

EAST WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
September 18, 2006
MINUTES

East Washington Borough Council met in Regular Session on Monday, September 18, 2006, 6:00 p.m., with the following members and Borough officials present:

Sandra L. Phillips, President	Mark Pacilla, Mayor
Joanne K. Coyle, Vice-President	Jeffrey D. Bull
Blake E. McCandless	Robert Dickson
Kelley Dickson	Milton J. Schuler
Cary Jones, Solicitor	James Helicke, CEO
Heather Walsh, Secretary	Robert Redlinger, Chief of Police

Also present:

Mark Connors; Christy Campbell, Observer-Reporter; John Nolen, Amy Peterson, Jim Stollar, Walter Ross

President Sandra Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Blake McCandless and seconded by Robert Dickson to approve the Minutes of August 28, 2006.

Vote: All ayes. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Motion made by Robert Dickson and seconded by Blake McCandless to approve the current bills for payment.

Vote: All ayes. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE

John Nolen, rental property owner, 113, 176 and 246 North Avenue, stated that he is interested in knowing why Council has recently visited North Avenue regarding code enforcement. He does not feel that it is the only location that has problems. He also stated that there are parking limitations on North Avenue due to red-lined alleys not being maintained.

Council President, Sandra Phillips, stated that she is one of the Council members that walked along North Avenue. Council has received complaints about the condition of some of the properties on North Avenue. North Avenue is not the only area being targeted. She invited Mr. Nolen to attend the Council meetings regularly in order to be informed about other issues before Council.

Joanne Coyle, Council Vice-President, stated that Borough Council discusses many issues regarding all locations within the Borough. Recent code enforcement initiatives are starting with some North Avenue properties. There are even issues on North Avenue regarding curbs and the condition of the street. It just happens that North Avenue is a street that many people

use to come into the Borough and the College, so it is very visible. Mrs. Coyle stated that code enforcement is also taking place on other streets, such as McKennan Avenue.

Jim Stollar, rental property owner stated that he is happy that North Avenue is going to be improved.

Mark Conners asked that Council review the condition of Ford Alley and the other alleys in the Borough.

Sandra Phillips stated that she and Blake McCandless have recently toured alleys and they are being considered for repair. Rehabilitation will start with the alleys that do not presently have any patching.

Amy Peterson, E. Wheeling St. resident, stated that she has become concerned about cars and trucks being parked too close to her driveway to allow safe entrance and exiting. She noted that the parking lot at the nearby Alumni House is mostly empty. The street parking is mostly done by the professors and employees of W & J College. She brought a film of the location for reference. The disk was given to the police chief.

Police Chief Robert Redlinger stated that tickets have been issued at that location. He stated that the ordinance reads "four feet from a driveway", which is not a lot.

Ms. Peterson stated that the curbs are in need of painting there.

Kelley Dickson asked Ms. Peterson if she has contacted W & J College regarding her concerns.

Ms. Peterson stated that W & J College stated that the employees parking there do not have permits to park in the lots, so they must park along streets.

Joanne Coyle stated that this is the area of E. Wheeling Street that Mayor Pacilla would like to make "No Parking" on both sides of the street.

Robert Dickson stated that there would be no reason to take away street parking along that street.

Sandra Phillips stated that the yellow lines along E. Wheeling Street curbs would be repainted.

Walter Ross stated that he agrees that the alleys in the Borough are in need of repair. He also stated that he appreciates that the Chief of Police is out and visibly walking in the Borough.

SECRETARY REPORT

Borough Secretary Heather Walsh distributed the current financial data.

STREET DEPARTMENT REPORT

Jeff Bull stated that the field was mowed again.

Mr. Bull stated that he is considering locating another light on the telephone pole outside the municipal building.

Mr. Bull stated that the chipper is now available to use. He suggested that the Road Department clear up branches in the Borough. Cary Jones stated that it should not be a problem if the property owners are in verbal agreement.

Mr. Bull stated that the Borough fax machine stopped working and the copier/fax from downstairs was switched with the copier upstairs.

Mr. Bull stated that the walk on North Avenue revealed serious problems with the condition of some of the buildings. The Code Enforcement Department is very active in pursuing these problems and it is going to take some time.

Jeff Bull stated that he is most appreciative of the fact that the Police Chief of the Borough walks the neighborhood streets and regularly greets the residents.

Mr. Bull stated that he would be seeking grants from the DCNR and/or PennDOT for work on roads in the Borough.

Jeff Bull stated that he talked to PA State Association of Boroughs regarding codifying ordinances. The PSAB told him that the Borough ordinances must be codified by a company like the one recently recommended by Cary Jones.

Mr. Bull stated that he and Blake McCandless worked on the wiring on the Borough Building over the previous weekend.

Sandra Phillips thanked Mr. Bull and Mr. McCandless for their extensive work on the building.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Robert Redlinger stated that Council might want to consider a new police car next year. The cars add 6,000 miles per month. The older car now has over 70,000 miles.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

CEO Jim Helicke presented the report.

Mr. Helicke stated that W & J College applied for and received a building permit for the basketball court. The cost of building is \$20,000.00. Work has begun. There will be no lights and a locking gate.

Mr. Helicke stated that there is a house at 78 McKennan Avenue with overgrown grass, which he has posted. The Borough will need to cut the grass.

Blake McCandless stated that a court date is set for October 3, 2006, for the code violations at the McCreight house on E. Beau Street. A court hearing is also set for that date for the Platt property.

Joanne Coyle asked about the old car that is still parked in a driveway on E. Beau Street. Mr. Helicke stated that the owner is planning to donate the car, and will be gone soon.

Blake McCandless stated that currently 5 properties on North Avenue are in code enforcement action and the other 13 properties are elsewhere in the Borough.

Mr. Helicke stated that the rental property at Lockhart and Christman was inspected. Everything is on order and the rental license should be issued.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Robert Dickson – No report.

Jeff Bull stated that a cold air return is needed for the upstairs.

Blake McCandless – No report.

Joanne Coyle – No report.

Milton Schuler – No report.

Kelley Dickson – No report.

Sandra Phillips – No report.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Cary Jones stated that the cost of codifications of Borough ordinances is estimated at \$10,560.00. This would not include the rezoning. A reference to Chapter 27 or Zoning would be included. Adding on the rezoning should not be much more. The cost for a five-year payment would be estimated at \$3,270.00 per year for five years, or \$16,350.00. This would include \$1,500.00 per year for supplementation for four years. Mr. Jones will have more information at the next meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

East Wheeling Street No Parking

Sandra Phillips stated that a draft resolution for ninety days is before Council that would prohibit parking on East Wheeling Street from East Lane to South Wade Avenue. Mrs. Phillips stated that this resolution was initiated when it was reported to Mayor Pacilla that the City Fire Department had some close calls turning onto E. Wheeling Street. Also, there have residents who have called and reported problems there.

Robert Dickson stated that he is opposed to the resolution. It would eliminate 17 parking spaces. He feels that it would push more public parking onto South Wade Avenue. Mr. Dickson took some measurements and it does not measure out to be a parking problem. He stated that he feels that speed is a problem, and speed would be increased with eliminating parking.

Blake McCandless stated that he, Mr. Schuler, Mr. Dickson, and Mr. Bull studied that area before this meeting. They feel that the only problem is a sight distance problem and not a parking congestion problem. The street is currently wide enough to have parking as well as having a fire truck and an oncoming car pass each other. Mr. McCandless stated that he does not feel that there is a problem.

Jeff Bull stated that permitting the College to allow parking there for their special events does create a problem. Maybe eliminating 2 or 3 spots at the turn would help.

Council tabled the matter until the next meeting.

Ordinance No Parking Trailers, Etc. on Streets

Blake McCandless stated that he has reviewed the proposed ordinance. He stated that he thinks that PODS and dumpsters should be allowed because this would help the property owners that are improving their property. It would be possible to put a time limit that could be extended, on the parking of these items or issue a permit. Mr. McCandless would also like the ordinance to include empty boat trailers.

Robert Dickson stated that the property owners could put PODS and dumpsters on their properties instead of the streets.

Mr. McCandless stated that the parking of the dumpsters or PODS could be regulated.

Jeff Bull stated that this ordinance would greatly limit people from having a trailer for their mower or parking their boat overnight.

Mr. McCandless stated that problems occur when the items are left for long periods of time.

Cary Jones stated that the weight limit could be adjusted. Also, PODS and dumpsters could be addressed in another ordinance. Also, a time limit of thirty days could be given and extensions could be possible.

Cary Jones would make the recommended changes to the drafted ordinance and it will be considered at the next meeting.

Permit Parking Ordinance

Solicitor Cary Jones stated that the Ordinance would be Borough-wide, but certain streets would be on schedule for the permits.

Motion was made by Robert Dickson and seconded by Blake McCandless to adopt the Permit Parking Ordinance.

Blake McCandless stated that he is concerned with Paragraph 5, the application of the permit. He would like to change the language from the person who resides there to the person who owns the property is the applicant. Also, he would like the measure of the curb feet to indicate the number of applications and permits possible.

Mayor Pacilla stated that he wants to make sure that this ordinance would improve the parking situation for the homeowners in the areas of Sherman, Penn and E. Chestnut Streets.

Sandra Phillips stated and Mayor Pacilla agreed that several homeowners have voiced approval of passage of the ordinance.

Cary Jones stated that if streets were added to the ordinance, a small advertisement would be made.

Chief Redlinger stated that if non-permitted cars are to be towed, it should be stated in the ordinance.

Cary Jones stated that Council would have to establish a permit fee and that the Secretary would administer the permits.

Robert Dickson stated that Council might want to table the passage of the ordinance until further review. Mr. Dickson withdrew his motion.

Jeff Bull stated that there is some more work to do on the ordinance and suggested a committee be designated to review and make suggestions to the ordinance.

Milton Schuler, Robert Dickson and Chief Robert Redlinger were designated as the committee that will work on the ordinance.

W & J College Banner Request Resolution

W & J College has submitted a request that the Borough adopt a resolution to place a banner on East Beau Street from October 12, 2006 to October 16, 2006. The banner would welcome back alumni to the College's homecoming weekend event.

Motion made by Jeff Bull and seconded by Kelley Dickson to adopt the Resolution authorizing W & J College to place a banner on East Beau Street for their homecoming event from October 12, 2006 to October 16, 2006. The resolution will have to be approved by PennDOT.

Vote taken: 5 Ayes. J. Coyle-No. R. Dickson-Abstain. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget Discussions

The dated for 2007 Budget discussions are set for the following Mondays at 6:00 p.m.: October 9, October 23, and October 30, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Robert Dickson and seconded by Kelley Dickson to adjourn the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council went into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING IS ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2006, AT 6:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Walsh,
Borough Secretary