

BOROUGH OF EAST GREENVILLE
BOROUGH COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
March 20, 2017

Call to Order: Council President Ms. Hunsinger called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance: The following Council members were present: Joseph Arahill, Tracey Hunsinger, Robert McCluskie, Jennifer Moran, Michael Perlow, Ryan Pugh, and Marita Thomson. Absent: None. Also present were Mayor Ryan Sloyer, Atty. Kramer, Solicitor, James Fry, Borough Manager, and Sharon Kachmar, Borough Secretary/Treasurer.

Visitors: 30 visitors were present.

Ms. Hunsinger made a statement expressing her concern that council candidates had spread false information on social media about this meeting. The meeting was advertised in a local paper, posted on the Borough website, on the Borough Facebook page, as well as posted on the Borough doors. Special meetings have to be advertised 24 hours in advance, and this meeting was advertised four days in advance. This special meeting is to discuss a motion that would make the proposed police ordinance available for public review as well as to advertise the bid for the renovations needed to turn the Colonial Village clubhouse into a police station. This meeting is so that the public can be informed. The public will then have two weeks to review these agenda items before Council makes a final decision during the April meeting. With June 1st quickly approaching, Council may have special meetings to make sure progress is made to meet the deadline.

Police Committee:

Mr. Perlow asked Atty. Kramer to briefly go through the proposed ordinance to terminate the Borough's agreement with Pennsburg regarding participation in the UPPD and establish the East Greenville Borough Police Department. Atty. Kramer said the intent is to repeal the current chapter titled Police Services and create a new ordinance to establish a conventional department for the Borough of East Greenville. The Whereas preamble clauses give the intent and purpose of the ordinance, the first section deals with repealing and terminating and the second section, Chapter 14, is the new ordinance. This chapter includes creation of police force, appointment of police, powers of officers, badge and commencement. It is worded broadly for Council's discretion. Section 3 is the repealer, Section 4 deals with severability and Section 5 is the effective date. Mr. Perlow inquired about a budget for the department. Ms. Hunsinger said a budget and five-year projection was available to the public at a meeting last fall. Mr. Perlow asked if a budget for the department can be made part of the ordinance. Mayor Sloyer advised that the budget is a separate document; the ordinance governs the creating of the department and a budget is created for each calendar year. Mr. Perlow wanted to see affordability over the long term and asked if the budget can be placed on the Borough website.

Public Comment:

Kris Baccari, 1565 Markley Road, Upper Hanover Township, said he wants to see a real budget.

Mike Schwenk, 112 Jefferson Street, asked if it can be posted on the website by next Monday. Mayor Sloyer said it will be posted before the April meeting. Mr. Schwenk then asked if it can be posted by Wednesday. Mayor Sloyer said he will strive to have it posted by the end of the week.

Kathleen Bieler, 546 Washington Street, asked if it will be a comparative study or budget.

Jim Raftery, 319 State Street, said the budget was somewhat ambiguous. Mayor Sloyer advised it was based on the actual working budget for UPPD.

Chrystal Connolly, 425 Jefferson Street, asked the public to be clear if they are looking for budget numbers, startup numbers or operational numbers. Mr. Raftery said he is looking for quotes of startup costs since the department is not yet operational. Mr. Perlow added that it will be a work in progress and will evolve as numbers get more firm. He said Council is working to develop a longer range projection. Mr. Raftery asked Mr. Perlow if any companies were directly contacted and asked for estimates. Mr. Perlow said there are a number of initiatives going on right now to get a fairer view of the budget.

Eric Grubb, 138 Main Street, read a few sentences from the PA Borough Code and wanted to ask each Council person how they felt about a majority of residents signing their name in favor of not separating from the UPPD. Mr. McCluskie said he has not seen the petition yet. Atty. Kramer advised Council they didn't have to answer any questions during the public comment period. Ms. Hunsinger advised the petition will be on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting. Mr. Grubb handed out a paper to Council on the surcharge section of the Borough Code.

Kathleen Bieler, 546 Washington Street, said she is not sure how the police ordinance can be voted upon without a basic, sound financial projection. Ms. Hunsinger said there is a budget to start with, and they have made a projection for increases based on research that has been done. Ms. Bieler said she was told the \$5,000 to outfit an officer was not a realistic figure. Mayor Sloyer said that figure includes gun, taser, uniforms, badge, belt, and handcuffs. He added that those figures can be revisited.

John Dingler, 503 Jefferson Street, asked about looking at two different budgets, one with startup costs and one with operating costs. Ms. Hunsinger advised they will be working on getting them up on the website.

Jim Raftery, 319 State Street, asked if the budget will include quotes for estimates from several different companies. Mayor Sloyer said the cars, for example, are through the Costars program. The budget for car payments was based on one UPPD purchased last year.

Chrystal Connolly, 425 Jefferson Street, said she's done her own research, and her numbers come close to what she's seen from the Borough.

Ann Grubb, 138 Main Street, questioned Ms. Hunsinger's opening statement and that scare tactics were used. She claims residents are scared of having no more police on May 31st. Ms. Hunsinger explained she was speaking directly to what was posted on social media that Council was trying to hide the meeting, which was incorrect. This may have been because some are not aware of the procedures for advertising a public meeting, or they may have been trying to scare the public and portray Council as doing something illegal. Ms. Grubb asked if Council would consider comments on the proposed ordinance from residents before it's voted on and finalized. Ms. Hunsinger said they will consider specific concerns about the ordinance.

Derek Ritter, 115 Main Street, asked what kind of decision Council would make if bids for a police station at the clubhouse came in much higher. Mayor Sloyer said they looked at three options for a police station, Colonial Village clubhouse, the old fire house on Main Street or at Borough Hall and then using the clubhouse for Council meetings. The police committee recommends the clubhouse at an estimated cost of \$49,552 which includes a holding cell, security lockup, office, locker room and entrance way. The other option of Borough Hall renovations is estimated at \$30,000 with the old firehouse at almost \$100,000, but there is no room for growth at those sites. If bids came in higher, they would review other options. The estimates by Cowan Associates are detailed and include unit cost and quantities.

Kris Baccari, Upper Hanover Township, said that one way in and one way out could be a safety concern for officers at the clubhouse location, and they might want to consider another access.

Jim Raftery, 319 State Street, asked if two holding cells would be needed, one for male and one for female. Mayor Sloyer said it's no different than the current situation with UPPD; they would make an agreement with another station.

Mike Schwenk, 112 Jefferson Street, asked if extra attorney fees were budgeted for when Council is sued by the FOP.

Angie Fegely, 501 Third Street, had similar concerns as Mr. Baccari and reminded Council that the speed limit is 25 mph throughout Colonial Village. Mayor Sloyer said it is a concern, and it would be no different to how UPPD responds to calls in that area now. Ms. Hunsinger said most of the streets in town have a 25 mph speed limit. The officers will be patrolling and won't always respond from the clubhouse.

Derek Ritter, 115 Main Street, said he believes the best place for a police station is at Borough Hall. Lots of kids play in their front yards in the village and speed bumps might be a concern.

Jim Raftery, 319 State Street, believes there is an increase for potential disaster by having a police station in the village.

Seth Howard, Penn Street, Pennsburg Borough, said he never heard of the words scare tactics until this evening, and he didn't know of any attempts of one side to scare the other. He claims trash was thrown in his face.

Ms. Thomson made a motion to approve the advertising of the ordinance of the Borough of East Greenville for establishing a police department and withdrawing from the police services contract in the entirety with the Borough of Pennsburg, seconded by Mr. McCluskie. Roll call: Mr. McCluskie – aye, Mr. Pugh – no, Ms. Thomson – aye, Ms. Hunsinger – aye, Mr. Arahill – aye, Ms. Moran – no, Mr. Perlow - no. Motion carries 4-3.

Ms. Thomson made a motion to advertise for bids to renovate the Colonial Village clubhouse, seconded by Mr. McCluskie. Roll call: Mr. McCluskie – aye, Mr. Pugh – no, Ms. Thomson – aye, Ms. Hunsinger – aye, Mr. Arahill – aye, Ms. Moran – no, Mr. Perlow - no. Motion carries 4-3.

John Dingler, 503 Jefferson Street, told Ms. Hunsinger everyone should be chastised for speaking out of turn including Mayor Sloyer.

Motion to Adjourn: Being no further business, Ms. Thomson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. McCluskie. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Submitted by:



Sharon Kachmar, Borough Secretary