

The Borough of Speers Council met on November 1, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Mr. Rice, Mr. McCorkle, Mr. Hepple, Mrs. Spina, Mrs. Barcelona, Mr. Daylong and Mayor Herd.

Absent was Mr. Todora.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as read; a motion to accept was made by Mr. Daylong and seconded by Mrs. Barcelona.

Greg and Josh with Rostraver/West Newton EMS spoke on the need of support due to lack of funding and lack of staff. They are requesting an annual pledge of \$5,435 and more exposure for memberships; possibly to hold a drive to help increase members. A motion to table the commitment for the pledge until the 2024 budget is complete was made by Mr. Hepple and seconded by Mrs. Barcelona; all in favor. Council will look into other options to increase membership and help offset the annual pledge.

Secretary read the correspondence: TCBA meeting 11/16 at Hugo's Restaurant, Chamber of Commerce Christmas Party invitation, MVTA nomination.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

October: Police – 64 calls; EMS – 25 calls; Fire – 12 calls; Reports available for review.

Streets & Sewers: Mr. Todora – Absent.

Finance: Mr. McCorkle – Income = \$20,929.20; Expenses = \$51,677.81. YTD (+) 33,139.13.

Borough Improvement: Mr. Daylong – will report under New Business.

Streetlights: None to report on at this time.

Parks: Mrs. Barcelona – Nothing at this time.

Transit Authority: Mayor Herd reported that the MVTA is a “Best of the Best” finalist; ridership is increasing.

Grants: Mrs. Spina submitted an additional application for an LSA grant (\$32,367.70) for the Lower Speers Park. She also reported that it is not feasible to continue applying for grants. It is not free money and it is too expensive due to the engineering fees. We are wasting time and money due to the guidelines involved. Council should meet with Commissioners to further discuss the grant process.

Mayor Herd thanked all who helped with the Halloween Parade and treat bags. He also reported that there will be an increase in the Police budget. He is concerned with Borough finances and a possible tax increase. Mayor Herd thanked Mrs. Spina and Mrs. Barcelona on their work on the bridge and park projects. He commented that elections are coming up and we will have an open Council seat. Council thanked Mr. Daylong for his 20+ years on Council.

Dennis Carson's report – Cut grass, weed whack, spray weeds, blow leaves at park, attached leaf box to truck, start picking up leaves, clean off catch basins, take meter out of pit at the park, winterized park bathrooms and drained water lines, installed new street signs, clean steps to RT 88, change oil in leaf machine, pick up branches at the park, 3 One Calls, submitted salt bid for 100 tons at \$90.75 per ton (\$9,079).

Solicitor: Mr. Lint reviewed the yearly budget process, adoption and advertising guidelines. If taxes are increased, a new ordinance will need to be completed.

Tax Collector's Report: Deposit of \$7,304.70.

OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Mayor Herd reported that 2 new Police cars are being purchased; Speers is being asked to pay a portion (\$7,500 over 4 years = \$1,875 a year). He is recommending that Council approves. Several questions need clarified. What will be done with the old cars? If we do this once, will we have to keep doing this? Will the Police board allocate money and have a new plan going forward? A motion to approve the payment of \$7,500 over 4 years was made by Mr. Daylong and seconded by Mrs. Spina; Mr. Hepple is against the motion. The Police Dept received \$100,000 from Charleroi Borough due the sale of the water company. Why get new cars, look into used cars? Is Speers portion to be paid monthly, yearly or all at once? When is payment due? How are the cars being paid for? Paid in full? Financed? Does this money replenish their budget if the cars are being paid for in full? Why are we giving annually if they are paying in full for the cars. There is some confusion that needs cleared up. Mr. Rice and Mayor Herd will reach out to the Chief of Police.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Krider reported on the bridge project. He sent out 11 bid packets and received one (1) sealed bid. JF Shea for \$679,522.50. He suggests having a meeting with the railroad company (W&LE) to discuss the project. We will NOT need to advertise again for re-bid per Mr. Krider and Shannon. Mr. Krider will forward the names of the railroad contacts to the secretary tomorrow since he did not actually speak to anyone at Wheeling and Lake Erie to get answers to the questions from potential bidders. Mr. Krider will contact Larry Maggi for help.

Mrs. Barcelona asked Mr. Krider if he has any progress on the Lower Speers Park. No, he does not. He still did not order the mandatory sign. Mrs. Barcelona will contact Ashley and find out who needs to do what so this project can move forward. We cannot keep waiting. Speers is paying Mr. Krider to handle this project but nothing is being done.

Council is inquiring about the invoices being submitted by KLH. We are not being informed of what is going on. Invoices with different names for thousands of dollars and still nothing being explained or justified. The invoices are not itemized as previously requested multiple times. All the information on the project and bid specs stayed the same other than changing the name of the project. Council is not clear what all the additional charges are for to justify the invoices. Mr. Krider will have Kevin Creagh, Director of Engineering, call the secretary to explain. (As of 11/6, he still has not called). Once again, Council is asking for transparency and to have itemized

invoices in a timely manner; we are getting invoices from 3 to 4 months ago. These are all issues that have been brought up multiple times.

A motion to appoint Mayor Herd as a representative to the Board of Directors for a 5 year term (January 2024 – December 2029) for the Mon Valley Transit Authority was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mrs. Spina; all in favor.

Mr. Daylong spoke on streetlights out. Secretary reported multiple times. Council will have the Police report them as well. Dr. Daylong is receiving multiple calls about the lights being out. All calls should be coming to the borough office.

Council will start working on the 2024 budget on Wednesday, November 8th at 6 p.m.

Mrs. Spina thanked everyone for their help with the grant application.

Mayor Herd stated the Police budget will increase.

Citizens: Mr. Bartolozzi – inquired about recycling in the Borough. Recycling is not included in our current refuse contract. Our current contract expires December 2024. We can discuss next year to possibly add it to the contract when it is open for bids. Sandy Sabot introduced herself as a candidate for Prothonotary in the upcoming election.

A motion to pay the bills was made by Mr. Hepple and seconded by Mrs. Barcelona; all in favor.

A motion to adjourn at 9:11 p.m. was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mrs. Barcelona.