

WILKINSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
Work Session
December 5, 2012

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-President McCarthy-Johnson called the meeting to order at approximately 6:35 PM in Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building, 605 Ross Ave., Wilkesburg, PA.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called to establish a quorum. Council members present were: Mr. Lefebvre (via telephone), Ms. Ervin, Ms. Evans, Ms. Trice, Ms. Goodman, Ms. McCarthy-Johnson, Ms. Macklin, and President Cohn (via telephone). Marla P. Marcinko, Borough Manager, was also present. Mayor John Thompson and Ms. Moore were absent. A quorum was established.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Following the pledge of allegiance, a moment of silence was observed to remember victims of violent crime.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Theresa Carroll – 810 Ross St. – Mailing address: 2121 Village Dr. – Commented that her matter with the Police Department was not properly handled. She has contacted the media and legal counsel.

Vice President McCarthy-Johnson advised Ms. Carroll that her complaint has been referred to Allegheny County for investigation.

YEAR-END REVIEW

Vice President McCarthy-Johnson advised Council that tonight's meeting will focus on a year-end review and that there is no agenda.

Ms. Marcinko provided a summary of projects which have been completed and which are ongoing and commented on the upcoming process for goal setting for 2013. President Cohn commented that Council should review what was accomplished during the year and review items which were not completed in 2012 as a start for 2013. Ms. Evans commented that there are a few capital projects to discuss. She would like to establish a capital planning policy by the end of March. If this cannot be accomplished through the

**Borough of Wilkinsburg
Council Work Session Meeting
December 5, 2012**

peer assigned by the Department of Community and Economic Development, she believes the Finance Director should be directed to supply models and develop a policy.

Council has identified street signs, pay stations in parking lots, curb cuts on Wood Street, park improvements (with a focus on the issues identified in the safety audit) and retaining walls as potential projects. Cost estimates for equipment are still needed from DPW.

Ms. Moore arrived at 6:45 PM.

Ms. Macklin commented that capital funds need to be directed throughout the Borough. She commented on the focus on the business district and Hamnett Place neighborhood. She expressed that funds need to be directed to the outskirts of the Borough. She commented on a two-prong approach to demolish structures and rebuild the inner areas of the Borough and support the perimeter. A more holistic approach is needed.

Ms. Macklin requested clarification on the process for the replacement of street signs and traffic signs. Ms. Marcinko explained the approach for street sign replacement and explained that regulatory signs must be reflective. The mandatory deadline for the installation of reflective regulatory signs has been pushed back by about a year. All regulatory signs being replaced are reflective. The sign inventory prepared by Glenn Engineering establishes a prioritized replacement schedule. Ms. Marcinko, Mr. Clark and Mr. Focareta will be meeting to develop a listing of the signs to be replaced.

Ms. Macklin commented that she had noticed some deterioration in the slurry seal and will forward a list of locations. She inquired as to whether a new street sweeper needs to be purchased. Ms. Marcinko commented that the sweeper is seven years old and most likely will not need to be replaced in the near future. Ms. Macklin commented that repairs to guiderails and handrails are a safety issue.

Ms. Marcinko provided an update on the staffing in the DPW Department and loss of two employees who are retiring.

Ms. Macklin commented that Council had discussed alternate financing options for the Eastridge Library Branch purchase.

Ms. Macklin commented on the need to paint the interior of the Municipal Building. Council has discussed the need to update audio/visual equipment in Council Chambers as well as an updated configuration of the seating to facilitate use of the space for presentations and workshops. Ms. Evans noted that this will most likely not be a priority in 2013. Ms. Marcinko commented that signage in the building should be reviewed and updated.

**Borough of Wilkinsburg
Council Work Session Meeting
December 5, 2012**

Ms. Moore commented on the number of unsecured properties in the Borough and the need for a plan to secure those properties.

Ms. Evans expressed a need to hold record property owners responsible for demolition of their own properties. Ms. Marcinko commented that the CDBG demolition list was provided to Sean Gramz, Code Enforcement Director, to identify those properties for which we have a responsible owner.

Ms. Moore commented on four properties in the 900 block of Hill Avenue that have been vacant for years with a realtor's sign in front of those properties. Mr. Gramz has instructed his staff to utilize those types of leads to attempt to contact property owners.

Ms. Trice commented on commercial vehicles parking on Laketon Road. Ms. Marcinko explained that Code Enforcement can enforce removal of vehicles on private property but the Police Department must enforce those parking issues on public rights-of-way. Junked vehicles on private property can be enforced by the Code Enforcement Department.

President Cohn suggested that the Police Department should look into officer certification to enforce vehicle weight and safety regulations.

President Cohn questioned the status of the private asset attachment issue. Ms. Marcinko stated that an opinion from legal counsel has been requested. President Cohn will follow-up with Mike Witherel, Borough Solicitor.

Ms. Evans commented on the issue of delinquent property owners receiving Section 8 vouchers and that this matter should be a priority for next year. Ms. Macklin believes the County is responsible for withdrawing the voucher.

Ms. Macklin commented on the need to increase Business Privilege Tax collections.

Ms. Evans commented that the tenant registration process needs to be improved. Ms. Marcinko advised that she will be meeting with staff in the next week to discuss the process.

Ms. Evans commented on the review of delinquent tax collection. Ms. Marcinko stated that she will put a notice together to send to Portnoff Law Associates sometime in February.

Ms. Evans commented on the importance of the review of the library organizational structure, the traffic circulation study, residential parking review and maintenance of street trees. For 2012, the priority for the Shade Tree Committee is pruning as they have not identified any hazardous trees to be removed.

**Borough of Wilkinsburg
Council Work Session Meeting
December 5, 2012**

Vice-President McCarthy-Johnson sees a need for painting of yellow lines to better control parking in residential areas.

Ms. Macklin questioned whether there was a two-year maintenance plan for the PENNVEST TreeVitalize Project. Ms. Marcinko responded that there is. Ms. Macklin commented that there were different standards for plantings and removals for upper Penn Avenue and the business district. Ms. Marcinko advised that the tree work on upper Penn Ave was part of a Municipal Tree Replacement Program with Duquesne Light. The goal of the TreeVitalize project is to reduce stormwater runoff.

Ms. Macklin commented on the need to remove the red brick from sidewalks on Penn Avenue and Wood Street. Ms. Evans commented that an assessment was made of sidewalks on Penn Ave and Wood Street and, relatively speaking, the sidewalks are not in poor condition.

Ms. Macklin commented on the Finance Department assuming the finance functions of the Library. Ms. Marcinko advised that Mr. Egler and Ms. Jennings will be meeting to discuss the finance functions which are performed by Library staff. She believes Council should discuss the issue.

Ms. Macklin questioned whether the grant funding for the Community Art and Civic Design Commission had been expended and what staff members attend those meetings. Ms. Marcinko responded that the funding will be fully expended by year-end and that she and Mr. Gramz attend the meetings as ex-officio members. Ms. Trice questioned whether Ms. Evans attends the meetings and was advised that Ms. Evans has been appointed to the Commission to represent the Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation.

Ms. Macklin commented that the Planning Commission is reviewing the solar energy zoning ordinance.

Vice-President McCarthy-Johnson commented that there will be a workshop on December 10 at the Landmarks Housing Resource Center to discuss LEED certification.

Ms. Macklin commented on the email from the Police Chief regarding the MDT purchase. Ms. Marcinko stated that the matter is being handled internally by staff.

President Cohn commented that he has been trying to work with Mayor Thompson to work on structural communication issues. He commented on a clear disconnect between the Police Department and other departments.

**Borough of Wilkesburg
Council Work Session Meeting
December 5, 2012**

Ms. Macklin commented that she had requested a list of goals and objectives several months ago for 2013-2014. She is glad to see it being discussed and commented on the need for discussion regarding personnel issues and timeliness in handling those.

Ms. Macklin questioned when the matter of contributions to health care costs by non-union, management employees will be discussed. President Cohn stated that those discussions should take place in conjunction with contract renewals.

Ms. Macklin inquired about the upgrades to the Freedom System. Ms. Marcinko advised that these issues are being worked through by staff and the need to continued on-site visits is being evaluated.

Ms. Macklin inquired as to plans for an employee holiday party. Ms. Ervin questioned whether it is appropriate to use Borough funds for a party.

Ms. Macklin commented on the need to recognize recent retirees. Ms. Marcinko stated that certificates of appreciation will be prepared for presentation in January.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, on motion by Ms. Trice, second by Ms. Evans the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:54 PM.

Vanessa McCarthy-Johnson, Council Vice-President