

**Orwigsburg Borough Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**December 13, 2017**

Orwigsburg Borough Council met on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 in Council Chambers. President Touchinsky called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

In attendance were: President Buddy Touchinsky, Vice President Susan Murphy. Councilors: Brian Baldwin, Paul Bedway, Darle Cresswell, Angie Hoptak-Solga and Michele Rudloff. Mayor Barry Berger; Borough Manager Robert Williams and Borough Secretary Sherry Edwards.

Visitors: Virginia Hughes of 135 S Warren St; Aida Lone of 115 Woodview Dr; Bill Knecht of 204 S Warren St; Janis McGowan of South Schuylkill News; Chief John Koury; David Barr of the Republican Herald.

**Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2017 and November 8, 2017 meetings as presented was made by Darle Cresswell, second by Susan Murphy. Unanimous.

**Treasurer's Report**

The October 2017 Treasurer's report was presented to Council.

**Tax Collector's Report**

The November 2017 Tax Collector's report was presented to Council as follows:

Real Estate	\$ 5,407.28
Per Capita	\$ 898.80
Occupation	\$ 303.81

A motion to exonerate the Tax Collector from collecting Occupation Tax on Tax Exoneration list #11 was made by Michele Rudloff, second by Susan Murphy. Unanimous.

Building Permits for November 2017:

0 – New Permits

3 – Renovation Permits issued at \$73,095.00 total value

## **Public Comment**

Virginia Hughes of 135 S Warren St mentioned how beautiful the town square looks and thanked the members of Council for not taking a salary to help with the boroughs budget.

Bill Knecht of 204 S Warren St questioned the additional police officer as part of the 2018 Budget message.

*Additional police officer is the officer (Lewis) that was hired in October*

**Old Business** – none

**New Business** – none

## **Committee Reports**

Mayor Barry Berger presented recognition plaques to the following Council members who term has ended and did not seek re-election:

Councilman Darle Cresswell served from January 2014 thru December 2017

Councilman Buddy Touchinsky served from January 2010 thru December 2017 and as President from January 2014 thru December 2017

## **Finance**

The 2018 Budget Message:

Bob noted the Borough's financial condition continues to improve. The Water, Sewer, and Sanitation Funds are adequately funded. The General Fund is forecasted to benefit from its second consecutive year of self-sufficient operating revenue without the dependency of borrowing from reserve funds.

The 2018 Budget is a lean Budget at 9 Mills that includes funding for an additional full time Police Officer in an effort to provide our community with the requested 24/7 coverage.

Public comment on the Budget:

Virginia Hughes of 135 S Warren St expressed her concerns with the 3 mill increase being a great burden on the residents on fixed income. She asked Council to please take that into consideration when making the decision and also asked how long will the 3 mills last until the next increase.

Council gave an explanation on the following:

- 10 years of under budgeting
- 20 years of no millage increase
- Years of deficit spending

- Challenges with 24/7 police coverage.
- Last year should have been raised more but was scaled back
- Road repairs
- Municipal Authority projects
- Borough Hall repairs
- Even with a 3 mill increase the borough (with a police force) is still a better value and can provide a higher level of service than any other town in the County
- 2018 Budget as present has \$100,000 set aside for road repairs, includes liquid fuels
- Improvements to water/sewer systems
- Borough received a significant amount of grant money which is a reflection of Councils desire to do as much as we can with little impact to the residents

Chief Koury noted even with hiring Officer Lewis it still does not give us a guarantee for 24/7 coverage, there may be shifts here and there that are not covered. Recommendation in a 1997 DCED study says the borough should have one more officer for a total of one chief and five officers.

A motion to approve the 2018 Budget as follows was made by Michele Rudloff, second by Brian Baldwin. Sue Murphy opposed. Motion passed.

	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
General Fund	\$1,247,700.00	\$1,247,700.00
Water Fund	\$ 754,115.00	\$ 754,115.00
Sewer Fund	\$ 825,900.00	\$ 825,900.00
Sanitation Fund	\$ 289,346.00	\$ 289,346.00

A motion to advertise Ordinance #430 establishing the 2018 Real Estate Tax at 9.00 mills on each dollar of assessed valuation for property tax and the 2018 Occupation Tax at 13 mills was made by Michele Rudloff, Brian Baldwin. Susan Murphy opposed. Motion passed.

A motion to adopt Resolution 2017-18 maintaining the Act 511 taxes for 2018 as follows: Per-Capita Tax \$10.00; Real Estate Transfer Tax  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 1 percent; Earned Income Tax  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 1 percent; Amusement Tax at \$25.00 per devise and Local Services Tax \$47.00 was made by Paul Bedway, second by Michele Rudloff. Unanimous.

A motion to authorize the Borough Manager to pay year end (FY 2017) bills after review by the Finance Chairman was made by Paul Bedway, second by Brian Baldwin. Unanimous.

### **Personnel**

A motion to adopt Resolution 2017-19 establishing the non-uniform full time employee wage rates at a 3% increase for 2018 was made by Darle Cresswell, second by Susan Murphy. Unanimous.

A motion to approve the 2018 Employee Handbook as reviewed and updated by the Power Kunkle Group was made by Michele Rudloff, second by Susan Murphy. Unanimous.

A motion to approve the employment agreements for the Chief of Police and Borough Manager effective January 1, 2018 for a term of 3 years at the current pay and benefit level with annual increases of 3% was made by Darle Cresswell, second by Michele Rudloff. Unanimous. Councilor Cresswell commended the Borough Manager and Police Chief on how well they are managing the borough.

A motion to authorize Fire Police support for the Orwigsburg Food Pantry event on December 16, 2017 was made by Michele Rudloff, second by Susan Murphy. Unanimous.

A motion to accept the resignation of Rodney Schaeffer from the Zoning Hearing Board, due to his election to Borough Council, effective December 31, 2017 was made by Michele Rudloff, second by Paul Bedway. Unanimous.

A motion to appoint Bill Knecht to the Zoning Hearing Board for a 1-year term, effective January 1, 2017 was made by Darle Cresswell, second by Michele Rudloff. Unanimous.

### **Insurance**

A motion to continue with the current Capital Blue Cross Health Insurance Policy at the proposed current overall rates was made by Angie Hoptak-Solga, second by Paul Bedway. Unanimous.

A motion to continue with the current Municipal Workers Compensation Insurance Plan at the proposed current overall rates was made by Angie Hoptak-Solga, second by Michele Rudloff. Unanimous.

### **Water, Sewer, & Sanitation**

A motion to extend the current County Waste contract for a period of 1 year with the current level of service at the current rates was made by Michele Rudloff, second by Paul Bedway. Unanimous.

### **Solicitors Report**

Solicitor Datte gave an update on the following plans:

As far as the pending litigation is concerned nothing has changed on all three plans

1. Pine Creek Retirement Community
2. Blue Mountain Retirement Community
3. Villas of Orwigsburg

Solicitor Datte addressed the ads from the newspaper that deemed the Blue Mountain Retirement Community preliminary plan approved. He noted as long as the Zoning Appeal is pending in the

Court of Common Pleas there is no deemed approval. Council will need to act based on the outcome of the court proceedings.

### **Sopko/SCMA**

Action needs to be taken to formally acquire the 20ft easement of the Sopko property. Ordinance #429 has been advertised.

A motion to adopt Ordinance #429 was made by Darle Cresswell, second by Susan Murphy. A roll call vote was taken by Secretary Edwards; vote as follows: Councilor Bedway – Yes; Councilor Murphy – Yes; Councilor Rudloff – Yes; Councilor Cresswell – Yes; Councilor Hoptak-Solga – Yes; President Touchinsky – Yes. Unanimous.

### **Act 42 – Resolution #2017-20**

State legislation has created the concept of mini casinos around the state. Legislation also permits municipalities to opt out which would prevent a mini casino being located in the borough. A Resolution would need to be adopted by December 31<sup>st</sup> to opt out. The borough does have the ability to opt-in at a later date.

A motion to adopt Resolution #2017-20 prohibiting the location of a category 4 licensed facility in the borough was made by Paul Bedway, second by Sue Murphy. A roll call vote was taken by Secretary Edwards, vote as follows: Councilor Bedway – Yes; Councilor Murphy – Yes; Councilor Rudloff – No; Councilor Cresswell – No; Councilor Hoptak-Solga – Yes; President Touchinsky – Yes; 4 Yes – 2 No. Motion passed.

Councilor Rudloff pointed out that tonight we're faced with a big decision as it relates to the budget. We are always talking about finding ways to increase revenue to the borough and decrease the tax burden on our residents. She views Act 42 as one of those options and would not opt out which would allow us to continue to be a part of the discussion.

### **Police Department Report**

Police Chief John Koury presented the November Police Activity report:

263 Incidents  
16 Reportable Crimes  
900 Regular hours logged  
142.5 Overtime hours  
21 Hours Court hearings  
4,167 Miles patrolled on vehicles  
433 Hours on patrol  
24 Hours on foot patrol  
33 Traffic citations  
78 Written warnings

8 Parking tickets  
9 District Court Hearings  
1 County Court Hearing  
5 DUI – 3 Drug arrests  
1 Assault  
1 Theft  
1 Criminal Mischief  
1 Public Drunkenness  
2 Reportable crashes  
1 Non-reportable crash  
2 Warrants served

- As of November 26<sup>th</sup> currently covering all shifts with Part-time and Overtime.
- Suggested to Council to apply for the 2018 COPS Grant to hire another officer.
- New police vehicle should arrive mid-January

#### **Fire Department Report – None**

#### **Planning & Zoning Commission**

The next Planning & Zoning Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 17, 2018 at 7:30 pm in Council Chambers at Borough Hall.

#### **Municipal Authority**

The next Municipal Authority meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 12, 2018 at 1:00 pm in Council Chambers at Borough Hall.

#### **Zoning Hearing Board**

The next Zoning Hearing Board hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, December 20, 2017 at 7:00 pm in Council Chambers at Borough Hall.

#### **COG**

Councilor Murphy noted the next COG meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 7:00 pm in Council Chambers at Borough Hall.

## **Orwigsburg Business & Professional Association**

OBPA Meet & Greet Mixer will be held on Thursday, April 5, 2018 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at the Schuylkill Country Club.

## **Community Events**

Free Christmas Concert at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Sunday, December 17, 2017 at 4:00 pm.

## **2018 Meeting Dates**

After a brief discussion on changing the meeting times to an earlier time the general consensus of council is to leave the meeting time at 7:30pm.

A motion to advertise the 2018 Meeting Dates as presented was made by Michele Rudloff, second by Brian Baldwin. Unanimous.

## **Correspondence - None**

## **Bills**

A motion to approve and ratify the Accounts Payable for General, Water, Sewer, Sanitation, COG, 2015 Bond, Capital Improvement and Grant accounts was made by Michele Rudloff, second by Brian Baldwin. Unanimous.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry M. Edwards  
Borough Secretary