

A meeting of Portage Borough Council Committee of the Whole was held on Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018, at 6:30 p.m.

Those in attendance were:

Sharon McCarthy	James Kissell	George Wozniak
David Hayes	Todd Learn	John Morgan
	Jerome Yetsko	

Also present were: Robert Koban, Borough Manager and Michelle Claar, Borough Secretary.

**Visitors:**

Ron Portash, Mainline Newspapers, Jean Kinley, Members of the Portage Area Joint Recreation Commission.

Mr. Koban provided an introduction to the Portage Area Joint Recreation Commission members of what this meeting was to accomplish. There was no representation from the Portage Area Hockey Association members. A lengthy discussion took place on the future of the ice hockey rink, set up/tear down, maintenance, usage, volunteers, and communication between all parties, including Portage Township. Several members of the PAJRC commented on several areas of concern and suggested installing the rink liner this year. Mr. Kissell suggested the first week in December to seek volunteers to assist in the labor and installation. Ms. Deb Shope advised that she would talk with her church fellowship group for volunteerism and community service. The issue will be further discussed at the December regular meeting.

In matters relating to the Restroom project, Mr. Koban asked the PAJRC members if they had any concerns/comments on the progress of the restrooms. Several concerns were the security, maintenance, and utilities. Mr. Squillario commented that it is a great addition to the park. Several members of the PAJRC also commented that they had sent several e-mails to the Portage Township Supervisors that have gone unanswered. Grant funding on previous attempts for the restroom project were unsuccessful. During the grant funding process, the local match consisted of the Borough and Township, each contributing \$8,000.00. Mr. Koban and the PAJRC members advised that they will be attending the next Portage Township meeting to discuss the issue with the Supervisors. Council thanked the PAJC members for attending the meeting.

Mr. Koban suggested addressing the new business agenda items first and unfinished business that have updates before reviewing the estimated 2019 budget.

Unfinished Business items A-L had no updates except for the emergency generator, under I. Under Buildings, there were no updates from A-J.

Mr. Koban commenced with the emergency generator and provided quotes from Lowes. There was a quote provided by Blair Auto in the amount of \$19,603.04. Lowes submitted their quote in the amount of \$ 25,000.00 that was a 48KW generator and included the pouring of a concrete pad. The main concern of Council is that the concrete pad is sub-contracted out to another contractor. Mr. Wozniak suggested researching the sub-contractor for work references and reputations. Council commented that they didn't want to repeat what happened to the borough building roof project that was sub-contracted out. Mr. Wozniak The other area of concern was whether or not the Portage Fire Dept would be splitting the costs with the Borough. The Fire Dept is in the process of purchasing property to construct a new hall. Mr. Koban informed Council that he will be meeting with the Fire Dept to discuss the emergency generator at the next building committee meeting. Mr. Koban also questioned Council if they would want to move forward with out without the Fire Department participation in the purchase. Mr. Learn questioned the timeframe

for the quotes to which Mr. Koban replied thirty days. The issue will be discussed further at the December regular meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### 1. Review of letters of interest for the real estate tax collector position

Ms. Claar provided Council with letters of interest she received for the borough real estate tax collector position. Six (6) letters of interest were received. Mr. Koban suggested a meet and greet for all candidates. Mr. Wozniak questioned the process and Mr. Koban advised that PA DCED has a real estate publication that can be presented to each candidate so they know what the responsibilities/duties are needed for the position. Mr. Koban also commented that the candidate would also have to take real estate certification classes and the position would be appointed for only one year, then they would have to petition the public so they could be on the ballot for the next municipal election. After a discussion, Council agreed to have the meet and greet on Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Koban informed Council that two members of the Water Authority met with him during his office hours last week to discuss some contentions between the board and borough council. Mr. Brent Kinley term expires at the end of year and seeking re-appointment. Mr. Koban informed the two members to come to a borough meeting to address their concerns between the two boards. Ms. McCarthy commented that these issues have been going on way too long and they need to be addressed. Council suggested inviting the Municipal Water Authority Board members to the same meeting on Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

ON MOTION OF MR. KISSELL, SECONDED BY MR. YETSKO, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE ADVERTISING OF A SPECIAL MEETING ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2018 WITH THE MUNICIPAL WATER AUTHORITY BOARD AND TO MEET WITH THE REAL ESTATE TAX COLLECTOR CANDIDATES. COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATELY WERE MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MR. KISSELL AND MS. MCCARTY. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

#### 3. Request from the Portage Area Planning Commission to obtain entrance keys

The Portage Area Planning Commission sent a request to obtain entrance keys to the Borough Building and Council chambers for the regular meetings. The Commission advised that they are considering meeting at least six times per year at the administration building and then six times at the Portage Township Building. In the past, the Commission obtained the keys to Council Chambers from the Borough Secretary but at times the entrance door was locked and they could not access the building. With the Sunshine Law, the Commission is planning on setting their 2019 meeting dates. Council and Mr. Koban were hesitant with having any organization having access to the building after hours and with Mr. Koban's office in council chambers. Mr. Koban advised that there are many confidential documents and paperwork on his desk and the Secretary's office leads from Council Chambers. Ms. Kinley commented on the room upstairs for Mr. Koban to have an office. Mr. Koban advised that it was not feasible. After a discussion among Council, Ms. McCarthy polled each member with a vote of 5-2 and denied the Portage Area Planning Commission request to obtain keys for entrance to the building.

#### 4. Request from WinterFest to close Main Street December 7<sup>th</sup>-8 and Conemaugh and Sonman Avenue for the festivities.

ON MOTION OF MR. HAYES, SECONDED BY MR. KISSELL, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE CLOSING OF MAIN STREET FROM 5:30 - 8:30 ON 12/7 AND 12/8/18 AT SERENKO-CLAAR FUNERAL HOME TO SUNOCO AND CLOSING OF CONEMAUGH AND SONMAN AVENUE BEFORE REX ALLEY. COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATELY WERE MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MR. KISSELL AND MS. MCCARTY. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

### **Paying of the Bills**

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

ON MOTION OF MR. HAYES, SECONDED BY MR. WOZNIAK, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED TO PAY THE BILLS IN WRITTEN FORM, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12,087.12. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MR. KISSELL, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

### **GOOD OF THE BOROUGH**

Ms. McCarthy commended Mr. Portash for the articles he writes for the community and the coverage of the Walter Mintus services.

Also commended by Borough Council was the efforts of Portage Women's Club for all their efforts during the year for each holiday. A special thanks was extended to Loraine Shedlock for making and placing the flower puffs on the telephone poles during the Walter Mintus services; Ed Hill for hanging the U.S. Flag on the side of his building, Valewood Farms, and the Portage Fire Department.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Review of the 2019 proposed budget for the General Fund, State Liquid Fuels, and the Capital Improvement Savings Fund.

As presented to Council before any adjustments, the General Fund revenues is estimated at \$881,414 and the expenditures are estimated at \$980,788. The fiscal impact is as follows:

#### **General Fund**

##### **A. Revenues**

- There is no projected increase in real estate tax millage and will remain the same at 17 mills. 16.5 borough and .5 general purpose. The assessed valuation decreased from \$14,657,720 to \$14,429,420 or \$228,300.00. The value of a mill went from \$14,657.72 to \$14,429.42 or (\$-228.30)
- EIT, LST, and Per Capita are consistent with 2018.
- Liquid Fuels decreased due to encumbrances in 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- Cable Franchise Fees was projected on the lower end due to subscriptions.
- State Aid and Foreign Fire is always revenue in and expended out at the same.

##### **B. Expenditures-**

##### **General Government**

- Council salary was increased by 25% in accordance with the Home Rule Charter every 4 years. Each meeting went from \$39.06 to \$48.83 per meeting. Ms. McCarthy suggested purchasing jackets for Council members and Mr. Wozniak commented that something should be done for the Junior Councilors as an incentive.

- Wages increased by 2% as presented to Council but Mr. Koban advised that it will be further address at the end.
- Hospitalization decreased for 2019 from \$890.75/mo to \$861.05/mo or \$29.70/mo. (\$356.40/yr)
- Auditing increased by \$500.00 for Kotzan & Associates. A 3-year agreement will be needed in 2020.
- Office Supplies increased for the purchase of a new color copier/printer. The current copier was purchased in 2008 and software is getting outdated.
- Donations estimated at \$3,200.00. Mr. Kissell recommended the Women's Club increase from \$100.00 to \$500.00 for 2019.
- All Tax Collection Fees and Commission remain consistent from 2018.
- The Municipal Building expenses also remain consistent from 2018.
- Borough Workers Compensation decreased in 2019 and binded with EMC
- Fire Company Workers Compensation decreased slightly in 2019 and is binded out State Workers Insurance Fund (SWIF)
- General Property and Liability Insurance decreased slightly in 2019 and is binded with EMC.

#### Public Safety

- Two (2%) presented to Council for each employee but to be discussed later in the meeting.
- Part Time Officers is estimated at 20/7 coverage and to provide at least 3,120 hours for 2019.
- Local and County hearings will be compensated at and hourly rate plus 1-hour travel time instead of a flat dollar amount in 2019.
- Full and part time officers will be compensation and time and half for any holiday that is worked in 2019.
- Hospitalization decreased in 2019 from \$437.89 to \$410.25 or \$27.64/mo
- Added a new line item for network wireless due to new laptop computers that have a scanner feature for drivers' licenses and citations that will be transmitted to the District Magistrate.

#### Solid Waste

- ❖ In 2019, the garbage collection remains the same in 2018 with the renewal of the Pro Disposal Agreement dated October 26, 2018.

#### Public Works

- Employees received a 2% wage increase but will be discussed later in the meeting.
- Seasonal employee remains the same in 2019 at \$5,500.00/yr.
- The Schedule B Part Time Employees was extended another level and the grade steps out to fifteen.
- Vehicle repairs includes the purchase of new tires for the skid steer.
- Capital Machinery consists of a 12,000 lb. vehicle lift for the trucks and other equipment for oil changes, etc.
- New Maintenance Building consists of installation of steel interior walls

#### Recreation

- ✓ The contribution remains the same as 2018 at \$7,255.00. Mr. Koban informed Council that the agreement should be re-visited with the Portage Area Joint Recreation, Portage Township Supervisors, and Portage Area School District in the new future. The rate is 2.75 per capita.

#### Community Development

- Continue to deposit ½ of EIT into Capital Savings Improvement Fund and remains consistent in 2019.

#### Debt Service

- Remains consistent in 2019. In December, 2019, the 2008 Truck and Equipment loan with First Summit will be paid off.

Mr. Koban highlighted the personnel changes he would like to amend in 2019 and suggested the following increases in wages.

Uniform Employees-Each officer working the holiday will get paid time and half

Uniform Employees-Hearings will be compensated at an hourly rate plus 1 hr. travel time, there will be no flat fee.

Compensation plan for Part Time Employees-Added another level and fifteen (15) pay grades.

Mr. Koban presented Council with a salary chart reflecting a 2% across the board cost of living adjustment (COLA) to the base compensation plan. Also provided was each employee with a 2% through 6% step increase and the financial impact. As council reviewed the chart, Mr. Koban recommended to Council to approve a 2% cost of living increase across the board and have each employee receive a 4% wage increase for a total of a 6% wage increase. Council agreed to go with the 2% cola and the 4% wage increase for all employees.

#### **State Liquid Fuels Fund**

As presented to Council, the Liquid Fuels Budget is at \$90,674.13 in estimated Revenues with expenditures totaling \$46,656.28. The fiscal impact is as follows:

##### A. Revenue

- The 2019 allocation from the State is consistent as in past years.

##### Expenditures

- There will be no paving program in 2019. The funds will be encumbered in 2019 to be used in 2020.
- All other remaining expenditures remain consistent in 2019.

#### **Capital Improvement Savings Fund**

As presented to Council, the Capital Improvement Savings Fund is at \$162,500.00 in estimated revenues with expenditures totaling \$232,839.00. The fiscal impact is as follows:

##### A. Revenues

- ✓ Continue to deposit ½ Earned Income Tax

##### Expenditures

- Continue to budget funds for blighted properties
- Administration building roof carried over to 2019 until resolved
- Main Street Phase II remained the same and carried over to 2019
- Park Restroom Project will be expended over a two-year period
- Completion of Sign inventory and data files remaining estimated costs
- Trout Run Stabilization Project carried over to 2019
- Main Street Phase III project budgeted at \$50,000.00

- In 2019, estimated \$20,000.00 for outdated Christmas lights and ground display.

There being no further business;

ON MOTION OF MR. HAYES, SECONDED BY MR. KISSELL, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. LEARN, MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, MR. KISSELL, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

The meeting concluded at 9:15 P.M.