

The regular monthly meeting of the Ebensburg Borough Council was called to order on Monday, October 23, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at the Ebensburg Municipal Building, 300 W. High Street, Ebensburg, by Council President Doug Tusing.

Present: Doug Tusing, President
Susan Barber, Vice President
Cecilia Houser
Dave Kuhar
John Cobaugh
Theresa Jacoby
Joe Miller

Others: Randy Datsko, Mayor
Terry Wyland, Chief of Police
Jeff Evans, Public Works Director
Mark Wirfel, Water Treatment Plant Supervisor
Daniel Penatzer, Borough Manager
Danea Koss, Community Development Director
Dirk Johnson, Recreation Director
Blair Pawlowski, Solicitor
Josh Byers, The Mountaineer-Herald
Jocelyn Brumbaugh, The Tribune Democrat
Calem Illig, The Altoona Mirror

Audience: 5

A. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. **Public Comments** – Mr. Tusing confirmed with Josh Byers that the meeting was being recorded.

C. **Consent Agenda**

Mr. Miller made a motion to approve the consent agenda containing the following items.
(Barber) Motion passed unanimously.

1. Approve the minutes of the September 25, 2017 regular monthly meeting of Borough Council.
2. Approve the Financial Statement and quarterly transfers.
3. Approve payment of the bills.

D. **Appointment to Address Council** – None.

E. **Mayor's Report** – None.

F. **Council President** – Mr. Tusing noted that October 31st is the last day to apply for an absentee ballot and Election Day is November 2nd. He encouraged everyone to get out and vote.

G. Water/Wastewater Committee

Mr. Mark Wirfel, plant supervisor, provided a verbal report of plant activities including 18 million gallons of clean water returned to Howells Run, 13 tons of sludge sent to landfill and no excursions for the month of September. He added that he'd been contacted by contractors who are working on a gas line through Ebensburg who would like to buy water from the borough.

1. **Wastewater Project Update** – Mr. Kuhar shared that PENNVEST approved funding for 100% of the project at their October 18th meeting. The \$9 million loan is at 1% for the entire 25-year period. The project will soon be advertised for bids with award expected in January. Construction should begin March/April. Approximately 300 easements have been mailed to affected properties and staff will be scheduling a specific day for property owners to stop by and ask questions about their specific easements.
2. **Wastewater Project Easements** – Mr. Kuhar reported that the Municipal Authority's upcoming wastewater collection system project requires easements through borough-owned property at six locations. Maps illustrating the easements were provided to Council. They are:
 - a. NW corner of parcel between Ann Street and Ghost Town Trail.
 - b. Along was edge of Memorial Field south of Triumph Street.
 - c. At entrance to YPCC.
 - d. Along northern edge of parcel between Ann Street and Ghost Town Trail.
 - e. Across the western tip of the tennis center parcel.
 - f. Along the western edge of the Babcock property at the rear of the county's storage building (stormwater).

Mr. Kuhar made a motion to approve six easements to the Ebensburg Municipal Authority in conjunction with the upcoming wastewater and stormwater collection system project. (Houser) Motion passed unanimously.

3. **Water Allocation Permits** – Mr. Kuhar reported that DEP has finally issued the renewal of the Water Allocation Permit. The previous permit expired in 2015; DEP is behind on issuing new permits. A water allocation permit is good for 25 years.

This permit increases our permitted daily consumption from 1.1 million gallons to 1.22 million gpd. A second separate permit was issued for water purchased from the Saltlick Reservoir, allowing for 350,000 gpd to be purchased.

4. **Fluoride** – Mr. Kuhar reported that a survey of sixteen water systems in Cambria County found that Ebensburg is the only system adding fluoride. Johnstown just recently stopped the practice. The Municipal Authority had discussed pros and cons and decided to cease the addition of fluoride. A minor permit amendment will be submitted to DEP.

H. Recreation Committee – None.

I. Street Committee – None.

J. Administration Committee

1. Review of 2018 Annual Budget Preparation

Ms. Jacoby shared that the preliminary budget numbers have been compiled. There are three outstanding issues relative to staffing in the police department, the YPCC and the tennis center yet to resolve. Those will be discussed in an executive session at the conclusion of this meeting. The tentative budget will be presented to Council at the November meeting. Final adoption is expected at the December Council meeting.

2. Death Benefit

Ms. Jacoby shared that over twenty years ago, the borough self-insured a \$2,000 death benefit for employees and retirees. Since then, a group policy provides the life and disability benefits for current employees. With the passing of Coleman Anna, only two retirees remain self-insured, and the borough carries a long-term liability on the books for that \$4,000 amount. Staff recommends that the benefit be paid now to those two retirees, eliminating that liability.

Ms. Jacoby made a motion to approve payment of \$2,000 to each of the two retirees. (Kuhar) Motion passed unanimously.

K. General Business

1. Eagle Scout Project

Mr. Penatzer reported that Thomas Swope is in the process of achieving his Eagle Scout designation and he chose the installation of bike crossing markings and crosswalks on the Locust, Center and West Streets at the Ghost Town Trail as his project. He and his fellow scouts completed the project in October.

L. Department Reports

1. **Police Department** – Chief Wyland reported that we had our largest PotatoFest crowd to date. Twenty-two parking tickets were given out and three cars had to be towed. He added that there were some parking and traffic back-up issues that will be addressed for next year.
2. **Public Works Department** – Mr. Evans reported on last month's activities including chlorinator problems, Crestwood sewer maintenance problems, new sewer taps on Hillcrest Drive, leaf pick-up, on call tickets and work on the upcoming sewer project.
3. **Community Development Department**
Ms. Koss reported on last month's activities including PotatoFest, the Main Street Partnership Adopt-A-Highway clean-up, Dickens of a Christmas planning and Trick or Treat and Halloween parade schedule.

4. **Recreation Department** – Mr. Johnson reported on last month’s activities including the winter basketball league and swimming lesson sign-ups.

5. **Ebensburg Zoning Board**

- a. **James Takacs** - The Zoning Board granted two variances at 102 West Milton Street for a house purchased by Takacs that will be razed. In the event a new house is ever constructed, smaller setbacks were approved. The second variance was to allow the existing garage to remain on the property in the interim.
- b. **Luke Byrne** – The Zoning Board granted a use variance at 499 South Center Street. Byrne purchased the property and intends to raze an old barn on the property. He will construct two storage buildings, a use that was not otherwise permitted.

M. **Media Comments/Questions**

Ms. Brumbaugh, Tribune Democrat, asked for confirmation that the borough purchases water from Johnstown and asked if the fluoride remove was a Municipal Authority decision. She asked if the fluoride had already been taken out of the water.

Mr. Illig asked if the borough was expecting to receive full amount for the PENNVEST loan and where all the sewer project will take place.

N. **Public Comments**

Mr. Illig asked if the municipal authority had contacted dentists when the decision was to remove fluoride from the water. He expressed that he did not agree with decision to remove fluoride from the water.

Ms. Fether, Alton Street, asked if Johnstown’s decision to remove fluoride was a financial decision.

Mr. Jerry McMullen, W. Lloyd St., expressed that he had been getting calls about the Authority’s decision to remove fluoride and that it will be coming up again at the next Authority meeting. Anyone who would like to comment is invited to attend the meeting. He also asked if there are any plans to change the floor in the YPCC’s community room and if the current floor be cleaned.

O. **Executive Session** – Council entered into executive session to discuss police staffing as it related to the annual budget and the collective bargaining agreement at 7:02 PM.

There being no further business Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn. (Houser) Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:57 PM

Minutes Recorded by: Danae Koss, Community Development Director