

The regular monthly meeting of the Ebensburg Borough Council was called to order on Monday, December 19, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Room of the Ebensburg Municipal Building by President, Doug Tusing.

Present: Doug Tusing, President  
Cecilia Houser, Vice President  
Robert Miller  
Mike Owatt  
Jeff Ball  
Dave Kuhar

Others: Kelly Cook, Borough Manager  
Blair Pawlowski, Solicitor  
Randy Datsko, Mayor  
Danea Koss, Community Development Director  
Dirk Johnson, Recreation Director  
Jody Eberhart, Ebensburg Police Department  
Breanna Berkebile, The Mountaineer Herald  
Katie Smolen, The Tribune Democrat

Absent: Theresa Jacoby

Audience: 2

A. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. **Public Comments** – Mr. William Link of N. Spruce Street requested that the Borough provide more publicity in advance of regular meetings that do not occur on the fourth Monday of the month.

C. **Consent Agenda**

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

1. Approve report of Inframark for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations.
2. Approve report of the Inframark for the Water Treatment Plant Operations.
3. Approve the minutes of the November 21, 2022 regular monthly meetings of Borough Council.
4. Approve the financial statement for November.
5. Approve payment of bills for December.
6. Schedule the 2023 Council meetings for the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m., with exception of November and December, which will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday.

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

E. **Mayor's Report** – Mayor Datsko reported that Chief Wyland is unable to attend tonight's meeting but he did submit a written report to Council.

F. **Council President** – Mr. Tusing reported that below freezing temperatures are expected this week and reminded residents to be sure to winterize any outdoor faucets, hose bibs, etc.

**G. Water/Wastewater Committee**

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

Mr. Kuhar reported that Inframark’s written report was submitted regarding operations, projects and activities at the wastewater plant for Council review.

**2. Report from Inframark on Water Treatment Plant Operations**

Mr. Kuhar reported that Inframark’s written report was submitted regarding operations, projects and activities at the water plant for Council review.

**H. Recreation Committee – None.**

**I. Street Committee – None.**

**J. Administration Committee**

**1. 2023 Annual Budget**

Mr. Kuhar reported that the Administration Committee has compiled a tentative 2023 budget for Council’s review. The 2023 Operating Budget calls for revenues of \$6,673,705 and expenditures of \$6,673,705. The general fund budget is balanced with the implementation of an increase in real estate taxes equivalent to 3.75 mills. It should be noted that the Borough has not enacted any tax increase in the past 13 years.

	Revenues	Expenditures	Surplus
General Fund Budget	\$2,320,170	\$2,320,170	\$0
Water Fund Budget	\$2,137,795	\$2,137,795	\$0
Wastewater Fund Budget	\$1,987,240	\$1,987,240	\$0
Stormwater Fund Budget	<u>\$228,500</u>	<u>\$228,500</u>	<u>\$0</u>
Total Operating Fund	\$6,673,705	\$6,673,705	\$0

The General Fund Budget reflects an increase of 16.5% over last year. This increase is primarily due to higher costs of wages and benefits for borough personnel and overall inflation in supplies and services. In particular, the budget reflects the hiring of an additional full-time police officer to reduce anticipated overtime and to ensure 24/7/365 coverage, mainly due to difficulties encountered in reliably securing part-time officers utilized in the past.

The Water Fund Budget increased by 13.85%, primarily due to added personnel costs, as well as contractual increases in water plant operation due to inflation. The Wastewater Fund Budget experienced an increase of 4.4%. At this time, neither of these funds requires an adjustment in rates. Wastewater has had a small surplus of revenues over expenditures for several years, but this year, it will balance. The water system has consistently experienced an increase in bulk water sales which are projected to continue in 2023.

Mr. Miller clarified statements that he made at last month’s meeting regarding the proposed budget and wage adjustments.

Mr. Kuhar made a motion to grant final approval to the 2023 annual budget. (Houser) Roll call was taken:

Tusing	Yes	Miller	No	
Houser	Yes	Owatt	Yes	
Kuhar	Yes	Ball	Yes	Motion passed 5-1.

**3. Ordinance #665 Regarding 2023 Taxes**

The Borough must pass an ordinance for taxes if the rate is being increased.

Ms. Houser made a motion to grant final approval to Ordinance #665 establishing the tax rate for general purposes to the sum of 36.75 mills for assessed valuation for land, 11.75 mills for assessed valuation for improvements, plus continuation of a dedicated tax for stormwater management equal to 2.5 mills of assessed valuation for land. Overall, this equates to an overall average tax rate of 16.75 mills. (Ball) Motion passed unanimously.

**K. Diversity Committee – None.**

**L. General Business**

**1. 2023 Fee Resolution**

Ms. Cook reported that a Resolution is required each year to establish fees to be charged for various services for the coming year. The fee for the pavilions was increased, based on the recommendation of the Recreation Board. The fees for the meters and laborer have been adjusted to reflect current costs. Equipment, other than a tractor and weed eater are seldom utilized, but in order to have a rate that can be assessed when needed, the Borough will utilize the current FEMA Schedule of Equipment Rates.

Mr. Kuhar made a motion to adopt Resolution #2022-17 establishing the fees to be charged in 2023 for various purposes. (Miller) Motion passed unanimously.

**2. Appointments to Boards and Commissions**

1. Reappoint Gerald McMullen to a 5- year term on the Ebensburg Municipal Authority, expires 12/2027.
2. Reappoint Bruce Hultman to a 4-year term on the Ebensburg Planning Commission, expires 12/2026.
3. Reappoint Carol Rummel to a 3-year term on the Zoning Hearing Board, expires 12/25.
4. Reappoint Jamie Oravec to a 5-year term on the Ebensburg Recreation Board, expires 12/2027.
5. Reappoint Tim Myers as alternate on the Ebensburg Civil Service Commission, expires 12/2023.
6. Reappoint Charlie Moyer as Chairman of the Ebensburg Vacancy Board, expires 12/2023.
7. Appoint John Hawksworth and Chief Mike Sheehan to 1-year terms on the Central Cambria Emergency Management Council, expires 12/2023.

8. Appoint Borough Manager as delegate to the Cambria/Somerset Council of Governments.
9. Appoint Borough Manager as delegate to the Cambria County Tax Collection Committee.
10. Appoint CCSD Business Manager as alternate to the Cambria County Tax Collection Committee.
11. Appoint Borough Manager as delegate to the Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency.
12. Appoint Danae Koss as alternate to the Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency.

Ms. Houser made a motion to approve the listed appointments to Boards, Commissions and Authorities. (Owatt) Motion passed unanimously.

**M. Department Report**

1. **Police Department** - Chief Wyland was not present but submitted a written report to Council.
2. **Public Works Department** – Mr. Surkovich was not present but submitted a written report for Council’s packet.
3. **Community Development** – Ms. Koss reported on recent activities including a wrap-up of Small Business Saturday and Dickens of a Christmas. She also reported that free metered parking began today in downtown Ebensburg and would continue through January 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. **Recreation Department** – Mr. Johnson reported that Bingo will be held at the YPCC on December 30<sup>th</sup>.

**N. Media Comments/Questions** - None.

**O. Public Comments** – Mr. Mike Murphy of N. Spruce Street asked about the status of an ongoing sewer issue on South Marion Street.

**P. Executive Session** – None.

**Q. Adjournment** – There being no further business, Ms. Houser made a motion to adjourn. (Ball) Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned 6:51 PM

Minutes Recorded by: Danae Koss, Community Development Director