

A meeting of Portage Borough Council Committee of the Whole was held on Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Those in attendance were:

Sharon McCarthy  
Jerome Yetsko  
David Hayes

James Kissell  
John Morgan

George Wozniak  
Todd Learn

Also present were: Robert Koban, Borough Manager; Alexis Wozniak, Junior Council Member. Michelle Claar-Secretary.

**Visitors:**

In attendance were: Mr. Ron Portash with the Dispatch, Tim Longwill with Decoplan & Associates; Sharon Squillario, Kathy Hough, Dave Squillario with the PAJRC; Joe Beyers, Rick Nagy, Steve Lane with the PARPC, and Chris Troxell with the Portage Area Hockey Association.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. McCarthy called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., which was followed by a roll call with a quorum being present.

**Discussion on grant funding**

**A. Restroom Grant**

Mr. Longwill advised Council that he was not sure on the grant funding status for the restroom grant due to the State budget impasse. Mr. Longwill informed Council that he read in the Altoona Mirror that three grants were awarded but he did not find it on the DCED website. Portage was not one of those three. Mr. Koban commented that this could be a negative reflection on the State with announcing funding opportunities with no budget being passed. Mr. Longwill will research with DCNR as well.

**B. Hockey Rink**

Mr. Longwill informed Council that the DCNR grant funding opportunity for the Hockey Rink is due on April 13, 2016. Mr. Longwill attended a grant webinar earlier last month advising that the awarding of grants is now stricter with scoring, narratives, site plans, and budgetary figures, public involvement, projects that are shovel ready, future maintenance, and letters of support. Mr. Longwill provided the most recent checklist for Council to review that require additional information before grant submission. Council questioned if the Township Supervisors were notified of the meeting to which Ms. Claar advised she had e-mailed and called the office to advise them of this meeting. There were no Supervisors present for the meeting. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the following concerns:

- Site plans, ADA compliance, Design, and engineering costs, parking
- Commitments and support from various organizations and the Township
- Budgetary figures, local share of funds,
- Used equipment versus new equipment
- Maintenance of the rink with labor, management, and future goals
- Phases of the project
- Communication between Mr. Longwill, other organizations and municipal officials
- The four (4) year term of the grant
- The timeframe of grant submission only being six weeks by April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016
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Mr. Chris Troxell with the Portage Hockey Association arrived at this point in the meeting and provided additional details on the current status of the organization. The organization has fifteen committed board members, approx. 44 players, and a few from surrounding areas. There are currently 14 teams with 10 players to a team. Mr. Troxel commented that the organization currently has \$20,000.00 on hand, some donated equipment and backer boards, and some of the area has had the trees cleared out. Mr. Troxel apprised Council that the cost for a hockey rink could be in the neighborhood of \$150,000-\$450,000.00. Their next meeting will be held on Saturday at 10:00 a.m. at the Portage Library. Mr. Longwill recommended that a committee of volunteers be formed by all the organizations that he can address questions and obtain the proper answers.

Another lengthy discussion took place on a project manager and if a preliminary design could be completed. Mr. Koban questioned Council if they wanted to move forward with the project and grant funding. The PAHA, PAJRC, and PARPC have already advised they were on board with moving forward with the grant application and support for the project. It is unknown whether the Supervisors are in support of the project. Ms. McCarthy questioned Council on how they wanted to proceed.

ON MOTION OF MR. WOZNIAK, SECONDED BY MR. YETSKO, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED MOVING FORWARD WITH A PRELIMINARY PLAN BEING PREPARED BY MR. BEYERS AND NAMING THE EADS GROUP AS THE PROJECT MANAGER. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MAYOR KISSELL, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

After the discussion, Mr. Koban suggested having another meeting with the committee volunteers from the various organizations. Council discussed and agreed to meet on Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Claar will notify the various organization and contact the Portage Township Supervisors. Mr. Troxell advised that he will inform the board members and obtain a list volunteers for the committee at their Saturday morning meeting. Mr. Beyers will try to have a preliminary plan available for Council and Mr. Longwill to review.

### C.Park Manager

Mr. Koban informed Council that he spoke with Windber Recreation Director; Matt Grohal. Mr. Wozniak also commented on the structure and role that the Recreation Director plays within the organization. Mr. Koban explained that the Winder Municipal Authority was created for recreation and have their own exclusive powers. A lengthy discussion took place on several issues for a Park Manager/Director:

- Salaries and benefits
- Development of future recreation projects
- Hunting and fishing programs
- Swimming and tennis lessons
- Senior programs
- Kids programs
- Community Building and pavilions

Ms. Hough commented that several other area recreation centers have similar activities as Windber. Mr. Learn suggested that the Park Manager/Director would encompass all aspects pertaining to recreation, parks and the position could develop as it progresses. Another discussion was held on whether the Township Supervisors would support the position. Mr. Koban again advised Council that the Recreation Director; Matt Grohal would come to a meeting to discuss the position.

ON MOTION OF MR. YETSKO, SECONDED BY MR. KISSELL, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO HAVE MR. KOBAN CONTACT RECREATION DIRECTOR; MR. MATT GROHAL INVITING HIM TO MEET WITH ALL THE ORGANIZATIONS AND PORTAGE TOWNSHIP ON MONDAY, MARCH 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2016 AT 6:30 P.M. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MAYOR KISSELL, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Mr. Longwill advised that the Park Manager/Director could be included in a grant application. At this point,

ON MOTION OF MR. WOZNIAK, SECONDED BY MR. MORGAN, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MAYOR KISSELL, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

ON MOTION OF MR. KISSELL, SECONDED BY MR. WOZNIAK, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO GO OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION AND INTO THE REGULAR MEETING. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MAYOR KISSELL, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

##### **A. Gaunt Property**

The Gaunts are slowly moving forward with demolition due to inclement weather.

##### **B. Comcast Cable Update**

Mr. Koban advised that a meeting is scheduled with Comcast rep; Cheryl McCabe for Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. Council is encouraged to attend.

##### **C. Borough Building Roof Update**

Mr. Koban informed Council that e-mails were exchanged between himself, Mr. Wisor and Mr. Emerick concerning the performance bond for American Roofing. Mr. Macharola with Stiffler, McGraw sent several e-mails and letters to American Roofing; R.L. Abatement, and the insurance company with no movement of resolution. Mr. Koban commented that American Roofing performance bond could be in jeopardy and could possibly lead to litigation. Mr. Emerick is reviewing the performance bond for legalities and will discuss at the next regular meeting. To date, the Borough has not expended any funds to American Roofing. A discussion was held if it did happen to go to litigation and Mr. Koban advised that it will not be cheap. The burden of proof is on the Contractor; American Roofing. The issue will be on the March regular meeting agenda for discussion and possibly council action.

##### **D. Update on a proposed ordinance for renting to drug convicted individuals**

Mr. Koban commented on the article that Mr. Kissell provided prior to the meeting. The article that was published in the Tribune and the Mirror related to the Gallitzin Borough Ordinance for renting to drug convicted individual. The article concerned a single mother of three children. The mother is claiming discrimination and is now in civil court. Council agreed to keep the issue on the agenda to see how it plays out.

#### **BUILDINGS:**

- A. 907 Jefferson Avenue-moving forward with demolition.

- B. 933 Sonman Avenue-no update
- C. 612 Orchard Street-no update

## **2. New Business:**

### 1. Discussion on Property Maintenance Codes

Mr. Koban provided additional information on the document he presented to Council concerning property maintenance codes and whether there should be stricter codes or guidelines to the Borough's ordinance. Mr. Kissell commented that he was not in favor of implementing stricter guidelines and regulations to the residents. Mr. Koban commented that the borough ordinance is so vague relating to fighting blight within the community. The property maintenance codes address this issue and many more. Mr. Koban elaborated on the Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency program for the property maintenance codes; which in turn, adopts the International Property Maintenance Codes. Mr. Learn questioned the codes. Ms. Claar will e-mail Council the link to the International Property Maintenance Codes for Council to review. The issue will remain on the agenda for the March meeting.

### 2. Declaration of a disaster emergency

Cambria County Emergency Management sent notice they would be applying for federal and state assistance for declaring a disaster emergency for Cambria County due to the recent snow storm; Jonas.

ON MOTION OF MR. KISSELL, SECONDED BY MR. HAYES, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED RESOLUTION 2-2016 BY DECLARING A DISASTER EMERGENCY IN THE WAKE OF WINTER STORM JOANAS PURSUANT TO SECTION 7501 OF THE PA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES CODE. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MAYOR KISSELL, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

## **3. Paying of the Bills**

Ms. Claar presented a copy of the bills to be paid in written form.

ON MOTION OF MR. MORGAN, SECONDED BY MR. YETSKO, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO PAY THE BILLS AS PRESENTED IN WRITTEN FORM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$21,275.76. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MAYOR KISSELL, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Mr. Hayes questioned why there was Verizon Internet and phone bill for the Public Works Dept with the Borough having an agreement with Comcast. Mr. Koban explained that the Public Works Department is not included within the agreement and the cost for installing cable and phone were cheaper with Verizon.

## **GOOD OF THE BOROUGH**

Mr. Kissell commended the Public Works Department for all their efforts during the recent storm Jonas. Mr. Wozniak also commended all the efforts of the Fire Company, Cambria County EMA Director; Ron Springer and Allen Kline.

Mr. Kissell commended Mr. Wozniak for all his efforts put into the recent storm as well and his position as the Emergency Management Director for Portage Borough.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, ON MOTION OF MR. WOZNIAK, SECONDED BY MR. KISSELL, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:56 P.M.