

**EAST PITTSBURGH COUNCIL
MINUTES
December 15, 2020**

The December 15, 2020 meeting of the East Pittsburgh Borough Council was called to order by Mary Carol Kennedy at 7:02 p.m. via video teleconference.

Mr. Abrams took the roll:

Present:

Absent:

Mary Carol Kennedy, Council President	none
Stacy Simon, Council Vice-President (arrived 7:04 pm)	
Paul Borkowski, Council Member	
Earnest Frazier, Council Member	
Jonathan Reyes, Council Member	

Other:

Seth Abrams, Borough Manager
Nick Evashavik, Solicitor
Dave Gilliland, Engineer
David Miller, Code Enforcement Officer
Denise Hartford, Secretary

All recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

ENGINEERS REPORT

Mr. Gilliland's report is on file.

Motion to accept the Engineer's report: Mr. Reyes, seconded by Mr. Frazier. Motion carried.

PRESENTATION

Megan McDonough from Food & Water Watch discussed options that the Borough has to establish a separate fund for environmental defense. This fund would allow for donations to be given to the borough for the express use of environmental issues that directly impact the Borough and/or its residents.

Council instructed Mr. Abrams to establish a bank account for this purpose and will further engage with Ms. McDonough in 2021 to establish fundraising objectives and identify donors.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Kennedy noted that the street on page two should be Franklin St., not Howard St. Ms. Simon made the motion to approve the November 17, 2020 Council Minutes with a correction to the street name on page 2. It was seconded by Mr. Borkowski. Motion carried.

MOTION TO PAY BILLS

Mr. Reyes made the motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$ 105,711.88. Seconded by Mr. Frazier. Motion carried.

FIRE MARSHAL REPORT – the report is on file. Ms. Kennedy asked about the building on Center Ave. that was noted to have a bowing wall. It was agreed that the borough engineer would assess the building and report the findings to the borough manager and code enforcement officer. The borough will reach out to the owner to inform them of the identified concern(s) once the report is received.

Motion to accept report by Mr. Reyes and seconded by Ms. Simon. Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS – No report. The crew is prepared for the pending snowstorm.

SOLICITOR REPORT

Mr. Evashavik received an offer from an estate to donate land on the corner of Cliff & Glosser. Council discussed options and consequences for the land if the borough does or does not accept the land, including tax liabilities. Mr. Evashavik will request for an extension to the trust offering the property until after the January Council meeting.

The case with Merrion Oil & Gas is scheduled to go in front of Judge James on January 19, 2021. The next likely step will be to submit briefs.

Motion to accept the solicitor's report by Mr. Frazier and seconded by Ms. Simon. Motion carried.

POLICE – no report

Zoning Hearing Board - No meeting.

MAYOR'S REPORT – No Report

MANAGER'S REPORT – The activities report is on file.

Mr. Abrams reported that as the borough took over local tax collection the software we use went down. It came back up today, and time is being spent entering data for the past month.

An upcoming goal is to further document and refine the vacant property list for Council.

Financially the Borough continues to run a surplus and is anticipating finishing the year with approximately \$200,000.

A staff member has tested positive for COVID and is self-isolating after consultation with their physician. Any staff near this person has been notified and asked to get themselves tested.

Ms. Kennedy asked about complaints for dogs barking at 304 Howard Ave. Mr. Abrams and Mr. Miller both stated that they drive the alley regularly and have not heard the dogs barking since the complaint. Both will continue to monitor the situation.

Motion to accept the Manager's report made by Mr. Reyes and seconded by Ms. Simon. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS – A memo from evolve:EA explaining the January virtual public meeting.

OLD BUSINESS – Ms. Simon asked about the progress of setting up a meeting with Sen. Brewster. Mr. Abrams explained that he did not make that request since the reason for the meeting was no longer an issue. Ms. Simon requested that meetings still be set up with Sen. Brewster and Rep. Markosek to give them updates on the Borough.

NEW BUSINESS –

1. Motion to Adopt the 2021 Budget as edited at the November 2020 meeting made by Mr. Reyes and seconded by Mr. Borkowski. Motion carried.
2. Motion to retain the PROPERTY TAX MILLAGE at 13.45 by Ms. Simon and seconded by Mr. Frazier. Motion carried.
3. Motion to accept Fee Schedule Resolution for 2021 by Ms. Simon and seconded by Mr. Frazier. Motion carried.
4. Motion to Ratify the telephone vote on November 25th to award the geotechnical study project at 516 Bessemer Ave. to Construction Engineering Consultants, Inc. with the low bid of \$7,700 by Mr. Reyes and seconded by Mr. Borkowski. Motion carried
5. Motion to Ratify the telephone vote on December 1st to approve the engagement of DeBlasio & DeBlasio for the purposes of reviewing the books of the Tax Collector from Jan 1, 2020 through Nov 15, 2020 by Mr. Reyes and seconded by Ms. Simon. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION-

Mr. Abrams presented a draft ordinance to increase the tax collector's wages to \$7,000 per year. The proposed ordinance will be advertised and presented for a vote in January.

Mr. Abrams presented a resolution to set a fee for the Borough to pickup and dispose of tires and televisions. The purpose is to offset some of the costs the borough incurs by bringing tires to the recycler and to Big's for their removal of the electronics dumpster.

6. Mr. Reyes made a motion to accept the recycling fee resolution. Motion was seconded by Mr. Frazier. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT-

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Seth Abrams
Borough Manager