

**BOROUGH OF EAST WASHINGTON
COUNCIL MEETING July 18, 2011
MINUTES**

Council of the Borough of East Washington met in Regular Session on Monday, July 18, 2011, at 6:00 p.m., with the following Members and Borough Officials present:

Blake E. McCandless, Borough Council President
Joanne K. Coyle, Council Vice-President
Marilyn A. Posner, Council
Jeffrey D. Bull, Council
Billy C. Josay, Council
Cary Jones, Borough Solicitor
Heather Walsh, Borough Secretary
Donald A. Solomon, Chief of Police
Michael E. Behrens, Code Enforcement and Zoning Officer
Mark Connors, Constable

Officials Absent: Kelley L. Dickson, Council; Robert G. Dickson, Council; Mark Pacilla, Mayor.

Audience Members: Mary Taufer and Terry Blackburn, Borough residents; Matti Gruzs, Joe Foutz, and Geno Pisciotano.

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COUNCIL MEETING

Council President Blake E. McCandless called the Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Marilyn A. Posner and seconded by Joanne K. Coyle to approve the Minutes of the June 13, 2011, Regular Meeting of Council of the Borough of East Washington.

Vote: All Ayes. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Motion was made by Joanne K. Coyle and seconded by Jeffrey D. Bull to approve the current bills.

Vote: All Ayes. Motion carried.

REPORTS FROM AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Council President Blake E. McCandless stated that this is the time of the Council Meeting where audience members can make comments or ask questions. Comments, questions and discussions will be kept to a maximum of five (5) minutes per person.

Mary Taufer, of 61 McKennan Avenue, stated that in May 2011 she received a letter from Borough Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. Behrens advising her that the East Washington Borough

Ordinance for Temporary Signs prohibits her from placing more than one sign on her property. In the letter from Mr. Behrens, she was given a period of time in which to remove one of her two signs, or possibly be fined. Ms. Taufer asked if the temporary sign ordinance has been revoked.

Mr. McCandless stated that the temporary sign ordinance has not been revoked.

Joe Foutz, of South Strabane Township, asked if there are plans to revoke the ordinance.

Mr. McCandless stated that there are no plans to revoke the temporary sign ordinance.

Ms. Taufer stated that she thinks the Borough temporary sign ordinance is an offense against the First Amendment.

Borough Solicitor Cary Jones stated that it is not.

Mr. Foutz stated that he thinks the ACLU would beg to differ.

Mr. Jones stated that he will talk to the ACLU about it then. From his previous research, it is the understanding of Mr. Jones that the Borough of East Washington, by ordinance, is permitted to regulate the size of signs, the quantity of signs, but not the content on the signs, with regards to “temporary signs” in the Borough.

Terry Blackburn, of South Wade Avenue, stated that he received a letter from Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. Behrens regarding an air conditioner cover that was left out.

Mr. Blackburn questioned the amount of parking available at the rental property known as 170 South Wade Avenue.

Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. Behrens stated that he believes there is adequate parking at that location.

Mr. Blackburn stated that there is an area near his property where there was trash at 166 South Wade Avenue.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

The Borough Secretary distributed the current financial statements.

2010 Borough of East Washington Financial Audit

A recommendation was made by the Borough Auditor, Gary Kissinger, to place the State Gaming Funds from the Meadows Casino in a bank account separate from the Borough’s General Fund until the funds are used. After discussion by Council, it was determined that the “playground account” savings bank account at Washington Financial will be used to hold the funds until they are spent.

Council discussed the auditor’s recommendation that the real estate taxes, as they are collected, should be directly deposited into the Borough’s general fund bank account instead of going first to the real estate tax collector for recording and disbursement to the Borough. Council decided to leave the collection procedure of the real estate taxes as it currently stands.

Motion was made by Jeffrey D. Bull and seconded by Marilyn A. Posner to accept the 2010 Borough Audit Report from Palermo/Kissinger.

Vote: All Ayes. Motion carried.

STREET DEPARTMENT REPORT

Councilman Jeffrey D. Bull stated that South Watson Avenue street issues were reviewed with regard to patching or paving the road. It may be patched. It would be important, first, to finish the building sidewalk project first. East Wheeling Street might be able to be paved. This would be a project working with the City of Washington.

Mr. Bull stated that some patching had been done on LeMoyne Avenue.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Borough Police Chief Donald A. Solomon stated that he has applied for a \$2,000.00 grant from WalMart. If the funds are received, Chief Solomon would like to use that money for a Crime Watch Initiative.

Chief Solomon stated that he recommends selling the 2006 Chevrolet Impala police car. The maintenance costs are rising. He may have a purchaser for the car.

Motion was made by Jeffrey D. Bull and seconded by Marilyn A. Posner to hire Geno Pisciotano as a part-time police officer for the Borough of East Washington.

Vote: All Ayes. Motion carried.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Borough Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. Behrens submitted his report.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Billy C. Josay - No report.

Marilyn A. Posner stated that there was a minor garbage issue that was solved easily.

Mrs. Posner has reviewed the issues with some sidewalks being in poor condition because of the root growth of nearby trees. She has made an appointment with an arborist to review the trees at \$50.00 per hour, hopefully before the next meeting. Borough Park & Shade Tree Commission member, Lori Gould, sent a report to Mrs. Posner regarding areas that have sidewalks with poor conditions. Mrs. Posner stated some ideas that could be used to repair the sidewalks without damaging the trees or tree growth.

Jeffrey D. Bull recommends that Council allocate the 2009 CDBG Funds to the City of Washington.

Motion was made by Jeffrey D. Bull and seconded by Joanne K. Coyle to allocate the Borough's 2009 Community Development Block Grant Funds in the amount of \$30,000.00 to the City of

Washington as a payment, credited to 2011, for fire-related services, as the Borough currently contracts with the City for fire protection.

Vote: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Jeffrey D. Bull stated that bids received were opened on Friday, July 15, 2011, for the Borough Building Accessibility Project. Bid received from Kimico, Inc. is \$16,600.00; the bid from MacBracey Corporation is \$22,700.00.

Motion was made by Jeffrey D. Bull and seconded by Marilyn A. Posner to accept the bid from Kimico, Inc. in the amount of \$16,600.00 for the Borough Building Sidewalk Accessibility Project.

Vote: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Joanne K. Coyle stated that a Resolution should be made by Council to adopt the Young Lungs at Play initiative at the Thayer Street Playground.

Mrs. Coyle suggested that there should be a committee to approve the placement of handicapped parking spaces in the Borough. She will work with the Borough Police Chief on this matter.

MAYOR'S REPORT

No report. Mayor did not attend the meeting.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Borough Solicitor Cary Jones stated that he is reviewing and will draft a new Local Earned Income Tax Ordinance for the Borough of East Washington.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Joanne K. Coyle and seconded by Marilyn A. Posner to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF EAST WASHINGTON IS MONDAY, AUGUST 8, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Walsh,
Borough Secretary