

**WILKINSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Council Work Session**  
**April 1, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER**

President McCarthy-Johnson called the meeting to order at approximately 6:35 PM in Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building, 605 Ross Ave., Wilkesburg, PA.

**ROLL CALL**

The roll was called to establish a quorum. Present were Mr. Lefebvre, Ms. Garrett, Mr. Taiani, Ms. Moore, Mr. Shattuck, Ms. Macklin and President McCarthy-Johnson. Amanda J. Ford, Interim Borough Manager was also present. Ms. Trice, Ms. Grannemann and Mayor John A. Thompson were absent. President McCarthy-Johnson informed Council Ms. Trice is ill and Ms. Grannemann had been present but had to leave for reasons related to her job. A quorum was established.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None at this time.

**CAPITAL PLANNING**

**1. Discussion Foreclosed Popular Registry Ordinance – John Stephens**

Mr. Shattuck reminded Council of their recent receipt of a draft copy of the model ordinance and of Council's prior discussion. Mr. Stephens introduced himself and provided an overview of the concept for municipalities to know who is responsible for properties that actions may need to be taken (nuisance properties). Community Champions provides a database of abandoned, vacant and foreclosed properties to municipalities. Currently there are seventy active foreclosed properties located in Wilkesburg. It was explained the first step in the process is for a municipality to establish an ordinance. A fee is charged in the amount of \$200.00 by Community Champions. Community Champions splits the fee with the municipality to generate a source of revenue for the participating municipality. Mr. Taiani asked how Community Champions funds their organization and it was explained funding is from registration fees. Community Champions' responsibility is to get the mortgage holder to register the foreclosed property. Mr. Taiani suggested inclusion of a clause in the ordinance for collection of attorney fees.

No action was taken by Council at this time.

## **2. Comprehensive Plan Review – Andrea Elcock**

Mr. Shattuck introduced Ms. Elcock, a CORO Fellow and one who is performing a review of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Elcock spent six months updating the Comprehensive Plan identifying what has been accomplished, what needs to be done and the priorities moving forward. The Comprehensive Plan was adopted in Year 2010. There are three documents inclusive of the Comprehensive Plan, Business District Revitalization Plan, and Five Year Financial Management Study. She first talked about the Management Audit and mentioned having talked to department heads for an overview of what has been accomplished. No recommendations were made due to a lack of collection of enough information.

An explanation of the process used in gathering the information for the review, color coding of action items, strategies and challenges were explained. A review of future land use possibilities was briefly mentioned. The Business District Revitalization Plan includes seven (7) goals, categorized featuring more color codes because of more specific goals. Providing support to existing businesses and helping them to expand in cooperation with the Wilkinsburg Chamber of Commerce with a set priority focused on aesthetics. It was mentioned there are seven-hundred pages to the plan to create a mental picture of the volume of content. Further, the business plan assigns responsibility, with the recommendation to hire an implementation manager for managing related tasks. Including diversity as a value is strongly recommended for inclusion. Ms. Elcock interviewed over one hundred people for the review of the Wilkinsburg Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Elcock thanked all those who supported and welcomed her. Mr. Shattuck will be the contact person to Ms. Elcock for Council.

## **GENERAL MATTERS**

### **1. Council Committee Reports**

#### **Administration Committee – Vanessa McCarthy-Johnson, Chairperson**

- Matters concerning contracts and infrastructure
- First meeting April 2, 2015 @ 5:30 p.m.

#### **Budget and Finance Committee – Michael Lefebvre, Chairperson**

President McCarthy-Johnson announced the competition between Wilkinsburg School District board members and Borough Council selling Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Tickets. Ms. Washington announced the School district is winning thus far. The winner will be served pizza. The PSO Concert will be held April 23, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

- Discussed job description for Assistant to Finance Director; information sent to Council on March 18, 2015.
- Purchase of street sweeper and financing options
- Business Privilege Tax collection (Keystone in lieu of Berkheimer)
- Fire Contract (response needed soon)
- Trash collection contract (for discussion)

- Floating a bond ( for discussion)

**Capital Planning/Econ Development & Revitalization Comm.**

**Patrick Shattuck, Chairperson**

- No meeting in March. Last meeting February 4, 2015. Next meeting April 22, 2015.
- A meeting is scheduled for the Library Board and staff to discuss Eastridge Library for development of a feasibility plan and budget
- Participation by Ms. Macklin and Mr. Shattuck in the East Busway Corridor Study Meeting. PCRG considers Wilkinsburg as a nucleus for the East Busway and willing to assist with raising the 25% matching funds.
- Railroad trestle \$1.5 million project and Wilkinsburg's ability to assist with lighting for the project.

**Civic Sector and Constituent/Business Outreach Committee – Pamela**

**Macklin, Chairperson**

- Committee members are Vice-President Moore and Ms. Garrett
- First organization meeting March 11, 2015. Due to email problems Ms. Garrett did not get the information.
- Purpose of the committee is to learn of citizen/constituent concerns and needs and find out how they feel about what goes on in Wilkinsburg. Gather ideas to improve communications and meet those needs from a government point of view.
- Meetings with church leadership to find out what is going on in their community i.e. needs, problems, and good things being seen happening.
- Possibility of video recording meetings to engage more people
- Ms. Macklin attended a Chamber of Commerce meeting and learned there are over seventeen businesses
- Two members introduced themselves to Council
- Plans to expand Farmers' Market to Farmers' Arts and Crafts Market

**Community Relations/Special Events – Vanessa McCarthy-Johnson,**

**Chairperson**

- A meeting is scheduled Friday, April 3, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.

**Hiring Committee – Eugenia Moore, Chairperson**

- President McCarthy-Johnson talked about two committees sort of tied together speaking of the Hiring Committee and the Personnel Committee.
- A meeting was held in March, 2015 when discussion about the formation of the Hiring Committee for the purpose of hiring a borough manager was held.

- Committee members are Ms. Moore, Ms. Trice, Ms. Grannemann, and Mr. Lefebvre.
- Recommendations will be made to full Council after review of resumes and preliminary interviews. Meetings are closed to the public and any discussion with full Council will be held in Executive Session
- Any public action will be presented as a topic in Council sessions
- As of April 1, 2015 fourteen resumes have been received.
- Committee members will meet soon

**Personnel Committee – Paige Trice, Chairperson**

No report at this time

**Public Safety Committee – Kate Grannemann, Chairperson**

- Ms. Grannemann had to attend a meeting for her job.
- President McCarthy-Johnson read aloud the minutes from the most recent Public Safety Committee Meeting
- Committee members are Ms. Macklin and Mr. Shattuck
- The most recent meeting was attended by Ms. Macklin, Mr. Shattuck, Chief Coleman and Mayor Thompson.
- Discussed what the committee will do as follows:
  - Make informed suggestions regarding public safety issues and possible solutions to the Police Department and DPW.
  - Provide a more coordinated effort to make sure things work well for public safety at events, among the Mayor/Police Department, EMS, and Fire Department.
  - Be involved and informed of the upcoming Wilkinsburg Public Safety Plan.
  - Ms. Grannemann to participate with former Wilkinsburg Fire Chief Owen McAfee and Chief Daryl Jones, PBF in the update. All committee members are welcome to participate.
  - Review monthly public expenditures related to public safety
  - Have oversight responsibility for the fire contract
  - Alter perception that Wilkinsburg is an unsafe community
  - Discussion of employee safety and safety practices and the procedure for reporting issues to the Safety Committee
  - Mayor Thompson reported on the upcoming event Saturday July 15, 2015 Wilkinsburg Community Festival at Hunter Park.
  - A discussion held in Executive Session about a presentation by Dave Adams

- An update from the Police Department about annual physical and random drug testing national best practices.
- Announcement by Chief Coleman Citizens' Police Academy brochures will be available shortly. Thursday, April 16, 2015 begins the next adult Citizens' Police Academy. Junior Citizens' Police Academy begins July 6, 2015. Twenty-five participants will be referred from the Wilkesburg School District for the junior program.
- Civil Service Police hiring new eligibility list will be given to Chief Coleman by the end of March. Conditional offers will be made and those candidates will have physical and psychological testing. It is expected to have new officers within a month.
- The Police Department sponsors a highly successful high school student intern program. Some student participants have moved on to successful law enforcement careers.
- Meetings will be held monthly on Mondays at 4:00 p.m. with the exception of August and December. Confirmed meeting dates are April 6, May 18, June 15, and July 20, 2015. Tentative future dates are September 21, October 19, and November 16, 2015. Dates will be confirmed once the Mayor's work schedule becomes available.
- April meeting the head of school safety will be invited, May meeting Mr. Clark from DPW, and at all meetings EMS and local fire captain will be invited.

## **2. Discussion regarding Talent Bank Applications for Authorities, Boards and Commissions.**

Council has an updated list of vacancies for Authorities, Boards and Commissions. President McCarthy-Johnson is concerned the Authorities, Boards and Commissions are working in the direction of Council's interests and goals. Ms. Garrett questioned if Council can merge similar authorities, boards and commissions specifically the Municipal Authority and the Commercial and Industrial Development Authority. President McCarthy-Johnson explained Authorities' regulations are governed by the State and there may be limitations what the Borough can change. Copies of purpose, charters, by-laws and description will be distributed to Council when available. There is a question about the necessity of some of the existing Authorities, Boards and Commissions for Wilkesburg. Ms. Ford explained the Municipal Authority by-laws and descriptions are missing. There was discussion about number of members needed to serve on each Authority, Board and Commission and a review of the number of members presently for each.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

The following announcements: Clean-Up days April 25, 2015 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. yard debris only. April 18, 2015 Calvary Baptist Church 2:00 p.m. Honorary Police Dept. and April 22, 2015 WCDC Liquor Control Board Public Meeting in Council Chambers.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Announcement: A program sponsored by St. James Ministry Center “Mary’s Child”, for ages infant-5 years.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Kate Luxemburg - 432 Rebecca Ave.** – Discussion about Wilkinsburg Redevelopment Authority, PA Urban Redevelopment Authority being the same as Wilkinsburg Redevelopment Authority.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business, Council adjourned into an Executive Session at approximately 8:35 p.m. by President McCarthy-Johnson. Executive Session 8:40 p.m.-9:40 p.m.

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Vanessa McCarthy-Johnson  
President of Council