

**Watson town Borough Council
Reorganization Meeting
January 6, 2014**

NEW MEMBERS: The Mayor started the meeting by swearing in Dan Folk and Janet Rump.

OPENING: The January 6, 2014 Watson town Borough Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Dave Hontz at 7:30 PM. The Mayor gave the opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Harriet Miller, Harry Hefty, Ralph Young, Jack Marshall, Janet Rump, Dan Folk, Solicitor Ryan Tira, Mayor Dave Hontz, Chief Dennis Derr, Borough Manager Edie Moser and Secretary/Treasurer Brendi Brooke.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ralph Heater, M. A. Bricker, Mary Phillips, Becky Hontz, Liz Folk, Garth Watson, Kevin Mertz, Bob Frey, Ken Hollenbach, Sandy Hendricks, Buzz Reynolds, Dave Powell, William West, David Plotts, John Fairchild, Sue Fairchild, Viola Ranck, Tim Ranck, Barbara Pick, Gary Harmon, Cindy Crozier and Virginia Wirth.

REORGANIZE-COUNCIL PRESIDENT: The Mayor took nominations for Council President. Jack Marshall nominated Harriet Miller for President of Council. Hearing no other nominations, Harry Hefty made a motion to close the nominations for Council President. 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.

COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT: The Mayor took nominations for Council Vice President. Jack Marshall nominated Ralph Young for Vice President of Council. Hearing no other nominations, Harry Hefty made a motion to close the nominations for Council Vice President. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hefty	- yes	Folk	- yes
Marshall	- yes	Young	- no
Miller	- yes	Rump	- yes

Motion carried by majority vote.

The Mayor offered congratulations and handed the gavel back to President Miller. She thanked Council for their vote of confidence in her as their President and her hope for a good year.

**BOROUGH
MANAGER:**

President Miller took nominations for Borough Manager. Harry Hefty made a motion to re-appoint Edie Moser as Borough Manager. Harry stated the Borough Code passed in the last year does state the Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Chief of Police and Public Works Supervisor do not need appointed. The reason the Borough Manager needs reappointed this evening is due to the Watsontown Borough has an ordinance which states the manager will be appointed on the even number years. Solicitor Tira stated the only offices required by state law are the President and Vice President. The manager is required by local ordinance. Hearing no other nominations, President Miller declared the nominations closed. 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.

SOLICITOR:

Harry Hefty made a motion to retain Ryan Tira from the law firm of McNerney, Page, Vanderlin and Hall as the Borough's Solicitor. A second was made by Jack Marshall. 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.

Solicitor Tira thanked Council for the retaining his office.

DEPOSITORIES:

Harry Hefty made a motion to designate West Milton State Bank, First National Bank and Muncy Bank & Trust as the Borough's depositories. A second was given by Ralph Young. 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.

CLARIFICATION: Edie spoke regarding Scott Winters clarification to the December 3, 2013 minutes, which was at Council's seats tonight. Scott advised the date referenced in his clarification is incorrect and should have been

December 3, 2013. She asked Council to make note. The Mayor said the timeline is an important thing to note regarding questions surrounding the truck, cameras and building security:

- The truck was purchased and turned over for Scott's use on 2/25/13.
- The cameras were purchased on 3/7/13 by the Borough Manager and Scott.
- The investigation of the alleged break-in to Scott's office at the Borough garage was 3/18/13.

President Miller asked if the dates were documented. Edie said she had the break-in at the garage documented on 3/18/13. Solicitor Tira said the clarification would be entered as a part of tonight's meeting and minutes. Mayor Hontz said he used Scott's journal as well as the Chief's records to confirm the date of the alleged break-in. Edie agreed, she had the same date documented. President Miller said her only concern was that the dates are correct before they're entered into the minutes. She doesn't want to have to deal with this again two months from now. Per Solicitor Tira: a letter was received by the Public Works Supervisor indicating a clarification of dates and the dates are being noted of record in case there are questions in the future.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Harry Hefty to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2013 Council Meeting and the December 16, 2013 Committee Meeting, seconded by Dan Folk. 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.

CORRECTION OF MINUTES:

Edie spoke of an email she and Brendi sent to Council and the Mayor on December 17, 2013 regarding the minutes of the November 25, 2013 Committee Meeting. After review of the recording, the minutes were found to be incorrect. Regarding Jason Kling's EMA credentials, the minutes should have reflected the following: the Mayor said he "wasn't certified or qualified and paperwork was incomplete". The Mayor thought he referenced EMA in the statement. Edie said the entire conversation was regarding EMA but EMA was not in the quote in question. Jason Kling was notified but Brendi expressed her concern with the use of the words "firefighter" in the minutes. She pointed out they are currently posted on the Borough's website for the public to see. Solicitor Tira advised the use of an asterisk and a note highlighting a correction of the

November 25, 2013 minutes to be reflected in the January 6, 2014 minutes.

**BILLS &
TRANSFERS:**

Jack Marshall made a motion to approve the bills and transfers in the amount of \$339,151.28. A second was given by Janet Rump. 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.

President Miller advised Janet and Dan to review the bills and transfers each month and not to hesitate to contact Edie at the office with any questions they might have. In calling ahead of time, Edie has a chance to gather information before the meeting.

**LETTER FROM
TURBOTVILLE
BOROUGH:**

Edie said she was in receipt of a letter from the Turbotville Borough thanking Watsonstown for the use of our sewer machine to help them with a sewer clog.

**RALPH
HEATER -
CONDEMNED
PROPERTY:**

Ralph Heater said he was at the last meeting and had questions regarding the Borough's ordinance regarding condemning properties. He said he was told nothing could be done until the electric was shut off. The electric has since been shut off due to an NSF check. Unfortunately, the pipes froze and broke, causing water to come down into his garage, a disaster that has caused major damage. He said he was given the electric bill for \$567.00. The reason he mentioned the bill was because he feels if the Borough would have acted on condemning the property, the bill would have never gotten so high. Edie confirmed the electric wasn't turned off until Friday, January 3, 2014. Solicitor Tira said the Borough is not involved in eviction proceedings in private matters. It is also the Solicitor's understanding the Code Enforcement Officer will commence the condemnation proceedings. Pat Yeager asked what the policy is for unpaid electric bills and Edie explained. Ralph Heater said the ordinance needs looked at and possibly changed to include water, sewer and gas shut offs. Solicitor Tira said the Code Officer deems the property uninhabitable thus condemned but it is Code Officer's call. Ralph's point: a landlord cannot rent a property without gas, water, sewer or electric yet if the property is rented and the utilities are shut off for non-payment by the tenant, the tenant can continue to live there without the utilities. Solicitor Tira said there are 2 types of processes: a civil eviction versus an uninhabitable property thus condemned. After much discussion, Council

agreed to look into the ordinance and Code Enforcement. Edie said she called Jeff Kanezo today to condemn the property.

BUZZ REYNOLDS DEMAND METER/ GENERATOR: Buzz Reynolds asked if anything has been done with regards to electricity. Edie said Jim Harvilla will be coming to the January 27, 2014 Committee Meeting. He is the Borough's electric engineer. Council is hoping he can help them offer help to Borough businesses. Buzz said he was told he needs to cut down on his electric usage and he has done that. He has several thousand dollar's worth of equipment sitting that he can't use. He asked if he met all Borough rules and regulations, could he install a generator to run his equipment. Edie mentioned the ordinance and application fee for installing generators. After much discussion regarding various things, President Miller advised Buzz to come into the Borough office for the proper paperwork to install a generator.

NOISE: President Miller asked the audience to please not have private conversations during the meeting. It makes it extremely hard for the Council to hear what is going on and to transcribe the minutes.

VIOLA RANCK - RIGHT TO Viola Ranck of 248 East 4th Street submitted a Right to Know Request regarding an employee's use of a Borough truck. She said she has gotten numerous convoluted answers and mixed messages from Council. She asked Council to answer her questions formally in writing.

JIM RITTER – STREET CONDITIONS: Pastor Ritter of 405 Elm Street spoke about street conditions during a snow storm on December 14, 2013. He had been to Kramm's in Milton to visit a church member and noted the poor road conditions in Milton and Route 405. He said was very pleased and impressed that the plows in the Borough had already been out and the streets had already been salted. He said he made it a point to talk with Edie to extend his compliments to the Borough crew. They are one of the reasons that he is glad for where he lives. President Miller thanked him for his compliments and said the guys don't hear it enough.

GARTH WATSON – SUBDIVISION: Garth Watson of 1007 Elm Street submitted plans to sub-divide 2.25 acres from 5.3 acres on South Main Street. Copies of the plan were reviewed at the table by Council. Edie said the plans have been approved by the Watontown Borough Planning Commission and Northumberland County. Tonight's meeting is the last step in the process to subdivide the land. After much discussion, Harry Hefty made a motion to approve the sub-division, seconded by Jack Marshall. 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.

TRAINING FOR NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Edie spoke regarding the PSAB training for newly elected officials that Janet Rump and Dan Folk have chosen to attend. She said the total expense for both to attend will be approximately \$600.00. Jack Marshall made a motion, seconded by Harry Hefty to approve paying for the training and associated expenses for Janet and Dan. 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.

INDUSTRIAL APPRAISAL:

Edie said she was in contact with Industrial Appraisal about getting the Borough's electrical system and inventory appraised. She said the cost to inventory and update all values will be approximately \$3,150.00. Edie said there is money in the electric budget to fund most of it and it's insurable value needs established. Jack Marshall made a motion to move forward with Industrial Appraisal, seconded by Dan Folk. 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.

HICK'S ALLEY/ LIBERTY STREET:

Edie spoke regarding a letter provided to Council from Susan Travis. The letter is regarding the curb blocking the driveway and garage access at 110 1/2 East First Street. The letter was provided at Council's seat prior to tonight's meeting. Solicitor Tira said Council needs to determine who will do the work, G & R Charles, another contractor, etc. President Miller said she will have the Street Committee, once appointed, take a further look into what needs done to resolve this issue.

BOB FREY – TIME OFF REQUEST:

Edie said she was in receipt of a request from Bob Frey for time off on Thursday, March 20, 2014 and Friday, March 21, 2014 to attend the NCAA Wrestling Championships in Oklahoma City, OK. A motion was made by Harry Hefty, seconded by Jack Marshall to approve Bob Frey's request. 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.

**COUNCIL
BY LAWS:**

Harry Hefty spoke about the Council By-Laws that have been referenced recently. He said they state vacancies on the board are filled by Council. He also said they indicate, as per Robert's Rules of Order, we are not to keep verbatim accounts of the meetings. If there are verbatim accounts, they are only put in the record after they are reviewed by everyone. President Miller said we are not keeping verbatim accounts any more. Harry said you basically record what was discussed and the action taken. Solicitor Tira said these by-laws were passed in 2003 by Council as a resolution, but they never became an ordinance. He also said the by-laws cannot contradict the Borough Code. President Miller clarified that if it's something important, include it in the minutes but not everything on each tape. Solicitor Tira said to paraphrase and summarize what would be 3 pages into 3 sentences.

**EMA DONATION
FROM
AMERICAN
LEGION:**

The Mayor said he recently received a \$500.00 donation from the Watsontown American Legion. It is to be used to bring the EMA vehicle into compliance. He wanted to publicly thank Watsontown Post #323 for their contribution and their interest in the continuing efforts of EMA. He has recently spoke with their business manager, Jean Kline and discussed the ability of the Watsontown American Legion to provide food, emergency and storage facilities in the event of a catastrophic emergency.

**EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT
SEMINAR FOR
ELECTED
OFFICIALS:**

The Mayor spoke regarding a program being offered by the Lycoming Department of Public Safety for newly elected officials. He highly recommends attendance by all elected officials. The seminar is regarding the responsibility, role and legality of elected officials in public safety. Anyone interested in going can contact him.

**SCOTT
WINTERS
APPOINTMENT
TO LEPC:**

The Mayor read a letter dated 12/30/13 from the Northumberland County Board of Commissioners appointing Scott Winters to the Northumberland County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). Scott will serve on the committee for the term of 1/1/2014 through 12/31/14.

**KENNETH
HOLLENBACH –
EMA FIRST
DEPUTY:**

The Mayor announced Scott Winters appointment of Kenneth Hollenbach to the post of Emergency Management First Deputy. Mr. Winters checked with Stephen Jeffries from Northumberland County EMA and the appointment comes from the EMC. This appointment is according to Emergency Management Services Code 35-7101. The duty of a deputy is to assist with the functions of emergency management.

**HOMELESS
NEEDS -
DONATIONS:**

Ralph Young said per Chief Derr, people are living in automobiles in the Borough with nowhere to call home. Chief Derr spoke of Haven Ministries in Sunbury and said if people want to get involved, he would direct them there. Pastor Ritter spoke about the help the Watsontown Ministerium offers to Borough residents. Pastor Ritter said donations are accepted by the Watsontown Ministerium. President Miller encouraged Pastor Ritter to submit a statement for the Borough Newsletter on behalf of the Watsontown Ministerium.

**CHIEF CARL
REED
CHRISTMAS
PROGRAM:**

Chief Derr said tomorrow, he starts his 33 year of employment with the Borough of Watsontown. One of his duties has been to run the Chief Carl Reed Christmas Program. He proceeded to read a letter he received from a child who wrote to Santa Claus this year. The letter was very touching and one the Chief thought the group should hear. Chief Derr said it has truly been an honor and privilege to run the program. It's letters like these that make all the work worth it. He thanked everyone in the community for their donations and those that helped with gift wrapping and shopping. He said Chief Carl Reed's program is a great idea and it is a great thing for this community. He said this year the program was able to help 75 families and 153 children. President Miller thanked Chief Derr for all he does for the Chief Carl Reed Christmas Program and it wouldn't get done without him. The crowd followed with a round of applause.

**POLICE
DEPARTMENT:**

Two written reports, a monthly and a yearly.

**FIRE and
AMBULANCE:**

none

**EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT:**

written

**CODE
ENFORCEMENT:**

written

SOLICITOR:

nothing

**BOROUGH
MANAGER:**

written

**EMAIL FROM
DEREK
GROSS:**

Eddie said she was in receipt of an email from Derrick Gross of the Warrior Run High School Honor Society offering to help elderly residents in the Borough with grass mowing, snow shoveling, etc. Eddie said she thought it was a wonderful idea. President Miller said she knew if there was a need,

somebody would step up. Edie said after presenting it to Council, she would get back to Derek Gross.

**PUBLIC WORKS
SUPERVISOR:** written

**BOROUGH
SECRETARY:** none

Brendi said she wanted everyone to know that if they've ever wondered whether there really is a Santa Clause, she worked side by side with Santa Claus this year. He really does exist and he lives right here in Watsontown Borough (Chief Derr).

**LEAKING
GARAGE
ROOF:** The Mayor expressed his concern for the leaking garage roof. He was at the garage during the Christmas season and a ceiling tile actually fell. The roof at the garage has been discussed over the last year and Edie said it has been budgeted for. Edie said she would have specs ready for the January 27, 2013 Committee Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before Council, Ralph Young made a motion, seconded by Jack Marshall to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brendi L. Brooke
Secretary/Treasurer