

MINUTES OF THE BIG BEAVER BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING December 19, 2023.  
Held at the Big Beaver Volunteer Fire Company, 621 Friendship RD, Darlington, PA 16115  
President Michelle Joy called the meeting to order at 6:00pm  
followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the Lord's Prayer.

Roll Call:

Mayor: Jamie Marshall

Council President: Michelle Joy

Vice President: Kim Wagner

Council Members: Bart Carr

Jeff Magee

Garrett Schriver

Erin Walter

Roz Miller

Absent: Zoning Officer Owen Pella

Secretary/Treasurer: Jennifer Gasser

Solicitor: Shannon Steele

Public Works Director: Chad Crawford

Engineer: Jeff Frye

Chief of Police: David Johnson

Approval of Agenda:

Kim Wagner made a motion, seconded Roz Miller to approve the agenda. All in favor, the agenda is approved as submitted.

Public Comment:

Tyler Schnerch discussed with Council the purchase of parcel 53-113-0368 from the Repository.

J. Roz Miller made a motion, seconded by Jeff Magee to approve purchase Parcel 53-113-0368.000 from the repository by purchaser Tyler Schnerch, with a tax waiver through 2022. Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Bart Carr, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy.

President Joy explained the tax increase was discussed at the Workshop Meeting and explained the current millage, last tax increase, and potential tax increased discussed last year, that was not done. With the reassessment, the Borough had to set a tax millage at a revenue neutral rate, for the year 2024 (1.7834). The municipalities have the ability to increase no more than 10%, which would set the millage rate for 2024 of 1.961. President Joy gave an example of her properties of 2023 versus 2024. President Joy discussed the reasoning behind the tax increase.

Garrett Schriver addressed the public regarding the tax increase and advised of the improvements on roads, park, and infrastructure and the importance of maintenance. Mr. Schriver discussed grants and the matches needed and advised this team is aggressively going after grants.

Bart Carr addressed the public and advised a lot of residents in the Borough are on a fixed income. He advised the Borough would figure out the grants regardless of the tax increase and of money sitting for projects and emergencies and does not feel this year is the time to do a tax increase.

Sally Powell addressed Council and wanted to know why the tax increase is needed now.

Helen Nalesnik had no comment.

Eugene Bischoff inquired who handled the budget and wanted to know the current budget. Due to lack of property owners at the meeting, he advised to raise taxes. Mr. Bischoff requested the police spend more time at 351 and Shenango Rd.

Paula Cook addressed Council and expressed her dissatisfaction with everything coming down on the property owners and inquired if a residential tax could be collected for residents over 18. Solicitor Shannon Steele, Council, and Ms. Cook discussed the per capita tax.

Mr. Schnerch inquired if it would make sense to take on debt to fix the issues. President Joy advised the Borough has taken on Bonds.

President Joy advised due to the why – costs are going up and revenue is going down and advised of the finite amount of money in savings and currently the Borough is in a good position without having to take out tax anticipation loans.

Jeff Magee advised they do go over the budget with a fine-tooth comb to get the budget down – sometimes to the bare necessities in each category. Budget work starts in September/October.

Kim Wagner advised they made cuts last year, so they did not have to do a tax increase last year. Cuts were made again this year.

Bart Carr advised he does not recall tax increase discussion, until the last meeting when it was to be advertised. Mr. Carr requested the minutes with the discussion of tax increase be pulled.

#### Approval of Minutes:

Roz Miller made a motion, seconded by Garrett Schriver to approve the Minutes of December 5, 2023, November Financials and December Bill List. All in favor, motion carries.

#### Administrative Reports:

Mayors: Mayor Marshall presented Roz Miller with a citation award for 30 years of service.

President Report: President Joy thanked Roz Miller for her years of service and advised the reorganization meeting will be January 2.

Public Works Director: Chad Crawford reported on the first snowfall for the year.

Secretary/Treasurer: Jennifer Gasser reported the office will be closed December 22, 25, and 26<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Professional Reports:**

Fire Department: Turned in.

Zoning / Code Enforcement: Turned in.

Police Department: Turned in.

Engineer: Turned in. Jeff Frye reported the Wallace Run lift station project is under technical review by the DEP, the LSA grants were sent to the Secretary to be submitted, he reviewed the issue with the resident building in the floodplain and manholes with the turnpike project.

Solicitor: Shannon Steele reported bulk water agreement and sent the Developers Agreement template to Pitt Race.

#### **New Business:**

A. Erin Walter made a motion, seconded by Jeff Magee to approve the Sewer Wastewater Agreement with Aqua Pennsylvania Wastewater, INC. Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Bart Carr, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy. The agreement is approved.

B. Kim Wagner made a motion, seconded by Garrett Schriver to approve to transfer \$9,078 from 438.250 Maintenance & Repairs of Roads and Bridges to 454.375 Maintenance and Repairs of Parks. Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Bart Carr, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy. The transfer is approved.

C. Jeff Magee made a motion seconded by Garrett Schriver to advertise the 2024 Council Meetings, including the organization meeting. Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Bart Carr, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy.

D. Kim Wagner made a motion, seconded by Jeff Magee to approve Resolution 11-2023 fixing the Fire Hydrant Tax Rate. Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Bart Carr, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy. Resolution 11-2023 is approved.

E. Erin Walter made a motion, seconded by Kim Wagner to approve Resolution 12-2023 Revenue Neutral Tax (1.7834 Mills) Rate for 2024. Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Bart Carr, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy. Resolution 12-2023 is approved.

F. Kim Wagner made a motion, seconded by Erin Walter approve Ordinance 233 Fixing the tax rate increase for 2024 (1.961 Mills). Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy. Roll Call Vote No: Bart Carr. Garrett Schriver addressed Council and the Public regarding the tax increase and encouraged the public to come to the meetings and thanked those for coming to the meeting. Ordinance 233 is approved.

G. Kim Wagner made a motion, seconded by Roz Miller to approve the 2024 Budget and Payroll. Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Bart Carr, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy. Budget for Payroll for 2024 is approved.

H. Jeff Magee made a motion, seconded by Erin Walter to approve MgSoft to purchase the materials needed \$3,000 and labor \$2,000, for the WIFI setup at the park, not to exceed \$5,000 (Norfolk Grant). Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Bart Carr, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy. President Joy advised we received a grant for \$20,000 from the Pittsburgh Foundation (Norfolk) to pay for WIFI and Cameras at the park.

I. Kim Wagner made a motion, seconded by Roz Miller to approve at the end of 2023, to make additional Credit Card payment, pay liabilities, and standard invoices due. Roll Call Vote Yes: Roz Miller, Bart Carr, Erin Walter, Garrett Schriver, Jeff Magee, Kim Wagner, and Michelle Joy. Motion approved.

Council President Michelle Joy closed the meeting with thanking everyone for their support.

Meeting Adjourned 7:13 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Gasser