

**Watson Borough  
Committee Meeting  
October 26, 2015**

**OPENING:** The October 26, 2015 Watson Borough Committee Meeting was called to order by President Harriet Miller at 7:30 PM. The meeting was held at the First Lutheran Church, 400 Main Street.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** President Harriet Miller, Vice President Ralph Young, Janet Rump, Dan Folk, Harry Hefty, Mayor David Hontz, Solicitor Randall Sees, Chief of Police Rodney Witherite and Secretary/Treasurer Brendi Brooke. Jack Marshall was absent.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Gladys Klapp, Pat Yeager, Mary Phillips, Ken Hollenbach, Earl Sheatler, J. M. Sheatler, Becky Hontz, Dennis Confer, Carolyn Powell, Dave Powell, Gary Harmon, Kevin Mertz, Robert Brown, Buzz Reynolds, Sandy Hendricks, Linda Reynolds, David Plotts, Ronald Miller, Liz Folk, Greg Miller, Erica Frey, Chuck Beck, Amy Pitou, Terry Kirchner, Cindy Crozier, Viola Ranck, Vera Young, Linda Klinger, Virginia Wirth, Lisa Davis, Attorney Terry Baldwin, Shane Erb and Kelly Erb.

**ATTY. TERRY BALDWIN – LIQUOR LICENSE:** Attorney Terry Baldwin of Baldwin and Baldwin represent Kelly and Shane Erb. They are the owners of the former Watson Theatre and would like to start their remodeling soon and make it into an “events” type/social hall business with many purposes. As a part of that, they would like to transfer a restaurant liquor license. They have an agreement with a business in Rockefeller Township, outside of Sunbury, to transfer a liquor license into the Watson Borough. They don’t need permission from Rockefeller Township but they do need permission from Watson Borough. Under Section 4-461 of the Pennsylvania Liquor Code, it provides that a license can be transferred provided there is a public hearing at which the public can make comments. If there are no adverse situations, they would ask Council to adopt a resolution to present to the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board to start the process of transferring the license and the Erb’s will operate the business. The business address is 131 Main Street and the Erb’s are the sole owners of the business on a 50/50 basis; they will operate under the name Watson Theatre, LLC. Attorney Baldwin spoke earlier with Attorney Sees and the Borough Secretary, to meet the advertising requirements, Monday, December 7, 2015 would be a regularly scheduled Council Meeting. At that meeting, they would like to set aside time to consult and adopt the resolution. Harry Hefty made a motion to have the hearing during the Council Meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>. A second was given by Dan Folk. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried. Attorney Baldwin said there would be no expense to the Borough.

**PRAYER FOR  
JACK  
MARSHALL:**

President Miller allowed Secretary/Treasurer Brendi Brooke to say a prayer in support of Jack Marshall and his family.

**VISITORS:**

President Miller reminded everyone there is a 5 minute limit; she said to make sure remarks are “Borough business”, nothing personal and to be civil and respectful of the speakers.

**BECKY HONTZ:**

Becky Hontz of 507 Ash Street was the first to speak. She stated the facts regarding the dollar amount paid for the Derr Lawsuit. She referred to the minutes of October 27, 2015, page 5 of 10; the Borough paid a \$2,500.00 deductible to Selective Insurance. Selective Insurance paid the balance, just as with any other insured. She spoke of emails from Amy Pitou reported fraud to the Attorney General and District Attorney’s offices with regards to the Solicitor’s bills and a cover up by Edie and members of Council. Becky said she sent the emails to Council. Becky went on to ask Council, to their knowledge, if there is or if there has been an ongoing investigation according to these claims. President Miller responded “not that she knows of”. Becky went on to read another letter from Amy Pitou to the Office of Disciplinary Committee about the high cost of Solicitor Fees and a possible cover up by Edie Moser and Solicitor Tira. She asked if there is an ongoing investigation by the Disciplinary Committee; President Miller again said “not that I’m aware of; I’ve never been notified of anything”. Becky went on to address Harry Hefty. She read from the September 8, 2015 minutes where Harry asked Council to waive a late fee for an electric customer but there was no second and the motion died. She read from a newspaper article, an email from Harry and an email addressed to the Mayor from the customer. Harry addressed Becky’s statements. The Mayor said Harry had referred to Ken Hollenbach as a supporter of the Mayor. President Miller moved the meeting along.

**AMY PITOU:**

Amy Pitou of 500 Main Street said the Disciplinary Committee found no wrong doing on the part of Solicitor Tira, Edie Moser or Borough Council. She offered to bring the letter next meeting. Amy continued by speaking regarding their involvement in the community and friendships. She said during that time, confidential information from a private Council Session was shared with them regarding a Borough employee. Amy said she and her husband decided to distance themselves from the Borough meetings

because they didn't want to be brought into disagreements by the Mayor and his wife that were not of their business. They would be of no political use to anyone. She went on to tell of a neighbor/friend and a conflict between them. Amy was interrupted twice by Becky Hontz shouting "this isn't Borough business". She continued to tell of being approached while she was out circulating the petition by the Mayor and being shouted at by the Mayor's wife. These incidents were reported to the Chief of Police; the Mayor and his wife were told to let them alone. Amy also said a supporter of the Mayor followed and filmed them for several blocks as they were circulating the petition, gave them the finger while walking their dog and blowing the horn at 5 am several times and waking them up. According to Amy, he has plead guilty to harassment charges. She went on to tell of their "resign now" sign being pulled from their garden and thrown against their house. She concluded by saying Council members have been threatened with being sued for signing the petition. President Miller had to interrupt as her 5 minutes were up. She was followed by a round of applause.

**MICHAEL HONTZ:**

Michael Hontz was not present at tonight's meeting to speak.

**ROB BROWN:**

Robert Brown of 11 East 10<sup>th</sup> Street spoke regarding the Mayor's disbanding of the auxiliary police. He had directed a request to Ralph Young and asked for proof of the Mayor's authority to disband the auxiliary police without Council's approval. He was hoping to get clarification on it tonight. The Mayor said the auxiliary police are a subsidiary of or directly under the Mayor; it's not a function of the Council just as the EMA and the Council has no say in the EMA Coordinator or Director or in who the Mayor appoints. The Mayor said he has the authority to create an auxiliary police department and the authority to disband it. The Mayor said that was his understanding; Rob Brown said that is not his understanding and he asked for clarification on it at the last meeting. He requested a copy of it out of the Pennsylvania Borough Code; he agrees with everything except for disbanding without Council approval; he has not been able to find it nor has anyone that he's talked to been able to find it. Rob said maybe for next meeting the Mayor could find the answer in writing, in the Borough Code. Solicitor Sees said there is no such thing as disbanding under the Borough Code or the Municipality's Planning Code; simply the Mayor has the right to call out the services of the auxiliary police. They are nominated by the Chief and sworn in by the Mayor and whether or not they are called into action is up to the Mayor. Solicitor Sees said there is no such thing as disbanding the auxiliary police.

**VIOLA RANCK:**

Viola Ranck of 248 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street publicly declared her disapproval of some of the conflicts in this town. She read an excerpt from the

November 24, 2014 Borough Meeting Minutes; the section titled conflict between Council and the Mayor disclosed. After reading, Viola asked the Mayor again “are you publicly aligned yourself with Mr. Winters in a lawsuit against this Borough?” She said “Mayor Hontz, I request that you resign now”. Someone from the crowd said “don’t answer”. She was followed by applause. President Miller told Mayor Hontz he did not have to answer; he thanked her then laughed.

**BUDGET WORKSHOPS:**

Harry said the first Budget Workshop will be on November 10, 2015; they are open to the public.

**CEMETERY:**

Janet Rump reminded people that flower pots need removed from the cemetery at the end of this month. The water has been turned off for the winter. The committee is looking at repairs to the fencing at the cemetery and she said anyone with any comments or suggestions regarding the fencing should contact her. She is working on getting pricing.

**ELECTRIC:**

Someone asked if per KWH could be displayed on electric bills. Lisa Davis said she would ask Diversified. The Mayor asked how many divisions of electric billing does the Borough have. He said he knows there are commercial demand meters and residential. Lisa said there is Lingles and NOV are the only companies considered industrial. The industrial rates are calculated with a disk. Someone said from there research, there’s not a whole lot of difference between commercial and residential rates. Harry went on to further explain the demand costs; the highest 15 minutes which electricity is demanded in a month. Someone asked if the demand is affected by electric outages; what happens when the power goes out 2 or 3 times in a month.

**POWER BLOWER PACK:**

Janet said in January, we ordered a power blower pack for the crew to use for snow and leaf blowing. She called Valley Ag and Turf and we can get the same blower pack for \$375.00 (the same price as in January-currently listed at \$499.95). She asked for permission for Greg to go down and pick up a blower pack. Harry made a motion to buy the blower pack, seconded by Janet. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

**BATHROOMS:**

Janet said the bathrooms at the Park will be closed for the season after the Halloween Parade.

**HALLOWEEN – PARADE:**

Janet reminded everyone of the Halloween Parade this Saturday at 6 pm followed by Trick or Treating from 6:30 to 8:30.

**CANAL BOAT LIGHTING:**

Janet said she has been in contact with Norm regarding the Canal Boat Lighting. Greg Brouse has returned to work and the lighting fixtures and poles will be ordered on Wednesday.

**WEED SPRAY TRAINING:**

Janet asked the Borough to have a few of our crew members trained to spray weeds in our cemeteries and parks and along our streets and curbs. Miller said they need a license; Mike Weaver had a license and left it go. Janet said we need this work done, it's been put off for almost 2 years. President Miller asked Brendi to talk with Greg and ask the crew if 2 will volunteer to be trained and certified in weed spraying. Someone interrupted and President Miller asked them to "please be quiet". President Miller continued by asking for 2 volunteers, if not we may have to use the "army system". Janet offered to contact other Borough's to see what they do for their spraying and what they do with their workers.

**GREENWAY:**

President Miller thanked Cindy Crozier and Sandy Hendricks for their work down in front of the Dollar Store. She said it looks very nice and very pretty; she said they did a great job and they can be very proud. The crowd applauded. Cindy thanked the Council for their support and the support of the community. They've only received positive comments; they've received donations and will continue to add to the area.

**PROTECTION TO PERSONS & PROPERTY:**

The Mayor mentioned an upcoming Protection to Persons & Property Meeting.

**PAVING:**

Dan Folk said "our" street paving is done; President Miller said the sewer project paving is ongoing and 8<sup>th</sup> Street is scheduled for Wednesday. A resident asked if the crack sealing was done; it was unclear amongst Council whether it was or was not done. It was concluded that Dan Folk would check into it and get back to Council next Monday night.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT RENOVATIONS:**

The Mayor said the renovation progress is coming along well in the police department. He said they have furniture to get and some detail work, putting cabinets together; it is moving along quite well and it will be done this week.

**INTL. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE:**

President Miller said Council was in receipt of Ordinance 2015- regarding the adoption of an International Property Maintenance Code. She said Solicitor Tira wanted Council to note the length of vegetation has been reduced from 10" to 8". Comments were made by Council and the audience. The Mayor asked and President Miller confirmed that Council is adopting the entire code with the listed changes. Harry Hefty made a motion, seconded by Janet Rump to advertise the ordinance 2015- (number next in line). A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**SALT STORAGE SHED:** Dan Folk said the salt storage shed is still a work in progress. They are looking at building it at the cemetery. Janet said it would be great if the plan was brought to the Cemetery Committee; Dan said it has not been taken to anyone yet.

**GENERATOR:** Brendi said S&K came to the Borough to get specs, Dave Ferguson nor Ben Meyers have not come to get specs. To date to Brendi's knowledge, we have not received a quote from S&K; she also clarified that it was for 2 generators, one for the Borough Building and one for the Borough garage. President Miller asked Brendi to check with Greg Brouse and have him make some phone calls.

**MORAN INDUSTRIES:** President Miller stated the letter they received about Moran Industries is in the hands of Moran at this point.

**8<sup>TH</sup> STREET LAMP POSTS:** Brendi said 2 poles are available so the question is does Council want the post replaced. After some discussion about how many times it's been damaged, President Miller asked if Greg would look to repair the lamp post instead of replacing it. Someone said to have flowers put around the base once it's fixed, another said groundcover. President Miller said Dan would go and see what he thinks is the best option.

**SPEED ENFORCEMENT AGREEMENT:** Chief Witherite said the Speed Enforcement Agreement is in the hands of Delaware Township at this point. He received a phone call from Mark Burrows stating the Borough would receive something back to modify; the Chief has yet to receive anything. Harry Hefty said he talked with Jim Ranck and they had some concerns but they are "doable", they are legitimate and Harry is sure they can be worked out. Harry said he was upset because they didn't approve it and called; Jim Ranck gave him a list of concerns. Chief Witherite said the Northumberland County District Attorney is looking to write an agreement.

**BOAT RAMP:** Brendi said Barry from Penn Dot has been in and gave a paving estimate for down at the boat ramp of \$6300.00. Barry said the best time to have the paving done is when we are having other paving done next year; when all the machinery and material is already here. Regarding the grant information, it is a matter of getting started and not dropping it; Brendi also said we are on the schedule for the ramp to be replaced by the Fish and Boat Commission next year.

**REFUSE BID:** President Miller reminded everyone that the refuse bids are due on Friday, October 30, 2015.

**NORTHERN NEIGHBORS:** Brendi said the paving is to be done this week but she also included their invoice to transfer the sewer money to Northern Neighbors. President Miller said she had talked with Bill Michael and the funds were being held until everything was completed to our satisfaction. Harry Hefty made a motion to release the funds to Northern Neighbors as a part of the sewer project in the amount of \$220,712.00. A second was given by Janet Rump. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

**STREET SIGNS:** A resident asked if the Borough received an answer yet regarding moving the street signs out of the garden area at Bucks Plumbing. Brendi stated it is in Penn Dot's hands and we haven't heard anything back yet.

**SESQUI-CENTENNIAL MEETING:** Janet announced the next Sesquicentennial Meeting will be held on November 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. They continue to average approx. 6 people at the meetings and encouraged others to come with their ideas. They hope to have a parade date at the next meeting. Dennis Confer said WABA suggested the parade be held in August, just as it was in 1967. WABA's 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade is already lasting 2 hours; others agreed it should be a separate parade. He said he and Ken Hollenbach have agreed to co-chair the parade.

**MEETINGS CHANGED:** Dan Folk made a motion, seconded by Janet Rump, to change meeting dates beginning in January 2016 to the first and third Mondays of each month. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**CHECKING ACCOUNT:** Brendi provided Council with a brief summary of the Borough's current checking account versus an interest bearing checking account. The one we currently have is a service bearing account and she'd like to change it to an interest bearing account at a rate of .10%. Though the rate is low, she'd rather see the Borough earn interest versus earn service credits that the Borough may or may not use; the switch is at no cost. Harry Hefty made a motion to change the account as presented. A second was made by Janet Rump. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**MUNCY BANK & TRUST:**

Brendi said the Borough's depository was changed to from West Milton State Bank to First National Bank. The Borough has 2 accounts at Muncy Bank & Trust; Brendi has asked for Council's direction on these accounts as to whether they should stay at Muncy Bank & Trust or move them to First National Bank. She was asked to provide additional information to Council regarding the Muncy Bank & Trust accounts; she made no suggestion; she is just looking for Council's pleasure. President Miller also noted that the one account is a sewer capital improvement account that will be going to Northern Neighbors. Janet Rump made a motion, seconded by Harry Hefty to keep the accounts at Muncy Bank & Trust. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**MARTY SOWERS – LIGHT-HEIGEL:**

Brendi said Marty Sowers of Light-Heigel has offered to meet with a committee, Council or the public regarding recent concerns with code enforcement and Jeff Kanezo. Brendi said she had sent each member of Council Marty's email trying to get an idea of how to move forward with Marty. After a lengthy discussion regarding various things, it was decided that Marty Sowers should come to our Council Meeting next Monday night. Per President Miller, he will be listed first on the agenda. Mayor Hontz said he would like to know how much Light Heigel has made on permitting fees collected from the Watsonstown Borough. Funds paid to Light-Heigel, what they've collected not what we've paid Light Heigel.

**LIGHT-HEIGEL AGREEMENT:**

The Light-Heigel agreement was put on hold.

**MEETING PROCEDURES:**

President Miller said Council was provided with "meeting procedures". She asked Council to read and review them, they will be on next week's agenda and their adoption will be voted on.

**SALUTE TO CHAMBER AD:**

Harry Hefty made a motion, seconded by Ralph Young to approve an ad in the Standard Journal for the Salute to the Chamber for the Central PA Chamber of Commerce. The ad will be 2 x 2.5 at a cost of \$60.00 and



is something Edie had done in the past. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**THANK YOU:** Brendi read a thank you to the Borough from Bernie and the crew from Dincher & Dincher.

Brendi also read a thank you from the First Presbyterian Church of Milton thanking the Borough for placing their article in our newsletter. Linda Klinger spoke regarding the success with their event.

**VOTING MACHINE DELIVERY:** Brendi said the voting machines will be delivered tomorrow and she also reminded and encouraged everyone to get out and vote next Tuesday.

**WEX FUEL CARDS:** Chief Witherite said he and Edie had talked about Sunoco fuel cards; their use when pumps are done and when employees/officers travel. He thought Edie was in the process of replacing the Borough's current program with Suburban Propane with the Sunoco cards from WEX. A few members of Council gave their opinion but Brendi mentioned that through Suburban Propane it is tax free at the pump. She believes with the Sunoco cards, the Borough will have to file tax returns to get tax monies back. She suggested keeping Suburban Propane open for regular business and getting 2 Sunoco cards for after hours and travel. Chief Witherite asked the Solicitor to speak to the issue; he was unsure. Chuck Beck asked to speak to the issue; he is familiar with the program and we would have to file tax returns to get the federal tax back from Sunoco versus Suburban being tax free and no tax returns necessary. Janet Rump made a motion, seconded by Ralph Young to continue our everyday usage through Suburban Propane and get 2 Sunoco cards for us when Suburban Propane is closed or travel situations. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

Brendi asked Council for clarification; the Chief would have possession of 1 card for police use and the other card would be kept in the vault for Borough use. Receipts will be kept and checked against statements.

**TIFFANY WERTMAN - REAPPOINTED:**

Brendi received a phone call from Sandy Snyder of the Warrior Run Fire Department requesting the re-appointment of Tiffany Wertman to the Fire Board a representative of Watsonstown Borough. A motion as made by Harry Hefty, seconded by Dan Folk to approved Tiffany Wertman's re-appointment to the Fire Board. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**BUDGET WORKSHOPS:**

Brendi said Budget Workshops have been set for November 10<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. They are posted at the Borough office, she encouraged people to come and be involved and know what's going into our 2016 budget.

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS:**

Brendi said meetings of committees have been scheduled and are also posted in the Borough office and on the Borough's website "[watsontownpa.info](http://watsontownpa.info)". She said there is lots of info on the website. The meetings are open to the public and she encouraged residents to bring their concerns to the committees; the democratic way.

**CHUCK BECK:**

Chuck Beck spoke regarding his assistance with the 2016 budget. He has met with Brendi several times, he has talked with our auditor, he knows what's in our accounts, he's looked at our history of past expenditures and he realizes what's happening. He said the Borough has several options:

- A budget to get the Borough through 2016
- A comprehensive plan to rebuild the town's infrastructure over a 5 to 8 year plan

He said these are the short/long options available to Council. He asked Council to meet with him to discuss the options soon. He doesn't want to spend a lot of his time and spend the Borough's money on a document that won't be utilized or implemented. He wants guidance on what Council wants him to do and how comprehensive they want it. Harry said the Finance Committee meets at 8:15 am this Wednesday and other members of Council can come and sit in the audience; no decisions will be made, strictly to gather information. During further discussion, Chuck said the the Borough paid \$15,000.00 for a storm water master plan that hasn't been implemented yet; he also said the Borough has money and is in the position we are in because of the Borough Manager we had (Edie Moser)

and “we can be very thankful”. Chuck went on to state his concerns: the Borough is in an election year, the Borough will have new Council members, the Borough will have a new President of Council and the Borough will have a new Borough Manager, by Borough Code on January 4<sup>th</sup> the Borough will have a Reorganizational Meeting and the Borough has until February 14<sup>th</sup> to amend the budget. He said if he goes ahead and does a 5 year comprehensive plan on rebuilding the storm drains, repaving the streets, replacing sidewalks and curbing, building a salt shed, putting a roof on the public works garage, and putting a roof on the Borough Building and then a new Borough Manager is not in agreement with this plan/program, it would be a waste of a lot of money. Members of the audience asked if Chuck would like the job. Chuck summarized that if “his” plan will be implemented and followed that’s fine but if not, he doesn’t want to waste the Borough’s money nor his time. Chuck stated without raising rates, the Borough has reserve money to do substantial capital improvements in this municipality, over a period of time. After numerous comments and concerns spoken by Council and the audience, it was concluded that Chuck would come and speak to the Finance Committee Meeting tomorrow morning at 8:15 am. The public is invited to attend.

**PART-TIME  
LABORERS:**

Brendi is to provide copies of the applications for part-time laborers to the Personnel Committee for their review. President Miller agreed to sit on the committee in Jack Marshall’s place; she will contact Jack. Personnel is meeting at 8:30 am on Thursday, October 29, 2015 to review the applications; Greg Brouse has already reviewed them.

**AUDITOR:**

Chuck Beck confirmed that Milton Borough has had their current auditor for 10 years but they are going out with RFP’s this year. Chuck confirmed that the state recommends looking at auditing, insurance and solicitor services every 3 years; it is not mandated. Chuck said he spent 2 ½ hours on the phone with Peg from Rogers, Huber & Associates today and she is very knowledgeable. After further discussion, Harry Hefty made a motion, seconded by Dan Folk to approve a 1 year contract with Rogers, Huber & Associates. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Motion carried by majority vote.

**JACK  
MARSHALL:**

President Miller said our prayers are with Jack Marshall and she hopes he gets well and is able to come back before the end of the year.

**BOROUGH  
MANAGER:**

Linda Klinger asked for an update on the hiring a Borough Manager. Dan Folk said the applications have been reviewed and we are in the process of setting up interviews. Linda asked about the Borough Manager's job description. She also inquired about other job descriptions.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before Council, a motion was made by Ralph Young, seconded by Dan Folk to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Brendi L. Brooke  
Secretary/Treasurer