

BOROUGH OF EAST GREENVILLE
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
December 21, 2016

Call to Order: Council Acting President Ms. Hunsinger called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Attendance: The following Council members were present: Joseph Arahill, Tracey Hunsinger, Robert McCluskie, Jennifer Moran, Ryan Pugh, Marita Thomson and Leon Steinert (via cell phone). Also present were Mayor Ryan Sloyer, Atty. Stephen Kramer, Solicitor, James Fry, Borough Manager, and Sharon Kachmar, Borough Secretary/Treasurer

Executive Session: Ms. Hunsinger announced that at 6:46 p.m. this evening an executive session was held to discuss pending litigation with police issues.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Ms. Thomson to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2016, meeting. Seconded by Mr. Pugh and unanimously approved.

Visitors: 10 visitors signed in; 13 were present.

Finance Committee: Ms. Thomson advised that the Planning Assistance Contract between Montgomery County Commissioners and the Borough was re-negotiated to keep the cost down. The three-year contract is for a total cost of \$42,777.00, of which half is subsidized by the county. In 2017, the Borough would pay \$3,528.00 in April and again in October. Mr. Fry was asked to describe to the newer council members what the Planning Commission does for the Borough under that contract. Mr. Fry advised that they review applications for land development and subdivisions, help with grant writing and historical preservations. They have recently worked on parking improvement studies and Main Street study as well as review applications for zoning variances that are received. The Borough has used their assistance for about 20 years. Ms. Thomson made a motion that they approve the 2017 through 2019 three-year contract with Montgomery County for planning assistance, seconded by Mr. Pugh. Roll call: Mr. McCluskie – aye, Mr. Pugh – aye, Ms. Thomson – aye, Ms. Hunsinger – aye, Mr. Arahill – aye, Ms. Moran – aye, Mr. Steinert – aye. Motion carries.

The proposed budget for 2017 was duly advertised for the 10-day public inspection period. The general fund budget includes a minor tax increase and taking a substantial amount of money from savings to balance the budget. Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve the budget advertised which includes Option 5, seconded by Mr. Pugh. Roll call: Mr. McCluskie – no, Mr. Pugh – aye, Ms. Thomson – aye, Ms. Hunsinger – no, Mr. Arahill – aye, Ms. Moran – aye, Mr. Steinert – aye. Motion carries.

Ms. Thomson clarified that a presentation was made at the last meeting and discussion about \$550,000 worth of savings. Right now the general fund savings is at \$415,000. Some of the total cash in the general fund is allocated for specific use such as the trash and recycling account and should not have been considered under general savings. A transfer of \$20,000 is needed to pay year end bills. She would like to start talking about the budget again in January. Ms. Thomson made a motion to pay the end of year bills, seconded by Mr. McCluskie. Roll call: Mr. McCluskie – aye, Mr. Pugh – aye, Ms. Thomson – aye, Ms. Hunsinger – aye, Mr. Arahill – aye, Ms. Moran – aye, Mr. Steinert – aye. Motion carries.

Public Comment:

Keith Gerhart, 143 Cherry Street, questioned whether glass would be taken as recycling in the new year. Ms. Thomson confirmed they would be taking the same glass as before and it can be comingled with other recyclables. Mr. Pugh said an informational notice about the changes is included with trash bundles for purchase.

Dan Moriarty, 238 Jefferson Street, expressed concern over water rates going up and asked why rates were twice that of Upper Hanover and Red Hill. He also felt that those who use more water are given a discounted rate. Ms. Thomson replied that Upper Hanover Water Authority rates are extremely low because they haven't made any improvements to their infrastructure, and they are working on a four-phase construction project which will raise their rates. The Borough is paying off a loan for the water main, dam, dredging, building improvements and water tower. Mr. Moriarty asked what balances are in the water fund and the justification for raising the rates. Ms. Thomson said there is currently \$465,000 in reserves for capital improvements. Mr. Fry said the water system needs to have a savings, and they anticipate using \$100,000 for sedimentation basin repair in 2017. Other plans for next year include upgrading security, maintenance on concrete and well piping modifications. Half of the utilities at the other Borough buildings and the truck loan are shared by the water fund. Mayor Sloyer added that Cowan Associates provided the Borough with a rate structure plan that addressed supporting the water mains, dam, water tower, maintenance building and backwash tank. Secondary lines will also need to be addressed in the near future. In the past the Borough has borrowed funds from the water side interest free in order to make the general fund solvent the first three months of the year. Ms. Hunsinger said she will have Mr. Steinert, Water Committee chair, review how the water rate structure is formatted. Mr. Fry added that the minimum which covers up to 3,000 gallons could be looked at as well. Mr. Fry stated that with EPA and DEP regulations, you need to be very careful in handling finances because of testing requirements. A reserve needs to be available to provide upgrades to the SCADA system, well pump modifications and unfunded mandates.

Eric Grubb, 138 Main Street, would like to see the Borough get out of the water business. Mr. Fry said that was looked at before, and Council would need to be very careful because the current general fund tax base wouldn't support what is paid for by the water fund.

Solicitor Items: Atty. Kramer presented the advertised ordinance fixing the tax rate for 2017 for approval. Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve Ordinance 2016-04 to establish tax rates for 2017, seconded by Mr. Pugh. Roll call: Mr. McCluskie – aye, Mr. Pugh – aye, Ms. Thomson – aye, Ms. Hunsinger – aye, Mr. Arahill – aye, Ms. Moran – aye, Mr. Steinert – aye. Motion carries. Mayor Sloyer exercised his right to veto the tax ordinance due to using money from savings, a tax increase and \$18,000 rollover from roads. A copy of his veto letter to Council is attached. Atty. Kramer advised that to override the veto, Council would need to entertain a motion and receive a majority of Council plus one, which is five votes. Mr. Pugh made a motion to override the Mayor's veto of the Tax Ordinance 2016-04, seconded by Ms. Moran. Roll call: Mr. McCluskie – aye, Mr. Pugh – aye, Ms. Thomson – aye, Ms. Hunsinger – aye, Mr. Arahill – aye, Ms. Moran – aye, Mr. Steinert – aye. Motion carries.

Atty. Kramer advised that the advertised resolution setting the fee schedule effective January 1, 2017, is ready for adoption. Mr. Pugh made a motion to approve Resolution 2016-13, seconded by Ms. Thomson. Roll call: Mr. McCluskie – aye, Mr. Pugh – aye, Ms. Thomson – aye, Ms. Hunsinger – aye, Mr. Arahill – aye, Ms. Moran – aye, Mr. Steinert – aye. Motion carries.

Atty. Kramer presented the advertised resolution to increase water usage rates effective 2017 for adoption. Mr. Pugh made a motion to approve Resolution 2016-14, seconded by Mr. McCluskie. Roll call: Mr. McCluskie – aye, Mr. Pugh – aye, Ms. Thomson – aye, Ms. Hunsinger – aye, Mr. Arahill – aye, Ms. Moran – aye, Mr. Steinert – aye. Motion carries.

Atty. Kramer presented the resolution appointing James Raftery as the Zoning Hearing Board alternate for adoption. Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve Resolution 2016-15. Seconded by Mr. Arahill and unanimously approved.

Other: Mayor Sloyer wished to address Council about parks and recreation. Comments were made from someone who said they would propose to Council that the clubhouse be sold if they became mayor. Mayor Sloyer said parks and recreation are not meant to be a money maker but rather an investment in the community to improve the quality of life. That property is used for recreation which is a preferred use over a housing development. An article in the Town and Country entitled *Linking Neighbor's in Need* states that according to the most recent census, East Greenville Borough has the second-highest poverty level in Montgomery County's 62 municipalities. The Borough needs to be careful how much they tax because the total amount of tax in the area will drive people away. The medium income is \$25,000 for females and \$35,000 for males according to the Upper Perk School District. Ms. Hunsinger added that East Greenville has the highest millage in the Upper Perkiomen Valley.


Keith Gerhart, 143 Cherry Street, asked if the 2017 Borough Council meeting dates were advertised. Sharon Kachmar confirmed they were advertised in the Town & Country on December 8, 2016.

Greta Harris, 232 Jefferson Street, received a solicitation for insurance on water pipes and asked about her responsibility for water pipes. Mr. Fry responded that piping from the home to the curb box is the homeowner's responsibility.

Motion to Adjourn: Being no further business, Ms. Thomson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Pugh. Motion unanimously approved and meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Ms. Hunsinger read a statement from Ed Buchinski thanking Mr. Fry and the Road Department for rapidly repairing several street lights that went faulty near the Grand. They are especially busy this time of year and it shows how well they are being taken care of by Mr. Fry and his crew. He expressed thanks for quickly addressing the problem.

Submitted by:


Sharon Kachmar, Borough Secretary

BOROUGH OF EAST GREENVILLE

206 Main Street

East Greenville, PA 18041

(215) 679-5194

December 21, 2016

Borough Council
East Greenville Borough

Re: 2017 Tax Ordinance Veto

My concern is the future sustainability to provide infrastructure improvements, maintain services (including police) and continue to improve the quality of life for all.

This Council is being fiscally irresponsible to the residents of East Greenville Borough with this budget and tax ordinance. The Council must address the way you are balancing the budget.

My concerns and reasons why I veto the ordinance/budget:

1. \$100,000 transfer from savings
2. 0.5 mil tax increase
3. \$18,000 rollover from roads

The Council needs to address the issues to balance the budget.

Sincerely,



Ryan Sloyer, Mayor