

Meeting Minutes of the Middletown Borough Council
January 19, 2016

A Regular Meeting of the Middletown Borough Council was called to order at 7 p.m. by Council President Benjamin Kapenstein. After the Pledge of Allegiance, the following Council members answered roll call: Anne Einhorn, Dawn Knull, Diana McGlone, Robert Reid, Ed Shull, Damon Suglia, Greg Wilsbach, and Benjamin Kapenstein. Also present were Mayor James H. Curry III. Robert Louer was not present.

Ratification of January 4, 2016 Action Items – All action items voted on by Council at the January 4, 2016 meeting were ratified.

Recess for Vacancy Board Meeting - Chairman of the Vacancy Board Earl Bright called the meeting to order and immediately asked for nominations to fill the vacant 3rd Ward Council seat. After nominations were closed, the only name put forth was Ed Shull. Ed was voted in unanimously by the Vacancy Board.

He was sworn in by Mayor James Curry and then took his seat as a functioning member of the Council.

Swearing in of Part-Time Police Officer – Mayor Curry administered the oath of office to part-time police officer Juan Castro.

Report on Executive Sessions - January 6 and 19, 2016 – An executive session was held January 6 for matters of personnel and labor relations. No action resulted from this session. An executive session was held January 19 for matters of personnel, labor relations, and litigation. The action item resulting from this session was to appoint Bruce Hamer as management advisor.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Robert Moyer, 176 Doe Run Road, Manheim introduced himself as codes officer.

Carol Nechemias, 314 Oak Hill Drive spoke about the feral cat problem occurring in town.

Rachelle Reid, 448 Grant Street asked council to advertise option meeting dates in case of cancellations.

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Debbie Rowe, 26 S. Union Street spoke about her concerns regarding the streetscape project.

David Grabuloff, 120 North Union Street, and Raymond Jones, 140 North Pine Street, both expressed their concerns on the effects of the proposed crematory on health, safety, and property values.

Michael Bowman, 100 Wilson Street stated he believed the Council should not have a meeting and the signed Residency Affidavits were untimely.

Resolution No. 639 - Appointment of Assistant Borough Secretary – **MOTION** by Greg Wilsbach, second by Dawn Knull to appoint Anne Einhorn as Interim Assistant Borough Secretary. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

Resolution No. 640 – Appointment of Signatories – **MOTION** by Damon Suglia, second by Greg Wilsbach to adopt Resolution No. 640, a Resolution to Appoint Signatories to Sign Checks. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

Resolution No. 641 – Participation and Voting by Telecommunications Device – **MOTION** by Damon Suglia, second by Anne Einhorn to adopt Resolution No. 641, a Resolution to Allow Participation and Voting By Telecommunications Device. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

Approve Contract with Emerald Data Solutions – **MOTION** by Anne Einhorn, second by Robert Reid to purchase Board Docs, a web based paperless agenda system. Motion defeated by a vote of 8 to 0.

Authorize Advertisement for Open Position of Zoning and Codes Official – **MOTION** by Diana McGlone, second by Greg Wilsbach to authorize advertisement for applicants for the open position of Zoning and Codes Official. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

Authorize Advertisement for Open Positions on Historical Restoration Commission – **MOTION** by Dawn Knull, second by Greg Wilsbach to authorize advertisement for applicants for three open positions on the Historical Restoration Commission. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

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Resolution No. 642 - Appointment of Management Advisor – **MOTION** by Greg Wilsbach, second by Damon Suglia to adopt Resolution No. 642, a Resolution Approving the Retention of a Management Advisor to Provide Certain Services to the Borough. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

Approval of Interim Role for Chief John Bey – **MOTION** by Robert Reid, second by Damon Suglia to designate Police Chief John Bey in an interim capacity to oversee Borough operations and to adjust his pay rate to \$82,000 per year retroactive to January 1, 2016. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

Feral Cat Complaint – Council spoke about the feral cat problem occurring in town and solutions to help resolve it. No action was taken.

Approve Abolishment of Code of Conduct – **MOTION** by Anne Einhorn, second by Greg Wilsbach to abolish the Borough Code of Conduct. Motion carried by a vote of 7 to 1 with Dawn Knull voting no.

Discussion on Electric Shutoff Policy – Council spoke about the electric shut off policy and expressed the need to re look at it.

General Public Comment

See above under public comment.

Approve Re-Establishment of Planning Commission – **MOTION** by Diana McGlone, second by Damon Suglia to re-establish a Borough Planning Commission. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

Approve Re-Advertisement for Human Relations Commission – **MOTION** by Anne Einhorn, second by Dawn Knull to authorize re-advertisement for a Human Relations Commission. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

Approve Withdrawal of Complaint Against Skarlatos and Zonarich – **MOTION** by Diana McGlone, second by Greg Wilsbach to authorize withdrawal of a complaint against the law firm of Skarlatos and Zonarich concerning the Electric Trust Fund. Motion carried by a vote of 8 to 0.

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Budget Workshop on Reopening 2016 Budget – A Budget Workshop commenced concerning reopening the 2016 budget. Discussion ensued resulting in the following possible changes to the 2016 budget adopted by the previous Council.

1. Include the \$725,000 concession payment from Suez in the General Fund.
2. No real estate tax increase.
3. A one cent per kilowatt increase in electric rates. Mark Morgan of Susquehanna Group Advisors indicated that along with the first payment from Suez a one cent increase in the electric rate could provide a slight surplus in the General Fund.
4. No contribution to the Middletown Borough Authority.
5. Eliminate the Director of Communications position.
6. Increase Advertising budget to \$10,000 in the General Fund.
7. Eliminate the Borough Secretary position.
8. Increase the Borough Manager salary by \$40,000 plus related taxes and benefits.
9. Add a new Director of Finance and Administration position
10. Eliminate the position of Contract Administrator to Suez for 9 months.
11. Increase Public Works Supervisor salary by \$20,000 plus benefits.
12. Add \$10,000 for contribution to the Olmsted Recreation Board
13. Add \$10,000 to cover contract with the Humane Society.
14. Add funding to re-establish a Borough Planning Commission.
15. Add Funding for a Management Advisor.
16. Increase Police Chief salary to \$82,000 per year.
17. Move Middletown Volunteer Fire Department contribution to fire section of the budget.
18. Rename Police Metro line item to Miscellaneous
19. Increase Public Works leave payout to \$30,000 from \$20,000.
20. Add funding for First Class Lineman.

Adjournment – There being no further business the meeting was declared adjourned.

Interim Assistant Borough Secretary