

**BOROUGH OF EAST WASHINGTON
COUNCIL MEETING September 12, 2011
MINUTES**

Council of the Borough of East Washington met in Regular Session on Monday, September 12, 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
Kelley L. Dickson, Council
Billy C. Josay, Council
Cary Jones, Borough Solicitor
Heather Walsh, Borough Secretary
Michael E. Behrens, Code Enforcement and Zoning Officer
Mark Connors, Constable

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

Audience Members: Mary Taufer, Terry Blackburn, Tom Shade, Borough residents.

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 August 8, 2011, Regular Meeting of Council of the Borough of East Washington.

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 McKennan Avenue, stated that she is expecting Borough Solicitor Cary Jones to send a letter to residents, who were notified of their violation of the Borough's temporary sign ordinance due to their political signs last May, stating that the temporary sign ordinance would be revoked.

Blake E. McCandless stated that Council explained to Ms. Taufer at the previous meeting that the current ordinance will not be revoked. Council is going to review the temporary sign ordinance and

consider options and recommendations. The temporary sign ordinance will remain as it is at this time, however, it will not be enforced at this time. Cary Jones will send a letter of explanation to residents previously affected by the ordinance.

Mrs. Taufer suggested that the Borough conduct educational classes at the local schools regarding an illegal drug called K2.

Council stated that they support all efforts towards anti-drug education. They recommended that Ms. Taufer contact the school nurses, the Washington School Board, or even the drug task force to advance that type of education program.

Terry Blackburn, South Wade Avenue, stated that 170 South Wade Avenue does not have adequate parking to be a rental for three apartments.

Council asked Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. Behrens to review the property for adequate parking spaces.

Jeffrey D. Bull stated that he has spoken with a contractor about the poor condition of the alley near Mr. Blackburn's property due to running water in the alley. Mr. Bull will work towards getting the problem solved.

Mr. Blackburn stated that he paid \$500 to take down some areas of his chimney that he received notification from code enforcement about it being a hazardous. He stated that at the corner of North Avenue and Chestnut Street, there is a house with chimney problems. He stated that code enforcement similar to what was done to people with houses needing to be painted should also be applied to the condition of some people's houses.

Michael Behrens stated that if Mr. Blackburn will provide addresses, he will follow up on issues needing code enforcement.

Mr. Blackburn stated that he doesn't have addresses and he said that driving around looking for problems is the code enforcement officer's job.

Thomas Shade, Christman Avenue, complained about conditions at a vacant house on Christman Avenue.

Mr. Behrens stated that the matter is in litigation for all of the code violations.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Borough Secretary distributed the current financial statements.

The gaming funds acquired in the last two years were transferred from the general fund to the savings account.

The Borough Secretary stated that each department should have its budget ready for presentation at the November 14, 2011, Council Meeting.

Councilperson Jeffrey D. Bull complained about the anticipated cost of transferring over the confidential earned income tax data from the East Washington and Washington School District Earned

Income Tax Collector's office to the new countywide tax collector, Keystone Municipal. The cost of doing so through the contracted software maintenance company could cost as much as \$800, which would be split between the Borough and the School District.

Blake E. McCandless stated that the earned income tax software program is very, very old. Also, since this information is confidential, only certain individuals (no third parties) are able to work with it. Mr. McCandless will attend a meeting with the Washington County Tax Collection Committee on Friday and ask if there might be an alternative way. Many municipalities have to bear the cost as this is a requirement of the new state legislation transferring all local earned income tax collection to a countywide collector beginning in 2012. Mr. McCandless and the Earned Income Tax Collector will recommend to Council the best, most cost-effective way of transferring the data required.

Jeffery D. Bull complained about the Borough Police Department having a dedicated phone line for police business.

The Borough Secretary stated that, recently, after a five-year break, the police department's non-emergency phone number was reinstated. It is a dedicated line not to be interfered with the regular Borough phone line. The line was set up that way by a technician after carefully reviewing all the options and the specific needs of the police department. The cost of the phone line is taken from the police department's yearly allotment of funds (budget) for expenditures that they have been permitted to use to adequately do their job of public safety. The police department has used less than two-thirds of its 2011 budget thus far.

Blake E. McCandless stated that if Mr. Bull needs additional information, he should talk to the Police Chief about his department's needs for a dedicated police department phone line.

STREET DEPARTMENT REPORT

Councilman Jeffrey D. Bull had no report.

Blake E. McCandless asked Mr. Bull when the new sidewalk/driveway work at the Borough building would begin.

Mr. Bull said that it should begin in the next 10 days.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Borough Police Chief Donald A. Solomon was not in attendance at the meeting. He provided a report by way of a Memo to Council:

1. Crime Watch signs have been received. Crime Watch will get started when some residents indicate a willingness to participate.
2. Equipment for a Borough-sponsored CPR class has been received.
3. Police Car 2006 Chevy Impala should be sold. It has 70,000 miles and needs a water pump and other costly things for state inspection. I suggest advertising to sell it.

Council President Blake E. McCandless stated that Borough Police Chief Donald A. Solomon recommends selling the older police car. Mr. McCandless asked for a Motion to advertise and sell the car.

Jeffrey D. Bull stated that he doesn't understand selling a car when it only has 70,000 miles.

Mr. McCandless stated that the Police Chief has reported that the car is now and will be very costly to keep for the future.

Mr. Bull stated that after this phone system problem, he wants to know what the cost of things are up front.

Mr. McCandless stated that the matter of selling the police car will be tabled until the next meeting and there is a detailed report of how much the car repairs will cost.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

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

Cary Jones stated that he contacted the attorney for the Faith Christian School and explained that it has never been a parking lot and it has always been a governor's driveway.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Jeffrey D. Bull – No report.

Joanne K. Coyle has been working on residential disabled parking spaces. At this time, the Borough does not have an application and she has been preparing one for the future. She asks that Council members please review her proposed application. She stated that the Borough will have to go to the people that already have disabled parking spaces and get them to reapply to make sure they qualify. Every year, people with spaces should be asked to reapply to make sure they still qualify.

Mr. Bull stated that he thinks an ordinance would be needed.

Cary Jones read the state statute regarding disabled parking and it does not indicate an ordinance is needed.

Mrs. Coyle stated that Washington & Jefferson students will be volunteering and doing work in the Borough on Saturday, September 17, 2011.

Billy C. Josay will attempt to repost the Census information on the Borough website.

Marilyn A. Posner stated that there were no recent garbage issues.

Mrs. Posner stated that she happened to be in the Borough office when someone came in to pay a parking ticket he received when he left his car unattended on a Borough street while moving his son into Washington & Jefferson College for the semester.

Mrs. Posner asked if there would be a way to work with Washington & Jefferson College on moving days to keep the parents from getting ticketed.

Mr. McCandless stated that there used to be something in place. He will talk to the Police Chief to see if this is something he would coordinate with his officers.

Kelley L. Dickson – No report.

Blake E. McCandless – No report.

MAYOR'S REPORT

No report. Mayor did not attend the meeting.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Borough Solicitor Cary Jones produced the Young Lungs at Play Resolution for Borough Council to consider. The enforcement is that if someone is found to be smoking at the Thayer Street Park and Playground, that person would be asked to leave the premises. Passage of the Resolution will then make the Borough eligible to received signs indicating the playground is a designated non-smoking area.

Mr. Jones stated that the earned income tax ordinance will be available to adopt at the October meeting as several dates of advertising are needed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Borough Council held an Executive Session at this time to discuss a potential litigation matter.

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, OCTOBER 10, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Walsh,
Borough Secretary