

**MINUTES  
WEST MIDDLESEX BOROUGH  
COUNCIL MEETING  
MAY 18, 2022  
6:30 p.m.**

**Call to Order  
Pledge of Allegiance**

**Council Present:** President Eric Lucich, Mayor Stacey Curry, Robert Lark and Bill Novak. David Moyer on Zoom.

**Others Present:** Attorney Robert Tesone, Secretary/Treasurer Sandra Ricci, Street Department Senior Laborer Bobby Cochran, Black, Bashor & Porsch Auditor Jack Kuchcinski, Police Chief Jason Newton, Fire Chief Rich Garrett, WMVFD President Adam Garrett, Tim Webster, Ron Preston, Mike Roknick, Herald Reporter, Debra Larouche, Harry Kornbau, Jayne Barris, Ray Lucich, West Middlesex Borough residents and Chuck Haun.

**Audit Presentation:** Jack Kuchcinski, Auditor addressed everyone regarding the 2021 Audit conducted at Black, Bashor & Porsch explaining their company was engaged from West Middlesex Borough in supporting with the DCED which is the Department of Community Economic Development. Mr. Kuchcinski said the Audits they performed were done on a DCED basis and West Middlesex Borough's Audit was of a clean opinion, was not modified and there was nothing to be found with the financial records and reportings of the Borough. Mr. Kuchcinski explained during their Audit their responsibility was to express an opinion on financial statements and like he said their opinion is unmodified and there were no changes. Mr. Kuchcinski said they did not experience any difficulties with the Audit, there were no disagreements about anything. Mr. Kuchcinski said he would like to thank Ms. Ricci for her time and effort on this and that there were no findings, he just wanted to present that. Mr. Kuchcinski said if anyone has any questions moving forward in regard to the Audit, you can always reach out to Ms. Ricci and to himself. Mr. Lark asked if there were filings with the Prothonotary's Office in Mercer and DCED, Mr. Kuchcinski confirmed.

Mr. Lark expressed that this is a positive statement for the Borough and a positive statement for the Borough Secretary/Treasurer. Ms. Ricci acknowledged her thanks from Mr. Kuchcinski and Council.

**Executive Session – For the purpose of “discussing information, strategy and negotiation related to labor relations”**

**Meeting Reconvened @ 7:30 p.m.**

**Public Comments:** A resident complained of high grass. Mr. Lucich said a letter has been sent to the property owners and they have an allotted time to cut the grass and if they don't cut it in that allotted time, the Street Department will cut it. Ms. Ricci explained that the letters were sent yesterday, they have five (5) days to comply with an additional two (2) days for the mail, so about a week before we start cutting it. Mayor Curry said Council was concerned about it, so the Street Department weed wacked around the fire hydrant for public safety in case the fire department needed access. This resident also addressed an obstructed tree. Council discussed.

Another resident questioned what can be done about empty houses that have high grass. This resident complained that they were only being able to speak for more than two minutes at a public meeting. Mr. Lucich said if anyone has anything to say they should raise their hand, don't just yell out. She thanked him. Residents also discussed the need for repairs on sidewalks which are safety hazards. Mr. Lark said he will contact Jeff Richardson regarding Zoning. Mr. Lucich said he believes the sidewalks are the owner's responsibilities.

Jayne Barris addressed Council regarding her property and DFA property for parking areas. Ms. Barris is asking to authorize the Police for trucks not to go into that area to park there. Council and Chief Newton discussed further.

**Fill Council's Vacant Seat:** Mr. Lark made a motion to appoint Ronald Preston, there was no second to the motion. Mr. Lucich said the motion dies for lack of a second. Mr. Lark made a motion to turn it over to the Courts. Mr. Lucich asked if there was a motion for the other applicant. Mr. Moyer said he will make a motion for Tim Webster, seconded by Mr. Novak. Roll Call: Mr. Lark-no, Mr. Novak-yes, Mr. Moyer-yes and Mr. Lucich-yes. Attorney Robert Tesone performed the swearing in of Tim Webster as Councilman.

**Minutes-April 13, 2022 and April 19, 2022:** Mr. Novak made a motion to accept both sets of Minutes, seconded by Mr. Lark with all in favor.

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

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Lark made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Mr. Novak with all in favor.

**Council's Committee Reports:** Mr. Lark addressed the Memorial Day Parade to be held on Monday, May 30, 2022 with explanations on who would be in attendance in the procession. Mr. Lark addressed the reactivation of the West Middlesex Borough Sewer Authority with a meeting at the Borough Building with an organization of five (5) people who were: Tim Webster, Ron Preston, Robert Lark, Stacey Curry and Robert Rankin. Mr. Lark said they elected Officers: Ron Preston is Chair person, Robert Lark is Secretary and Tim Webster is Treasurer. Mr. Lark said they went over financial assets and reviewed pending issues that have come before the Sewer Authority. Mr. Lark said they will be meeting again. Mr. Lark said this meeting took place per the Sunshine Act as will the next meeting, it will be between two and three weeks from now and the people will be notified. Mr. Lark addressed an advertisement in the Sharon Herald on Saturday and it will appear again tomorrow (Thursday), a Public Notice regarding Bids for storm sewer work on Garfield Street Extension with explanations and paperwork passed out with projected estimated costs with no guarantees of prices. Mr. Lark said the Bids are due here on Tuesday, May 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:00 a.m. Mr. Lark said this will work out with Mr. Tesone and with Jeff Kordes of GPI. Mr. Lark explained the bid process to everyone along with finances. Mr. Lark passed out paperwork of the drawings from the Engineers and copies of Bids to review.

Mr. Moyer said the Shenango Valley Animal Shelter meeting is not until tomorrow night and he will have something for next month.

Mr. Novak said he and Mayor Curry talked about Parks the other day and there are a few issues they would like to tackle at Sweesy Field. Mr. Novak said the roof at the pavilion has two panels that need replaced that were previously fiberglass and filling in where the playground used to be, getting quotes for that with either sand and a sandbox with an awning over it or placing dirt and planting grass.

Mayor Curry said they had suggestions from people such as; corn hole, tether ball and a life size catcher board. Mayor Curry said they could possibly put swings on the existing swing set and that the Budget is \$3,070.00 and most of the things they are talking about are very inexpensive. Mayor Curry said she and Mr. Novak haven't received the quotes back about the dirt and the sand but they thought about purchasing volley balls and have them held at the pool, they would have to be signed out and to bring them back. Mayor Curry said they were wondering if Council was okay with moving forward with the Budget amount and asked what their opinions were or can they just do it since the amount is in the Budget and nothing would go over that figure. Mr. Lark made a motion for the Park and Recreation Committee to spend the allotted amount of money in the Budget, seconded by Mr. Novak with all in favor. '

Mayor Curry explained the Touch a Truck Event for the little kids in town. Mayor Curry said West Middlesex Fire Department, Shenango Township Fire Department, Jones Performance, Barris' and Shenango Township Police Department said they would all participate. Mayor Curry said it will be at the High School's Parking Lot June 4th from 10:30 a.m. to 12:35 p.m. and Women's Club will be providing refreshments so it shouldn't be any cost to the Borough. Mayor Curry said Margie Jones has offered to help do a fundraiser for the playground at the park if Council is so inclined and to let them do that to hopefully offset some of the cost.

**Street and Sewer Report:** Bobby Cochran read the Street and Sewer Report.

**Fire Department Report:** Fire Chief Rich Garrett read the Fire Department Report. Chief Garrett explained there was a fire on Route 18 by Dunkin Donuts and Sheetz which is one mile out of town. Chief Garrett said Hermitage Fire Department had an engine on scene in six (6) minutes, when West Middlesex got called, they had an engine on the scene in eight (8) minutes, Shenango Township got the call the same time as they did and were probably thirty (30) seconds behind them. Chief Garrett said for those of you who think he's calling Hermitage because he doesn't like the Township, that's two (2) minutes difference. Chief Garrett said Hermitage was there even before they were there. Chief Garrett stated it's not political, it's not that he doesn't like them, it's looking out for this Borough. Chief Garrett stated if he wanted to be political it would be the other way. Chief Garrett said it is common sense and a no brainer and he is getting tired of being beat up about this. Chief Garrett stated it's in black and white with the numbers. Mr. Garrett thanked Mr. Novak and Eric Lucich for helping to put up the lights in the Bay.

**Police Department Report:** Police Chief Jason Newton read the Police Department Report. Chief Newton said he wanted to talk about the parking that was brought up today and that there are several case laws that state any Government owned property is public property and explained further. Attorney Tesone said they can have an Ordinance but they have to first indicate whose properties they belong to.

**Burning Permit Report:** Council reviewed the Burning Permit Report. Mr. Lark asked Richard Garrett if the Fire Department was aware of the Burning Permits and Mr. Garrett said yes that they were.

**Building Permit Report:** Ms. Ricci gave the Building Permit Folder to President Lucich to review with everyone. Council is requesting Jeff Richardson's office to prepare a list of Building Permits monthly.

**Fire Feasibility Study:** Mr. Lark said they talked about this before, that they acknowledged it but did not accept it and not necessarily endorsing it until they have some public information. Mr. Lark said he thinks they should have a public meeting and the Fire Department obviously needs to be involved as does the Community, that they need to do this through a learning process. Mr. Lark said he thinks ultimately however he doesn't think this is a decision to be made by a majority of three (3) on Council, by two (2) families of the Fire Department, he said he thinks it should be put on the Ballot and the people should vote in the town. Mr. Lark said it is the people's protection and the people are paying the bills. Mr. Lark said they need a process laid out, that it's been done in other places like Greenville, and if that's the route they are going Mr. Lark will make a motion to that effect when it's appropriate. Mr. Lark said he thinks it should be placed on the Ballot, possibly in November or next Spring since he thinks it's a decision the people should make as a Democracy. Council discussed the corrections that Harrisburg needs to make on the Study which Mr. Lark said they work at a different pace than the rest of the world.

**Jones Performance Proposal:** Mayor Curry said she spoke with Mr. Jones, that he doesn't have an Official Proposal and that he has talked with Brad Campbell for quotes for the building materials for the actual building. Mayor Curry said he has two quote requests out for constructing the building and she said Mr. Jones wanted to know if they were going to use the site that we had proposed at the end of North Street. Mayor Curry said she told him that Council's concern was that they have to have it surveyed and he understood that part of the property is on the flood plain and a beaver dam but that he didn't think it would affect ours but he can't speak for that. Mayor Curry said she told him they would not move forward with that until they received his official proposal, but in the proposal he commented that it would not just be the building and the construction of the building, it would be electric, plumbing, the concrete foundation and the parking lot and there was discussion if the building site was not feasible to possibly purchase a piece of property. Mr. Lark said as part of their discussion they talked about him simply buying our property, giving us the money, put it away in the bank because we are involved in a lot of issues right now. Mayor Curry and Council discussed further.

**Brian Foster's Quotes:** Mr. Novak said he spoke with Mr. Foster regarding removing wood paneling and adding in metal, which he said he thought would be a good, cost effective way to improve that space. Mr. Lark said the American Rescue money can be utilized since the pool suffered loss since they weren't open for a year and when they were opened it was limited not only to admissions but also to concessions. Council discussed further. Mr. Novak made a motion to utilize the money from the American Rescue Fund for these repairs. Mr. Lark said he will support that with the understanding that is where they can begin and where it might end or undertake something else because it is an old building and in bad shape. With that statement Mr. Lark seconded the motion, with all in favor.

**GPI Engineer Invoices - \$402.50 and \$3,463.50:** Mr. Lark made a motion to accept the GPI Invoices, seconded by Mr. Novak with all in favor.

**Armor Linings Quote - \$634.95:** Council and Mr. Cochran discussed Armor Linings rustproofing of the Borough equipment. Mr. Lark asked if there were any other quotes. Mr. Lucich said he was able to start to get quotes from a company in Pittsburgh which is an hour and forty-five minutes away. Mr. Moyer recommended the motion that they use Armor Linings in West Middlesex as a local business and they won't have to travel to get it done. Mr. Novak asked about the Salt Eliminator as well. Mr. Lucich said the Salt Eliminator is an additional \$135.00 to be applied per vehicle. Council and Mr. Cochran discussed. Mr. Moyer made the motion to include the Salt Eliminator as well. Mr. Lucich stated with the Salt Eliminator the cost will be \$889.95 for the Ford F-250, the Ford F-550 and the Skid Steer. Mr. Novak seconded the motion and said for the public record he was the one that obtained the quote. Mr. Lucich asked if all was in favor, Mr. Novak-yes, Mr. Lark-yes and Mr. Moyer-yes. Mr. Lucich abstained.

**Calvert Sewer Request - \$2,500.00 for high sewer bill due to burst water pipes:** Mr. Lucich read aloud a letter from the Calverts' rental property where there were medical issues of the tenants at that time. Council discussed the sewer bill further. Mr. Lark made a motion to table this issue, seconded by Mr. Webster with all in favor. Mr. Lark said they have had several requests like this in the past of different ways and times so he asked that they look up what was done in the past before acting on it.

Mr. Lucich stated if anyone would make a motion to Adjourn or if there was any other business. Mr. Lark said he had items of business and said there were two (2) Letters of Reprimand of issues with Borough Employees which was not a reflection of public discussion and not a reflection of a vote of the Borough Council. Mr. Lark made a motion that the two (2) Letters of Reprimand be withdrawn. Mr. Lucich said that wasn't on the Agenda and at the next meeting they can vote to put it on the Agenda. Mr. Lark stated he is making a motion to add it in right now, seconded by Mr. Novak. Attorney Tesone said they will need a majority of votes to put in on this Agenda. Mr. Lucich asked if all was in favor and Council Members all said yes. Mr. Lucich asked if anybody opposed, no one opposed. Mr. Lucich said motion carried. Mr. Lark said he makes the motion of the two (2) Letters of Reprimand that was not a reflection of the thinking of the Council in public discussion which is a violation of the Sunshine Act with the District Attorney and it was not a reflection of the vote of the majority of the Council to both be rescinded of two (2) Borough Employees, seconded by Mr. Novak. Mr. Webster asked if that was any part of what they discussed in Executive Session and Council confirmed. Mr. Lucich stated there is a motion to rescind the Letters with a second by Mr. Novak with all in favor.

**Adjournment @ 8:35 p.m.:** Mr. Lark made the motion to Adjourn, seconded by Mr. Novak with all in favor.