

The regular monthly meeting of the Ebensburg Borough Council was called to order on Monday, January 27, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. at the Ebensburg Municipal Building, 300 W. High Street, Ebensburg, by President Doug Tusing.

Present: Doug Tusing, President
Dave Kuhar, Vice President
Theresa Jacoby
Scot May
Cecilia Houser
Mike Owatt
Jeff Ball

Others: Randy Datsko, Mayor
Daniel Penatzer, Borough Manager
Blair Pawlowski, Solicitor
Terry Wyland, Chief of Police
Jeff Evans, Public Works Director
Danea Koss, Community Development Director
Dirk Johnson, Recreation Director
Mark Pesto, The Tribune Democrat

Audience: 12

A. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. **Public Comments** – None.

C. **Consent Agenda**

Ms. Houser made a motion to approve the consent agenda containing the following items. (Jacoby) Motion passed unanimously.

1. Approve the minutes of the December 16, 2019 regular monthly meeting of Borough Council.
2. Approve the Financial Statement.
3. Approve payment of bills.
4. Appoint Jessica Murphy to complete an unexpired term on the Main Street Partnership, term expires 2021.

D. **Appointment to Address Council**

Mr. Phil Sutton updated Council on a Dog Park project that the Rotary Club of Ebensburg is interested in undertaking. The Club is interested in placing the park on the property next to the east end playground, owned by the borough. Proposed plans were shared.

Councilor May raised several concerns including liability and maintenance. Some residents from that particular area voiced their concerns and opposition to this location. Mr. Fred

Novak, Triumph Street, asked if the Rotary Club could consider moving into Cambria Township.

Mr. John Tanish, 301 S. Caroline Street, stated that the dog park would not benefit that neighborhood and thought it would be an added risk to the families that take their children to the east end playground.

Council suggested that the Rotary Club explore other options, possibly in the Lake Rowena area. Ms. Jacoby suggested that Rotary work with the Recreation Board when looking at other possible sites and they could come back with a recommendation for Council.

E. **Mayor's Report** – Mayor Datsko reported that after the last Council meeting, a set of rings were found in the Council room. If anyone lost them, they can reach out to the Ebensburg Police Department. He reminded residents to shovel their sidewalks and not into the street. Mayor Datsko also shared a letter commending Officer Greg Huber for assisting a former resident with a flat tire while passing through Ebensburg.

F. **Council President** – Mr. Tusing shared that the following committee assignments had been made:

Water/Wastewater/Stormwater: Councilors Ball & Kuhar
Recreation: Councilors Jacoby, May & Owatt
Streets: Councilors Ball, Houser & Owatt
Administration: Councilors Houser, Jacoby & Kuhar

He added that an ad-hoc committee to focus on the topic of Sustainability has been appointed and includes Councilor May, Mayor Datsko and Community Development Director Danae Koss. This committee will report to Council on an as needed basis.

G. **Water/Wastewater Committee**

1. **Report from Inframark on Wastewater Plant Operations**

Mr. Ball stated that Mr. Mike Montgomery wasn't able to attend but his report was included in Council's packet.

2. **Sewer Lateral Progress Report**

Mr. Penatzer gave an update to Council on the status of progress made by customers complying with sewage regulations and sewer lateral replacements.

H. **Recreation Committee** - None

I. **Street Committee**

1. **2020 Sidewalk Project**

Mr. Owatt reported that Peoples Gas has decided to cancel a project to replace gas lines in the northern section of town. They have advised us that any eventual project to replace gas line will be delayed eight or more years.

Mr. Penatzer shared that plans have been developed for the installation of curb and sidewalk on those streets in two phases. Phase 1 is the northeast quadrant, and Phase 2 is the northwest quadrant. Phase 1 was intended to be undertaken in 2020 following gas line work, and Phase 2 was to be delayed until 2021 following additional gas line work.

Council reviewed the current sidewalk plans and is suggesting that any desired revisions be made prior to the February Council meeting. Once a final project scope is determined, bids will be advertised in early March.

Mr. Penatzer shared that since the gas project has been abandoned, it would be possible to complete both phases on the sidewalk project at the same time. Phase 1 is about three times the size of the 2019 project. Phase 2 is the same as the 2019 project. That said, staff's preference is to do the work in two separate phases over two years as planned. That will minimize inconvenience on the north side of town, negate the need for an interim wearing course of blacktop in the northwest quadrant, and keep the project manageable for smaller contractors.

Construction would be scheduled to begin June 1st. During April and May borough crews would complete stormwater improvements along West Sample Street and East Sample Street.

A 2-year bridge loan of \$1 million would be obtained for both phases of the project. Interest-only payments would be made from the \$160,000 currently being reserved annually, with the balance continuing to be reserved for sidewalks. Near the end of 2021, after the completion of both phases, the balance owed (approximately \$800,000) would be converted to a 10-year loan. The \$160,000 currently being reserved annually for sidewalks would be directed toward that debt, retiring the loan in six to seven years.

The consensus of Council is for the Streets Committee to review proposed sidewalks prior to the February meeting and to move forward with Phase 1 of the sidewalk project.

2. **2020 Street Resurfacing**

Ms. Houser reported that bids will be sought for the resurfacing of streets in the northeast quadrant in August. Bids would be awarded in September with work occurring in October. The estimated cost of street resurfacing is addressed in a separate report.

She added that regardless of when the sidewalks are completed in the northwest quadrant,

the resurfacing of streets in that quadrant should wait until 2021, as originally planned, in order to maximize use of liquid fuels funds.

J. Administration Committee

1. Public Works Wage Adjustment

Ms. Jacoby reported that Council's administrative committee met to discuss a wage concern bearing on employee recruitment and retention. Since any action on this matter will affect the AFSCME labor agreement, an executive session will be conducted at the end of this meeting to discuss with the full Council.

2. Public Works Hires

Ms. Jacoby reported that eight applications were received for two vacancies within public works. Six of the applicants were interviewed.

It is a matter of record that Daron Murton and Caleb Oldham were hired as Public Works I at a rate of \$16.66 effective 1/27/2020.

3. Public Works Hire

Ms. Jacoby reported that a vacant part-time position in public works has been advertised. In the interim, Tim Myers was hired to fill that position.

It is a matter of record that Tim Myers was hired as temporary part-time public works at the rate of \$13.00 effective 1/27/2020.

K. General Business

1. Airport Runway Rehabilitation Project

Mr. Penatzer reported that the engineering agreement for this project has been approved by the Bureau of Aviation and is ready for Council approval. This project has a total cost of \$450,000. The Bureau is funding \$440,000 of that cost. The proposed engineering fees are \$58,261. All local costs are funded by RACRA. The project is scheduled for bidding this spring, with construction in late summer.

Mr. Kuhar made a motion to approve an engineering agreement with L.R. Kimball for design of the runway rehabilitation project in the amount of \$58,261. (Houser) Motion passed unanimously.

2. Dump Truck

Mr. Penatzer reported that it is necessary to replace a 2008 Ford dump truck. The purchase is included in the 2020 capital budget. The 2008 truck will be advertised for sale.

Ms. Jacoby made a motion to approve the purchase of a 2020 Ford dump truck from Walsh Equipment of Ebensburg from the State bid list in the amount of \$89,054. (Houser) Motion passed unanimously.

3. Property Appraisal

Mr. Penatzer reported that the appraisal of all borough buildings and equipment by Industrial Appraisals is the basis determining insured values. Values are updated with inflation every year, but a reappraisal is supposed to be completed every six years. Ebensburg's last full appraisal was ten years ago. The cost of the reappraisal is \$9,950. The project was included in the 2020 capital budget, but for \$7,500.

Mr. Kuhar made a motion to approve a contract with Industrial Appraisal in the amount of \$9,950 for updating of the property inventory and report of insurable vales.

L. Department Reports

- 1. Police Department** – Chief Wyland reported on activities during the month including a larger than average crowd for Dickens of a Christmas, a recent accident and subsequent repairs to the cruiser and Officer Dave Roberts' retirement next month after 43 years of service.
- 2. Public Works Department** – Mr. Evans reported on public works activities including handing over the water plant to Inframark as of February 1st and water loss and leak repairs.
- 3. Community Development Department** –Ms. Koss reported on activities during the month including plans for a Main Street member Happy Hour on Tuesday, March 17th, member renewal numbers for the year and updates on Art in Bloom.
- 4. Recreation Department** – Mr. Johnson reported on the activities during the month including another upcoming Bingo night on February 28th, the addition of more Silver Sneakers equipment because of an uptick in membership, and a Breakfast with the Easter Bunny sponsored by Frank Burns that's scheduled for April.

M. Media Comments/Questions –

Mr. Mark Pesto from The Tribune Democrat asked if Council decided to go ahead with Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the sidewalk project.

N. Public Comments

Mr. Mike Illig asked if the sewer certificate was only good for five years.

Ms. Karen Meintel, W. Lloyd Street asked if we can have the snow plow drivers slow down.

- O. **Executive Session** – Council entered into Executive Session at 7:54 pm to discuss a payroll issue.

Council exited the executive session at 8:09 pm. Ms. Jacoby made a motion to approve Resolution 2020-01 creating an additional wage tier in public works. (Owatt) Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Jacoby made a motion to approve a memo of understanding with AFSCME creating an additional wage tier in public works, subject to AFSCME approval. (Kuhar) Motion passed unanimously.

- P. Adjournment – There being no further business, Ms. Houser made a motion to adjourn. (Jacoby) Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:11 PM

Minutes Recorded by: Dana Koss, Community Development Director