

**Watson town Borough
Council Meeting
September 8, 2015**

OPENING: The September 8, 2015 Watson town Borough Council 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. Brendi Brooke gave the opening prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Mary Phillips, Dennis Confer, Penny Confer, Terry Kirchner, Amy Pitou, Pat Yeager, Judy Marshall, Vera Young, Ronald Miller, Angela Salvatori, Aaron Salvatori, James Yost, David Plotts, Earl Sheatler, Sandy Hendricks, Thomas Raup, Lisa Davis, Viola Ranck, Dave Powell, Janice Lease, Barbara Pick, Roberta Brown, Ken Hollenbach, Robert Brown, Sue Fairchild, John Fairchild, Buzz Reynolds, Cindy Crozier, Hal Crozier, Virginia Wirth, Brent Frey, Erica Frey, Mark DuRussell, Matt Farrand-Standard Journal.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Harry Hefty made a motion, seconded by Janet Rump to approve the minutes from the August 3, 2015 Council Meeting and the minutes from the August 31, 2015 Committee Meeting. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Motion carried by majority vote.

BILLS & TRANSFERS: Jack Marshall made a motion, seconded by Ralph Young, to approve bills and transfers for the month of August 2015 in the amount of \$316,727.63. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

VISITORS: President Miller reminded visitors of the 5 minute time limit and asked everyone to be respectful.

ROBERT BROWN: Robert Brown spoke of his observations of Watsontown. He talked about the success of the Kids Café program. He said Watsontown's success is not based on appearance; it is based on mutual respect and how we treat each other; it is about the people and the good things they can accomplish together. He spoke of sporting programs in our area, including football, little league baseball and his involvement in the AYSO soccer program. He spoke of "Troy", the former President of the AYSO league; as a tremendous leader and compared the league to our town. He spoke of "Troy's" decision to step down when the time came to hand the reins to someone else, another quality of a great leader. In conclusion, Rob said "we" need to set the bar high when electing leadership, leadership needs to remember who they represent and good things can be achieved if "we" expect nothing less. A round of applause followed.

AMY PITOU: Amy Pitou of 500 Main Street gave, as requested, the reasons for the petition. She spoke of the suspension of Dennis Derr and the \$23,875.00 lawsuit settlement; she feels this has divided the community. The second reason, the Mayor demonstrates a pattern of behavior that is not appropriate for a Mayor or any public official, in her opinion. The controversy began with a negative election campaign in 2013 and, it is in her opinion, the Borough has had controversy ever since. She said the people who signed the petition have chosen to exercise their constitutional right. She continued by reading statements made by the Mayor from various meeting minutes. In her opinion, the Mayor has cast our leadership in a negative light, causing division and embarrassment to Watsontown. She read quotes made by the Mayor to the Daily Item regarding the petition and concluded stating that 394 voices are not as the Mayor stated "insignificant" or their right to speak out "worthless". In her view the Mayor should listen to the residents of Watsontown and they have the right to seek out new leadership. She said they will continue to do so until the Mayor resigns; the one person that can end this is Mayor Hontz; the Mayor should do the right thing, put an end to the division and allow new leadership to get on with the business of the Borough. A round of applause followed.

President Miller had to remind people to be quiet while others are speaking.

CHRISTINA WOLFE: She read the petition, which respectfully request the voluntary resignation of Mayor David Hontz. They feel the Mayor has lost his ability to lead and are not satisfied with a community that is divided. They believe the Mayor's role should be one of leadership and working with all people, with the Borough and Borough Council. For the betterment of the

Borough and its citizens, they desire new leadership in the role of the Mayor of Watsonstown. She concluded “Mr. Mayor, there are 394 people that want their voice to be heard and we respectfully request your resignation”. A round of applause followed.

Someone from the crowd asked Christina if all of the names on the petition were Borough residents. Someone answered they are all Borough residents. Another asked if they were all registered voters and were answered with “they don’t have to be”.

MAYOR HONTZ: Mayor Hontz thanked the group for their efforts and he has been advised by his council not to give this any time or due consideration because there is no statute that supports the removal of a Mayor by petition. He said they do have the right to their opinion, he respects that and always has, but he thinks it’s time for the residents of Watsonstown to put all their efforts into pulling weeds then we won’t have a weed problem. He concluded with “under the advice of my council, I accept this petition and will take it under advisement, thank you”. A round of applause will follow.

CINDY CROZIER: Cindy Crozier asked because this petition has no “legal legs” and the Mayor has said he’s not going to resign, is this going to end? The Mayor stated he didn’t say he wasn’t going to resign, he said he was taking it under advisement.

ANGELA SALVATORI: Angela Salvatori is a rental property owner and spoke regarding 216 Pennsylvania Avenue, which is next to one of her many rental properties in Watsonstown. She first filed a complaint in October of 2013. She presented pictures from 2013 to present of said neighboring property which included garbage stacked against the house. She has not yet advertised her rental because she doesn’t feel her new tenants should have to deal with the stench from the garbage lying around. She highlighted a picture taken this morning of approx. 40 bags of garbage, including maggots and numerous rodents coming in and out of the bags. There is also approx. a foot thick of dog feces lying around the property and children walk down the sidewalk next to it. She said she and her husband take much pride in their rentals and it’s unfortunate that “some” people take no pride in their homes. She doesn’t know where to go from here, she’s sent many emails to Jeff Kanezo over the past years and the property has gotten worse. She just wants to get something done and get good tenants into their beautiful rental but she cannot advertise with the way the neighboring property looks and smells. She asked that something be done and asks what else she should do. President Miller said Council hears her. Chief Witherite said the code enforcement officer recently met with the Mayor and the police department. He was taken around to various properties in the Borough and Jeff Kanezo said he was working on it. Chief Witherite assured Angela it will be taken care of. Harry Hefty asked

Angela to rate Jeff Kanezo's service on a scale of 1 to 10. Angela said she has had a good working relationship with the code officer regarding inspections of her properties but a rating with regards to this problem - a one (1). The conversation continued with "who" the property is owned by and deeded to and concluded with Chief Witherite stating he would step out of his bounds and take care of it. A round of applause followed.

DEB HANEY:

Deb Haney spoke regarding medical marijuana also known as Senate Bill 3. The reason she is here tonight is because her grandson John, who is 5 years old, suffers from unexplained seizures and has been on 5 different medications, sometime 3 at a time. She said when children have seizures it sets them back, John was born 3 months premature and he was labeled as delayed. Before his second birthday, he suffered a seizure that lasted 45 minutes; two days later when he recovered, he was an infant again. He couldn't hold his head up, he couldn't talk. John is now 5; his speech has not improved though he does say words here and there. A few days ago he was able to put 3 words together but it could be another 6 months until they hear it again. Deb said she read articles regarding the positive effects neurologists have had with the use of medical marijuana. She spoke of the side effects of his past and current seizure medications. Studies are going to be conducted in Philadelphia, Hershey, and Pittsburgh and John is a candidate in Hershey for this study. They would be extremely grateful if they could get this passed; the sooner the better so kids like John have a chance. She doesn't know if it's going to be a miracle drug and an answer to all their prayers but it is hope. They have done the research and if she didn't believe in it she would not be here. A round of applause followed.

The Solicitor said his understanding of the issue was the Senate passed a bill to legalize medical cannabis and it has been stalled in the House for some time. He understands through Mr. Bolton, who is a councilman in McSherrytown Borough, Adams County, that it has been moved to another stage. The Solicitor said he didn't know if that was true. He thinks that Mr. Bolton was asking boroughs to ban together to show the Pennsylvania legislature that this is what we want. He said to the extent that Council decides to consider this issue at all would be to purely announce their feelings to the Pennsylvania legislature, which is where the real issue is. He said the Borough doesn't have the right or the ability to legalize marijuana. Deb said Lynda Culver supports it, Milton Borough, Lewisburg Borough, etc. All she is asking is for Council to sign the resolution to support its use as the bill continues to sit in the House due to pharmaceutical companies. Janet said the information was in Council's packets in July and was never addressed therefore it was put in Council's packets again for September.

Janet made a motion, seconded by Jack Marshall, to sign the resolution for banning with the boroughs to legalize medical marijuana. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried. A round of applause followed.

**INT'L
PROPERTY
MAINTENANCE
CODE:**

President Miller said the International Property Maintenance Code is still being worked on by Solicitor Tira.

**SALT STORAGE
SHED:**

President Miller said Dan continues to work on the salt storage shed.

GENERATORS:

President Miller said Greg Brouse is working on the generators. Lisa Davis said she has information for Greg regarding the office and the Borough garage that includes average usage.

**LEANING
FENCE:**

Greg Brouse and Ralph Young have looked at the leaning fence on Park Street. Greg is working on that.

**DAMAGED
LAMP POST:**

Brendi said the crew was aware of the damaged lamp post on 8th Street. It has been damaged two times, there is a spare at the garage. The crew needs approval to replace the lamp post and order another spare. This is at the Borough's expense because it was unreported damage. Brendi said if it will continue to be hit and damaged, maybe the Borough should decide not to replace it; there are not safety issues with the damaged lamp post per Greg Brouse. A few members of Council asked if the lamp post could be moved back; President Miller asked Brendi to get a cost for the next meeting.

**MID-STATE
PAVING:**

Brendi said there has been no word on the paving from Mid-State.

**NORTHERN
NEIGHBORS –
SEWER PROJECT:**

Ralph Young said 7th, 8th and 9th Streets should be done in a week.

**SPEED
ENFORCEMENT
AGREEMENT:**

Chief Witherite said a draft agreement with Delaware Twp. has been and will be ready for Council at the next meeting. Chief Witherite went on to explain why an agreement is necessary. Families of children that

attend the elementary school have requested that the Watsonstown Police Department patrol Route 405 in front of the school to slow traffic. They currently have no enforcement power at present time; that area belongs to Delaware Twp. Chief Witherite has asked for an intergovernmental agreement with Delaware Twp. giving the police department enforcement authority. The Chief said he has also contacted the PA State Police and they have no problem with the agreement.

SESQUI-CENTENNIAL MEETING:

Janet Rump said there will be a Sesquicentennial Meeting this Thursday, September 10th at 7:00 pm in Council Chambers for anyone interested in coming.

PENN DOT TRUCK STUDY:

Council was provided copies of the truck study at the corners of Brimmer and Main Streets which was done by Penn Dot. President Miller proceeded to read the Penn Dot's recommendations which included moving stop bars back in all directions, thus causing the loss of parking spaces in the business district. Harry Hefty said if we do anything, this is what we do; based on Penn Dot's recommendation, we cannot modify it.

ANOTHER TRUCK STUDY:

A resident said that a truck traffic study on "Main Street" was requested, not just at that intersection. Someone said they want the volume of truck traffic on Main Street studied. President Miller asked Brendi to contact Penn Dot to conduct a truck traffic study on Route 405 – Main Street. After much discussion, President Miller tabled a decision on the truck study at the corners of Brimmer and Main Streets.

BOAT RAMP:

Brendi said she has left messages for the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission about our boat ramp repairs but hasn't heard anything back.

BOROUGH MANAGER JOB DESCRIPTION & ADVERTISING:

President Miller read the residency requirement as stated in the new Borough Manager's job description; Council approved a 10 mile residency requirement; she continued reading the educational and experience requirements. Janet said the job description includes 28 responsibilities and duties; she said she worked with Brendi in compiling information from areas that also sell electricity. She mentioned all the towns she used feels Watsonstown's this Borough Manager's job description encompasses the requirements all of these communities. A resident asked if experience is required; another resident asked if Catawissa had anything in their experience requirements about knowledge and the sale of electricity. President Miller said it was an excellent job description and whoever put it together did a great job. Another resident expressed his concern for residents being able to see the job description and have input in what the Borough is looking for and asked that Council not take any action until the public sees it. Harry Hefty thought maybe the decision to approve the Borough Manager's job description should be tabled to another meeting. Another resident felt the current elected body was able to make the

decision on the job description and make a good decision doing it; his vote of confidence is with the Council; he trusts Council. A round of applause followed the statement. Harry said if they meet all these skills, they will truly walk on water. Many people were talking. President Miller asked for Council's pleasure; Harry Hefty said it is Council's wish to have a new Borough Manager in place by January 4th to work with the newly elected Council. Harry Hefty made a motion to approve and advertise the new Borough Manager's job description as presented to Council; a second was made by Jack Marshall. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

ADVERTISING: It was decided the job would be advertised in the Harrisburg, Williamsport, Sunbury and Milton newspapers. It would also be sent to PSAB for display on their website, as well as on the Borough's website. Copies would also be available in the Borough office.

GARBAGE CONTRACT: Brendi said Solicitor Tira is working on the garbage contract.

WABA – BREAST CANCER AWARENESS: Brendi asked Council's permission for the Borough office to participate in WABA's Breast Cancer Awareness Day, set for Thursday, October 1st from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Brendi and Lisa asked Council and the Mayor to volunteer to stand outside during those hours to handout pens, mints and snacks. Council granted permission to purchase pens and mints and they volunteered to help.

RFP's: (Auditor's Engagement Letter) Harry Hefty said the Finance Committee recently met with Chuck Beck; he spoke about Milton's use of Requests for Professional Services to allow others to bid/propose prices for services. It is a mechanism to keep everyone honest and keep costs in check. Harry Hefty made a motion to use Request for Professional Services for the following:

- Auditor Services for 2015
- Legal Services & Solicitor for 2016
- Financial Consultant for the 2016 budget process
- Code Enforcement

Janet Rump gave a second. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Young	- yes	Marshall	- yes
Rump	- yes	Miller	- yes

Hefty - yes

All in favor. Motion carried.

**PENN DOT
WINTER
MAINTENANCE
AGREEMENT:**

Jack Marshall made a motion, seconded by Janet Rump approving Penn Dot's Winter Maintenance Agreement for reimbursement of \$5,521.19 for the Borough's snow and ice control of said state routes. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**CIVIL SERVICE
RULES &
REGULATIONS
AMENDED:**

After a brief clarification and discussion regarding the amendments, Janet Rump made a motion, seconded by Harry Hefty, to accept the amended Civil Service Rules and Regulations as written. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**ELECTRIC
CUSTOMER
REQUEST:**

Harry Hefty asked Council to consider waving a late fee of \$24.40 for a customer who has paid 180 electric bills on time prior to this past month. After a long discussion, there was no second. The motion died.

**WEED
SPRAYING:**

Janet said residents are calling her concerning weeds at the river bridge and the cemetery wall. She would like to see someone come to spray our weeds. The Mayor said he would check with Moran's to see who they use for weed control. It is also something that needs worked into the 2016 budget.

**NEW POLICE
VEHICLE:**

Chief Witherite said he put some information together regarding a new vehicle; they continue to have problems with the Dodge Charger. He said the department is looking at a police truck; it is cheaper, it has more room and they use Borough trucks all the time. After further discussion about the truck, its need and its use, the Chief said it comes with a full, bumper to bumper warranty. President Miller asked if there was money in the budget; Chief Witherite said he had talked with Edie on this subject and she said she had money in the truck fund. He said that Edie said if they needed, they could take it out of the truck fund; she didn't need another truck for the Borough; he said the crew has a truck that's not used. Jack

Marshall wants to know what we will get for the Dodge Charger, either to sell it outright or to trade it in. He also wants to see the truck.

**2 – WAY
PORTABLE
RADIOS:**

Brendi said the radios quoted by Keystone Communications are programmed to allow the crew to communicate with the office and the radios in the Borough trucks; they are not just “walkie-talkies”. Harry Hefty made a motion to purchase the 2 way portable radios as quoted from Keystone Communications at a cost of \$535.52. A second was given by Janet Rump. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**RESOLUTION
2015-05:**

Harry Hefty made a motion, seconded by Ralph Young, approving Resolution 2015-05, which adopts written procedures in how professional services are chosen for its pension plans in order to comply with Act 44 of 2009 and the Auditor General’s recommendation. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**RESOLUTION
2015-06:**

Harry Hefty made a motion, seconded by Ralph young, approving Resolution 2015-06, which authorizes the execution and filing of a declaration of taking and proceeding in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Borough Code and the Eminent Domain Code of Pennsylvania and its advertising. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

**BOROUGH
ADVERTISING:**

Brendi said the Standard Journal asked if the Borough was interested in advertising on Ciro’s placemats at a cost of \$125.00. There was no motion.

**JOSHUA
FOGELMAN:**

There was a brief discussion regarding a letter received from Joshua Fogelman at 106 South Main Street. He is requesting a Borough sign to

be moved so they can situate a driveway/parking area in front of their home. The request was deferred to the Street Committee for the next meeting.

**PUBLIC
WORKS
DEPARTMENT:**

Brendi called Council's attention to the information provided by Greg Brouse regarding future needs of the Public Works Department. President Miller mentioned Greg's concern with the need for residents to trim trees and bushes overhanging streets and alley ways. Janet said we have areas and sidewalk with knee high weeds. She said the International Property Maintenance Code will solve a lot of these problems.

**STORM DRAINS/
BRUSH PICK-UP:**

A resident mentioned the storm drains need cleaned out. There was a storm on Friday night. Brendi reminded the crowd of the holiday weekend and today was brush pick-up. Brush pick-up will be completed tomorrow and storm drains will be looked into at Greg's discretion.

A resident asked if the storm drain at East 10th and Ash Streets could be checked.

The Mayor encouraged residents to follow his leadership and remove the leaves and debris from their storm drains themselves.

MEETINGS:

The Mayor confirmed there's a Civil Service Meeting on Friday, September 11th and the Sesquicentennial Meeting on Thursday, September 10th. Both will be held in Council Chambers.

**ZONING
HEARING
BOARD:**

The Mayor said it has been brought to his attention that Bonnie Burrows no longer lives within the Borough limits therefore she'll need to resign from her position on the Zoning Hearing Board.

**FLOOD
INSURANCE:**

The Mayor said he took advantage of an invitation from Lou Barletta and met in Sunbury with part of his sub-committee from FEMA. He said the meeting was regarding local flood insurance and the method by which residents who have to have flood insurance could possibly have their flood insurance rates drastically reduced. He said the program is CRS, a community rating system and read through many things included in the system. He spoke extensively about the system used to require flood insurance. A brief discussion regarding flood insurance ensued.

**POLICE
DEPARTMENT:**

written

**FIRE &
AMBULANCE:**

written

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: nothing

CODE ENFORCEMENT: written

BOROUGH SECRETARY: Brendi spoke regarding the causes of recent power outages.

MARY PHILLIPS: Mary Phillips asked to speak but was unable to come to the microphone. The tape was inaudible.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Harry Hefty asked for an Executive Session following tonight's meeting for personnel and may return to Public Session.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION: The meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 9:17 p.m.

RE-CONVENE TO PUBLIC SESSION: The meeting returned to Public Session at 9:45 p.m. in Council Chambers.

PART-TIME LABORERS: Harry Hefty made a motion to advertise and hire two (2) part-time laborers. A second was given by Ralph Young. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

All in favor. Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before Council, a motion was made by Ralph Young, seconded by Janet Rump to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brendi L. Brooke
Secretary/Treasurer