

Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of Gordon Borough Council was held Tuesday, December 12, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. in the Gordon Municipal Building. Council Present: Richard Babb, Shannon Dumboski, Jeffrey Hoffman, Todd Houser, Richard Korn, Jason Quick and Michael Rader. Also Present: Solicitor Christopher Riedlinger, Mayor George Brocious, and Secretary-Treasurer Linda Gately. Citizens: Randy Huber, Carol Fetterolf, Leo Rauber, Jr.

President Rader called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance, establishing a quorum by roll call.

Public Participation: Citizen Randy Huber questioned the ambiguous wording of the new rental permit ordinance for landlords. He was told the IPMC (International Property Maintenance Code) 2009 version is the standard used and adopted by council. It was also clarified that if, in example, one of six rental units was noncompliant (not up to code), that all other units are still eligible for rental occupancy permits, with only one \$25 inspection fee paid (pass or fail) as each unit is vacated and available for rent within the time frame. Solicitor Riedlinger noted that the term "in arrears" is open to interpretation within reason; therefore, it is unlikely permits will be withheld for a recent property delinquency (utility, tax, judgement) not yet adjudicated/without lien attached. Borough Manager Jason Quick added that if borough credentials are challenged and we are forced to use a certified UCC inspector for these property assessments, the ordinance would have to be revised to reflect much higher fees for professional services, currently a minimum of three hours at more than \$100/hr. each per inspection based on square footage.

Motion by Councilman Hoffman for borough council to accept the minutes from the November 14th regular meeting as presented by Secretary-Treasurer Linda Gately carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: General Account Checking 8709 Opening Balance 11/1: \$274,486.⁷⁵; Receipts: \$52,099.²¹, Expenses: \$119,030.⁶⁵, \$32,895.⁴⁷ uncleared checks; Balance 11/30: \$174,659.⁸⁴. General Muni 3430 balance 11/30: \$2,185.⁰¹. CD 0830: \$14,505.⁹¹. \$70,442.⁶⁷ is in the new General Reserve CD 3802 @ 1.2% (former Sewage Reserve CD 6530). General Revenue CD 0431 (former Sewage Revenue CD) 0.8% Interest, Balance 11/30: \$86,602.⁸¹. BB&T CD 8835: \$5,118.¹⁷. Petty Cash balance 11/30/17: \$93.

Motor License Fund Checking 9509 Balance 11/1: \$53,112.¹⁶, \$26.⁰⁹ Int.; Expenses: \$1,955.⁶⁷; Bal. 11/30: \$51,182.⁵⁸; MLF CD 20018 (BB&T) Balance 11/30: \$84,111.⁴². All three borough signatories must be present together according to BB&T in order to close accounts before year end as previously approved by council.

Community Hall Savings Fund 2966 balance 11/30/17: \$498.⁷⁶. Park Savings Fund 2917 balance 11/30/17: \$2,635.¹⁸. Home Depot Foundation Park Grant Gift Card 1458 balance 11/30/17: \$330.¹⁰. Hoffman seconded Babb's motion to accept all accounts' November finance reports as read; motion carried unanimously.

Invoices: General Account-Aqua PA (\$418), Berkheimer-EIT/LST (\$263.⁶³), Butler Twp. Police (\$2,750), Ennis-CEO (\$70.³⁹), Gene's Supply (\$78.⁰⁵), Lavas Tax Coll. Comm. (\$10.³⁴), PPL-St. Lts. (\$856.⁵⁰ LED, \$323.⁵⁹ HSV), PTD internet (\$99.⁹⁵), Republican-Herald ads (\$666.⁸⁰), Riedlinger (\$325), SWIF-W/C (\$1,308.), W.B. Mason (toner \$52.⁹⁹). Dumboski's motion to pay all invoices, seconded by Babb, carried unanimously. MLF Invoices-Chemung Supply (\$245.⁶⁵), Gene's Supply (\$30.²²), Paul Dean Construction (\$350.).

Mayor Brocious, read Butler Township Police Chief Ed Tarantelli's monthly report for November, with 16 calls and complaints within Gordon Borough. Code Enforcement Officer Robin Ennis' 4Q report showed six hours total with October violations at 210 W. Biddle and 607 Hobart, a magistrate citation for 226 E. Biddle (withdrawn in December); November EPA emails, citations for 700 Hobart and 319 McKnight. Fire Report: Gordon Citizens' Fire Company No. 1 is purchasing a heating system from Cool Works for the truck bays. Brocious turned over \$53 Community Hall rental deposit money for October's Chinese auction fundraiser.

Solicitor Christopher Riedlinger, Esq., introduced the required annual resolution for appointing an independent auditor. Motion by Hoffman to adopt Resolution 12122017 appointing Lettich and Zipay CPAs to examine accounting records for the fiscal year. Motion passed unanimously.

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Riedlinger also presented duly advertised tax ordinance 2018-01, adopted along with the 2018 budget at a special meeting earlier this evening. Pursuant to Section 1302 of the Pennsylvania Borough Code, the proposed Gordon Borough Ordinance 2018-01 imposes a tax on real property in the borough and establishes the millage at eight point five (8.5), with no increase since 2012. Council President Rader acknowledged that although the current and planned level of future spending has been good progress, it would require a substantial tax increase within three years (approximately 200%, according to Rader's calculations using the 2018 annual budget report's \$218,355 in revenue versus \$373,000 in anticipated expense) if the budget is not kept in check. Incremental increases were suggested by Babb and Houser to offset a large millage increase in a single year. With this year's sewage system transfer to SCMA, no increase was necessary. Holding back increases for so many years "isn't doing local taxpayers any favors."

Councilman Korn asked the solicitor to follow up in writing Verizon a letter regarding trees down on phone lines behind his house in the borough, as discussed in a previous meeting.

Riedlinger informed council the 209 East Biddle (old school) Tax Parcel 46-4-103 deed transfer is complete but the awarding of the bid by the county is still pending for our state grant demolition project. The same contractor with the low bid is under investigation for a building collapse in Frackville and another complaint. Riedlinger added they may choose to award the contract to the "lowest responsible bidder" as warranted. Citizens requested to preserve the cornerstone and bricks for a potential fundraiser when the project begins. Borough Manager Jason Quick has secured the property using plywood, posting notices and caution tape.

Questions arose as a result of recent PSAB training taken by new members. Solicitor Riedlinger suggested drafting a resolution for the next meeting's council approval when asked by Houser about permitting meeting participation via telecommunications devices. Riedlinger clarified that technology is allowable only in cases of travel outside of the area (vacations, business trips) or extended sickness. Quick added that although a council member may participate electronically, they do not count toward the required quorum for meeting attendance.

Quick also asked Riedlinger's advice on whether a conflict exists for a borough manager to also be a council member. Riedlinger responded it is more applicable if Gordon Borough's position were strictly managerial/administrative, involving contracts, grants, etc., where the main job function supervises workers rather than perform maintenance tasks themselves (such as larger municipalities). In a smaller borough, the awarded title has some similar responsibilities, but the bulk of tasks performed are mainly labor intensive, with major decisions made jointly by council, creating no conflict of interest.

Borough Communications/Committee Reports: Quick reported the Bobcat skid loader and attachments were delivered and already put to use unloading the new HVAC units Cool Works is installing in the Community Hall. Quick will be recycling two more old units for scrap value. Building permits were issued for Shoffler's roof and Smitrovich's shed. Quick worked with SCMA and Paul Dean to level manholes in town due to settling in the development. The borough is widening Mountain Road where a Gordon taxpayer lives on a property that crosses into Butler Township. A request to plow that area was approved, since Quick uses it as a good turnaround area. Quick has had discussions with council about a winter maintenance agreement with the state to receive compensation for helping with plowing/salting upkeep along state roads in the borough.

Quick requested whether council wanted him to report the borough sign damage done by a trucker on November 17th to their insurance company. Other borough signs were repainted/repaired by Quick using his own materials. A 35 mph sign was placed coming into town on the western end near Lynn Korn's property.

The 2020 Census registration form was completed by the December 15th deadline and signed by borough volunteers George Brocius, Shannon Dumboski, Tracy Hughes, Jeffrey Hoffman, and Jason Quick. Quick reminded the council recreation committee to take the lead on a proposed community park design contest via the Gordon Borough Facebook page to get quotes on what is needed before application for a playground equipment grant begins in March 2017.

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In New Business, Hoffman and Babb motioned to designate holidays for 2018, with the borough office closed. Houser added that holidays may be changed year to year due to the weekday on which they fall. The motion passed unanimously, naming 2018 holidays as follows: New Years' Day, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas Eve and Day, and New Years' Eve.

The next Gordon Borough Council Meeting is the special reorganization meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 2, 2018 in the Gordon Borough Municipal Building, immediately followed by the regular council meeting at 7:00 p.m. There being no further general business, motion by Dumboski carried unanimously to adjourn the regular Gordon Borough Council meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Attest:



Linda S. Gately, Secretary-Treasurer December 12, 2017