

January 10, 2017

The regular meeting of the Council of the Borough of Minersville was held January 10, 2017 in the Council Chambers, North Delaware Avenue and East Carbon Street. Mr. Angelo opened the meeting with The Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance:

The following Council members attended the January 2017 meeting: Mr. William Angelo, Council President; Mr. Jamie Kuehn, Council Vice-President; Ms. Katielyn Milbrandt, Mrs. Jennifer Beach, Mr. Paul Vuksta, Mr. Walter Miscavage; Mr. Ian Mahal; Mackenzie Cullen, Junior Council; Rebecca Daukaus, Junior Council; Mayor Joseph Post; Solicitor Albert Evans; Robert Mahalchick, Borough Manager; Police Chief Michael Combs; Kyle Crouse, Code Enforcement Officer and Eric Eichenberg, Fire Marshall. Seven Council members were present which created a quorum.

Mr. Miscavage made a motion approving the December meeting Minutes. Mr. Mahal seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Miscavage made a motion, second by Mr. Mr. Mahal to approve the Officers Reports. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Miscavage made a motion to approve the bills as presented. Ms. Milbrandt seconded the motion. The motion passed as presented.

Citizens' Comments:

Mr. Chris Swolinsky thanked Mr. Vuksta for his help with plowing in the borough. Mr. Swolinsky then proceeded to express his displeasure at the recent 4mill tax increase, blaming needless spending on the increase. Mr. Miscavage questioned what Mr. Swolinsky would do differently, explaining that health care has increased and the aging infrastructure needs to be addressed. Mr. Vuksta explained that buying the property on Penn Street for the Street Department was necessary due to fumes released into the Borough Office and stated the excessive cost of a pole building to house the department.

Pam Smith, 220 Oak Street suggested fund raising as an alternative to raising taxes. Solicitor Evans explained that the Borough Code does not allow for fundraisers. On the issue of money spent to repair the pool, Mr. Mahal defended the spending, as the pool is an investment in the town. Mr. Kuehn did list events that were held and planned in the past, such as Movie Night at the Recreation Complex and a Chili Cook-off. Mr. Miscavage stated there were no people interested in running the events. Monica Raczka stated she has been attending meetings for ten years and never heard about a chili cook-off. Mr. Kuehn stated that we use our Community Newsletter to advertise events. Mrs.

Raczka questioned Entech's cost to prepare plans for the Borough Building. Mr. Mahal explained that there were five different plans presented by Entech and he believed the cost to prepare the plans was \$5,000 to \$7,000. Mrs. Raczka questioned if the Dollar store was in the flood plane. Mr. Angelo responded that the Dollar Store moved their up so it is not in the flood plane. Mr. Angelo and Mr. Vuksta both stated that delinquent taxes were an important issue in raising taxes. For 2016, more than \$90,000 is owed in delinquent municipality taxes.

Melissa Mitchell, 400 North Delaware Avenue expressed her concern of the tax increase on the elderly citizens. She also expressed her hope that the police presence will not be cut. Mr. Mahal responded that we are not cutting the police force.

Mr. Swolinsky questioned the progress of a contract with the Police Department. Mr. Miscavage replied that we are in arbitration. In response to Mr. Swolinsky accusation that Council and the officers cannot get along, Mr. Kuehn explained that the Chairman of the Law and Order Committee changes every two years.

Communications:

A letter was received from the Gratz Bank informing the Borough of its recent decision to transfer its Trust business to Fidelity Bank. Mr. James O'Brien will remain at the Minersville location in the Fidelity Bank Wealth Management position.

Old Business:

Appointments to Authorities are as follows-

Ms. Milbrandt made a motion to appoint Michael Andruchek to the Municipal Authority, second by Mr. Kuehn. The Mayor vetoed the appointment. A roll call vote was held with Mr. Andruchek's appointment being unanimous.

Ms. Milbrandt made a motion, second by Mr. Kuehn to appoint Richard DiBiase to the Sewer Authority, The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Vuksta made a motion to appoint Eric Eichenberg to the Planning Commission, second by Mrs. Beach. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Vuksta made a motion, second by Mr. Kuehn to appoint Don Cuff to the UCC Appeals Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kuehn made a motion, second by Mrs. Beach to appoint Jim Kimmel to the Vacancy Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kuehn made a motion, second by Mr. Mahal to approve the 2017 Tax Levy Ordinance #321 following the second reading. The motion passed unanimously.

The creation of a Zoning Board by the ARRO Group was tabled.

Mrs. Beach made a motion to hire Mr. Dave Motuk as a Street Department employee, following the interviewing of thirteen candidates. Mr. Miscavage seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The quotes for work to be done to the Penn Street building were tabled until next month.

New Business:

Mr. Vuksta made a motion, second by Mrs. Beach to approve changes to the health care insurance and employee handbook to include domestic partners. The motion passed unanimously.

The renewal of the Security Agreement with Select Security for the Street Department building was approved.

The first reading of Ordinance #322 pertaining to changes in parking of Front Street was held.

Mr. Miscavage reminded the Council that Borough employees cannot undermine the authority of their employer in a public forum.

Mr. Mahal made a motion, second by Mr. Miscavage to hire Zach Malis as a patrolman at a salary of \$38500, subject to change following arbitration. The motion passed as presented.

Unfinished Business:

The lease agreement with the Lions Charities for the Senior Center was tabled.

The Pavilion Lease extension with the Lions Club was tabled.

The Minersville Little League's request for financial help with the fireworks was tabled.

Solicitor Evans stated that he has sent the School District Solicitor a letter on the back taxes owed on the former Legion property.

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The property at 246 Laurel Street owned by John Morris, who requested the Borough take ownership, is in terrible condition and needs to be demolished. Solicitor Evans will research if it is beneficial for the Borough to take ownership. Mr. Mahalchick will consult with the owner of the neighboring property to see if there is interest in obtaining the property.

Mr. Mahalchick shared the Code Enforcement Officer's report for 2016.

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Miscavage made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Milbrandt seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Gloria Capik