

**West Middlesex Borough
Council Meeting
February 20, 2024**

Call to Order: The West Middlesex Borough Council was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Borough President Mr. Tim Webster.

Pledge of Allegiance

Council Present: President: Mr. Tim Webster conducted the meeting. Vice President, Mr. Robert Lark, Mr. Bill Novak, Mr. Robert Rankin, Mayor Stacey Curry. Absent: Mr. Dennis Bollinger.

Others Present: Attorney Robert Tesone, Secretary/Treasurer: Paula Luca, Police Chief: Mr. Jason Newton, County Commissioner: Ann Coleman, WMVFD President: Mr. Rich Garrett, Mr. Ray Lucich, Mr. Harry Knorbau, Ms. Barb Lapinski, Mr. Dale Perry.

Public Comments: **Ms. Barb Lapinski** addressed the Council with a concern. She stated that since the accident on Main Street, there is no Speed Limit Sign posted on Main Street from 318 traveling west until you come to Erie Street. Her concern is, if no Speed Limit Sign is posted, then the speed limit in that area would be 55 mph. The only sign is the School Zone Sign. The Police Chief agreed that there is no sign posted but the speed limit would be 35 if not posted due to being in a residential area. However, it should be posted 25 for the Speed Limit. President Tim Webster added that our Streets Department Senior Laborer Mr. Bobby Cochran will contact PennDOT with the request for a speed limit sign. **Mr. Dale Perry** addressed the Council: Mr. Perry reported after speaking with a representative at PennDOT, it was suggested that West Middlesex Borough and Shenango Twp join together to come up with a Comprehensive Plan, so when funding is available, then the plan would be added to the list of requests for the funding. Mr. Webster questioned him, is Shenango TWP interested in working together with West Middlesex? Mr. Perry replied, He also suggested that Lackawannock Township be added to the group to also join in and work together for a plan. Mr. Perry added, it would be a long-term commitment for all three. Mr. Webster thanked Mr. Perry for his suggestions. Commissioner Ann Coleman added that the Commissioners are working on a New Comprehensive Plan for the Entire Mercer County. Her suggestion is that all municipalities get involved. Working on the Countywide Plan. She also updated all in attendance that the Reassessment Project is underway. She reported some residents have refused to have anyone on their property, however when this happens, a card is left for the residents to complete and return. Mr. Lark asked if West Middlesex and Shenango Twp had been completed? She answered Yes. He then asked when they feel the Project will be completed? She said in 2026, so the New Tax Cards for the tax year 2027 will show updates if there are any. Mr. Lark also asked will residents be able to file an appeal with the new assessments? She replied yes. There will be informal and formal appeal boards. Mr. Lark and Mr. Webster both thanked Commissioner Ann Coleman.

Minutes: A motion was made by Mr. Lark, and seconded by Mr. Novak to accept the Minutes from January 10, 2024 Work Session Meeting, January 16, 2024 Council Meeting and January 24, 2024 Recessed Meeting from January 16th Council Meeting. All in Favor, No Opposed. Motion Carries.

Police Department Report: Chief Newton read the Police Report for the Month of January 2024. He also read the year-end Report for 2023. Chief Newton then addressed the Council with a concern of a parking issue. He stated that if there is an area that the Borough Council would like to address concerning parking, a No Parking Sign must be posted. He reported that he spoke with Judge Odem in the past, concerning the problem, and she agreed that if there is not a No Parking from Here to Corner Sign in place, she will dismiss the case. It has to be posted. Mr. Webster presented a question to Chief Newton concerning Fine and Penalty Money the Borough Receives from State Police. He questioned Chief Newton how this Money calculated? Is it from citations issued by Shenango Twp, or is it for citations issued from State Police in the Borough. Chief Newton replied that this is not from citations from Shenango Twp. It would be from State Police, however this is not certain if it is for a citation or if the State Police send each municipality a portion of the County Wide Citations issued. Mr. Lark then asked Police Chief Newton a question concerning the Cars parked at the Business on the Corner of Erie Street and Main Street. Chief Newton replied he has spoken to the owner of the Garage in the past. He feels he is very cooperative on not having cars parked on the sidewalks due to it causing a driving problem. He will stop and speak to the owner again. Mayor Stacey Curry presented a question to Chief Newton inquiring about abandoned cards on the road. Chief Newton replied if on the road something can be done. Mr. Bill Novak asked Chief Newton, concerning the No Parking Signs, do we also need an Ordinance? Chief Newton replied, we do not also need an ordinance. A sign and the yellow marked area are sufficient. The Parking Ordinance is already in place. He did however suggest that older Ordinances be updated. Mayor Stacey responded that it was her understanding that the Borough only needed a parking Ordinance if it is something that is being changed, not a State Law. Attorney Tesone does suggest parking ordinances if it is a state road. If we let him know the location, he may have an ordinance.

Fire Department Report: The Fire Department Report was Read by WMVFD President Mr. Rich Garrett.

Treasurer's Financial Report: The Treasurer Report was presented by Treasurer: Paula Luca. A motion was made to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills by Mr. Lark, and Seconded by Mr. Novak. All in Favor, No Opposed. Motion Carries.

At this time, President Mr. Tim Webster suggested that we change the order of the Meeting Agenda, due to Attorney Tesone having to leave early due to another commitment. The questions for Attorney Tesone were now presented by the Council.

Questions for Attorney Tesone: *First Question: Sale of Equipment:* Attorney Tesone had sent an email for all of the Council to review. A copy of the Email was added to the Council Meeting Folders. The email included a copy of a Resolution in association of Selling Borough Items. Mr.

Rankin added, he felt the first action that would need to be done is to assess the value of the items to be sold. Attorney Tesone added: If the value of each item is under \$2000 then this ordinance can be used. If the value is over \$2000, a Resolution would need to be in place. The item can be sold to the highest bidder. The Bill of Sale would be as is. No Warranty. *The Next Question: Concerning purchasing an item from a Private Purchase.* Attorney Tesone added, if the value of the item is below \$12,600 the Council would not need to advertise or need a resolution. If the value is \$12,600- \$23,200, 3 telephone bids would be required. *Next Question: Concerning the Borough accepting a private owned street in the Borough.* Attorney Tesone advised the following: A survey for location of the easements. Also, a test to confirm the street is up to PennDOT standards. A report on the Storm Sewer situation. It can be very costly. Another option would be to have a Maintenance Agreement between the Borough and the Homeowners on the Street. *The next Question asked is concerning documents and paperwork in the Borough Office.* Mr. Lark had asked how long items should be retained by the Borough. Attorney Tesone suggests keeping Ordinances as long as you can. However, there is a 7year Paper Retention. Mayor Stacey Curry addressed Attorney Tesone with a *question concerning the L-S-W Community Swimming Pool.* The pool will be accepting bids for installing a heating system to the pool. Because it is managed by Cog, and the three communities, who will cover the cost of the advertisement for the bidding process? Attorney Tesone suggested that the cost be split between the 3 communities involved. Mayor Stacey Curry reported the Pool Committee has a meeting scheduled for next week on February 27th. Attorney Tesone excused himself from the meeting.

Fire Chief Rich Garret asked a question concerning the cost of the heater for the pool. Mayor Stacey Curry updated on the funding for the pool project. Commissioner Ann Coleman added there have been 3 applications for the Grant Money, and it is on the agenda for their meeting tomorrow evening. He then asked Council a question concerning the Generator that was discussed at the work session meeting? It was stated at that meeting that the funds at this time were not available for the new generator. Chief Garret asked if other sources of funding are being considered. President Tim Webster replied yes.

Lilly Bridge/WM Estates Pump: The Council received 2 quotes. One for a new pump, and one to refurbish the pump. Mr. Webster updated the Council that a spare is needed. Due to the situation last year when the pump needed to be replaced, we cannot go without a backup pump. Mr. Rankin asked what the lead time was. Due to the history of ordering our last pump, we cannot go by the quoted lead time. A Motion was made by Mr. Robert Lark to purchase a New Pump, Contingent on the suggestion from the Engineers on what pump would be best with the possible New Pump Station. Mayor Stacey Curry questioned how long it may take to build the New Station. Possibly it might be better to purchase the refurbished pump and that would hold us over until the pump station might be completed. Mr. Webster said it can possibly take a year, but Mr. Lark suggested it might take less than a year. She feels saving the \$4000 might benefit the Borough in the future. The motion did not get a second. Mr. Lark withdrew his original motion. Mayor Stacey Curry added. I know I don't get a vote, but she agreed the refurbished pump would be a great back up pump if there is an issue like there was in the past. And because it cost less, it would save the Borough money. Mr. Lark then made a Motion to Contact

GPI first before a pump was purchased. This would allow them to give advice on what pump to purchase that would be compatible with the New Pump Station Plans they are currently working on. Mr. Rankin Seconded the Motion to Contact GPI. If compatible, we will purchase the New Pump. Mr. Novak Opposed the Motion. Motion carries to contact GPI and table topic until March Meeting. Mr. Novak added, He is not in favor of putting off until the March Meeting. He feels we need the spare pump Now. Putting it off for a Month can possibly get us back into the same situation that we had when the pump quit working last year. Mr. Lark added, If there is an issue before next month, an Emergency Meeting can be scheduled. Mayor Stacey added that she is in favor of ordering the refurbished pump due to the past history. It will be tabled until the March Meeting for a Discussion. It will be added to the March Work Session, and Council Meeting Agenda. Mr. Lark will contact GPI. Mr. Webster added when we contact GPI, we need to also inquire on a timeline for a new Pump Station.

Pump House Refurbished Pump Quote: Mr. Webster updated all on the pump situation at the Pump House. Mr. Lark made a Motion to Purchase the refurbished Pump, Seconded my Mr. Rankin. All in Favor, No Opposed. Motion Carries.

New Locks for Borough Office Main Entrance and Borough Garage: Mr. Lark made a motion to have the Locks cylinders changed and requested a written Invoice not to exceed \$160.00. Seconded my Mr. Novak. All in Favor, No Opposed. Motion Carries.

List of Streets to Be Repaired: Mr. Lark addressed the Council with a list of Streets in most need of repair. The List Is:

1. Fairview
2. Oak Hill EXT.
3. Campground/Penn Ave
4. Walker Lane

Mr. Novak suggests that Erie Street be added to the list also. Mr. Webster suggests we do not add Walker Lane to the list until we own it. Mr. Novak agrees. Mr. Lark added, this is just a list to get information on the repairs, it does not mean that they will be repaired. Mr. Novak asked if the study will include the Storm Water Issues? Mr. Lark responded yes. Mr. Novak also added, due to the Legal Issues involved, he does not feel money should be invested in the Study by GPI to include Walker Lane. He feels that the homeowners should pay towards the study. Mr. Webster added that he agrees with Mr. Novak concerning Walker Lane. Mr. Lark made a Motion to withdraw Walker Lane as part of the motion. Mr. Webster asked with Walker Lane off, do we want to add Erie Street, from Main to Garfield. Mayor Stacey asked if Penn Ave can be done in sections? Mr. Webster added that the engineers can probably let us know in sections.

Mr. Lark Made a Motion to contact GPI concerning the following Streets:

1. Fairview,
2. Campground/Penn Ave
3. Oak Hill EXT.

No Second on the Motion.

Mr. Webster asked for another Motion: Mr. Novak made a Motion to contact GPI on the following 4 roads:

1. Fairview
2. Oak Hill EXT
3. Penn Ave
4. Erie from Main Street to Garfield

The Motion was seconded by Mr. Ranking. All in Favor, No Opposed. Motion Carries. Mr. Lark will contact GPI.

Up Date on Progressive Consultants concerning Snyder Brothers and National Fuel:

Secretary Paula Luca updated Council on the billing for the Gas for 25 North Street, the Municipal Building, Pump Station on North Street, and The Borough Garage on Walnut Street. We receive bills from both National Fuel, and Snyder Brothers. Our current rate we pay Snyder Brothers is 0.410 and the new rate will be 0.444. We receive the Gas from Snyder Brothers and National Fuel transports it to us. There is confusion concerning the billing. The contract is up in May, so that would be the deadline to commit to the contract. It will be tabled until more information is received. Mr. Lark agrees for it to be tabled until the March Meeting for more discussion.

Mr. Webster informed the Council that he will be on vacation in March. He will not be present at the March Work Session or Council Meeting. He added a reminder to have the Lilly Bridge/WM Estates Pump on the Work Session Meeting. However, if an emergency Meeting is needed, it can be scheduled. He also suggested that we add to the Work Session Meeting the National Fuel/Snyder Brothers Billing Update.

Other Business: Mr. Lark passed out information from the most recent COG Meeting. Minutes and the Budget for the Swimming Pool and the Bucket Truck. He spoke about setting up a joint meeting with the Council, Our Planning Committee and Lisa Holmes from Mercer County Planning Committee. Possibly in April or May. Mr. Webster also requested that on the Agenda in March we add the Vacancy on the Sewer Authority and the Borough Zoning Board. Secretary Paula Luca updated the Council on the Summer Feeding Program that is provided by the Community Food Warehouse. Paula Spoke with Alexis from The Community Food Warehouse, and they are highly considering the location of the parking lot of the Methodist Church. This would be a great asset to the People of West Middlesex.

Mayor Stacey Curry asked if an Executive Session can be added to the Agenda before Adjournment for a discussion. President Tim Webster suggested an Amended Agenda be posted on the Borough Door to include the Executive Session. At this time all in attendance left except for the Borough Council.

All were invited back into the meeting after the executive session for the adjournment. The Meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm.

