

BOROUGH OF WILMERDING
MINUTES OF THE JUNE 2, 2009 REGULAR MEETING OF BOROUGH COUNCIL

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by President S. Shurgot.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the President.

ROLL CALL: M. TRKULA, absent; J. FILIA, present; K. PETERSON, absent; S. SMITH, present; G. JAKUB, present; J. THOMAS, present; S. SHURGOT, present.
MAYOR D. POMPOSELLI was also present.

G. JAKUB / S. SMITH TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 4, 2009 MEETING AS PRESENTED. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 5-0.

PETITIONS & MEMORIALS

MRS. J. TOMASIC, WESTINGHOUSE AVE.: the house at 418 Westinghouse Avenue is a total disaster. The weeds on the sidewalk are about three feet high and the parade tomorrow is going right past it and the reviewing stand is only a couple of feet away. The last time I asked about this I was told it that you couldn't go on it because it was private property. Now the three taxing bodies own it through sheriff sale and there is a rat problem. As part owners of that property the weeds need to be cut. What are you going to do with this. I thought this was on the list to be condemned.

MR. S. SHURGOT: you are saying that the house is unsanitary and poses a health hazard.

MRS. J. TOMASIC: yes.

MR. S. SHURGOT: with her statement we have the right to go on private property and cut the grass and weeds since it is a health hazard.

MRS. S. ZIBRAT, AIRBRAKE AVE.: what is the status of the houses that were supposed to be demolished.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we were just awarded grants to tear down two houses, one at 10-14 Morningside and 38 Sprague Street. The money is expected to be released in late July or early August. We still have money left from the grant and we are going to talk to the contractor to see if there are other properties that we can do.

MRS. S. ZIBRAT: is there anything about the building on Middle Avenue.

MR. D. MILLER: I looked at that property and it is in bad shape.

MRS. S. ZIBRAT: not only that, but there are ground hogs and rodents in there.

MR. D. PARISI, WESTINGHOUSE AVE.: I would like to comment on what Joyce brought up too. Being that we are having the Westinghouse parade tomorrow, and being that is where there is the most congregation of people, it is an eyesore and embarrassment to the borough. Can our borough workers go over there and cut they weeds there and make it presentable.

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MR. S. SHURGOT: we have instructed our workers to go over there and cut the weeds tomorrow.

MR. D. PARISI: I would like to take this opportunity to compliment the Mayor for being in attendance at the Memorial Day services and all members of Council. I also want to compliment Sandy for all the work that she did. It was a tremendous showing. The crowd was exceptionally large this time. Also, since Wall Borough does not have services any more, I would suggest that maybe Council would consider starting at 8:30 am or 9:00 am.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. received a letter from the Wilmerding Fire Department asking Council to accept two new members, Emily Hartzell and Richard Oddo.

MR. G. JAKUB: I believe that we already accepted them.

MR. J. THOMAS: I thought so too. I don't know why she sent that up.

G. JAKUB / J. THOMAS TO RECEIVE AND FILE. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 5-0.

2. received a request for a handicap sign for 514-A Middle Avenue. He has submitted all of the paper work and everything is in order.

MS. S. SMITH: is there space available there.

MR. J. THOMAS: the 500 block of Middle Avenue is not that bad because you have parking on both sides of the street. I don't see a problem with that.

J. THOMAS / S. SMITH TO GRANT A HANDICAP SIGN FOR 514-A MIDDLE AVE. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 5-0.

3. received a request for a handicap sign at 107 Middle Avenue. She has submitted all of the paper work and everything is in order.

MR. J. THOMAS: this is in the area we are contemplating making angle parking. Can we put this on hold for a month or so until we get the angle parking put in.

MS. S. SMITH: if you look at the drawing the engineer gave us on the angle parking, the space in front of 107 Middle Avenue has ample space for someone with a disability because that is the last parking spot.

G. JAKUB / S. SMITH TO APPROVE THE HANDICAP PARKING SPACE PENDING THE INSTALLATION OF ANGLE PARKING. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 5-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC SAFETY - G. JAKUB: Eastern Area Ambulance responded to 40 calls for the month of May with an average response time for emergency calls 5.09 minutes and non-emergency calls 8.17 minutes.

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FIRE MARSHAL - D. MILLER: went to 112 State Street to check the condition of the property and a letter will be sent to the owner to clean up the property and advise him of the poor condition of the building. Performed occupancy inspections at 315 Patton Street, 209 Welsh Avenue and 207 1/2 Locust Way. Met with Chief Comunale concerning code enforcement citations. He call Judge Barner and the Judge advised him that he will only hear the cases and side with Wilmerding if a certified letter is sent to the defendant concerning the ordinance violation prior to issuing the citations. Rode around the borough and documented over 30 addresses for high grass and weeds. A list was given to Amy to send out letters. Nothing was done to correct the front porch roof at 434 Airbrake Avenue so a citation will be issued for the front porch roof. A certified letter was already sent. The following addresses will be receiving certified letters due to the condition of the buildings; 428 Airbrake Avenue, 715 Middle Avenue, 14 Sprague Street, 18 Sprague Street and 38 Sprague Street. There are also two on Welsh Avenue that I need the addresses for. Spoke to Amy and one last letter will be sent out to all landlords that have delinquent rental agreements.

POLICE REPORT - CHIEF J. COMUNALE: for the month of May we had a total of 284 police actions and 195 actual calls. There were 27 citations and 2 parking tickets issued. I think I told you a couple of months ago that there was an ongoing effort to rid the town of undesirables. That effort has started and there are several houses that have already been eradicated. I want to make one comment on the handicap parking spots. When people move or go into a nursing home they have to let you know so that you can remove that sign. As far as rodents are concerned, I don't know what is going on this year, but we have had about 75 to 80 racoon calls. I talked to the Health Department and they informed me that this area has been baited for rabies and they are harmless.

K. PETERSON ENTERED COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT 7:45 P.M. AND WAS RECOGNIZED BY THE CHAIR.

CHIEF J. COMUNALE: the posting for the parade route will be done early tomorrow morning. Two officers have volunteered their time for the parade and two will be paid by the George Westinghouse Festival.

MR. S. SHURGOT: the ambulance was asked by the Y to stand by for a 5k race on Saturday morning. Is that true. If so, where is the race going with the Wall bridge being closed and the main drag closed.

CHIEF J. COMUNALE: it is starting at the Y and going down Caldwell the wrong way, then down Station Street and over the bridge down Middle Avenue to Second Street, and then it will come up Airbrake and come back over the bridge down Station Street to Caldwell Avenue and end at the Y.

MRS. S. ZIBRAT: I don't know if you are aware of this or not, but John Palumbo told us that he saw a fight going on at the playground on Airbrake between girls and boys.

CHIEF J. COMUNALE: unfortunately it is happening nationwide. They are putting it on You Tube. I don't know why they do it but it is an ongoing this and it is happening nationwide.

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CODE ENFORCEMENT: collected \$12,134 in rental license and as of May 31st collected \$9,026.11 in delinquent garbage.

G. JAKUB / J. THOMAS TO CHANGE THE TITLE FROM CODE ENFORCEMENT CLERICAL TO CODE OFFICIAL SO THAT SHE CAN WRITE CITATIONS. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

MR. J. CERESA, SPRAGUE STREET: I have a question on code enforcement. Is she just going to sit in the office and issue citations or is she going to be patrolling.

MR. S. SHURGOT: the street department will patrol and they will submit a list to her to send out letters and citations. Mr. Miller, our Fire Marshal, is going to class next week to become our Building Code Official

MR. J. CERESA: another issue I have is the parking lot across from my house. I am asking for permission to improve that parking lot. The houses are worth nothing if you can't park your car there. When my neighbor moved in she took fifty-five feet of the parking lot for two cars and left me thirty feet for my three cars. The house next to me has roses that are so tall that they are on the porch roof. There are trees mixed in with the hedges and they are twenty feet tall.

MR. S. SHURGOT: Jim, you have to meet with our Code Officer, he is the one who is going to have to help you.

MR. J. CERESA: what about help to improve the parking lot.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we believe that the property is owned by the Redevelopment Authority. You would need to send a letter to the county and ask their permission.

MR. N. EVASHAVIK: the borough can't grant you permission to improve anyone's property that does not belong to them.

MR. G. JAKUB: what are you looking for.

MR. J. CERESA: some help from the street department to put the material down in specific places.

MR. J. THOMAS: I am going to go on line and see who owns the property. I will take a ride up there and look at it. I know where he put the other shavings.

PUBLIC WORKS - J. THOMAS: we are going to have the vac truck out here next week to clean up some sewers. The sweeper truck was out here last week and it is coming back again this week. On the summer workers I would like to hire another person to be our third person on the street department.

J. THOMAS / J. FILIA TO HIRE MICHAEL JAKUB AS A SUMMER WORKER AT A RATE OF \$7.15 AN HOUR. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 5-0-1 WITH G. JAKUB ABSTAINING.

COG REPORT - G. JAKUB: the demolition bids were opened on May 28th and the low bidder was W&J Contracting at \$13,150 for the demolition of 10-14 Morningside and 38 Sprague Street.

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G. JAKUB / S. SMITH TO AWARD THE BID TO W&J CONTRACTING, AFTER THE ENGINEER AND SOLICITOR REVIEW THE BID TO MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS IN ORDER, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$13,150 FOR DEMOLITION OF 10-14 MORNINGSIDE AND 38 SPRAGUE ST. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

ENGINEER'S REPORT - D. GILLILAND:

1. PennDOT has not yet set a date to advertise the Safe Route to Schools Project.
2. The grant for the Phase II Walking Trail expires on December 31, 2010. We have applied for a CD36 grant to match the DCNR funds.
3. We are still waiting for approval of the CD35 Significant Deficiency Sewer Repair Grant using stimulus money. Plans and specifications are ready to advertise once approval is received.
4. CD36 Pre-Applications have been turned into COG for the following projects: catch basins, demolition of the Y bleachers, demolition, Ice Plant Hill retaining wall, step reconstruction, street reconstruction (Westinghouse and Avenue U), YMCA Basketball Court and the Phase II Walking Trail.

UTILITIES: there was discussion about switching the phone service.

G. JAKUB / J. THOMAS TO SWITCH PHONE SERVICE FROM ONE COMMUNICATIONS TO COMCAST. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

SOLICITOR - N. EVASHAVIK: we have prepared an ordinance providing for an amendment to the occupancy ordinances: amending provisions of Ordinances #737 and #835 codified under Chapter Four, Part 3 and amending fees.

G. JAKUB / J. FILIA TO ADVERTISE THE ORDINANCE AMENDING PROVISIONS OF ORDINANCES #737 AND #835, CONCERNING OCCUPANCY. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

FINANCE - J. THOMAS:

J. THOMAS / K. PETERSON TO PAY ALL THE APPROVED BILLS. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

J. THOMAS / J. FILIA TO CHANGE THE LINE ITEM FOR THE PART TIME WAGES TO COINCIDE WITH THE FULL TIME LABORER WAGES SO THAT THERE IS STILL \$5,800 STILL AVAILABLE FOR THE SUMMER HELPERS. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

BOROUGH PROPERTY: no report.

RECREATION - S. SMITH: we had a great turnout for Memorial Day Services.

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PLANNING - K. PETERSON: since Jim Filia resigned from the Zoning Board that leaves a vacancy that needs to be filled.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we can ask around to see if anyone is interested and also post a sign in the borough building.

MS. K. PETERSON: the Planning Commission also wants to know if they can get a copy of the code book.

MR. S. SHURGOT: all of the books are out. They can look at the website for all of our ordinances.

MS. K. PETERSON: we were also talking about specific areas in our town that are historic and some of the houses owe back taxes and garbage. Is there anyway that we can take over the property that are so run down and are hazardous.

MR. S. SHURGOT: what are we going to do with the property. We have no money to rehabilitate them.

MS. K. PETERSON: I talked to people in other borough's and they are getting grant money to do this. There are grants available all the time. There must be some way that we can apply for some money to rehabilitate these building, especially the ones in an historic area.

MR. G. JAKUB: the problem with some of the grant money is that places that are under Act 47 are at the top of the list.

MR. S. SHURGOT: I don't think we want to be property owners. We talked in a workshop to see if there were any community groups in town that were interested in taking over these properties.

MS. K. PETERSON: if you are able to get grant money and fix the property then you can sell it for a profit.

MR. S. SHURGOT: if you have any idea where we can get those grants I will take you up on your offer.

MS. S. SMITH: you would need someone to monitor that property until the project is completed.

MR. D. GILLILAND: it is a separate body that applies for the grants and fixes the properties up, not the borough.

MR. N. EVASHAVIK: the borough cannot go on private property except to abate a nuisance. The other issue is back taxes and liens on the property.

MS. K. PETERSON: we haven't decided on when the next meeting will be.

OLD BUSINESS

None

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NEW BUSINESS

MS. S. SMITH: this week is the George Westinghouse Days and with all the economic cut backs they are struggling to make ends meet. I would like to propose that the people that did not go to Seven Springs that we afford the George Westinghouse Days more help with the money that we budgeted for the conference. I would like to give them another \$500.

MR. G. JAKUB: do we have an idea of what is left in that line item.

MR. S. SHURGOT: I believe that there is more than that left for that line item.

S. SMITH / G. JAKUB TO DONATE \$500 TO THE GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE DAYS FESTIVAL.
MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

MS. S. SMITH: when I attended the Women's Civic Club dinner I met the new director from the Y and he is all about community work. He is proposing a program one day a week for our children who have nothing to do. They also have problems cutting the grass up there.

S. SMITH / K. PETERSON FOR THE BOROUGH TO CONTINUE TO CUT THE GRASS AT THE Y
BALLFIELD ON A REGULAR BASIS. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we also talked in our workshop about a request from the Y about removing the tennis courts for additional parking for them. We talked about sending the school district a letter stating that we are in agreement with the Y to use the tennis courts for additional parking and that our Engineer has reviewed their plans and he sees no problem with parking cars there.

MR. G. JAKUB: do we want to set some guidelines as we discussed about fencing that area off so cars do not go onto the field.

MR. S. SHURGOT: I think what we are saying is that we are in agreement with the Y to do the tennis courts. As I understand it, the letter to the school district would state that the Y has approached Council to use the tennis courts for additional parking.

S. SMITH / J. FILIA TO SEND A LETTER TO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT STATING THAT THE
BOROUGH IS WILLING TO LET THE Y USE THE TENNIS COURTS FOR ADDITIONAL PARKING.
MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

MR. J. FILIA: I want to talk about the parking in the 100 block of Westinghouse Avenue. It seems that there are people that park there all day. I want to propose that we make the parking in the 100 block of Westinghouse Avenue, the east and west side, one hour parking.

MR. G. JAKUB: I don't know about one hour.

MR. J. FILIA: in the workshop I talked about thirty minutes. I would like to have it at thirty minutes but I was advised against it.

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MR. G. JAKUB: I would put it for thirty minutes only for the reason that if you put it for an hour they will be there an hour and a half. At thirty minutes we can move them along.

J. FILIA / G. JAKUB TO MAKE THE PARKING IN THE 100 BLOCK OF WESTINGHOUSE AVENUE THIRTY MINUTES ON THE EAST AND WEST SIDES OF THE STREET.

MAYOR D. POMPOSELLI: do I have the power to veto it.

MR. N. EVASHAVIK: no.

MAYOR D. POMPOSELLI: why.

MR. N. EVASHAVIK: I don't think that you can veto a parking issue. The only thing that you can veto is an ordinance.

MR. S. SHURGOT: if he veto's something he has so many days to put it in writing. The solicitor would then review it to see if it stands.

MAYOR D. POMPOSELLI: I just wanted to make sure. I am not in favor of it because it has been that way for fifty years and it is a bad move for the business people. The people that park there overnight live around there.

MR. J. FILIA: for anybody that lives there, they live above Johnny's, and there is parking on the side street and in the 200 block of Westinghouse.

MR. S. SHURGOT: we do not have the right to grant anybody a parking space in front of their house and if they have a handicap sign anybody with a handicap placard or plate can park there.

MAYOR D. POMPOSELLI: you are taking a living away from the businesses down there. You want to limit it to thirty minutes and if they get tied up they may be there for thirty- five or forty minutes.

MR. G. JAKUB: nobody said that we are going to chase them at thirty minutes. If you give them an hour they may be there for an hour and a half. There was a truck that parked in front of Johnny's all winter long and he left a plow on the street with no vehicle.

MR. J. FILIA: if there are no restrictions they can park there all day and take up the parking spaces for the businesses. If there is a restriction it gives the people who have to go to Compass Bank, who go to Larry's, have to go to Johnny's, to the Dollar Store or the Sport's Page it will keep the traffic moving instead of the three or four cars that park there all day and there is no place for anyone else to park.

ROLL CALL: J. FILIA, yes; K. PETERSON, yes; S. SMITH, no; G. JAKUB, yes; J. THOMAS, yes; S. SHURGOT, yes. Motion passed to limit parking to thirty minutes in the 100 block of Westinghouse Avenue on both sides of the street, 5-1.

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MR. J. FILIA: in the 400 block of Station Street I want to propose making one parking spot, on the south side of the street across from the Post Office and close to the parking lot, a fifteen minute time limit. This would be the same as it is in front of the Post Office.

J. FILIA / J. THOMAS TO MAKE ONE PARKING SPOT ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF STATION STREET IN THE 400 BLOCK FIFTEEN MINUTE PARKING. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

J. THOMAS / K. PETERSON THAT WHENEVER WE GET THE STIMULUS GRANT FOR OUR SEWAGE WORK THAT ALL THE APPROVED WORK FOR PHASE FOUR AND FIVE BE PUT OUT TO BID. MEMBERS VOTED APPROVAL, 6-0.

MAYOR'S REMARKS - D. POMPOSELLI: there is not enough people here for me to speak. When we get a bigger crowd then I will speak and let them know exactly how I feel.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.