WILKINSBURG BOROUGH
Council Work Session
September 3, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

President McCarthy-Johnson called the meeting to order at approximately 6:32 p.m. in Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building, 605 Ross Avenue, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called to establish a quorum. Present were Mr. Lefebvre, Mr. Taiani (via phone), Ms. Moore, Ms. Trice, Ms. Grannemann, Mr. Shattuck, Ms. Macklin, and President McCarthy-Johnson. Borough Manager Marla P. Marcinko was also present. Ms. Garrett and Mayor John Thompson were not present for roll call. 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 McCarthy-Johnson stated that public comment will be taken at the beginning of the meeting on agenda items only. Public comment will be open to non-agenda items after business has been conducted. Public comment is limited to 5 minutes per speaker.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Andre L. Scott 561 Ardmore Blvd. – Mr. Scott is legislative assistant to State Representative Ed Gainey; on behalf of the Representative, he thanked Council for its work in seeking funds from Allegheny County for emergency demolition. Mr. Scott asked how the structures would be prioritized. Ms. Marcinko responded that 19 properties have been identified, with two of those constituting immediate threats to public safety. It will take several months to obtain the funding from the County. The Borough will utilize its own funds to demolish the two most dangerous structures. Ms. Marcinko, in collaboration with Borough Engineer Dave Gilliland, Code Enforcement Director Dan Freidson and Administrative Assistant Cindy Bahn, prioritized the remaining 17 structures, using several factors. This list will be submitted to the County.

CAPITAL PLANNING

(Ms. Garrett arrived at approximately 6:37 p.m.)

Mr. Shattuck referred to an updated report on the status of capital improvement projects which was distributed to Council members. He provided the following report:

- The Ferguson Playground Project has experienced some delays and the ribbon-cutting ceremony has been postponed. The project is now expected to be the middle of September.

(Mayor Thompson arrived at approximately 6:40 p.m.)

Ms. Marcinko reported on updates to the Capital Planning Projects spreadsheet:

- The final costs for the Police Department renovations were updated.
- Fencing at the DPW garage is complete, and the figure for the final cost has been updated. The project was completed under budget.
- A new scope of work is being prepared by the Borough Engineer for the salt storage building.
- The dump truck purchases will be for (2) 2.5 ton trucks as opposed to (1) 5-ton and (1) 2.5 ton truck. The final cost, which will be under budget, has been updated.
- Parking meter updates were budgeted for 2014, but a plan for this project has not been finalized.
- The Street Sign Replacement Project is in process and the project costs have been updated; these are also under budget. Ms. Macklin stated that she understood that all signs were to be replaced. Ms. Marcinko responded that the project was only to replace missing and unreadable signs.
- The figure for the Borough's local share for the Ferguson Park/Playground Project was updated. Total project costs are approximately $175,000. An $89,000 grant was received for the project. Ms. Marcinko noted that a funding source for the Borough's local share has not yet been identified. The $40,000 for contracted maintenance costs included in the general fund budget have not been spent. The Parks Safety Improvement Project was completed; those costs, nearly $60,000, were incurred in 2013. Ms. Macklin questioned whether Pittsburgh Urban Christian School contributed to the project. Ms. Marcinko stated that PUCS had pledged $5,000 but does not believe those monies were received.
- Ms. Marcinko stated that final decisions have not been made on the following projects which were budgeted in 2014: tractor purchase, parking lots, decorative lighting, and relocation of Code Enforcement Offices. There is approximately $84,000 remaining in the Capital Improvement fund. Mr. Shattuck commented that $150,000 was budgeted for parks in 2013 which included $90,000 for Ferguson Park and $60,000 for maintenance. Mr. Shattuck stated that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recommends replacement of the trash receptacles in all parks and he requested input from Council. Ms. Moore questioned the cost of the containers.

(Mr. Taiani arrived at approximately 6:42 p.m.)

Mr. Taiani requested a description of the style of the receptacle and whether they would be mounted. Mr. Shattuck responded that they will be of the same style as those that are installed in the business district. The installation cost for each receptacle is $105 and the cost of the receptacle is $1187.93. It was estimated that

20 receptacles are needed in the parks, plus one at the Borough building and one at the Eastridge Branch Library. Ms. Macklin noted the need for water fountains in all Wilkinsburg parks and requested this be included in the 2015 budget. Ms. Grannemann questioned whether there is money in the budget for this purpose. Mr. Shattuck stated that Hunter Park has a water feature and Ferguson Park/Playground will have a water fountain installed. The current priority is trash receptacles due to the unsightly and poor condition of the existing containers. Monies are available under the recreation contracted services line item. Remaining bond funds could be used for the Borough's local share of the Ferguson Playground Project. Ms. Macklin commented that she does not want to forego maintenance. Ms. Marcinko and Mr. Shattuck explained that the monies budgeted for maintenance were intended to be utilized for weekly, contracted maintenance of all parks, which did not occur in 2014. The Playground Safety Improvements Project was paid for out of the Capital Improvement Fund.

- Mr. Shattuck questioned whether analysis had been performed for a new bond issue. Ms. Marcinko stated this will be part of the 2015 budget process.
- It was the consensus of Council to proceed with the purchase of trash receptacles.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mayor Thompson commented on concerns relating to the establishment of an eligibility list for hiring of police officers through the civil service process. He stated that he had a discussion with the solicitor to the Borough's Civil Service Commission who advised that the Borough can hire part-time police officers outside of the civil service process and suggested that the process be started. Ms. Macklin stated that she has been trying to get more police officers hired since 2010. Ms. Marcinko commented on the establishment of the current eligibility list, which was certified by the Civil Service Commission in January, 2014 and contained 4 candidates. From that list, two candidates were hired. The list is valid for one year. Ms. Macklin commented that she had thought that a new list could not be established at this time. She stated that monies have been budgeted since 2010 for the hiring of part-time officers. She stated that she understood that part-time officers could not be hired outside of the civil service process. She noted that under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, part-time officers can be utilized for thirty-two hours per week. Ms. Marcinko stated that she will speak with the Solicitor to the Civil Service Commission to obtain clarification prior to proceeding. She does not believe that the hiring of part-time officers is permitted outside of the Civil Service process. Mayor Thompson stated that the collective bargaining agreement allows for the hiring of part-time patrol officers and establishes that they are eligible to take the civil service examination at the time of testing. Ms. Macklin referred to the Management Review contained in the Five-Year Plan and Financial Management Study from 2008 which contained a recommendation for the hiring of part-time police officers. Mayor Thompson stated that the collective bargaining agreement establishes a process for the scheduling of part-time officers. It was the consensus of Council to move forward with the hiring of part-time police officers.

Mayor Thompson provided the following report:

- The Police Department will be participating in rapid deployment activities with departments in other jurisdictions. Ms. McCarthy-Johnson questioned whether an officer has been identified to perform the safety inspections on trucks.
- The FBI would like to recognize the officers who were involved in the large drug bust which took place several months ago.
- Officers will be fitted for new vests and Tasers on September 22, 2014. Mr. Taiani questioned whether the vests would be worn internally or externally, and expressed concern that officers wearing external vests appear too militarized. The Mayor stated that the main objective is officer safety. Ms. Macklin questioned whether consideration has been given to the installation of in-car cameras. The Mayor stated that the Chief is exploring funding opportunities for same. Ms. Macklin questioned whether vest cameras are being considered. President McCarthy-Johnson stated that she would like the Borough to explore this further. Mr. Taiani suggested that officers become trained in the use of video cameras so cameras are not turned off during the arrest of an actor. Audio recording during an arrest was also mentioned. In response to a question from Ms. Trice, the Mayor responded that K-9 officers will also be fitted with vests.
- A thirty-one year old person who was reported missing was found in Las Vegas. The individual chose to move from the area.
- The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra will be performing on September 22, 2014, 8:00 p.m. at Deliverance Baptist Church. The theme is "How Music and Spirituality Relate".
- Kentucky Fried Chicken will hold a Day of Giving in Wilkinsburg. They will be distributing 10,000 free dinners from their store on Penn Avenue in Wilkinsburg. Mayor Thompson is working with the store to secure meals for seniors and shut-ins. He requested Council's help with distribution to those segments of the community. The event is planned for October 23, 2014 from 11:00-4:00 p.m.
- School Crossing Guards are needed and Mayor Thompson asked for Council's help to get the word out. Ms. Macklin questioned how the pay rate compares to neighboring communities. Mr. Shattuck noted that Swissvale provides benefits for its guards. Ms. Macklin questioned whether the guards can be used for other functions outside of their regular crossing guard duties.
- The Department is in need of a vehicle for Parking Enforcement. Monies were budgeted in 2013.

1. **Award contract to Eveready Contracting in the amount of $26,000 for the demolition of 1421 Mill Street and 709 Wood Street.**

Moved: Ms. Macklin **Second:** Mr. Lefebvre

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

GENERAL MATTERS

1. **Approving Resolution No. 14-072 – Application for Emergency Demolition Funds – CDBG.**

Moved: Mr. Lefebvre **Second:** Ms. Moore

Ms. Trice commented on an abandoned structure on the list for demolition which is located next to an occupied unit. She commented that an "X" is marked on the outside of the structure, indicating that the fire department will not enter the building. She questioned whether the Borough had spoken with Pittsburgh Bureau of Fire regarding structures with this designation. Ms. Marcinko stated that she had not spoken with PBF but has a list of the properties marked with an "X" which she received from the former Chief of the Wilkinsburg Fire Department. Ms. Trice requested a copy of that list and stated that greater priority should be given to those structures which are marked. Ms. Marcinko commented that this was discussed and the likelihood of fire at the structure in question is relatively low as there is no electric service, and a missing floor discourages trespassers. The prioritized list will be submitted to Council once it is received from the Borough Engineer.

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

2. **Approving Resolution No. 14-073 – Establishing Delinquent Tax Collection Fees.**

Moved: Ms. Grannemann **Second:** Mr. Taiani

President McCarthy-Johnson questioned the fees and costs associated with the collection of the MSF. Ms. Marcinko stated that the fees and costs contained in the resolution only relate to delinquent tax collection.

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

3. **Approving Resolution No. 14-074 – Preliminary and final approval – SSA Land Development application.**

Moved: Mr. Lefebvre **Second:** Mr. Shattuck

President McCarthy-Johnson noted that she is pleased to see this development on a long-vacant, high profile site. Mr. Bruce Beaver, property owner, described the project which includes the construction of a two-story office building. Ms. Grannemann questioned the proposed use for the building the company will be vacating. Mr. Beaver stated that it will be leased. Ms. Macklin questioned whether there will be employment opportunities for local residents and Mr. Beaver stated that there are fifteen to twenty positions in the monitoring center, which is currently located in Mt. Washington.

Yes: Ms. Garrett, Ms. Trice, Ms. Moore, Ms. Grannemann, Mr. Shattuck, Ms. Macklin, Mr. Lefebvre, President McCarthy-Johnson

Abstain: Mr. Taiani

Motion carried: 8:0 with 1 abstention

4. **Approving Resolution No. 14-075 – 2014 Rock Salt Bid.**

Moved: Mr. Lefebvre **Second:** Ms. Macklin

In response to a question from Ms. Moore, Ms. Marcinko stated that this contract only includes the purchase of salt. Mr. Taiani commented that a colder winter than last year's is predicted and questioned whether a sufficient supply of salt will be available. Ms. Marcinko stated that the supply will be managed equally as well as it was in the 2013/2014 winter season. Wilkinsburg was one of the few communities that did not exceed its estimated purchase quantities, and did not run out of salt.

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

5. **Approving Resolution No. 14-076 – Approving VPRP Application – 567 Ardmore Blvd.**

Moved: Mr. Shattuck **Second:** Mr. Lefebvre

Mr. Shattuck commented that this application demonstrates an exceptional use of the VPRP process. The individuals acquiring the property are twenty-eight year residents of the Borough. They are making a significant investment in a dilapidated structure, which is next door to their primary residence.

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Ms. Trice commented on the Conflict of Interest form that was included with the application. Ms. Marcinko stated that the form was signed by Ms. Bahn, Administrative Assistant, who is a Borough Official.

6. **Approving Resolution No. 14-077 – Removing A.B. Carl – Library Board.**

Moved: Mr. Lefebvre **Second:** Ms. Moore

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

7. **Approving Resolution No. 14-078 – Approving amendment to MOA – Lincoln Highway signs.**

Moved: Ms. Grannemann **Second:** Mr. Shattuck

Mr. Taiani questioned whether the signs will be the same as those posted in the White Oak area. Ms. Marcinko stated that the design of the sign is standard throughout the State. The Borough currently has eight of these signs posted.

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

8. **Approving Resolution No. 14-079 – Accepting the resignation of Patrol Officer Joshua Martinelli.**

Ms. Macklin informed Council that Mr. Martinelli lives in Penn Hills and has accepted a patrol officer position with the Municipality. Mr. Martinelli has been employed by Wilkinsburg since January, 2014. Mr. Taiani questioned whether there is a policy in effect to recoup equipment and outfitting costs for officers who leave the Borough's employment within a year of being hired. Ms. Marcinko stated that uniforms and training costs are terms and conditions of employment and will be bargained with the union during negotiations place for a successor collective bargaining agreement.

President McCarthy-Johnson noted that Wilkinsburg High School football team won their first home game. She stated that they will next play Clairton on Friday and asked for Council's support of the team.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Atkins – 2021 Kendon Dr. West – Presented an application permit for street closure for 2021-2075 Kendon Drive West on September 6, 2014 from 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Ms. Atkins is the block watch captain for this neighborhood.

Approving Street Closure 2021-2075 Kendon Drive West on September 6, 2014 from 1:00 -7:00 p.m., contingent upon approval of Chief of Police, Ophelia Coleman.

Moved: Ms. Macklin **Second:** Mr. Lefebvre

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Andre Scott – 561 Ardmore Blvd. – Mr. Scott commented on maintenance issues at 561 Ardmore Blvd. President McCarthy-Johnson stated that the property in question is private property and all adjoining property owners share equally in the maintenance costs.

Kate Luxemburg – 432 Rebecca Avenue – Ms. Luxemburg questioned the status of a VPRP application for 431 Biddle Avenue. The proper process is to send applications directly to the County. Mr. Shattuck noted that the application should be updated on the Borough's website. Ms. Luxemburg questioned the responsibility of the new delinquent tax collector, MBM Collections, LLC, for collecting fees owed to Portnoff. Ms. Marcinko responded that MBM Collections, LLC is responsible for collecting those fees and remitting them to PLA. In response to a question from Ms. Trice, Ms. Marcinko stated that PLA ceased collecting for the Borough on August 18, 2014. The files were turned over to MBM Collections, LLC on August 28, 2014.

William Steele – 1601 Penn Avenue – Representing Ms. Jennings of 2428 Laketon Road regarding a sidewalk that has heaved from tree roots. Ms. Jennings was not aware of her responsibility for the maintenance of the sidewalk. Mr. Steele referred to the Shade Tree Ordinance and requested Council allocate funds for the removal of the tree as it is a public safety hazard. Ms. Marcinko stated that this is a common issue throughout the Borough, and that healthy trees cannot be removed. There may be an option for removal of the sidewalk and installation of an alternative surface to eliminate the tripping hazard. Ms. Marcinko will have the Borough arborist inspect and provide a recommendation.

Ms. Garrett announced she will be hosting a Community Conversation on September 24, 2014 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Eastridge Library. State Representative Ed Gainey's office will provide light refreshments for the event. All residents are invited to attend the conversation which will focus on issues specific to Ward One. She noted that the speakers for the event will be Ward One Councilwomen Paige Trice and Eugenia Moore, Police Chief Ophelia Coleman, and Block Watch Captain Linda Atkins

Ms. Macklin received a complaint regarding customer service relating to a request to cut down vegetation and repair a storm sewer grate.

Gayle P. Hill 1723 ½ Clark St. – Described for Council the condition of dead branches across from her residence and the response of a DPW employee toward her.

After recounting her conversation with the employee, which included extending the middle finger of her right hand, Mr. Taiani requested that Ms. Hill be barred from further speaking. Ms. Hill continued describing the conversations between herself and Borough employees relating to her request to have vines and overgrowth cut down on a privately-owned, vacant lot.

Ms. Moore thanked Mr. Shattuck for transportation to Council meetings during her recovery following surgery.

Mr. Shattuck announced that the Whitney Park Master Planning session will be held on October 16, 2014, and the goal is to obtain input from residents as to what amenities they would like to see in the park. He noted that conceptual drawings will be a part of the process. This meeting will be held in lieu of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board monthly meeting. The Ferguson Park/Playground Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will take place on October 17, 2014. The Frank Conrad Historical Marker will be re-erected on October 17, at 11:00 a.m., at the corner of South Trenton and Penn Avenues. The PA Historical and Museum Commission will be attending the official ceremony.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, President McCarthy-Johnson adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Vanessa McCarthy-Johnson
President Council