

BOROUGH OF EDGEWOOD
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**BOROUGH OF EDGEWOOD
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF JANUARY 18, 2011**

CALL TO ORDER

President Schaefer called the meeting of the Borough of Edgewood to order at 7:34 PM in the Municipal Building.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call, the following responded: Mr. Bright, Ms. Waldock, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Gleba, Mr. Fuller and Ms. Schaefer.

Mr. Bowers was absent.

Mayor Hellett and Solicitor Barry were also present.

Due to another obligation, the Junior Councilperson was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Ms. Schaefer announced that the Police Department Service Award presentation is being postponed due to scheduling issues.

Referring to the recent rash of robberies in the area, President Schaefer introduced Police Chief Payne for an update on the situation.

The Chief said that there is an ongoing investigation of the robberies which have occurred during the last two weeks. The crimes intersect four jurisdictions, including Edgewood, Swissvale, Wilksburg and the City of Pittsburgh.

The Chief noted that approximately eight robberies have been committed up to this point. In Edgewood, Chief Payne said an attempted robbery, as well as a robbery, occurred. According to the victim, a gun was drawn and the actors left the victims alone after it was discovered that they had no money.

Stating that he was able to contact Chief Geppert of Swissvale, Chief Coleman of Wilksburg and Chief Dengler of Zone 4 of the City of Pittsburgh, Chief Payne said that the group has been working very closely on this case. He said that during the meeting of the group and subsequent investigation of the case, all parties agreed that the most important issue is resident safety.

The Chief did state that steps are being taken to solve the crimes, but that he is not at liberty to discuss the issues openly. He did share that one individual has been identified and that five other people apparently are involved. Chief Payne said another cell phone has been found, apparently from the Friday robbery in the City of Pittsburgh.

The Chief then reported that another robbery had occurred last night in Swissvale and the victim was pistol whipped. Chief Payne emphasized that the four departments are working closely to solve these cases by communicating daily and, in some cases, hourly, to find the individuals responsible. He felt that an arrest would occur in the near future.

Ms. Waldock referred to the handouts available for the Nixle system.

Chief Payne explained that one of the tools which Edgewood Borough uses to inform residents is the Nixle system. He said that the system is available online. Both texts to cell phones or notes to email are ways that Nixle can be used. Information from the second robbery, January 12, 2011, was placed on the Nixle system, along with the area where the robberies had occurred. At that time, a general description of the actors was also given. These measures were taken to caution the public to be aware of their surroundings. Chief Payne advised the audience that if anything looks suspicious, residents should call 911.

Mayor Hellett noted that the Nixle system is overseen by the Borough Manager, the Police Chief and the Fire Chief. It can be used to communicate schedules, service changes and meeting dates, for example. Mr. Hellett said the system is a wonderful community service tool.

Chief Payne continued stating that the group of departments is attempting to establish a Block Watch, with one on East Hutchinson currently in the works, according to the Chief. The Chief expressed to Council that Edgewood Police Department will help in any way possible.

On the topic of 911, Chief Payne said that many people still shy away from calling them and added that this is the only way to get fire, police or EMS to respond. By calling the Borough Building, residents delay the response time by these agencies, according to the Chief.

In very specific detail, Borough Manager Cecconi explained to the audience just what questions the 911 center will ask.

Chief Payne said that there will be meetings between the four boroughs. The Chief said he may invite Braddock Hills and Forest Hills to participate. Chief Payne said that monthly meetings would allow the exchange of information, but might also destroy any barriers which currently exist.

Solicitor Barry informed Council that he attended a CONNECT meeting for attorneys regarding the important topic of intergovernmental cooperation.

Chief Payne noted that he will attend a meeting of the Regent Square Civic Association this Thursday.

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

Residents of Lehigh Street, Ms. Rundel, Mr. Holtz and Mr. Davidson, had concerns regarding the change in the garbage collection contract and how residents were notified of this information. Mr. Davidson said that in October and December, a \$162.60 flat tax was reported in the newsletter. Mr. Davidson said that the October information said "more to follow." However, when the December information emerged, the changes were already in place.

Mr. Davidson said that this gave citizens no opportunity to voice their opinions. He felt this was lack of adherence to the Sunshine Law. Mr. Davidson posed a one-half of one mil tax rebate.

President Schaefer, referring to the Waste Management contract, said that in 2003, the Borough rolled the cost into the Borough's tax structure. Basically, according to Ms. Schaefer, the process has been returned to its original place.

With respect to the Sunshine Law, Ms. Schaefer informed the audience that discussion of the changes occurred long before October. Information was in the newsletter, and during 2009 discussion of anticipated changes occurred, noted Ms. Schaefer. She also said that the budget had been vetoed and it was then decided that the budget could not support the collection of garbage. According to Ms. Schaefer, discussions regarding Waste Management have been occurring for the past two years.

Ms. Waldock said that \$217,000 was the actual cost of trash collection, which would have meant a tax increase this year. She said that regardless of the value of your house, all residents are paying the same amount.

Ms. Gleba added that collection costs have more than doubled since the Borough began paying in 2003.

Ms. Rundel asked how residents were notified and if discussion was in 2009, was it advertised.

Ms. Gleba said it was not in the newsletter in 2009, but was discussed in the budget meetings. Since 2009, according to Ms. Gleba, this issue has been a priority.

Ms. Schaefer said that the newsletter is not meant to be a hard-hitting news source, but is a community newsletter. It is not meant to rehash past Council meetings and past meeting minutes are online. Disbursing information in a timely manner is not an easy task, according to Ms. Schaefer.

Mr. Davidson asked if Council had thought about increasing the flow of information.

Mr. Hellett welcomed him and the others to come to the Borough's Council or Committee meetings.

Ms. Schaefer thanked the group for their time and stated that she would like to continue this dialogue.

Mr. Holtz said that he is requesting formal notification of residents whenever a decision is made.

Solicitor Barry said that this is not a legal issue.

Speaking to the posting of information online, Ms. Rundel felt this to be problematic since this calls for repeated checking.

With regard to the newsletter editor, Ms. McGregor of Walnut Street noted that she has been absent from the Council meetings. Ms. McGregor also noted that Waste Management is mixing recycling and garbage. She also said that the Nixle system needs a big boost to inform residents that it is available. A second "Items from the Floor" was requested by Ms. McGregor. She said that oftentimes, things take place during the meeting and there is no way to comment on them afterwards.

Ms. Waldock reported to Council that, according to Robert's Rules of Order, discussion of current approval-ready minutes could take place directly before the vote. This was done.

DISCUSSION: MINUTES OF DECEMBER 20, 2010.

Ms. Waldock had the following changes: page 5 (motion M-7) – rates instead of rats; page 7 – list of meeting dates notes July 7; should be 5; pages 8 and 11 – amount for opting out is "less than"; page 10 – should read Mr. Hellett said **Intercouncil** meeting.

Ms. Gleba noted a correction on page 2 – **employee health care** is listed twice.

M-1 Ms. Gleba moved to approve the minutes of December 20, 2010, as amended. Second by Mr. Wilson.

DISCUSSION: None.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Mr. Bright, Ms. Waldock, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Gleba, Mr. Fuller, Ms. Schaefer. Mr. Bowers was absent. **Motion carried.**

M-2 Ms. Gleba moved to approve the minutes of January 3, 2011. Second by Mr. Wilson.

DISCUSSION: None.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Mr. Bright, Ms. Waldock, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Gleba, Mr. Fuller, Ms. Schaefer. Mr. Bowers was absent. **Motion carried.**

M-3 Ms. Gleba moved to authorize the payment of bills, for goods and services received by the Borough, having been reviewed and approved by the General Government Committee, from the General Fund, in the amount of \$142,038.67 and from the Sewer Fund in the amount of \$8.10, for a total of \$142,046.77. Second by Ms. Waldock.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Schaefer explained that the \$8.10 fee is for Pennsylvania One Call services.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Mr. Bright, Ms. Waldock, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Gleba, Mr. Fuller, Ms. Schaefer. Mr. Bowers was absent. **Motion carried.**

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Gleba said that the list of committee assignments will be discussed at the Committee of the Whole meeting on January 24, 2011. She also stated that a budget article will appear in the newsletter.

POLICE REPORT

Mayor Hellett revisited the robberies currently being investigated and the meeting held last Tuesday at a home on East Hutchinson. Mr. Hellett reported that there is a great deal of interest in another Citizen's Police Academy class.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Waldock said there will be an additional session with Ms. Sciulli regarding deployment of the crossing guards. The crossing guard staff is still short by one part-time person. Ms. Waldock also reported that the Borough Police Department is looking at hiring two part-time officers. Ms. Waldock said that Chief Payne is probably going to have another Citizen's Police Academy in the spring.

Ms. Schaefer commented that she and Mr. Wilson, along with his son, attended the last Academy class and said she would recommend participation.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Fuller said the Committee has not met.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Fuller said the Committee has not met.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mr. Wilson said that the Committee did not meet.

PERSONNEL

In Mr. Bowers absence, Ms. Schaefer noted that a Committee of the Whole Meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2011.

PENSION

Mr. Bright said that the Committee has not met. He said that the Borough's new pension management program has completed its first year and that an evaluation of the program's performance can now be done, followed by a written report.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

INTERCOUNCIL

Mr. Wilson said that the Committee has not met.

Ms. Schaefer reported that an executive meeting of CONNECT will be held in Brentwood.

3 RIVERS WET WEATHER DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Ms. Schaefer informed Council that the group is offering grants for intermunicipal and sewer system work. She also stated that CONNECT's proposal was accepted by the Demonstration Project.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Ms. Waldock asked the Solicitor if he had an opportunity to speak with Mr. Davies and Mr. Barry said he had not heard back from him as yet.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT

Employee health insurance has completely been switched to the Teamster's HMO, reported Mr. Cecconi.

Mr. Cecconi also reported that some spot pointing has been done on the Borough Building, as well as the glass block windows. The cost of new windows for the Borough Building, according to Mr. Cecconi, will be \$89,000.

Reporting on Waste Management collection, Mr. Cecconi noted that the list of items allowed for collection has expanded and is on the website. He continued stating that Waste Management does not collect the same items in every borough.

Mr. Cecconi said that the direct billing of garbage has seen comments all over the board. Mr. Cecconi pondered why some people get the information and others do not.

The school guard contract has been ratified.

RECREATION REPORT

Mr. Cecconi noted that the Recreation Advisory Board is attempting to meet monthly. A few volunteers are still needed for the Board. Mr. Hooks is running the group and is working on a database program.

The basketball program, according to Mr. Cecconi, had 30 people sign up. Players from last year were called. Mr. Cecconi said it is not too late for new signups. The adult basketball program is underway. With basketball season, Mr. Cecconi stated that parent volunteers are being recruited.

COMMITTEE ACTION

M-4 Ms. Gleba offered Resolution 2011-08 and asked for its immediate adoption. Second by Mr. Wilson.

BOROUGH OF EDGEWOOD

RESOLUTION 2011-08

WHEREAS, the Borough of Edgewood has an elected Tax Collector, and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector is charged with the collection of local Borough real estate taxes, and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector has collected all real estate taxes for the tax year 2010 deemed collectible and desires to officially close her books for the 2010 tax year.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Edgewood Borough Council hereby exonerates the Tax Collector from the uncollected balance of face value taxes in the amount of \$43,907.01. The Council hereby authorizes Pennsylvania Municipal Services to undertake the procedures necessary to collect this unpaid balance of year 2010 taxes.

ADOPTED THIS THE 18th day of January 2011 by the Council of the Borough of Edgewood.

ATTEST:

Borough Secretary

Council President

EXAMINED AND APPROVED by me this 18th day of January 2011.

Mal Hellett, Mayor

DISCUSSION: Ms. Gleba commented on the excellent real estate tax collection rate this year and Mr. Cecconi stated that there was a 98% collection rate.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Mr. Bright, Ms. Waldock, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Gleba, Mr. Fuller, Ms. Schaefer. Mr. Bowers was absent. **Resolution Passes.**

M-5 Ms. Gleba offered Resolution 2011-07 and asked for its immediate adoption. Second by Mr. Wilson.

BOROUGH OF EDGEWOOD

RESOLUTION 2011-07

WHEREAS, the Borough of Edgewood understands the significance of a Zoning Hearing Board; and

WHEREAS, the Borough understands the complex zoning issues a community can face; and

WHEREAS, James Gladys has exhibited the desire, knowledge and ability to contribute positively to the Zoning Hearing Board.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Edgewood Borough Council will hereby reappoint James Gladys to the Zoning Hearing Board to a term which will expire December 31, 2014.

ADOPTED THIS THE 18th day of January 2011 by the Council of the Borough of Edgewood.

Borough Secretary

Council President

DISCUSSION: Ms. Schaefer thanked Mr. Gladys for his willingness to serve. She went on to say that other open committee positions will be discussed at the meeting next Monday. As well, these openings can be placed in the newsletter.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Mr. Bright, Ms. Waldock, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Gleba, Mr. Fuller, Ms. Schaefer. Mr. Bowers was absent. **Resolution Passes.**

- M-6 **Ms. Gleba moved to transfer from the PLGIT account to the Sewer Fund the amount of \$67,698.70. Second by Ms. Waldock.**

DISCUSSION: Mr. Cecconi said this was done to reduce a due to account from the General Fund to the Sewer Fund.

Ms. Gleba explained that the accounts were co-mingled and now they are not.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Mr. Bright, Ms. Waldock, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Gleba, Mr. Fuller, Ms. Schaefer. Mr. Bowers was absent. **Motion passes.**

Ms. Waldock said that a meeting was needed to discuss Edgewood Towne Centre and Parcel D issues.

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

- M-7 **Following an Executive Session which lasted from 9:10 PM to 9:55 PM, it was moved by Ms. Gleba and seconded by Mr. Wilson to adjourn at 9:56 PM.**

DISCUSSION: None.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Mr. Bright, Ms. Waldock, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Gleba, Mr. Fuller, Ms. Schaefer. Mr. Bowers was absent. **Motion passes.**

Warren Cecconi, Borough Manager