

**MINUTES
BOROUGH OF GREENCASTLE
COUNCIL MEETING
December 4, 2017
7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Robert Eberly, Council President Frank Webster, Jr., Council Members Charles Eckstine, Larry Faight, James Farley, Duane Kinzer, Craig Myers, and Matthew Smith. Also present were Borough Manager Eden Ratliff and Borough Secretary Ericka Faight.

Mayor Eberly gave the invocation and led the meeting in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

Manager Ratliff announced that the meeting would be audio recorded.

Budget Presentation

Council Member Eckstine gave an overview of the proposed 2018 budget. Discussion was held on the following topics:

Tuition Reimbursement

The 2018 budget proposed tuition reimbursement of \$10,109 for two years to the Borough Manager, the money is only being budgeted and Council would have to approve the expenditure in 2018, in addition the Borough Manager would be required to continue employment with the Borough for one and a half years for every one year of schooling that the Borough reimburses tuition.

Bud O'Mara, a member of the GAFCWA, discussed that the Borough pays for training for other employees, and paying for the Manager's continued education should be looked at the same, and that education is important and worthwhile.

Council Member Eckstine noted that Mr. Ratliff also secured approx. \$200,000 in grant funding, and to have that kind of talent is valuable, and that top level staff is valuable. Council Member Faight asked the manager how he found out about the grant opportunities and Mr. Ratliff explained that the county sends out notices of available grant money.

Mark Divelbiss, a member of the GAFCWA, asked when the employment commitment would begin and Council Member Smith replied that it would begin when Mr. Ratliff started school.

Nancy Piefer, 42 E Franklin Street, asked Mr. Ratliff degrees he already holds.

Clock Tower Renovation

The request for these funds were removed after an anonymous donor pledged a donation to cover the cost of the project.

Wade Burkholder asked if the donation covered a total renovation of the tower or would it just address the immediately needed repairs because he was going to form a committee to raise the funds. Mr. Ratliff responded that the donation would cover the cost of the total renovation. Council Member Kinzer thanked Mr. Burkholder and the donor.

Steve Miller added that the Borough needs to stay in control of the project and should have a contract in place and asked if the donor would be willing to concede that the appearance and design be left up to the Borough. Mr. Ratliff stated that the details have not been worked out, but the Borough would be in charge in of the project.

Wage Increase

Mr. Ratliff explained the proposed wage increases for those employees receiving more than the standard proposed 3% raise. Mr. Eckstine noted that some of those employees are also taking on a bigger work load.

Health Care Contribution

Mr. Ratliff explained that the employee contribution to health care would raise from 15% to 40%.

Additional Part-time Officer Shifts

Council recommended the addition of 3 part-time officer shifts per week.

Police Chief Salary

An adjustment was proposed for the Police Chief's salary.

Proposal to eliminate the K-9 unit

A proposal was presented to eliminate the K-9 unit effective January 1, 2018 to free up hours that are currently being used for training and paid time off for the handler, those hours would then be used as patrol hours.

Mr. Faight asked why this was being addressed gain and Mr. Eckstine responded that he is looking to add hours of patrol time.

Wade Burkholder asked why the hours have not been questioned before and isn't Rony potentially a life saver. Mr. Eckstine stated that patrol hours are the driving force.

Mr. Faight asked Officer Russell to describe a recent incident in which Rony was utilized in a bar brawl, and Officer Russell replied that he probably would have been hospitalized if Rony had not been present.

Ken Peifer stated that this is a vendetta against the police department and that the elimination of the K9 program was not even discussed at the previous budget meeting, and the police budget is the only depart that Council is looking to cut.

Mr. Ratliff explained to Council that the K9 program does not need to be decided right now and it is not a major factor in the budget because the money will still be spent. Mr. Ratliff also suggested that Council consider asking the public what they want.

Mr. Myers questioned the ongoing yearly donations that are made without any discussion by Council.

Mr. Smith stated that he didn't want to balance the budget on the backs of the community.

Mr. Myers questioned engineering costs and suggested that the Borough look at bidding the services out. Mr. Myers also discussed the amount of money that has been spent on snow removal and fuel costs.

Mr. Kinzer stated that although it is a sore subject, he blames the engineer for the curb and sidewalk issues on Williamson Avenue.

Ben Thomas gave an overview and encouraged Council to adopt the preliminary budget, stating that this is the eleventh hour. Mr. Thomas made the following encouragements to Council

- Look at a two year plan for personnel budgeting.
- Investigate leasing a phone system.
- Thanked the anonymous donor who pledged the funds needed to repair the clock tower.
- If Council adopts a budget for three full time officers and the hiring of additional part-time officers, it should be reconsidered mid-year to see if any qualified part-time candidates have been found.
- Look at capital improvement 10 year plan.
- Negotiate trash service.
- Road maintenance cost sharing between funds.
- Commended the Borough's healthy Pension funds.
- Request to consider securing the offices for employee safety.
- Stated that eliminating the K9 unit does not aid public or officer safety, and asked Council to remove it from the agenda.

Mr. Miller restated his request to have the alleys that are budgeted for repaving be identified. Mr. Ratliff stated that alley paving projects will be presented to the committee and Council prior to any work being done.

Mr. Ratliff gave an overview of the proposed sewer budget and stated that the authority has not been saving for future projects and has been relying on rate revenue to function. The 19% increase will still leave sewer rates at the lowest in the area. The Authority's loan matures in five years and then that money can be allocated to saving for capital improvements.

Mr. Myers asked what percentage of customers use the minimum amount billed and Mr. Ratliff responded that nearly half of the customers do not use the minimum. Mr. Myers stated that we are constantly asking residents to pay for something they don't use and Mr. Ratliff explained that there has been no preparation for future capital improvements. Mr. Myers stated that we could have been going down this road for years and Mr. Farley stated that this is a result of delaying upgrades and equipment purchases to save money.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes of previous meetings:

On an Eckstine/Smith motion, Council voted unanimously to approve the Borough Council Meeting Minutes of October 2, 2017 and November 6, 2017.

REGULAR AGENDA

Report of Disbursement and Payment of Bills

On a Faight/Farley motion Council voted to approve the November 2017 Disbursement Report in the amount of \$253,383.53.

Reports from Elected Officials

President's Report

President Webster wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and thank Mr. Eckstine for his 24 years of service on Council.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Eberly shared that he is looking forward to January and expressed his displeasure with the interaction between some Council members during the last couple of years and encouraged Council members to speak their mind, take a vote, and then go along with the decision that is made. Mayor Eberly stated that this the best police department that he has ever been associated with, and his time here has been enjoyable.

Police Chief Phillippy thanked Mayor Eberly for his service and acknowledged that he has worn several hats over the years including Mayor, boss, and friend. Chief Phillippy wished him well in his future endeavors.

Manager's Report

Mr. Ratliff stated that is important for government to be transparent, and thanked everyone for their continued support.

Reports from Committees

A. Administration & Finance:

1. On an Eckstine/Kinzer motion, Council voted unanimously to adopt and authorize advertisement of the preliminary 2018 municipal budget.

2. On a Faight/Smith motion, Council voted unanimously to authorize advertisement of a tax ordinance reflecting a tax rate of 15 mills.
3. On a Faight/Farley motion, Council voted unanimously to authorize advertisement of an ordinance increasing sewer rates to \$8.60 per 1,000 gallons.
4. On a Myers/Smith motion, Council voted unanimously to approve T. Byers invoice #13687 in the amount of \$54,526.00 for N. Carlisle St. sewer line replacement project.
5. On a Kinzer/Farley motion, (Mr. Faight Abstained) Council voted unanimously to authorize the disbursement of the annual Christmas bonus in the amount of \$100.00 to fulltime employees and \$50.00 to part time employees.
6. On a Myers/Faight motion, Council voted unanimously to approve the 2018 Meeting Schedule.
7. On a Faight/Smith motion, Council voted unanimously to approve the 2018 Holiday Schedule.

B. Personnel:

C. Public Safety:

1. On a Kinzer/Faight motion, Council voted unanimously to authorize the Council President to sign an ordinance amending Chapter 190 of the Code of the Borough entitled "Vehicles and Traffic" eliminating parking in certain sections on the east side of S. Carlisle St.

D. Public Facilities:

1. On a Farley/Smith motion, Council voted unanimously to adopt a revised version of the Concrete Curb and Sidewalk Specifications revised October 2, 2017 as recommended by the Public Facilities Committee to be effective January 1, 2018.

E. Community Development:

1. On a Kinzer/Faight motion, Council voted unanimously to adopt a resolution opting out of allowing Category 4 casinos to operate in the Borough of Greencastle at the recommendation of the Community Development Committee.

F. Correspondence:

Reports from Council Members

Mr. Kinzer thanked Mayor Eberly and Mr. Eckstine for their years of service and acknowledged the various departments and committees for all their hard work on the budget preparation. Mr. Kinzer also wished everyone a Happy Holiday Season.

Mr. Faight told Mayor Eberly that he has enjoyed the bantering between them over the years and wished him well, he acknowledged that sometimes it is frustrating, but it is also a joy serving on Council and wished everyone a Merry Christmas. Mr. Faight also congratulated the HR/Finance manager on her recent marriage.

Mr. Myers said the he hoped Mr. Eckstine's impression of him has changed over the years and thanked Mayor Eberly for all the life lessons he has learned from him while on Council. Mr. Myers also wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Mr. Eckstine told Mr. Myers that although there were things that needed talked through, he felt Mr. Myers has come a long way and thanked him for his service.

Council voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ericka Faight
Borough Secretary