gazette- Natalie Kennedy

Williamsport Sun-Gazette- Bryan Robinson

VISITORS:

Dennis Phelps -10 Public Avenue Montrose James Paxson -7 Bache Street, Wellsboro

John Coleman – Caulkins Lane

Dale Pierce -10 Bache Street, Wellsboro

Kevin Connelly - 152 Main Street

MINUTES- Council Member Sticklin made a motion to approve the minutes for January 10th and January 24th 2011, seconded by Council Member Wheeler motion carried 6-0.

TREHAB PROPOSED 40 HOME DEVELOPMENT- Mr. Phelps informed the Borough Council, Trehab works in 6 counties and has had a work force and community program in Tioga County for the past 20 years. Approximately a year ago they met with the legislators of the northeast region; Representative Baker, Tina Picket, Sandra Major and other representatives to call their attention to the serious housing crisis in Tioga and Bradford Counties due to the gas well industry. It is our understanding that rents have tripled in these counties. Our Trehab board instructed me to design a strategic plan to address the housing crisis.

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At this time Trehab has a site in Susquehanna County, which is a 40-unit development, a site in Towanda for a 30-unit development, and a proposed 40 single-family home development in Wellsboro. The homes are a rent to own program where after 15 years or in some cases 10 years the families would be able to buy the homes. Our board has always worked very closely with Representative Baker and he is very excited about this possibility. The site is located on Greenwood Street.

Council Member Bryant said he is the realtor for Betty Niles so he would abstain from any of the voting. However he said Trehab has completed Step 1 at Harrisburg and has a lot of work to be done to complete Step 2 here. They had spoken with Mrs. Niles today on the environmental condition of the field.

Council Member Wood said the single family home development is an excellent idea, rather than row houses or duplex-type. Having the separate homes allows the families to have lawns and be able to care for their individual homes and gives more sense of pride. Member Wood said he has requested the police chief look into other developments that have been created to see what if any increase in crime in the areas and he can report on his findings.

Mr. Phelps said a family of two would have an income of approximately \$25,900.00; and the rent for a three bedroom would be \$580.00. There will be two and three bedroom homes. Mr. Phelps said in Sayre we pay full taxes however the taxes are high in North Towanda and we had to go back to the county and ask for an abatement based on what the project can pay. Mr. Phelps said he didn't think there would be a problem with the tax rate in Wellsboro, he didn't believe the rate was as high as in the Towanda area. Mr. Phelps said the projects are funded usually 30% by HUD and 70% by investors. The investors for this project are the Enterprise Group out of New York. The project will have full disclosure and will share financial records with the Council on how the project is going. They have a manager and maintenance people on site. They are a Social Service Agency, which does good for the community. We insist tenants pass a basic criminal check and also check for drug and alcohol problems. If we have any problems tenants are immediately removed.

Council Member Scharf asked if the houses would be assessed at the fair market value for each home or as one large development. Mr. Phelps said he was not sure how the taxes would be assessed. Mr. Phelps said once the ten or fifteen years was up and the homes were purchased then the tax would be assessed by the individual properties, but until then he thought it would be one parcel. Mr. Phelps said out of the 40 units two would be special or handicap people of lower income 50 to 60% poverty level and our program would work with the Housing Authority with these two homes.

Council Member Sticklin asked if the borough would maintain the development? Mr. Phelps said they would maintain it. Superintendent Dieffenbach said the Borough Engineer would need to explore the water/sewer issues in that area for a development of this kind.

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Secretary Keck asked Mr. Phelps what he needed from the Borough Council this evening. Mr. Phelps said if the Council would write a letter of support for the project. Council Member Wood made a motion to have Secretary Keck write a letter of support for the project; seconded by Council Member Sticklin motion passed 5-1 Council Member Bryant abstained from the vote.

BACHE STREET PARKING- Dale Pierce from Bache Street asked about the Parking problems on that street. Mr. Paxson was also attending this evenings meeting for this topic. Mr. Paxson said he had gone online and pulled up to borough ordinance for off street parking and the ordinance states for one or two family homes there should be 2 spaces per dwelling. Secretary Keck said the ordinance applied to new development it does not cover existing homes.

Council Member Bryant asked if there was a safety issue to be considered? Mr. Pierce said if a fire truck was needed at the end of Bache Street he thought it would have a difficult time going down Bache Street. Superintendent Dieffenbach said he had talked to Mr. Bliss concerning the one apartment home and Mr. Bliss said he would make off street parking.

Mr. Pierce said not only is the parking creating problems for the people living on the street but also for the borough crew. Mr. Pierce said the cars create a problem for the garbage truck as well as the snowplows. Mr. Pierce said the plow only does one side of the street. Council President Hart said the borough has an issue of parking all over town. Superintendent Dieffenbach said parking off the street breaks down the curbing and then it creates rutting between the sidewalk and street and it brings dirt out on the street. Council Member Wood made a recommendation for the Street Committee of Council, Public Works Superintendent, Police Chief and all of the residents of Bache Street have a meeting here at the borough office. Council President Hart asked the Street Committee to meet and report back to Council

MAYOR'S REPORT- SNOW REMOVAL STREETS & SIDEWALKS- Mayor Daugherty reported the snow removal is difficult this year with all of the vehicles parked on the streets. The department has started towing cars, which have been parked on Main & Crafton streets. Mayor Daugherty said the same people are not shoveling their sidewalks after a snowstorm.

CHIEF OF POLICE- SNOW REMOVAL- Chief Bodine informed the Council, Bacon Street is another street where the residents all park on the street. Chief Bodine said a lot of the tenants are leaving their cars parked and riding to work in the company truck. Chief Bodine said all of the driveways are single lane and the residents do not want to park one car behind another in the driveways. Property owners need to widen the driveways and create off street parking for the tenants.

JANUARY POLICE ACTIVITY- Chief Bodine reported the department has been extremely busy with a church break-in; two stolen vehicles, misdemeanors and DUI are both up.

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POLICE TRAINING- Chief Bodine reported he has one officer registered for a two-week training with the PA. State Police, in March, for commercial oversize loads. The legal updates have completed one week, with another week coming up in March. Chief Bodine reported he has been asked to join the cyber crime task force for the Tioga, Potter & Bradford area. He stated there is no other person in this area on the task force. This is a task force for Internet crimes against children.

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS- SIDEWALKS- Superintendent Dieffenbach said he wanted to say if residents had not cleared their sidewalks after each storm, this winter it froze and was too hard to remove. Superintendent Dieffenbach said the next four days are going to warm up and it will melt most of the ice and snow.

DEANE CENTER PROBLEMS- Superintendent Dieffenbach reported the crew needed to remove a section of sidewalk to resolve a problem; the building had three water services from 1967 going into the building. The fire line froze up on Friday and broke this morning we had to shut it off on the boulevard. Superintendent Dieffenbach said the building is now isolated and the new service will come in off from Water Street and Central Avenue.

CREW- Superintendent Dieffenbach said the crew has been working to get the broom ready for spring. Superintendent Dieffenbach said the broom is ten years old and they are refurbishing the main broom.

BEAM BREAK- Superintendent Dieffenbach said a beam broke on Main Street. Superintendent Dieffenbach said it's a cast iron main from Lincoln Street down to John's Service Center. Superintendent Dieffenbach said at this time it is protected under the curb line. However Superintendent Dieffenbach said if Penn DOT were to reduce the size of the boulevards this would be a concern. Council Member Bryant said if the long-range goal is to cut down the boulevards we need to replace the line. Mayor Daugherty said Penn DOT planned to increase the roadway by removing it from the sidewalk side of the road.

PLANT SUPERVISOR- PUMP TEST- Dan Brought reported he was working with Scott Bray and Geo Services getting the meters ready for the pump test.

APPLICATIONS- Dan Brought informed the Council; he was still accepting applications at the plant.

TRUCK TRAFFIC- Kevin Connelly addressed the letter to the editor this past week concerning truck traffic in Wellsboro. He asked if it were possible to curb the amount of truck traffic on the weekends, when most of the tourist would be in town? Council Member Bryant said he didn't think that wide loads were permitted on weekends. Chief Bodine said the two-week course, which the officer will be attending, would address this issue concerning the trucks in the borough. Chief Bodine said if a truck has a fuel tax sticker they are permitted to be on any highway.

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FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT-SEWER IMPROVEMENT ACCOUNT- Council Member Scharf informed the Council the Finance Committee had established a new PLGIT Sewer Improvement C. Reserve account and deposit \$20,000.00 from the Sewer Revenue account.

WATER EXPLORATION ACCOUNT- Council Member Scharf informed the Council the Finance Committee has also established a new Water Exploration account to keep the cost for the Keck Well and any other new water source expenses separated from the budgeted Water expenses. This account will be opened with a check we will receive from Principal in the amount of \$8,974.00. Secretary Keck said the amount from Principal was based on the stock value at the time Principal receives the letter so the amount may go up or down depending on the stock market.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT- RATIFY BILLS FOR 1/26TH, 2/2ND, 2/9TH – Council Member Sticklin made a motion to approve the bills as presented, seconded by Council Member Wood motion carried 6-0.

BOROUGH COUNCIL APPROVAL FOR ITEMS #2, #3 & #4 ON THE FINANCE REPORT DATED 2/11/11- Council Member Bryant made a motion to approve the request to establish a PLGIT Sewer Improvement C.R., 2nd establish a PLGIT Water Exploration Account and 3rd to establish a Capital Reserve for backhoe purchase, Council Member Wood seconded the motion, motion carried 6-0.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS- Secretary Keck informed the Borough Council of terms of office which have expired.

WELLSBORO MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY- Dennison Young's term has expired, Borough Council requested he be asked to serve another term.

WELLSBORO BOROUGH MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY- Council President Hart said there was one position opened and asked if any member of council would want to serve on the board? Secretary Keck said this committee is for a financing authority for the Nessmuk Lake. Council Member Scharf said he would serve.

WELLSBORO PARKING AUTHORITY- Secretary Keck said Phil Sweet is retiring. Jim Paxson said he had served on the committee at one time and would be willing to serve again. Jim Paxson said Doug McMichael might serve. Secretary Keck will contact Doug McMichael. Council Member Bryant said he would also serve on the committee.

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SHADE TREE COMMITTEE- Council President Hart asked if there were any objections to asking Vicki Fox to serve again, hearing no objections she would be contacted.

WELLSBORO CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION- Council President Hart asked if there were any objections to asking Ralph Salvadge to serve again, hearing no objections he will be contacted.

WELLSBORO PLANNING COMMISSION- Council President Hart stated Ron Comstock and Jim Prevost terms had expired and there was one open position on the commission. Council asked to have Ron Comstock and Jim Prevost contacted to serve another term. Council Member Bryant asked Kevin Connelly if he would be willing to serve on the commission.

ZONING HEARING BOARD- Council President Hart asked if there were any objections to asking Harland Crawford, Nina McCarthy and John Aronson to serve again, hearing no objections they would be contacted.

HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD- Borough Council President Hart said Shawn Forrest, Robert Williams are both off from the board and Toni Grabowski's term is expired. Council Member Bryant said he did not think Toni would serve another term. Council President Hart said she would serve on the HARB Board.

OUTDOOR WOOD BURNING ORDINANCE COMMITTEE- Council Member Scharf said Brian Meadows has moved from the community.

ELM STREET COMMITTEE- Secretary Keck said the money is not still available however hoping the funds will be available at a future date so would like to keep the board members.

MONTHLY CALENDAR- Council Member Bryant said Secretary Keck has created a monthly calendar of the meeting dates, which is a great help in knowing when there are meetings.

GRANT WRITING CONTRACT WITH DEB RUDY- Council Member Bryant said the Grants Committee had met with Deb Rudy and she could work ten hours a month for the Borough of Wellsboro, starting in March. Council Member Bryant said we now have the cost for the completion of the project. Council Member Wood said he was impressed by the grants she has gotten for other groups; she lives in the community and cares for the community. She knows what she is doing and what she is looking for with grants. Council Member Wood made a motion to sign the contract, seconded by Council Member Wheeler, motion passed 6-0.

CHAMBER REQUEST FOR LAUREL FESTIVAL EVENTS- Secretary Keck said the chamber is requesting permission to close the street on the 17th & 18th for the Laurel Festival Parade. They are also requesting the assistance of both the police and public works departments. They would like to use the borough garage from 5/28th through 6/22nd. Another request is for exclusive rights during the week of 6/12-20th to all "hucksters & vendors". Council Member Wheeler made a motion to approve the requests, seconded by Council Member Bryant, motion carried.

POLICE RETIREMENT PLAN AMENDMENT- Secretary Keck explained to the Council this amendment stated if an officer were killed in the line of duty the state not the

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municipality would carry the survivor liability. Council Member Sticklin made a motion to approve the amendment, seconded by Council Member Bryant, motion carried 6-0.

SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL- Council Member Sticklin said his and his neighbor's sidewalks are bare of snow. Council Member Sticklin said it is the same houses each storm; they don't shovel their walks. Council President Hart said they have notified some of the landlords and residents and they are working on the walks.

ENERGY COMMITTEE REPORT- Secretary Keck informed the Council the committee met and reviewed the quotes. Secretary Keck said the Swartz's Electrical quote was for \$6,209.00 and Kevin Borden's quote was \$7,200.00. She said Kaminski's had no response. Council Member Bryant made a motion to accept Swartz's bid, seconded by Council member Scharf, motion carried 6-0.

ADJOURNED 7:00 p.m.