

MINUTES OF THE BOROUGH OF MONTOURSVILLE

January 13th, 2014

The regular meeting of the Montoursville Borough Council was called to order by Council President Ronald Shearer at 7:00 PM, with the following answering roll call: Mark Tillson, Dennis Holt, Rosemary Holmes, David Moyer and Christopher Lucas.

The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

VISITORS AND PUBLIC COMMENT – nothing at this time.

NEW BUSINESS –

ORDINANCE – TAX LEVY – Council President, Mr. Shearer asked for discussions regarding the Tax Levy Ordinance. Council member, Mr. Holt stated that he had some thoughts and distributed a spreadsheet to members. He explained to council members his ideas for future capital spending and changes to the current general and water fund budgets; he would be requesting all water monies be removed from the general fund; allowing the general fund to stand on its own. He stated the bad news is in order to implement his ideas would mean deleting a police vehicle, cutting department spending and increasing taxes. Council member, Mr. Holt stated along with the changes he had spoke about he would entertain a .7 Mil increase in order to generate \$180,000.00 and he would not increase taxes without serious budgetary cuts. He said over the last four years the spending is unsustainable. Council President, Mr. Shearer stated that the last four years are over and taxes should have been raised fifteen, ten and five years ago. He said that anyone that runs a business knows that you cannot run a business without raising prices. He went on to say that the school district raises taxes all the time; a little every year. We have not done that and it has to be done. Council President, Mr. Shearer stated that it amazes him that people think that the borough can go on forever and not raise taxes. We may have not raised taxes in twenty years, maybe more. Council member, Mr. Moyer asked Council member, Mr. Holt how there can be department cuts with union contracts in place. Council member, Mr. Holt stated it doesn't necessarily have to be employees; however there is no contract that states we must keep everybody that is under contract. He noted there are a lot of areas that can be cut. Council President, Mr. Shearer stated that we must start with tonight's meeting to address the tax ordinance; it must be done. A discussion took place regarding area tax rates noting that if taxes were raised to three mills; they would still be one of the lowest. Council President, Mr. Shearer suggested the Budget Committee meet to discuss the budget and bring back their suggestions to council. All agreed however it was agreed that currently the tax millage needs to be addressed. It was noted that the budget could be adjusted throughout the year. Council member, Mrs. Holmes stated considering taxpayers have the value they have and taxes have not been raised for so many years; she feels very comfortable with a .7 mill increase. Council member, Mr. Moyer stated he would have to agree with Council member, Mrs. Holmes. Council member, Mr. Lucas stated that he had reviewed the figures from the past several years and being a young dad, just starting out, he would have thought that raising taxes would be that last thing that he would do. Unfortunately, without raising taxes for such a long period of time; we are so much lower in our tax rates that our neighboring borough's. He stated if we raise taxes; we owe it to the residents to make cuts and was in agreement with council that raising taxes was needed. Council member, Mr. Moyer stated that upon reviewing the budget, he had noticed some services were offset by income. Council member, Mr. Tillson stated that sometimes elected officials have to make some difficult decisions and it is not what we do while we are in office but how we leave the municipality when we are done. He stated he did not want the borough to end up in dire straits like some municipalities. Council member, Mr. Moyer discussed how reassessment does not increase revenues for the municipality; millage rates are adjusted so that the revenues remain the same.

Motion by Mr. Holt to approve advertising of the Tax Levy Ordinance; increasing the tax rate by .7 mills to 3 mills second by Mrs. Holmes. The motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Holt to approve the advertisement of a special council meeting to be held on January 27th at 7:00 PM to adopt the Tax Levy Ordinance and 2014 Budget, second by Mr. Lucas. The motion carried.

BUDGET 2014 – Council discussed advertising requirements and meeting dates. Council member, Mr. Holt discussed his suggested changes to the current General Fund budget in order for it to become balanced, noting that there would be no cuts to any departments simply adding the new tax increase revenues, removing revenues infused from the water revenue fund, adjusting health insurance expenditures, and reducing the income from the Special Improvement Account. Council member, Mr. Tillson stated he would be in agreement with Council member, Mr. Holt suggestions as long as there were future discussions about the budget involving all of council. Council member, Mr. Holt stated that if council would approve this; the budget could be adopted at the January 27th meeting. A discussion took place regarding the twelve and a half percent expense for certain police items being reimbursed by the water revenue fund.

Motion by Mr. Holt to approve the advertisement for the proposed amended 2014 Budget, second by Mr. Moyer. The motion carried. A discussion regarding the tracking of the Act 13 monies took place. The motion carried.

RESOLUTION 2014-01 – APPOINTMENT OF PRIMARY REPRESENTATIVE – CHRISTOPHER LUCAS AND ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE – DAVID MOYER - CENTRAL KEYSTONE COG – The Borough Secretary explained what the Central Keystone Council of Government is and what their duties would be as Representatives.

Motion by Mr. Holt to appoint Christopher Lucas as Primary Representative and David Moyer as Alternate Representative to the Central Keystone Council of Governments, second by Mrs. Holmes. The motion carried.

PLANNING & ZONING – Nothing at this time.

RECREATION – Nothing at this time.

STREETS/WATER – Street/Water Commissioner, Mr. Ron Smith reported to council the installation of a valve at Beacon Container. He stated they have gone out of business and needed their heat to be shut off. He noted in order for this to be accomplished the valve needed to be installed so the water could be shut off to the building; the cost of the installation and valve would be sent to Beacon Container. He stated that leaks found in the survey would start to be repaired in the near future. Council questioned and discussed the difficulty in repairing the leaks. Street/Water Commissioner, Mr. Smith gave a brief explanation, stating it will be an ongoing process. Mayor Dorin requested a copy of the leak survey. Street/Water Commissioner explained that repairing those leaks will help with the non – accounted water use however some of the water loss also stems from old meters; replacement of those meters will not only help with the water loss but the accuracy will generate more water income.

MAYOR – Mayor Dorin noted this Wednesday the CBA meeting’s speaker will be Mr. William Kelly; the topic will be LCAT. He noted that he will be resubmitting the “Young Lung’s at Play” and working on the pond rehabilitation project to present to council for 2014.

POLICE CHIEF – Chief Gyurina requested approval to investigate the hiring of the replacement of two part time police officers. He noted that the department is shorthanded. It was noted that the Personnel Committee would give their recommendation prior to council hiring.

Motion by Mr. Moyer to approve Chief Gyurina to proceed with the process of hiring two part time police officers with final recommendation from the Personnel Committee and final approval from council, second by Mr. Holt. The motion carried.

SOLICITOR – nothing at this time.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT – nothing at this time.

COUNCILPERSONS – Council member, Mr. Moyer explained to council that the Civil Service Commission is down one member and he is requesting the approval from council to appoint Mr. Robert Brown as a member; he is currently an alternate member on the commission.

Motion by Mr. Moyer to appoint Mr. Robert Brown to the Civil Service Commission, second by Mr. Holt. The motion carried. A discussion took place regarding committee appointments. Council member, Mr. Holt suggested that do to upcoming projects; the Street and Water Committee should hold a meeting. Street and Water Committee Chairperson, Mr. Tillson suggested a meeting of the committee be held on January 20th at 7:00 PM; he noted that he would like to request former council member, Mr. Gene Boyles and Water Engineer, Mr. Dave Walters attend the meeting along with the Street/Water Commissioner and Borough Secretary. The meeting will be advertised; it was noted that all committee meetings should be advertised. Council member, Mr. Holt requested an update from Mr. Eric Greenway/Neighborhood Watch Group. Mr. Greenway noted that there hadn't been any meetings in 2014 yet; they have approximately 330 Facebook members with 8 block captains throughout the borough and growing. He noted their Facebook page is Montoursville Neighborhood Watch. Mayor Dorin requested a roster and block captains for the police department.

CORESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS –

Next council meeting will be Monday, January 27, 2014 at 7:00 PM

VISITOR AND PUBLIC COMMENTS –Resident, Donna Ponegrate congratulated council for working together and hopes it continues.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm on a motion by Mr. Moyer, seconded by Mr. Lucas and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Gardner, Borough Secretary