

**BOROUGH OF WILKINSBURG COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Planning Session**  
**June 6, 2012**

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Cohn called the meeting to order at approximately 6:39 PM in Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building, 605 Ross Ave., Wilkinsburg, PA. President Cohn welcomed everyone.

President Cohn commented that Council work sessions are intended to discuss items proposed for action at a later time.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

President Cohn announced that a prayer vigil will be held Saturday, June 9, 2012 at 12:00 PM, 748 Wallace Avenue to denounce crime and violence among youth in the community.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Marion E. Wilkins – 601 Hampton Ave.** – (Councilwoman Eugenia Moore read a letter to Council from Ms. Wilkins) – Ms. Wilkins requested a review of the current street sweeping schedule which includes Hampton Avenue, Hay Street and the Third Ward. She requested that street sweeping for Hay Street and Hampton Avenue be performed on different days and that there be a two hour window from the posted times before tickets are issued. She requested that tickets be issued prior to the posted time as opposed to following the posted time.

**Arthur Hicks – 571 Princeton Blvd.** – Requested consideration of a 15 mph speed limit and flashing sign at the intersection of Traymore and Marlboro Avenues and suggested a traffic barrier to deter a head on collision. He commented on two houses with suspected drug activity. Chief Coleman took note of the addresses provided and will follow-up.

**Valerie Winston – 1443 Foliage St.** – Commented on the condition of the Borough steps from Foliage Street to Elm Street. There is a lot of debris, the railings are missing and

there is no lighting. She also commented on garbage being dumped at Grant Way and Center Street. There is also an overgrowth of weeds that needs to be cut back.

**Betty Brown – 1460 Foliage St.** – Commented on overgrowth at Ewing and Center.

**Leonard Jones – 1909 Remington Dr.** – Commented that there are five utility poles in the alley behind his house, four of which have lighting and one which does not (Triangle Way). He also commented on the pillars which are public property and one that was damaged by a car accident last Thursday. Ms. Marcinko will follow up.

## FINANCE

### **1. Discussion – Fraud Policy.**

Mr. Lefebvre commented on the two issues for discussion. The auditor has provided a standard fraud policy for adoption by the Borough. The need for the policy was listed in the 2011 management letter. Ms. Macklin questioned whether the policy is related to personnel and whether it should be included in the employee policy manual. She questioned whether there is currently a policy in place relating to fraud. Mr. Egler explained that recommendations for the adoption of fraud policies were the result of the Enron financial issues back in 2001. Mr. Egler will check with the auditors to see what has been adopted in other municipalities. Ms. Evans commented that such policies are commonplace and recommended moving forward. Ms. Marcinko commented that the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) application to public sector accounting has led to higher standards for municipal government accounting practices. Ms. Macklin commented that Council should ensure that the proposed policy does not conflict with any policies currently in place or terms of the collective bargaining agreements. President Cohn commented that too much time should not be spent on this issue as the Borough has been the victim of theft in the past and this matter should not be taken lightly. He further commented that the auditors' recommendations, findings and observations were not taken seriously by prior administrations. Ms. Macklin commented that the Borough received Excellence in Accounting awards from 1999-2006. Ms. Marcinko clarified that the awards were given to municipalities which prepared a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report which is an optional financial report which may be prepared in addition to the required Audited Financial Statements. Receipt of the award did not reflect good financial reporting, standing, policies or procedures. The awards were given to encourage municipalities to prepare the additional report. Mr. Egler agreed that the Borough should work on clearing as many of the findings and observations as possible. Mayor Thompson questioned whether there would be one policy for Finance and one for personnel. The intent is to have one policy to cover all employees and elected officials.

### **2. Discussion – Fund balance assignments – GASB 54.**

Mr. Lefebvre explained the GASB 54 Standard and that it will be on the next agenda for action. President Cohn questioned whether the Borough is required to adopt the Standard and Ms. Marcinko replied yes. Ms. Macklin commented that the year-to-date April

financial report showed real estate collection approximately \$1,000,000 lower than last year at the same time. Mr. Egler clarified that the discrepancy was due to the timing of a lump sum payment received in early May and that payment will be indicated in the May reports. He stated that the tax bills were not late in going out and that it may be a reflection of people choosing to pay later.

Ms. Trice questioned the Borough's allocation for Art in the Park. She questioned the amount contributed by the WCDC. Ms. Evans stated that the WCDC paid for all advertising and spent close to \$4,000 on same last year.

Ms. Ervin questioned Municipal Service Fee receipts. Mr. Egler reported that receipts are actually slightly ahead of last year.

Ms. Trice questioned the status in selecting a delinquent tax collector. President Cohn would like to have another meeting with Portnoff Law Associates as his questions had related specifically to fees charged. He suggested that another conversation would be prudent and that it is his impression that the School Board has no intention to move to another collector. Ms. McCarthy-Johnson commented that her concerns relate to how they deal with residents and her impression that Portnoff Law Associates is not lenient on payment schedules for residents living on fixed incomes. President Cohn commented that a switch to a different collector may result in client-based (Borough) fees. Ms. Goodman commented that she would support another conversation with Portnoff Law Associates and issuing an RFP to assess the Borough's options. Ms. Evans expressed concern with having two different collectors for the Borough and suggested that the School Board may be interested in looking at proposals. Ms. Evans also mentioned that the Borough should work with the School District on various strategies in dealing with tax delinquent properties, i.e., delinquent tax collection, sheriff's sales, etc.

Ms. Macklin stated that her budget concerns relate to the revenue side and inquired whether a decision has been made on PLA's ability to collect delinquent taxes under Act 45. Ms. Marcinko will follow-up.

Ms. Trice inquired as to the contract term with PLA and commented that the Borough need not have the same collector as the Wilkinsburg School District.

Ms. Evans suggested September 5, 2012 as a better date to meet with PLA.

Mayor John Thompson inquired about a discussion last week regarding the COPs Grant funding. Mr. Egler responded that two officers were budgeted under the 2012 budget. One being a replacement and one being a new hire under the COPs grant. Ms. Macklin questioned whether reimbursement has been received. Mr. Egler responded that the reimbursement request has not yet been made and will be soon. Ms. Macklin commented that there has been no movement on the hiring of part-time officers which were budgeted.

## CAPITAL PLANNING

### **1. Discussion – Projects to be authorized for bid funded out of Capital Improvement Fund.**

President Cohn asked the Borough Engineer to speak to Council about the street paving program. David Gilliland informed Council that the slurry seal application is not an appropriate treatment for Findley Drive. The additional cost to pave Findley Drive as opposed to slurry seal is approximately \$80,000. He recommends taking Findley Drive out of the slurry seal contract and adding to the paving contract. President Cohn questioned whether there are any other streets which could be deferred from the paving contract to a later date to which Mr. Gilliland responded no. Ms. Moore commented on the poor condition of Findley Dr.

A motion was made by Ms. Macklin, second by Ms. Trice, to remove Findley Drive from the Slurry Seal Project.

**All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried**

Mayor Thompson inquired about South Avenue paving and the sink hole. Mr. Gilliland explained that the sink hole is the result of a broken pipe that will be replaced as part of the paving project scheduled for July.

Mr. Gilliland commented on buses using local streets and suggested that Council may be able to take action to restrict bus travel on streets which are not designated bus routes and limit their travel to State-maintained roads.

Ms. Evans commented on the capital planning process and projects for the municipal building – automatic front doors, columns, air conditioning, exterior painting and adding interior painting. Ms. Moore questioned whether consideration was given to Police Department renovations. Ms. Evans advised that she does not have cost estimates for same. Ms. Macklin commented that the prior Capital Planning Committee had \$50,000 allocated for those improvements. Ms. Evans commented that the Borough has not adopted a formal capital planning policy and process. She stated that the list presented was a short list created from the comprehensive list which has been prepared over the past several months and presented to Council on several occasions. The projects on the list have been previously discussed by Council. Ms. Evans commented that Council should adopt a capital improvement policy and five year plan. Ms. Macklin commented on the need to have estimates for work needed to obtain accreditation. President Cohn stated that he spoke to Chief Coleman before the meeting and that a plumbing issue needs to be evaluated and assurance obtained that it has been fixed before spending any money on improvements. He further stated that the need for the improvements should be determined and evaluated. Dave Gilliland and Roy Clark will evaluate the plumbing issue. Ms. Macklin questioned the accreditation requirements for physical plant. Ms. Marcinko explained that the accreditation requirements only relate to the health/safety of

prisoners and not the health/safety of personnel. Delta Development will be providing the standard requirements for accreditation. Mayor Thompson commented on the work which needs to be done. President Cohn commented that the Borough needs to verify that there are no further flooding problems in the basement, determine what the requirements are for accreditation, identify the best use of the space and move forward. The area has been in poor condition for at least 6 years. Ms. Trice commented that the police department renovations are more important than the other projects proposed. Mayor Thompson commented that the locker room is still being utilized. Chief Coleman contended that the basement is still receiving water. Ms. Marcinko advised that Mr. Clark checked the basement after the two most recent significant rain events and no water was visible. Ms. Evans stated that estimates need to be obtained. Ms. Marcinko stated that two estimates had been obtained for two different scopes of work and those costs were approximately \$26,000 and \$52,000. Given that it is expected that the costs will exceed the bidding threshold of \$18,500, a scope of work needs to be developed and the project must be competitively bid. Ms. Macklin commented that the Chief and Mayor should not be expected to design the space and that some type of professional assistance should be provided. President Cohn commented on the need to make sure the space is dry and that it stays dry. He further commented that the Police Department needs to communicate its needs for the space to Council. Mayor Thompson commented that he is able to define what they want to do with the space and what needs to be done to improve safety but professional assistance is needed.

Ms. Evans commented on the process followed to provide a short list for capital projects. The comprehensive list has been distributed to Council on several occasions and input has been requested. Ms. Evans commented that low interest road paving loans through PA DOT could be explored as an alternate funding source.

Ms. Moore commented on the importance of the automatic doors.

Ms. Marcinko informed Council of the need to explore alternate funding sources.

President Cohn proposed proceeding with the installation of the automatic doors, air conditioning on the first floor and decorative lighting. Ms. Evans commented on the ongoing safety issues with the condition of the wiring of the lampposts.

A motion was made by Ms. McCarthy-Johnson, second by Ms. Goodman, to authorize the preparation of bid packages for the installation of automatic doors, air conditioning for the first floor of the Municipal Building and repairs to the decorative lighting.

**All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried**

Ms. Macklin inquired about the status of the repairs to the Princeton Park pillars which was proposed by the prior Capital Planning Committee with the cost being less than \$5,000. She stated that she would like to see the work done and requested it be added to the immediate list. Ms. Evans commented that many of the projects previously proposed

would not constitute a capital project under a standard capital asset schedule and further commented on the need for Council to establish and adopt a policy for same.

Mayor Thompson asked Council to consider a motion to restrict buses from travelling on local roadways which are not a designated bus route. He asked that the legislation be prepared by the Solicitor and provided to Council for action at the next meeting.

### GENERAL MATTERS

- 1. Adopting Ordinance No. 2893 – Establishing Handicap Parking Space – 616 Hampton Ave.**

**Moved:** Ms. Evans

**Second by:** Ms. McCarthy-Johnson

**All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried**

- 2. Approving street closure for MADDAD's Father's Day Event and to accommodate the Pitt Mobile Science Lab. 0700-0900 No parking on Center from Whitney to Ramsey Streets and 0700-1600 no parking on Center between Ramsey and Woodworth Streets.**

**Moved:** Mr. Lefebvre

**Second by:** Ms. Goodman

**All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried**

- 3. Discussion – Applying for ARLE Grant Funds to carry out Phase One of the proposed Wilkinsburg Traffic Study.**

Ms. Macklin commented that she sent questions to Ms. Marcinko and Ms. Evans regarding this application. Ms. Evans responded that she had replied to Ms. Macklin's questions. Ms. Evans commented that the scope of work for this project had been discussed earlier in the year under other funding opportunities. The scope of work proposed is the same and the only change from what was previously discussed is that the Borough would need to be the applicant for this particular program. Ms. Evans commented on the scope of work and that Phase II of the project will address the concerns raised by Ms. Macklin regarding encouraging the motorists that currently travel through Wilkinsburg to patronize the business district. Phase I is a precursor to Phase II. Ms. Evans read the project description which deals mostly with traffic flow. Ms. Trice questioned who would perform the study. Ms. Evans responded that a RFP would be issued. Ms. Trice asked if the police department would be consulted. Ms. Evans commented that those issues are addressed in the study proposal. Ms. Goodman commented that the project is a good idea.

**Moved:** Ms. Goodman

**Second by:** Ms. McCarthy-Johnson

**All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried**

Chief Coleman distributed a report from the Police Department to Council. President Cohn asked Council to review the document at their convenience.

Ms. Moore spoke about the condition of the central area of Wilkinsburg. President Cohn suggested that if there are specific issues that they be shared with Ms. Marcinko to forward to Code Enforcement.

Ms. McCarthy-Johnson announced the Wilkinsburg High School graduation will be held on Friday June 8, 2012.

Ms. Moore announced the athletic awards ceremony was well-attended. She informed Council that the Library Book Sale has been postponed. She announced that June 11, 2012 kicks off the Wilkinsburg Library Summer Reading Program. The summer reading program will continue through August 17, 2012. A program with Robert Henckel is being sponsored by the Library June 11, 2012 from 1:30-2:30 PM on the topic of Money and Life: Debt.

Mayor Thompson announced the recent Pittsburgh Foundation tour of Wilkinsburg and that participants were impressed with the work Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation is doing in Wilkinsburg. The Mayor announced the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Community Festival to be held on July 1, 2012 at Hunter Park. Mayor Thompson announced that the Fox television show Kitchen Nightmares filmed at Jean's Southern Cuisine. Finally, the Mayor announced that Frank Collins, a Wilkinsburg resident, will be carrying the torch for the Olympics and that there was an article in the New Pittsburgh Courier.

Ms. Evans announced that there will be a Nine Mile Run Watershed Association and TreeVitalize meeting on June 12, 2012 to review the plan for the Penn Avenue tree planting.

President Cohn announced that Council will be holding an executive session following adjournment to discuss personnel issues.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business, on motion by Ms. McCarthy-Johnson, second by Ms. Trice, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:04 PM.

Borough of Wilkinsburg  
Planning Session Council Meeting Minutes  
June 6, 2012

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Jason Cohn, President