

**MINUTES  
WEST MIDDLESEX BOROUGH  
ZOOM AND REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
APRIL 20, 2021  
6:00 p.m.**

**Call to Order**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Council Present:** President Cyndi Gilkey, Vice-President Eric Lucich, Ron Preston, Robert Lark, Stacey Curry and Mayor Debra Larouche.

**Others Present:** Solicitor Robert Tesone, Street Department Senior Laborer Bobby Cochran via Zoom, Fire Chief Rich Garrett, Ray Lucich and Mr. Chupak from West Middlesex United Methodist Church. Secretary/Treasurer Sandra Ricci absent due to illness.

**Public Comments:** None

**Minutes:** Mr. Lark made a motion to accept the Minutes, seconded by Mr. Preston with all in favor.

**Bills:** Mr. Preston made a motion to accept the Bills, seconded by Mr. Lark with all in favor. Mr. Lucich addressed the Port-A-Potty purchase. Ms. Gilkey said they could justify it as a safety concern and also a low amount if it were to become an Audit issue. Mr. Lucich questioned Mr. Cochran on Sereday's bills for purchases. Mr. Cochran explained the purchase of trash bags, paint for PA One Calls and miscellaneous bolts, etc. for the Street Department. Ms. Gilkey addressed Street Sweeping at \$100.00 per hour totaling \$700.00 for two days and she said a lot of the streets looked better.

**Treasurer's Report:** Ms. Gilkey read the Treasurer's Report account balances. Mr. Lark made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Mr. Preston with all in favor.

**Street Department Report:** Mr. Cochran read the Street Department Report and discussed Jayne Barris' property that she was asking if Council could do something about her property's access due to DFA trucks. Mr. Cochran said DFA would work with them if possible. Ms. Gilkey said DFA is always reasonable. Ms. Gilkey asked Mr. Cochran to get together with the Street Department Committee for any solutions. Mr. Cochran addressed one of the pumps in the pump house which will eventually have to be taken out for repairs. Mr. Lark and Mr. Cochran discussed pumps further.

**Fire Department Report:** Rich Garrett read the Fire Department Report.

**Police Department Report:** Mr. Preston discussed the Police Department Report.

**Approval of GPI Invoice of \$1,816.50:** Ms. Gilkey discussed the GPI Invoice. Mr. Lark explained the meeting that took place with GPI. Mr. Lark said GPI should send a detailed report with their invoices, therefore he feels this is a disagreeable report from GPI. Ms. Gilkey asked if they would like to table this invoice until May's Council Meeting and Council agreed.

Mr. Lark gave a follow up on the first phase of Shenango Township being completed and discussed further phases. Mr. Lark said it will affect the Borough with the work that will be done at the plant and at a subsequent time they need to have a discussion regarding that based on percentages. Ms. Gilkey suggested it be appropriate to schedule a meeting with the Sewer Authority as a starting point, Mr. Lark agreed. Ms. Gilkey asked who was the head of the Sewer Authority. Solicitor Tesone said that Mr. Preston is the Chairman. Ms. Gilkey asked Mr. Preston to schedule the meeting. Solicitor Tesone addressed Engineers and verbalized being careful about changing Engineers since GPI has a lot of background, experience and history of the Borough and Shenango Township. Solicitor Tesone said he doesn't know of any other cheap Engineers regarding costs. Solicitor Tesone, Mayor Larouche and Council discussed further.

**Brown's Masonry & Concrete Quote in the amount of \$5,622.00.:** Ms. Gilkey explained the concrete work project with Rich Garrett. Mr. Garrett explained further for the completion. Council discussed with Adam and Rich Garrett. Ms. Curry suggested receiving more than one quote on this project. Ms. Gilkey said she wants to make sure this gets done since it was something that has already begun. Ms. Gilkey asked who would be the appropriate companies to approach different companies requesting bids. Council, Mayor Larouche and Mr. Cochran discussed further.

**Authorize President Cyndi Gilkey to sign the Notice to Proceed – Proposed Housing Rehabilitation Program for Curry-Donnelly:** Solicitor Tesone explained that this was from Lawrence County's Planning Commission and Ms. Gilkey just needs to sign, which she did. Ms. Curry explained the project and Solicitor Tesone condoned the project as acceptable. Ms. Gilkey said this is only informing the Borough that they are doing the project, and the Borough's knowledge of receipt. Solicitor Tesone said this does not need a vote for the Borough's signature.

**Kiwanis Port-a-Potty:** Ms. Gilkey asked what were Council's wishes on this matter with discussions. Mr. Lark said there is an invoice from Bell's Portable Restrooms, Inc. in the amount of \$375.00 and made a motion to accept, seconded by Mr. Preston with all in favor. Council then discussed what to do with the old Kiwanis Rest Room. Ms. Curry made a motion to back fill it and be done with it, seconded by Mr. Preston with all in favor.

Mr. Chupak, from the West Middlesex United Methodist Church addressed Council on the high sewer bill due to water leaks at the Church and requesting the sewer bill to be reduced/waivered. Mayor Larouche said that once a year she gets an Aqua Water larger amount water bill. Council and Mr. Chupak discussed further. Mr. Lark suggested tabling this subject until the May Council Meeting for more information, Ms. Gilkey agreed.

Mr. Lark said the residents on North Street are complaining about groundhogs and to explore that situation.

Mr. Lark said that in February the Democrats and the Congress approved the American Rescue Act and our President signed that. Mr. Lark said he contacted Senator Casey's office regarding the Borough of West Middlesex receiving \$79,000.00 which will come from the Treasurer's Department. Mr. Lark said the \$79,000.00 has to be spent accordingly related to Co-Vid. Mr. Lark suggested to develop a public improvement plan for the Borough with said monies in the next several months. Ms. Gilkey said that Eric Lucich had suggested a generator for the Borough Building for emergencies or a major power outage.

Eric Lucich questioned when Ms. Ricci will be returning back to the office. Ms. Gilkey said Ms. Ricci is ill. Mr. Lucich said he knew that and did not expect her to come to work this week. Ms. Gilkey asked what Council thought. Ms. Curry said when Ms. Ricci was needed by her at four different times in one day, that she was always available. Ms. Curry asked if there was any disadvantage to her not being in the building. Eric Lucich's said his concern was where the important papers were kept in case of a house fire. Ms. Gilkey said from a social distancing point of view they do have the door with plexiglass. Mayor Larouche said one of the main things of keeping her out of the office is her right to privacy using the restroom facility in the building because she is very much concerned regarding Fire Department First Responders who are using the same facility and it has been an issue for her for a while. Mayor Larouche said she feels Ms. Ricci is entitled to some privacy. Council discussed bathrooms in other facilities. Mr. Preston said there was a sign on the restroom door and someone tore it down. Mayor Larouche said she remembered that and that there was no respect there. Mayor Larouche said some people are much more health concerned than others. Mayor Larouche said Sandy has constantly abided by the rules and is very much afraid. Ms. Curry said that is why she was asking what are the issues from her working from home. Mayor Larouche and Council said nothing. Ray Lucich spoke up saying that he wanted to call "bullshit on this" because he "caught" her in the Diner using the Diner's restroom. Ms. Gilkey said she will talk with Ms. Ricci.

Eric Lucich was concerned about the ground faults are not properly installed and also the coffee pot water lines are needed with the change of the sink. Mr. Lucich also said the fire department wanted locks for the cabinet doors. Ms. Gilkey asked if the outlets can be purchased and changed. Mr. Preston said they will have to deal with it. Rich Garrett said they had absolutely no input on that project. Mr. Preston said that's because it's not their building, it's the borough's building, not the fire departments. Heated discussions followed. Rich Garrett said it would have been nice to have a window while they are cooking in the kitchen to blow the heat out and had no input again. Ms. Gilkey said at this point the kitchen is what it is. Adam Garrett said he objected to that because the ground fault is absolutely a safety hazard, Ms. Gilkey agreed and said possibly Mr. Cochran can change it. Rich Garrett asked in all honesty if they would deal with things like this in their houses in this age. Ms. Gilkey said she can't say anything because she has an old house with a cast iron sink that just has one thing. Mayor Larouche said that was surprising that Mattson & Sons wouldn't put GFI's in by the sink. Mr. Garrett said it is in violation. Mayor Larouche and the Garretts discussed further. More discussions followed regarding the new kitchen area along with locks on the cabinets. Eric Lucich and the fire department staff discussed emergency lights in the bays for when Ms. Ricci walks through there in the dark. Ms. Gilkey agreed.

**Adjourned @ 8:00 p.m.:** Ms. Curry made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Lucich with all in favor.