

**WILKINSBURG BOROUGH**  
**Council Work Session**  
**April 2, 2014**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-President Moore called the meeting to order at approximately 6:32 PM in Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building, 605 Ross Ave., Wilkinsburg, PA.

**ROLL CALL**

The roll was called to establish a quorum. Present were Mr. Lefebvre, Mr. Taiani (via telephone connection), Ms. Trice, Ms. Moore, Ms. Grannemann, and Mr. Shattuck. Marla P. Marcinko, Borough Manager was also present. Ms. Garrett, Ms. Macklin, President McCarthy-Johnson and Mayor John A. Thompson were absent. A quorum was established.

Vice-President Moore stated that President McCarthy-Johnson should be arriving shortly.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Following the pledge of allegiance, a moment of silence was observed to remember victims of violent crime.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**John T. Ward – 1221 Swissvale Ave.** – Speaking on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce and inquiring about the installation of lighting for the holiday season on Penn Ave. Ms. Marcinko stated that there is no power supply to a number of the decorative lamp posts and there are monies budgeted for the repairs. Mr. Ward questioned whether utility poles could be used. Ms. Marcinko stated that would need to be approved by Duquesne Light Company. Mr. Ward questioned whether approval would need to be obtained from the Community Art & Civic Design Commission. Ms. Marcinko will review the legislation to determine the specific reviews which will be required. Mr. Ward requested the use of Council Chambers on April 14. This should be coordinated through the Library.

**Brenda West-Evans – 605 North Ave.** – Inquired about the status of the residential parking restrictions which were discussed last month. Ms. Marcinko stated that residential permit parking restrictions had been eliminated in June, 2013, on certain streets after a request was received from Hosanna House for a parking restriction review in the 800 block of North Avenue. At that time, a review of the number of residential parking permits issued for all streets on which the restriction had been established, was conducted. Council took action to eliminate the parking restrictions in the 500 and 600 blocks of Hill Avenue.

President McCarthy-Johnson arrived at 6:44 p.m.

**Carl R. Morton - 2173 Village Dr.** – Mr. Morton expressed concerns regarding the failure of police department personnel to return phone calls, the Wilkinsburg School District and public officials. Mr. Morton commented on the condition of roadways and lack of maintenance.

**Denise Edwards – 118 Peebles St.** – Ms. Edwards stated that she yields her time to residents from Hill Ave who would like to address the residential permit parking issue.

**Kate Luxemburg – 432 Rebecca Ave.** – Ms. Luxemburg commented on the need for residential permit parking when there is limited off-street parking. She also commented on the free and clear tax sale for Mulberry Church and the historic significance of the structure. Ms. Marcinko stated that the buyer backed out of the purchase due to the taxes which would be due at the time of closing, based upon a high assessed value. Mr. Shattuck stated that the structure has an honorary designation from PHLF but that it does not have a historic designation from the PHMC. Finally, she stated that an RFP for school district delinquent tax collection will be issued on April 11, 2014.

**Frances Butts – 521 Hill Ave.** – Ms. Butts' questioned why some residents have residential parking permits and others do not. She stated that the handicap parking space in front of her house is not painted. Ms. Marcinko will follow-up with DPW. Ms. Marcinko stated that there were (4) residential parking permits issued in error, in 2014, for the 500 block of Hill Ave. The Borough will refund those payments to the residents.

**Darlaine McGill – 516 Hill Ave.** – Ms. McGill commented on the inconveniences of having to move vehicles on street cleaning days and not being able to park on the street, in front of her residence.

**Claudia Lee – 527 Hill Ave.** – Ms. Lee inquired about refunds for parking tickets which were issued for violations of the residential parking restriction, as well as refunds for payments for parking permits which were issued in error. President McCarthy-Johnson stated that no parking violations should have been issued for the 500 and 600 blocks of Hill Avenue after June, 2013.

**Denise Edwards - 118 Peebles St.** – Ms. Edwards questioned which streets will be included for the residential parking restriction. President McCarthy-Johnson stated that the ordinance will be discussed under Public Safety. Ms. Edwards congratulated President McCarthy-Johnson for her letter to the editor in today's newspaper, wherein she supported Wilkinsburg School District youth. Ms. Edwards encouraged Council to support and defend the Borough's youth and the school district.

## **CAPITAL PLANNING**

Mr. Shattuck provided the following updates to Council:

- The final invoice for the safety improvements to Wilkinsburg parks has been paid.
- The final renovations for Ferguson Park are out for bid.
- The Borough is on schedule for the expenditure of the balance of the bond proceeds on projects identified last year.

- Mr. Shattuck suggested that Council consider conducting a Capital Needs Assessment to develop long-term plans for all buildings, equipment and infrastructure.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **1. Discussion – Authorizing the advertisement of Ordinance No. 2925 – Residential Permit Parking.**

Ms. Marcinko summarized the legislation previously in effect and the changes made with an amendment in June, 2013. Council will be considering re-establishing residential permit parking in the 500 and 700 blocks of Hill Avenue. She questioned including the 500 block of North Avenue, given its proximity to the Martin Luther King Busway. Ms. Marcinko stated that the 700 block of North Avenue is currently designated, the 800 block of North Avenue was appropriately eliminated, and the 600 block of North Avenue was never designated for residential parking. Ms. Trice commented on the heavy parking in the 600 block of North Avenue. Mr. Shattuck suggested that, to alleviate confusion, the restrictions be established in the 500, 600, and 700 blocks, for both streets. President McCarthy-Johnson suggested “visitor parking” be considered to accommodate the churches and social halls in the neighborhood. Ms. Marcinko stated that the primary purpose for the change to the legislation is to re-establish the residential parking restrictions in those locations wherein it appears to have been eliminated in error.

Mr. Taiani disconnected from the meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Trice, second by Mr. Lefebvre, to authorize the advertisement of Ordinance No. 2925 to establish residential permit parking restrictions in the 500 and 700 blocks of Hill Avenue and the 500 block of North Avenue.

**All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.**

Ms. Grannemann questioned the process for adoption of the legislation. Ms. Marcinko stated that the ordinance would be advertised and Council may adopt it at the meeting on April 16, 2014.

## **GENERAL MATTERS**

### **1. Authorizing the issuance of a RFP for Delinquent Real Estate Tax and Municipal Service Fees collection.**

President McCarthy-Johnson stated that the Wilkinsburg School District will be issuing an RFP on April 11, 2014 for delinquent tax collection. Discussion took place on the financial liability for legal fees and costs which would be owed to the current collector, Portnoff Law Associates, if the accounts they currently hold are transferred to a new collector. Ms. Marcinko advised that it is her understanding that the Wilkinsburg School District is in the same position as the Borough, relative to those accounts. Ms. Marcinko explained that PLA has incurred fees and costs in its collection process, to which it is entitled. Ms. Marcinko has consulted Solicitor

Witherel and there are a number of questions which remain unanswered. Council had discussed issuing a joint RFP with the School District which would have offered a larger book of business for a vendor. Mr. Shattuck stated that he attended four meetings of the School District's delinquent tax collection committee and does not have a clear understanding of the School District's direction. It was stated that the School District Business Manager was not in attendance at the meetings. Council agreed to discuss the matter further and arrange a meeting with the Wilkinsburg School District. Ms. Trice inquired as to whether an agreement could be reached for PLA to continue delinquent tax collection efforts on those accounts which have been turned over to them, for a time certain, with those accounts then being turned over to a new collector at the expiration of that term. Ms. Marcinko commented that Council can negotiate any terms in a new agreement. Council members agreed to schedule a meeting with Portnoff Law Associates.

Vice-President Moore thanked those responsible for removing tires dumped throughout the Borough and stated that there are still some on Hill Avenue and Center Street. Ms. Marcinko informed Council that the Department of Public Works was responsible for the removal of tires and that this was a matter of discussion at a recent staff meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business, on motion by Ms. Trice, second by Ms. Grannemann, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:47 P.M.

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Vanessa McCarthy-Johnson  
President of Council