

**Watson town Borough
Committee Meeting
June 29, 2015**

OPENING: The June 29, 2015 Watson town Borough Committee Meeting was called to order by President Miller at 7:30 PM. The meeting was held in Council Chambers.

MEMBERS PRESENT: President Harriet Miller, Vice President Ralph Young, Janet Rump, Dan Folk, Jack Marshall, Harry Hefty, Mayor David Hontz, Solicitor Benjamin Landon, Borough Manager Edie Moser, Chief of Police Rodney Witherite and Secretary/Treasurer Brendi Brooke.

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeff Stroehmann, Mary Phillips, Kevin Mertz, David Plotts, Sandy Hendricks, Cindy Crozier, Ken Hollenbach and Virginia Wirth.

AUXILIARY MEMBER POLICE DEPARTMENT: The Mayor announced the swearing in of Ashley Porcshet as a member of the auxiliary police. She served as an intern with the police department and asked to join the auxiliary police as she goes on to continue her schooling. Chief Witherite and Sargent Faux joined the Mayor as Ashley took her oath.

CEMETERY: Janet Rump said general maintenance continues at the cemetery.

DUMPING AT CEMETERY: Edie said the crew brought to her attention that dumping continues at the cemetery. The Borough dumps its own road debris, brush, etc. up there and they are running out of space. She spoke with Chuck Beck at Milton and he said they have the same problem. She asked Council to consider a fence and changing the signs to “no dumping allowed”. Trail cameras were mentioned. President Miller asked Council to go take a look and think about what would best fit the Borough’s needs. It was tabled for the next meeting.

FINANCIAL CONDITION OF BOROUGH: Harry Hefty spoke regarding the financial condition of the Borough. He said the Borough is at 84%; at minimal distress which is the liability for pensions against assets. He went onto to say for the last several years the Borough continues to operate in the black; a reflection of good budgeting. He spoke of the “simple” accounting method used by the Borough; it is legal and it’s the one used by the DCED. Last year the Borough had \$4,355.00 left over due to budgeting well; revenue versus expenses. The Borough is in good financial shape; financially healthy.

ELM/ASH STREET FUNDS: Harry said there is a little over \$4,000.00 left in the Elm/Ash Street fund. To him, the closest thing that could be done is to do asphalt and paving the alleys; the money can’t be used towards the Elm/Ash debt because the

good news is it's already paid off. He thinks it would be good use of the public's money. He went on to mention its possible use for crack/sealing.

**PARKS &
RECREATION:**

Janet said maintenance continues to take place.

**EXECUTIVE
SESSION:**

Chief Witherite asked for an Executive Session following tonight's meeting for possible litigation.

**STREETS &
HIGHWAYS:**

Sandy Hendricks spoke regarding the condition of "her" alley. There was confusion about whether Lynn Watson has finished the repair. Sandy said rain continues to lay; it is not going down the drain; cars continue to hit and scrape. Dan said because of the size used, you are no longer able to straddle the grate, you must drive over it. Janet mentioned another alley near Third Street. Edie said she would contact Lynn Watson to come back.

SEWER LINES:

Jack Marshall asked if anyone knew when 8th Street would be closed for the new sewer lines, new railroad crossing, etc. around the Moran Warehouse. Jeff Stroehmann said the work in town is supposed to be the end of July. It was also mentioned that work is being done by Delaware Township on 8th Street Drive to Fisher Drive.

**POLICE
DEPARTMENT
CONSTRUCTION:**

Mayor said they've received several bids for the construction to be done in the police department. Chief Witherite confirmed the prices are for the complete project. Edie is to include copies of the bids in Council packets next week and include it on the agenda. Janet asked if the wages for the Borough workers needs included in the price since they are doing the demolition. Solicitor Landon said no; although if we were dealing with the potential of prevailing wage issue; which he doesn't think we would be with this; it does; it's total project cost. He further explained "but for this we are just bidding out specific work so it's whatever the mated cost of the work is for bidding purposes".

**INT'L
PROPERTY
MAINTENANCE
CODE:**

Edie said she and Solicitor Tira have a meeting set up for the International Property Maintenance Code.

**SALT STORAGE
SHED:**

Dan Folk said he had nothing on the salt storage shed yet. Dan said they are trying to find someone to survey the property. Edie provided Harold Keefer with a copy of the deed but realized there was a new one which she found this afternoon. The Mayor said Light-Heigel does surveying as well. Edie said we have the deeds; all we want to know is where the lines are.

GENERATOR: Edie said she is waiting on Jim Harvilla regarding the generators here at the Borough office and at the Borough garage.

MULBERRY STREET: Edie said she was instructed to contact Uni-Tec at the last meeting; John Mazik did come and meet with Edie and the Street Committee regarding Mulberry Street. He will be preparing a written report and Edie hopes to have it for next week's Council Meeting.

SEALANT FOR 1ST STREET BRIDGE: Edie said the Mayor had asked about looking into sealant for the other side of the 1st Street Bridge. She contacted Larson Design Group and provided her with names of (4) different companies where we could get prices for sealant; she is waiting to hear back. President Miller said we need to find out how long it will last; Edie agreed that we need more information.

MePUSH QUOTE-COMPUTER BACK-UP: Edie spoke regarding the quote received from MePush for computer back up of Edie, Lisa and Brendi's computers. Copies of the quote were included in packets for Council's review. This quote is for the Borough side only; not the police department. Edie said this includes back-up, any service calls, viruses, etc. Sargeant Faux said if the absolute worst thing happened, such as a complete crash, they would be able to get the system up and restored and working as if nothing ever happened. He further explained what the cost includes. President Miller said if she was looking at the quote correctly, the initial set-up cost is \$2,100.00 then \$300 per month; Edie thinks it is actually \$700 per month. Edie said Council needs to realize: the utility and the accounting systems are extremely important to the Borough. Someone asked about the current backup to which Edie said though they thought it was, it is not currently being backed up. President Miller said she thought the Borough had offsite back-up, she asked if we have been paying for it, Edie said "no". She spoke of Brendi's email recently being hacked; she also said MePush is able to remote into the system and fix certain problems. Edie said she's not sure that Council can turn this down, though it's expensive. President Miller said it is to be included on next week's agenda and Edie is to confirm whether the External Hard Drive @ \$400 is a monthly charge or an initial charge. Sargeant Faux thought it was \$300/month - \$3,600 per year. A Borough resident asked if this was the only quote; President Miller said MePush is the Borough's computer consultant and because it's under a certain amount, no other bids are required. She said MePush is familiar with our programs and the police department's so that's who we work with. She asked if the resident knew of anybody that could do it for less and was answered with "no, not without doing research". The conversation concluded with Sargent Faux confirming MePush's reputation with small businesses and law enforcement.

PAVING:

Edie said it's time for Council to act on the paving list; it's getting late and it's time for Council to decide what they want paved. President Miller said the Streets Committee recommended the following:

1. The alley behind the Borough Building
2. Railroad Street North
3. West 6th Street

President Miller said the total for the paving is \$23,740.00 and Harry has found money to do \$8,000.00 in crack sealing.

**3rd STREET
PAVING:**

The Mayor asked where Council was going to find the money to pave 3rd Street when it needs to be paved. President Miller said 3rd Street had been addressed; to which the Mayor said "3rd Street had not been addressed to his satisfaction". He said he has done some research and the voting public should know what he has to say; he got an estimate of what it would cost to plane and pave 3rd Street. He's baffled by Council's decision but he got a quote in the neighborhood of \$90,000.00 from a reputable company and done as a favor to him. President Miller said it sounds very high; the Mayor said he was glad she felt it was high; he would like to see the Borough get an official estimate. The conversation continued; Solicitor Landon said from a procedural point of view, Council actually took a vote on this particular subject and for "that" matter, which has already been voted on, to be reconsidered, there would have to be a motion and a second by someone who voted "no" or voted the way it didn't prevail. Dan Folk and President Miller agreed the vote was unanimous. The Mayor said he has thrown the figure out there and he challenged the Street Committee to do their due diligence and the rest of Council take a look at what is going to need paved at some point because there are as many joints and patches from the utilities that you'd think you were driving over the River Bridge. He said 3rd Street was someone else's responsibility and asked President Miller to explain that. President Miller said Council has more important matters at hand than 3rd Street; they have the current paving list. A "tax paying citizen" asked if the utility company didn't do it correctly then how much is it going to cost to get it repaired. President Miller said the only thing she thinks they didn't do was to overlay, they did the base coat and that should fix it; the Mayor said they did 1 1/2" milling and an overcoat. President Miller went on to say that we never had an estimate; for what the water company did for the Borough, we traded services; they did jobs for us and didn't charge us, therefore we are good. Harry Hefty gave a heated response regarding the 3rd Street paving, John Pick and the Water Company, old ordinances and new ordinances, Scott Winters, etc. The Mayor said "the \$3,800.00 we spent for Mr. Tira's professional advice on this matter, Council has never been advised, he's never heard a word from the Solicitor". Council agreed that Solicitor Tira wrote the memo.

**PAVING
APPROVED:**

President Miller directed Council back to the paving list for this year. She said the total not including the crack sealing if \$23,740.00. Edie said there is money in Liquid Fuels plus what Harry found, also they checked with the Auditor and Elm/Ash can be used and the account closed out. A resident asked about the entrance to Oak Lane, it was concluded it could be patched. Harry Hefty said some Borough's look a year ahead; he would like to get them all done next year by including them into the November budget talks. Dan Folk made a motion to accept the paving list and authorized the Borough Manager to advertise the paving for bids. Bids are to be opened on July 27, 2015. Jack Marshall gave a second. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Rump	- yes	Miller	- yes
Hefty	- yes	Folk	- yes
Marshall	- yes	Young	- yes

All in favor. Motion carried.

**ELM/ASH
ACCOUNT
CLOSED:**

Harry Hefty made a motion, seconded by Dan Folk to close the Elm/Ash account and use the funds for crack sealing the streets. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hefty	- yes	Folk	- yes
Marshall	- yes	Young	- yes
Miller	- yes	Rump	- yes

All in favor. Motion carried.

**TREE
TRIMMING:**

Edie said she, Janet and Ralph met with Dincher & Dincher to trim (2) large trees near the Canal Boat Pavilion and remove a tree in the old cemetery. She explained the trees and their location in detail as well as the costs involved with the work. Janet Rump said \$2,200.00 will come from the Greenway fund to trim the Silver Maple and Sycamore trees near the Canal Boat Pavilion. After much discussion, Harry Hefty made a motion, seconded by Janet Rump to approve Dincher & Dincher's trimming and removal of the proposed trees. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Marshall	- yes	Young	- yes
Miller	- yes	Rump	- yes
Folk	- yes	Hefty	- yes

All in favor. Motion carried.

PLANTERS:

Sandy Hendricks spoke regarding the Greenway Committee. She said Bush's is permanently closing on Friday. Bush's has (8) large planters

that she will sell the Borough for \$20.00 each for a total of \$160.00. In an effect to beautify the Borough, the planters could possibly be set in front of Family Dollar and Lingle's Bi-Lo. Janet Rump said Edie will need to contact the property owners for permission first; Edie said she has contact information for Mrs. Garrido and Bill Lingle. Solicitor Landon said Council could approve it if they wanted to subject to Edie getting the appropriate permission. Edie said if permitted, someone from the Borough crew would pick the planters up at Bush's and take them to where they want them. Sandy said the planters will take the sun; they are huge and will be a beautiful addition. The Mayor said if they are unable to get permission from the strip mall, independent business owners along Main Street would love to have something like that. Ralph Young made a motion, seconded by Janet to purchase (8) planters @ \$160.00 from Bush's to be placed somewhere in the Borough after getting permission from the owners. We will be billed. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Miller	- yes	Rump	- yes
Folk	- yes	Hefty	- yes
Young	- yes	Marshall	- yes

All in favor. Motion carried.

**MORAN
INDUSTRIES –
ZONING
AMENDMENT:**

Jeff Stroehmann spoke on behalf of Moran Industries regarding their request to have an amendment made to the zoning map for the former foundry property on Ash Street. It is currently zoned urban residential and they are requesting it changed to industrial. Solicitor Landon said there are a series of things to go through; they would have to submit to the Planning Commission and the County. He also said there are also a series of steps to be taken by Council that's not all that complicated but all boxes must be marked off or we'll run into complications. President Miller asked if Jeff wanted to disclose their intentions for the property. A discussion followed regarding the property and its use; at which time Solicitor Landon stated tonight wasn't the time nor the place to discuss such matters; in time a public hearing would be held on this issue and that would be the time to for those that are for it or against it to say what they had to say; there is a process that must be gone through. Solicitor Landon stated Council doesn't have to do anything right at the moment other than if this is something that Council may want to pursue, it could be sent to the two Planning Commissions to get the ball rolling for setting up a hearing date, etc.; he said it's a 2 or 3 month process. Jeff Stroehmann added the former foundry sight; it was grandfathered in and was allowed to stay that way because of its grandfathered use. He said Moran Industries are land recyclers; they recycle land and industrial sites; blighted sites are cleaned up or torn down and reused. They do not do it with residential properties; they do it with commercial and industrial properties and have had fairly good success. He said the problem with this particular sight is they are not

comfortable allowing it for residential use or any other use other than industrial because it's a former foundry sight. It happens throughout North Central Pennsylvania, in our old industrialized communities, Watsontown is no exception; we were one of the largest industrialized communities at the turn of the century; it has a very rich industrial heritage. This site is bordered on three sides by an alley and bordered by commercial/industrial along Ash Street; there is currently nothing Moran can do with the site under current zoning. They would like to put a maintenance building on the property; he continued to clarify their recent use of the location as a temporary "drop location" while working on their Building 5 and the demolition on their main campus and it was never their intention to permanently use the site. They feel they were very responsible in cleaning the property up; it then became a dumping area, which is why the fence is there now, to prevent dumping. They want to be good neighbors and cooperate with the Borough but in the same respect, they'd like to use the land for something; thus the reason for the request. Harry Hefty pointed out the building will be taxed and the electricity used will be supplied by the Borough. Harry made a motion that Council proceed to at least have the Planning Commission examine the property for industrial use. A second was given by Jack Marshall. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Folk	- yes	Hefty	- yes
Young	- yes	Marshall	- yes
Rump	- yes	Miller	- yes

All in favor. Motion carried.

**POSTS ALONG
PA AVENUE:**

Eddie said the crew has replaced the few posts that were falling down. Dan felt there were not a lot of good posts out at Oakes. She called Penn Dot for specifications, which were dropped off to her; she called Chemung Supply which supplies used galvanized guardrails at \$15/foot installed and new galvanized guardrails at \$25/foot installed. Eddie and Dan said what the Borough is currently using is not up to code; per Dan, the wooden posts can no longer be used if they are all going to be replaced, a pole that is broken can be fixed but metal guardrails must be used if the whole side of the street is replaced. Eddie asked if Council wanted her to get prices for next year's budget; she also said the worst ones have been repaired and if more come down, they will be replaced. Janet wanted confirmation that there are no safety issues. President Miller said it should be put on the agenda for the budget meetings.

**HANDICAP
CHILD SWING:**

The handicap swing was taken from Memorial Park to the 8th Street Park. Janet asked Edie to get prices to replace the handicap swing at Memorial Park at it should have been replaced last year. Edie said she would order it from George Ely Associates, Inc. (sales representative for Playworld) at a cost of \$772.00.

**SEESAW-
TEETER/
TOTTER:**

Janet also asked Edie to look into ordering a seesaw/teeter totter. She said we can get one from ages 2-12, its plastic at a cost of \$1,220.00 for the 8th Street Park. Harry Hefty made a motion, seconded by Jack Marshall to purchase the mentioned playground equipment for a total of \$1,992.00. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Young	- yes	Marshall	- yes
Rump	- yes	Miller	- yes
Hefty	- yes	Folk	- yes

All in favor. Motion carried.

**8th STREET
PARK -
LATCHES &
TREE:**

Ralph Young said someone thought we needed new locks at the 8th Street Playground. There is also a tree at the 8th Street Park that needs replaced. Edie wanted to be clear; the police used to lock the 8th Street Park at night and unlock in the morning but they stopped. Ralph said he wasn't sure if they meant latches or locks; the crew fixed the latches once already. Ralph said it was on "Watson town Rants" and this person said there isn't enough shade; he mentioned they've already tried umbrellas twice and they were stolen or destroyed years ago. President Miller directed Edie to get a tree and get it planted.

**MERRY-GO
ROUND:**

Jack Marshall mentioned the merry-go-round is the most popular piece of playground equipment at Memorial Park. It is heavily used daily during Kids Café. A discussion ensued regarding its age.

**BENCH
DONATION:**

Elaine Michael would like to donate a bench to the park in memory of her son, Daniel Culfer. Edie passed out pictures of it to Council. Elaine would like to have a candle lighting on September 12, 2015 to dedicate the bench. The Mayor said this particular bench would require a foundation and asked if this was a part of the donation. President Miller asked Edie to contact her to find out if the foundation will be included in the donation, then to be included on next week's agenda.

**ICE CREAM
TRUCK:**

Janet inquired about the ice cream truck and whether he has a peddler's permit. She inquired about his business on Sundays, which is the "hot" night for it. It also stops and goes on the streets, cars are going around it, kids are running up to it, she is concerned about the safety, but also she's concerned to see if they have it licensed and up to code for food safety (the Board of Health). Edie said they come in, we give them the permit

but the police department approves or disapproves the peddler's permit. The Mayor asked that the decibel level be checked with its music. Chief Witherite said it would be looked into.

**SALE OF
WARES:**

Janet also said others have questioned setting up and the sale of wares in town constantly; including setting up canopies and blocking sidewalks selling berries, garden items, etc. She asked if it fell under the "peddler's code". The Mayor said there is a yard sale ordinance and she might want to check on it. Chief Witherite said he would check with Code Enforcement.

Janet's main concern is the Borough's liability; people coming back on the Borough for matters of safety.

JES/VIC

Eddie said the Borough was in receipt of a thank you from Jes/Vic.

**PEDESTRIAN
CROSSINGS:**

Eddie contacted Penn Dot regarding the pedestrian crossings, which were discussed at previous meetings. She said pedestrian crossings at red lights are fine but at the other locations discussed by Council, there can be NO parking within 75 feet of either side of the crossing. This means that the Borough will lose at least 5 parking spots and she's not sure the Borough can afford to do that. She told them not to send anything at this time until she talked with Council. She feels it needs to be a dead issue at this point; Council agreed.

**PROPERTY
CONDITIONS:**

David Plotts of 114 East 3rd Street spoke regarding the condition of the property at the corner of East 3rd Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. He said it had been cleaned up but it is now back to the same old mess. Eddie said they have been cited twice by Light-Heigel with the magistrate. He also mentioned the sign on Liberty Street regarding "not mowing grass until across the street mows grass"; there is also a problem with another neighbor in that area. President Miller said though the wheels move slowly, these matters are being addressed.

**ADJOURN TO
EXECUTIVE
SESSION:**

There being no further business to come before Council, a motion was made by Dan Folk, seconded by Ralph Young to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Brendi L. Brooke
Secretary/Treasurer