

A Portage Borough Council Committee of the Whole meeting was held on Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

Those in attendance were:

Sharon McCarthy  
David Hayes

George Wozniak  
John Morgan

Jerome Yetsko

Also present were: Robert Koban, Borough Manager and Michelle Claar, Borough Secretary. Absent were James Kissell and Todd Learn.

Council met with Kami Lidwell who submitted a letter of interest for the Portage Area Planning Commission Board. At the end of the discussion, Council informed Kami that she will be notified when Council appoints for the remainder of a two-year term and a five-year term. Ms. McCarthy and Mr. Hayes suggested to Mrs. Lidwell that she might consider attending the next Planning Commission meeting at the Portage Township Municipal Building on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Council thanked Mrs. Lidwell for her willingness to serve on the board.

**Visitors:**

Ron Portash and Austin Feathers, Mainline Newspapers; Jean Kinley, Kami Lidwell

Mr. Koban suggested that Council move to agenda items that have updates and those requiring council action, then proceed to review the 2020 budget.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. Update on Recreation Peer Consultant-no update.
- B. Update on Borough Roof-No update
- C. Update on Trout Run Rehabilitation-successful on the grant funding with DCED.
- D. Update on PennDot Project on SR 164-PennDot is mapping out utilities
- E. Update on PennDot Multimodal for Main Street Phase II-There was no update
- F. Update on Main Street Improvements Phase IIIA with the Commonwealth Financing Authority-The Borough has awarded the grant on 11/14/19, in the amount of \$298,165.00.
- G. Update on Main Street Improvements Phase IIIA with PennDot MTF has not yet been awarded.
- H. Update on restrooms and Crichton McCormick Park-Mr. Koban advised that the retainer for Brickley Construction and Biter Electric be approved for payment. Brickley Construction in the amount of \$9,000 and Biter Electric in the amount of \$980.00.
- I. Update on Sonman Avenue Bridge-12-year plan- No update
- J. Mainline Trail Feasibility Study Phase-No update.
- K. Update on grant funding for Crichton McCormick park through DCNR and Frank Burns Office. Mr. Koban informed Council that Portage Borough was awarded the DCNR grant submitted by Mr. Frank Burns Office on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The grant amount is \$40,000.00 with the Borough and Township portion of \$10,000.00 each.
- L. Update on welcome signs-There was no update.

**Buildings**

- A. 933 Sonman Avenue Property (Greenawalt)-There was no update.
- B. 616 Dulancey Drive (Adams)-No update.
- C. Update on junk vehicles-work in progress.
- D. 828 North Railroad (Gaunts)-No update.
- E. 720 Orchard Street (Plummers)-There was no update.
- F. 406 Caldwell Avenue (Barclay)-There was no update.
- G. 925 Main Street (Lewis)-No update.
- H. 532 Dulancey Drive (Gaunts)-No update
- I. 1007 Conemaugh Avenue-demolition is complete.
- J. Update on fire damage at 1010 Jefferson (Quigley) and 1012 Jefferson (Seese)-No update

**New Business:**

- A. Approval to advertise in the Borough News and the PSAB website on-line for decorations. Mr. Koban informed Council that there were no bidders for the 22 Christmas pole decorations and suggested placing an ad in the Borough News magazine and the PSAB online website. The cost for the borough as a PSAM member would be \$125.00.

ON MOTION OF MR. MORGAN, SECONDED BY MR. YETSKO, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED TO ADVERTISE THE 22 CHRISTMAS POLE DECORATIONS IN THE BOROUGH NEWS AND THE PSAB WEBSITE, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$125.00. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

**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 \$28,571.33. VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, AND MS. MCCARTHY, MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Review of the 2020 General Fund, State Liquid Fuels, and Capital Improvement Funds.

Mr. Koban commenced with the General Fund first for the Revenues. Mr. Wozniak suggested reviewing those line items with a fiscal impact.

### **GENERAL FUND**

#### Revenue:

- The real estate assessed valuation in 2020 went from 14,429,420 to 14,36,430 resulting in a decrease of \$60,990.00. The value of a mill in 2019 was \$14,429.42 and in 2020 the value of a mill is \$14,368.43 with a decrease of \$-60.99.
- The Per Capita should increase in 2020 due to a revised 727 taxpayer additions to the per capita listing submitted to Cambria County.
- Earned Income tax of 1.5% will result in an increase for prior years averaging.
- The Cable TV Franchise fees proposed increase is a result of the new cable contract.
- The Marcellus Shale Impact Fee will decrease due to PA Supreme Court motion turning down stripper well impact fees.
- Workers Compensation Reimbursement for 2020 resulted in a decrease from the premiums being less. This reimbursement is for Portage Township and Cassandra Borough's portion for the Portage Volunteer Fire Company.
- County Liquid Fuels increase by \$7,100 in 2020 due to the 2019 allocation being encumbered until 2020 for the paving program.
- Solid Waste remains consistent with 2019 revenues
- Total impact in revenues for 2020 reflects an increase of \$24,378.00.

#### Expenses

##### General Fund

- ❖ Council remains the same in 2020 at \$48.83/per meeting. Per the Charter, Council salaries can be increased every 4 years, the last increase was in 2019.
- ❖ Borough Manager received a \$500.00/yr. increase.
- ❖ Secretary received a 2% COLA and a 2% grade increase per the 2020 Compensation Plan. The COLA was across the board.
- ❖ Longevity for 2020 increased by \$100.00 for 20 years of service. The amended lump sum payments will be incorporated in the 2020 Personnel Policy at \$350.00.
- ❖ Hospitalization increase in 2020 by 21.5% from \$890.75/mo to \$1,053.46/month or \$162.71/month.
- ❖ Auditing increased with the 3-year engagement letter with Kotzan CPA & Associates that was approved on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Year ending 2020-\$5,000; 2021-\$5,800; 2022-\$5,850.
- ❖ Office Supplies consist of a new desk, hutch, and chair \$2,500.00. Old desk is over 20 years old.
- ❖ Workers Compensation for the Portage Fire Company estimated at \$20,466.75.
- ❖ Workers Compensation for the Borough estimated at \$ 9,611.05.
- ❖ Commercial Liability Insurance estimated at \$ 26,895.47 based on 5% increase.
- ❖ Electric with Direct Energy will terminate on 12/31/19.

##### Public Safety

- Chief Miller and John Branick received a 4% wage increase in 2020 per separate agreement.
- Part time officers Maul and Vranich received a 2% COLA and 2% grade increase.
- New Part time officers starting wages increased from \$14.28 to \$14.87/hr.
- Opt-out of insurance increased due to Officer Branick not participating in boro plan.
- Hospitalization decreased in 2020 due to Officer Leyo resignation in 2019.
- Supplies will consist of 2 cases of ammo for qualification purposes.

### Solid Waste

- Solid Waste remains consistent with the past 3 years due to contract extended another year with the same prices to the residents: \$14.30/month for curbside service and \$31.00/pack pre-paid bags (10).

### Public Works

- The Public Works Director, Mechanic, and Laborer each received a 2% COLA and a 2% grade increase in accordance with the 2020 Compensation Plan.
- Hospitalization increased in 2020 with Scott Maul participating in the Borough health plan with UPMC. The premium in 2020 increased by 21.5% from \$458.57/mo to \$536.24/mo or \$77.67/month.
- Opt-Out decreased due to Scott Maul participating in boro health plan.
- Longevity increased in 2020 for Fran Steberger with 21 plus years to \$500.00. Longevity amendments will be incorporated into the Personnel Policy.
- Meter replacement will increase in 2020 due to a 3-year Meter Replacement Program of 24 meters with 8 spare batteries and 1 charger. The replacement program has 72 meters total.
- New Building Costs consist of a Security System and Cameras at the Public Works Building.
- County LFT Expenses increased by \$7,100.00 from the 2019 encumbrance of funds for the 2020 Street Resurfacing Program. The resurfacing program total cost is \$86,931 with \$72,731 allocated from the State Liquid Fuels and \$14,200.00 from the General Fund through County Aid.

### Community Development

- ✓ Continuance of the ½% of earned income tax to be deposited into the Capital Improvement Fund with an anticipated increase of \$2,500.00.
- ✓ The Grant Writer retainer with Decoplan & Associates will remain the same at \$200.00 per month.
- ✓ Portage Borough was awarded the DCNR Peer Grant for a Recreation Manager Study on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The total grant award amount is \$10,000.00 with a local match of \$1,000.00.

### Debt Service

- \* The Debt Service has decreased in 2020, with the 2008 Medium Truck/Equipment loan being paid off in 2019.
- \* The Public Works Department is in need of a backhoe. The proposed purchase of a new backhoe is estimated at \$104,963.10 with a trade in of the Case 621 BXT Wheel Loader (\$25,000.00) and the Kubota M59 Backhoe (\$28,500.00) for a total purchase price of \$51,463.10. The estimated loan amount of \$52,000.00 was calculated at 5% interest for five (5) years at a yearly payment of \$11,775.60 which will be equally split between the General Fund and the State Liquid Fuels Funds. The total General Fund yearly payment is estimated at \$5,888.00.

The total proposed budget for the General Fund in 2020 is estimated at \$1,016,424.00

### **STATE LIQUID FUELS FUND**

#### Revenue

- The estimated 2020 allocation had decreased from 2019 from \$89,994.13 to \$88,168.29 with a shortfall of (\$1,825.84).
- The estimated interest will remain the same at \$500.00.

- Reimbursement remain consistent in 2020 at \$180.00 for the shared Route 53 & Main Street Signal with Portage Township.

#### Expenses

- ❖ Equipment Purchases: The Public Works Department is in need of a backhoe. The proposed purchase of a new backhoe is estimated at \$104,963.10 with a trade in of the Case 621 BXT Wheel Loader (\$25,000.00) and the Kubota M59 Backhoe (\$28,500.00) for a total purchase price of \$51,463.10. The estimated loan amount of \$52,000.00 was calculated at 5% interest for five (5) years at a yearly payment of \$11,775.60 which will be equally split between the General Fund and the State Liquid Fuels Funds. The total General Fund yearly payment is estimated at \$5,888.00. The other loan payment split with the General Fund is the 2018 F550 Medium Truck at a yearly payment of \$7,539.00.
- ❖ Streetlights will remain consistent for 2020 at an estimated cost of \$16,000.00/year.
- ❖ There will be a 2020 Street Resurfacing Program for a total project cost of \$86,931.00 with \$72,731.00 from the State Liquid Fuels Fund and \$14,200.00 from the County Liquid Fuels in the General Fund. The street resurfacing program consists of the following:
  - Sonman Avenue from Cambria Street to Blair Street
  - Gillespie Avenue from Blair Street to the Bridge
  - Gillespie Avenue from the Bridge to Bedford Street
  - Washington Avenue from Lee Street to the top of the hill
  - Park Avenue from Grant Street to Lilac Alley.
  - South Railroad from Plaza Alley to Blair Street
- ❖ The total proposed budget for the State Liquid Fuels is estimated at \$127,883.56.

#### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND**

##### Revenue

- Estimated ½% from Earned Income Tax continues for 2020 in the amount of \$160,000.00.
- Estimated interest in the amount of \$3,200.00

##### Expenses

- Blighted/Demolition of properties include the demo of 828 North Railroad Street estimated at \$35,000.00.
- Main Street Phase II with PennDot estimated at \$2,500.00 for engineering and design.
- Proposed Crichton McCormick Park Improvements to include the paving of Monument Way entrance to the tank estimated at \$10,000.00.
- The Borough was awarded a grant on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 through the Commonwealth Financing Authority for the Main Street Phase 3A Project (East Side of Main Street) in the amount of \$298,165.00. The Borough's local share amount of \$127,786.00. Another grant application was submitted to PennDot Multi-Modal as another funding source for the same project in the amount of \$327,654. The grant funding has not yet been awarded.
- The Borough was awarded a grant through the PA DCNR for the Crichton McCormick Tennis Court project, submitted by Representative Frank Burns Office on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019, in the amount of \$40,000.00. The total project cost is \$60,000.00 with the Borough and Township matching \$10,000.00 each.
- On September 17, 2019, The Borough was awarded a grant through the PA DCED Commonwealth Financing Authority for the Trout Run Flood Protection Project in the amount of \$499,800.00. The local match for the project is 93,625.00. The project will

take place over a two (2) year period for an estimated cost of \$30,000.00 for engineering and design in 2020 and \$63,625.00 for construction in 2021.

- On April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Borough Council approved a letter of support in the amount of \$5,000.00 to the Allegheny Ridge Corporation for the Mainline Trail Feasibility study. In 2019, \$926.00 was paid thus far with the balance of \$4,074.00 to be budgeted in 2020.
  
- An anticipated grant application for Main Street Phase 3B for the West Side (Dollar General) of Main Street, in the project amount of \$327,654.00. The local match amount is 30% or \$98,296.50 over two years. Engineering and design are budgeted for \$2,500.00 in 2020. The balance of the project match; construction costs will conclude in 2021, in the amount of \$95,796.50.
  
- The total proposed capital improvements project for 2020 is estimated at \$297,860.00.

### **GOOD OF THE BOROUGH**

Winterfest is scheduled for December 13<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

There being no further business;

ON MOTION OF MR. MORGAN, SECONDED BY MR. WOZNIAK, COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO ADJOURN. COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. MORGAN, MR. YETSKO, MR. WOZNIAK, MR. HAYES, AND MS. MCCARTHY. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

The meeting concluded at 8:45 P.M.