

WEST HOMESTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL
Caucus / Work-Shop Meeting
May 4, 2021

Call to Order

President Baran called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm in Council Chambers, 456 West Eighth Avenue, West Homestead, PA 15120.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

The roll was called to establish a quorum. Present were Mr. Harhai, Mrs. Ferson, Mr. Fonos, Ms. Cain, Mrs. Scolieri and President Baran. A quorum was established. Mr. Guzzi was absent.

Mayor John Dindak, Borough Manager Bill Etherington, Solicitors Stan Lederman, Michael Lederman, Borough Engineers Mark Brashear and Bill Roth, and Borough Secretary Donna McMichael were also present.

President Baran asked anyone in the audience if they had any questions not included on the Agenda.

Non-Resident Property Owners were asking several questions on West Homestead Code Enforcement as it relates to their properties in the northern region along with other property owners not maintaining respective properties. All questions were answered with clear and concise responses. The property owners appeared to be very frustrated with the lack of maintenance over the years and felt this was more of the Borough's responsibility instead of the existing property owners. This did prompt council to investigate the Borough Properties Committee goals & objectives to determine if changes are required. (see below Committee Reports)

The Caucus was turned over to Borough Manager Bill Etherington

Recent/Hot Topics and Actions from Prior Month Meeting

- Recycling Bins (1,008) were delivered to West Homestead residents on April 12, 2021. Approximately 273 Bins in Zone 1 and 595 Bins in Zones 2 & 3 with 140 Bins in excess storage.
- Doyle Avenue drainage is causing landslide on 8th Avenue extension across the street from FOP building.
- Receiving estimates for repair on Public Works Building Roof. Need this along with Salt Shed repair for 2021.
- 912 Sarah Street – Complaint of Discrimination with PHRC (PA. Human Relations Commission). Solicitor completed required paperwork in response to Complaint of Discrimination with PHRC. A teleconference was held on Feb. 9th with PHRC. Conference went well. More documentation was provided to PHRC. No update as of May 4th.

- PA Representative of 34th District Summer Lee will be visiting with Council on May 4th at 5:00 P.M. Very informal meeting just to listen and answer any questions from Council. Borough Manager has only received 4 questions from one Council Member. Manager will be asking for Grant monies to help with Calhoun Field improvements.
- Manager discussed Police Union CBA expiring at end of 2021. Established Police Review Board. Includes Mayor, President, Public Safety Chairperson, Personnel Chairperson. Board met in March, reviewed proposal, financial impact and looked at benchmarking with other similar sized boroughs. Next meeting, May 17, 2021.
- Manager provided Council with a chart showing Towing Service providers bid information from costs to service level to number of vehicles to storage capacity. Discussions were held by council including a vote followed by a motion declaring Culgan Towing Services and the preferred supplier to be used by Borough Police, VFD and Emergency Management.

Committee Reports

Administration (Manager)

- UCC/IPMC Appeals Board has been completed as Craig Siniawski has agreed to be the final member. Manager will send out updated list of 2021 Committees.
- Will be using Gemini Electric to perform Electrical Audit on Municipal Building. Audit will be performed in May/June.
- Housekeeping / Storage - In Process. Good job by Administration in the removal and shredding of 2013 documents. Met with Scan-Tek on May 5th. Awaiting revised proposal.
- The American Rescue Plan includes \$350 Billion for State and Local aid. Distribution of aid will be based on population. Monies will be distributed in 2 tranches, 1st in June 2021 and the 2nd in June 2022. Funds must be used by 12/31/24.

Borough Properties (Mrs. Scolieri)

- Topic of discussion was the goals and objectives of this committee. Manager envisioned a committee that reviewed both Blighted & Borough Owned properties. Primary objective is to move properties back onto the tax role through a streamlined process that makes it easier and less expensive for potential buyers. Monthly meetings should review a Status Update of all properties showing owners, lien amounts, potential buyers along with any other critical information to have a productive and useful meeting. Council Vice President Dave Harhai agreed to be an additional member on this committee.
- Status on Ninth & Hays properties show purchaser will extend agreement pursuing Quiet Title Action by his attorney through means of court approval. School Board did pass resolution for exoneration of school taxes on these properties. No Update.

Community Affairs (Mrs. Ferson)

- West Homestead Borough Clean Up campaign was held on May 1, 2021. Early feedback shows that the turnout was the highest ever and several bags of garbage was removed from the borough streets and properties. Thanks to everyone who attended.
- Mrs. Ferson also mentioned the committee discussed preliminary plans for the Community Day to be held on August 14, 2021. Much progress already made on this project.

Personnel (Mr. Harhai)

- Manager and Mr. Harhai discussed status of Officer on Workers Compensation and Officer back pay from termination.

Public Safety (Mrs. Scolieri)

- Meeting was held on 5/4/21 @ 5:00 P.M. prior to Caucus Meeting. Manager provided monthly police report for Apr-21 after receipt from Chief. New format includes valid data that will allow the Borough to make better decisions on Crime Prevention.
- Mr. Harhai was concerned on the low number of citations issued year to date. Committee would like the Chief to provide more information showing the enforcement on speeding and running stop signs throughout the borough.

Public Works (Manager)

- PW employees working on standard work schedule activities.
- Last 2 weeks of April consisted of working out the bugs on the NEW Recycling Process.
- Additional requirements included vehicle issues, tire chains, batteries, and plows.

Recycling (Ms. Cain)

- As mentioned earlier. Bins are distributed. Pick-ups have been performed in all zones.
- Mechanical issues with truck have been resolved.
- Many residents did not read information provided through Newsletter or provided with Bin delivery showing NO Shopping Bags or plastic bags to be used. Many residents are purchasing Recycling Bags which cannot be used with Recycle Source single sourced recycling process.
- Need to discuss residents that want to return bins, want more bins, and how the bins will be required before transfer of properties.
- Delivery schedule shows Zone-1 (First & Third Mondays), Zone-2 & 3 (Second & Fourth Mondays). See presentation for timeline of activities.

Web Site Development (Mr. Fonos)

- Manager is working with Gov-Unity on missing information needed to update NEW Website.
- All the missing information is provided on presentation.

Authorities/Boards/Commissions

Zoning Hearing Board

- Hearing to be held on May 15th at 6:00 P.M. for variance to build a residential house at 108 Wood Street.

Zoning Approvals/Matters

- 3602 Fieldstone Drive provided zoning approval for pool.
- 933 Forest Avenue (Commercial District). Provided information regarding potential pool.

- 3425 Pinewood Drive provided zoning approval for patio roof.
- 1304 Overdale Drive provided zoning approval for shed installation.
- 839 Forest Avenue (Commercial District) for porch roof installation.
- 1248 Edgewood Drive provided zoning approval for sidewalk and driveway replacement.

HARB (Historical/Architectural Review Board)

- Council approved Certificate of Appropriateness for Filtech at 4/13/21 meeting.

SVEZ (Steel Valley Enterprise Zone)

- Board recommends the approval of 2 items:
 - Steel Valley Enterprise Zone Corporation administration of the TIF fund for 2021 in the amount of \$ 9,000.00
 - A donation to Boy Scout Troop 15 for landscape maintenance at the Homestead Grays Bridge in the amount of \$ 1,000.00

Engineering Reports

- **Code Enforcement** - 1042 Sullivan Drive – Several complaints regarding debris residing in front and side yard. Issued 2 Notice of Violations. Will follow with Citations.
- **Code Enforcement** – 3512 Fieldstone Drive – Install fence bordering yard and granted departure from using 6’ Fence and allowed use of 4’ Fence. This was granted in accordance with the Fair Housing & American with Disabilities Act.
- **Code Enforcement** – Conditional use requirement for 454 West Eighth Avenue. No on street parking will be monitored for continued abuse.
- **Code Enforcement** – Act 152 – Demolition of Blighted Properties application submitted.
 - 305 / 308 / 315 Walnut Street
 - 912 Sarah Street
 - 506 West Seventh Avenue
 - Cherry Street Garage
- **Code Enforcement** – No Parking on northern side of Doyle Avenue due to landslide.
- **New 8th Avenue Sewer Project** – Improvements to sanitary sewer including drainage and rain garden (BMNECC). Improvements to New Eighth Avenue. Sanitary Sewer \$137K DCED Grant along with Alcosan Grow Grant of \$33K.
 - 3 Elements of project:
 - ✓ Sewer manhole repair/recovery – Complete Oct.-20.
 - Also included pre-lining camera inspection. Complete Nov-20.
 - ✓ Pipe Lining – Complete in January 2021.
 - Stormwater improvements (Rain Garden) – Q2 2021, Bids advertised and due May 11th. Construction to begin in June/July.
 - Request for 1 Year Extension approved.
- **Salt Shed Repair/Replacement** – Engineering initial estimate shows \$40K - \$50K. Manager/Public Works working with Co-Stars Supplier.

- **Calhoun Field Improvements** – Site design (Pashek) revisited. This ties to DCNR Grant for \$90K (\$45K) + matching \$45K. Manager & Engineering met with Pashek on 3/03/21 to finalize Construction Documents. Waiting on cost estimates.
- **Streets Repair (General)** – Inlet Replacement and Pavement Repair for Basic & Doyle Intersection, section of Doyle repaved, section of Laurel Hill repaved. Total Bid Award = \$48K to Independent Enterprises. Preconstruction meeting held. Work to be started in May 2021.

Financial - Account Balances - See Caucus/Work Shop Presentation

Adjournment

There being no further business, President Baran adjourned the meeting at 8:38 P.M.

ATTEST

William Etherington

William Etherington, Borough Manager

Joseph Baran

Joseph Baran, Council President