

**BOROUGH OF SEWICKLEY**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2013**

President Bob Hague called the Committee of the Whole Meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. Members in attendance were Susan Aleshire, Bill Cornman, Tom DeFazio, Charles Driscoll, Stan Ference, Carole Ford, Robert Glenn and Jamie Morrill (8:07 p.m.) Others in attendance were Jennifer Markus, Kirsten Recker and Alex DeLoia of Village Green Partners, Mayor Brian Jeffe, Solicitor Richard Tucker, and Borough Manager Kevin M. Flannery.

President Hague announced that the meeting began a 7:40 p.m. due to an Executive Session on contractual matters, which began at 7:00 p.m.

Borough Council interviewed Cynthia Mullins for a position on the Tree Commission. After answering questions from Council, Mr. Hague thanked her for the interview and asked that her name be placed on the February 18<sup>th</sup> Council Agenda for the approval of Ms. Mullins' appointment to the Tree Commission.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Village Green Partners presented a prepared and bound report of the 2012 Holiday Season Business District Survey to Council. The highlights indicated that the Business District merchants appreciated the free parking, the carriage rides, and other promotions in the Village during the 2012 Yuletide Season, and there were requests to have more traditional music for the various venues. There were also requests to place greater emphasis on businesses being open on Wednesday evenings until 8:00 p.m.

Jennifer Markus reviewed details of the "Chocolate Walk", scheduled for Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, in which fifteen businesses are participating. In addition, she indicated that the "Soup Crawl" is scheduled for Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup>.

Village Green Partners passed out promotional items associated with the Greater Pittsburgh Visitors Bureau, and indicated that new banners have been placed on Route 65 and that flags promoting the business district are being placed throughout the Village this week.

Village Green Partners also presented a report on the highlights of the February 7<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Business Community.

On motion of Mr. Ference, seconded by Mr. Driscoll, Council voted, 9-0, to approve the request of the Quaker Valley High School Girls Softball Team for use of the Chadwick Street Field.

Council reviewed two Right-to-Know Requests from and responses to Paul Farkus.

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**COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT/MEMBERS/MAYOR**

Council Member Bill Cornman asked if the stop sign at Maple Lane and Chestnut Street could be addressed. It appears that a vehicle has backed into it, causing the sign to list.

**REPORT ON BUILDING INSPECTION. ZONING. PUBLIC WORKS AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT**

Council reviewed the Building Inspector's Report, indicating that thirteen (13) permits were issued in January, with permit fees of \$13,961.00 collected on \$1,223,132.00 worth of construction. Twenty-Two (22) building inspections were performed.

Council reviewed the Public Works Report for January, highlighting the repair of a sewer line in the Borough Building, the collection of Christmas trees, and fifteen days of snow removal. In addition, the street sweeper is at Walsh Equipment for repairs; the repairs should be completed within four to six weeks.

Council reviewed the Wastewater Treatment Plant Report for January, indicating that 19.268 million gallons of sewage were treated. In addition, 127,452 cubic feet of digester gas was used.

Council reviewed a report on Hopkins Street and Orchard Terrace. There was a blockage at the manhole. After investigation, Wastewater Treatment Plant personnel will be making repairs to the manhole.

Council also reviewed the Consulting Engineer's Report, highlighting the startup of the Boundary Street Pump Station, scheduled for the week of February 18<sup>th</sup>. The sanitary sewer construction on the Glen Osborne Interconnect Project work will be completed on the adjacent property by February 20<sup>th</sup>. The Pump Station construction has begun with the pouring of the walls and the floor.

The Building Inspector's Report, Public Works Report, Wastewater Treatment Plant Report and the Consulting Engineer's Report were received and filed.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

Council reviewed the Solicitor's Report for January, highlighting the Village Green Contract, the spot zoning challenge and tax assessment appeals. Solicitor Tucker advised that the majority of the appeals coming in are being initiated by the Quaker Valley School District.

Council reviewed the Solicitor's Invoice in the amount of \$7,019.00.

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**SOLICITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)**

Council reviewed a significant number of tax assessment appeals; the majority of the appeals have been filed with the Assessment Appeal Board and most appeals are being initiated by the Quaker Valley School District.

Solicitor Tucker indicated that he was present for the Zoning Hearing Board Hearing for 801 Ohio River Blvd. He has entered some testimony and indicated that the Borough Code Enforcement Officer Nancy Watts and Borough Manager Kevin Flannery will be testifying next month as the hearing was continued until March 5, 2013, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The Solicitor's Report was received and filed.

**BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT**

The Borough Manager indicated that Lennon, Smith, Souleret Engineering has begun the field survey work for the 2013 Road Project. In addition, pursuant to the request by Council, Grimes Street and Harbaugh Street have been added to the project. The next utility meeting, for coordination of the project, is scheduled for Wednesday, February 13, 2013. A Residents Meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2013, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The Borough Manager provided a 2013 Real Estate Assessment update. By action of Council, the 2013 Budget was adopted in November, utilizing a real estate revenue dollar amount of \$2,453,704; this amount was based upon 5% over the 2012 amount of \$2,336,861. The final total collections for 2012 for real estate taxes were \$2,351,258.23. The adopted number in the 2013 Budget was \$2,453,704, which represents an approximate 4.9% increase. When adopting the Budget, Council also formally voted to petition the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, and received approval, for an increase in the tax rate for 2013 (in order that a large number of appeals could be satisfied) and to establish an escrow account to pay back any refunds granted in 2013.

Borough Manager indicated that as of February 7<sup>th</sup>, the assessed valuated is presently down to \$460,896,330. This represents an \$11,815,800 dollar reduction in values. There are 344 remaining appeals that need to be heard by Allegheny County.

The Borough Manager reviewed a Basic Conditions Report, prepared by Urban Design Ventures, for the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County. The Report recommends that a Tax Increment Finance District can be established and recommends the adoption of a resolution. The conclusions for the support of the district are highlighted on Page 15 of the report. At the Planning Commission Meeting on February 6, 2013, the Planning Commission requested, and did schedule, a Public Informational Meeting for March 6, 2013, at 5:30 p.m., to provide information to all property owners within the proposed district.

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**BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT (CONTINUED)**

Council reviewed reports and drawings from Lennon, Smith, Souleret Engineering and Gavin Boward Engineers on the proposed parcel purchase and the feasibility of a parking facility. Council indicated their support for the purchase of the land and asked that a motion be placed on the agenda for the February 18<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting to have the Solicitor enter into a Buy-Sell Agreement for the land, subject to the Seller securing Subdivision approval, and the placement of the theater within three years. Council asked the Borough Manager to investigate financing options to obtain a bridge loan for the purchase of the property. The Borough Manager indicated that he will review financing options, pursuant to the final Buy-Sell Agreement, as approved by Council.

The Borough Manager advised that the Quaker Valley Council of Governments have scheduled their Recycling Day for Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and will be hosted by Avalon Borough. The Borough Manager recommended, and Council was in agreement, that a small Recycling Day be scheduled for the residents of Sewickley, to collect items such as electronics, tires, and possibly, paint to be held on Thursday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, from approximately 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and on Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Borough Public Works Department will then take the collected items to Avalon Borough on Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>.

Council reviewed the Borough insurance renewal, as prepared by Municipal Risk Management, indicating that the Property Liability Package is \$61,800 and the Professional Liability Policy is \$31,325. The total cost of \$93,125 represents a \$10,911 increase over the 2012 price of \$82,214. The increase is due to two lawsuits filed regarding the accident at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and the settlement of a civil suit regarding the Police Department. Borough Manager noted that over the last three years, \$11,390 has been returned to the Borough in dividends. Council was in agreement to place the recommendation to continue with Municipal Risk Management on the February 18<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting Agenda.

Borough Manager advised that the Ambridge-Aliquippa Bridge is scheduled to close on March 4, 2013, and reopen no later than November 8, 2013. PENNDOT has agreed to pay for police services during the first week. In addition, the Sewickley Borough Police Department will be placing the speed machine on Route 65, advising of the Ambridge-Aliquippa Bridge closing.

Council reviewed a notice from Environmental Protection Agency sent to all NPDES permit holders on the procedures for the acceptance of oil and gas waste at a wastewater treatment plant. The Borough Manager advised that the Borough has no plans to accept waste from oil and gas byproducts.

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**BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT (CONTINUED)**

Council reviewed a letter and a copy of a payment for a realty transfer tax payment sent electronically to the Borough of Sewickley by Allegheny County in error. The property is located in the Borough of Sewickley Hills, and the realty transfer tax payment should have been forwarded to Sewickley Hills.

The Borough Manager reviewed the Liquid Fuels Audit for two years, ending December 31, 2011. Council was in agreement with the recommendation that the Audit be placed on the agenda for receipt and filing.

The Borough Manager reviewed a notice for the public information gathering meeting for the Ohio River Boulevard Corridor Enhancement Study, taking place on Saturday, February 23, 2013, beginning at 9:00 a.m., in the Hansen Library at Sewickley Academy.

The Borough Manager advised that the 2012 Audit has begun. He reviewed the standard Engagement Letter and a check list of required documents.

Council reviewed the proposed Employees' Association Contract, the contract for the Public Works Department employees, a Bookkeeper position and Custodian position. The proposed contract is a 3-year agreement, retroactive until January 1, 2013, providing a 2½% increase each year; with the employees paying an additional 2½%, for a total of 10%, for their healthcare. In addition, all new hires in the office and in the Public Works Department will be placed in a defined contribution pension program; this will provide a tremendous savings to the Borough of Sewickley over time. There was some discussion regarding the start of the contract. On motion of Stan Ference, seconded by Bill Cornman, Council voted, 8-1, with Mr. Glenn voting no, for the proposed contract to be placed on the February 18<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting Agenda for approval by resolution.

The Borough Manager's report was received and filed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On motion of Mr. Ference, the Committee of the Whole Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin M. Flannery  
Borough Manager/Secretary

KMF:pmf