

BOROUGH OF CHURCHILL  
2300 WILLIAM PENN HIGHWAY  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15235

Minutes of Special Meeting

December 18, 2013

A special meeting of the Borough of Churchill was held in the Municipal Building on Wednesday, December 18, 2013 and was called to order by Robert L. Ferry at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Ferry led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Members present include Ms. McAbee, Mrs. Pantlik, Messrs. Lepidi, Kline, Jurewicz, and Dworin. Also present were Mayor McKenna and Donna Perry.

Mr. Ferry explained that the initial discussion of the budget will be an open forum for Council Members and afterward he will open the discussion to the residents. He stated the budget that was presented at last week's meeting would not be read again. Mr. Ferry conferred with the Borough Manager and prepared an analysis that shows the numbers presented last week with some adjustments. He is comfortable with the ending numbers. The millage is certainly an issue and we are most likely looking at a tax millage increase. The revenue projected this year for real estate tax was \$1,359,000 and we are only going to receive about \$1,031,000. The huge difference was primarily due to the reassessment of the Westinghouse property.

Mr. Lepidi began the discussion. He believes there can be additional cuts in expenses in addition to reducing the police force from ten men to nine. He stated we purchased two brand new state-of-the-art police cars this year, bringing our total to five police cars. He doesn't understand the need for five cars and requested an explanation. He would like to eliminate the current budgeted item to purchase another new police car at \$27,000. His suggestion was to adopt the proposed budget that was read at the November 12 meeting, eliminate the police car purchase of \$27,000, lower the increase in millage from one mill to one-half or three-quarter mill and possibly incorporate some of the revised reduction figures that Mr. Ferry presented. He further commented that nine police officers are more than sufficient for a community with a population of 3,000 people. We have the ability to pay for police overtime costs and could have the Chief of Police do more patrolling.

Mr. Kline stated he voiced his opinion the last two months and felt it was unnecessary to repeat it. He thought the proposed budget was a good compromise between cutting expenses and raising revenues. He said a one mill increase represents the revenue loss from the Westinghouse reassessment and felt he could accept the increase. He further thanked Mr. Ferry for submitting a revised budget reflecting an approximate savings of \$50,000.

Mr. Ferry detailed some of the line items. The revenue changes were solely his suggestions. He said he brought the revenue figures closer to the historical average. He conferred with the Borough Manager regarding some of the expenditure changes.

Mrs. Pantlik stated she believes a thorough examination of all possible factors be considered and investigated before reducing the police force. With the Resource Officer at the high school, she considers the Borough as having nine officers during the time period from September through May. She further read facts she gathered about some of the surrounding communities that included the number of police officers, millage rates, square mileage, etc.

Ms. McAbee concurred that a study of the Police Department needs to be completed prior to a reduction of the force. She is not in favor of removing the purchase of a police car from the budget due to the high mileage on some of our vehicles. She would support the 1.25 mill increase.

Mr. Dworin stated Council has put a lot of time with respect to researching what they think should be in the budget and everyone has the best interest of the Borough. He believes a 1.25 millage increase proposes an actual compromise. There is a slimming down of the budget, but there is still a retention of staff. He further commented that road paving is a very real issue that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Jurewicz proposes a millage rate of 5.60 with no reduction of the police force. He would consider a reduction at some point in time, but not now.

Mr. Ferry stated he would favor a 1.25 millage increase with no reduction of the police force, along with the other changes he presented tonight.

Mr. Ferry proceeded to read the following budget:

A.	<b><u>NET ANNUAL REVENUES</u></b>	
1.	Real Estate Tax – Current, Prior and Liened	1,352,776
2.	Earned Income Tax	600,000
3.	Real Estate Transfer Tax	30,000
4.	Local Services Tax	30,000
5.	Misc. Sources (Fines, Permits, Interest, Etc.)	180,790
6.	Liquid Fuels Tax Reimbursement (state)	65,644
7.	Grants, Gifts, Transfer, Contributions	<u>164,000</u>
	<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>2,423,210</b>
B.	<b><u>EXPENDITURES</u></b>	
1.	Payroll	1,098,719
2.	Employee Fringe Benefits	553,986
3.	Compensation (Auditors, Tax Collector)	8,750
4.	Debt Service	6,000
5.	Operating Expenses & Supplies	199,665
6.	Garbage & Rubbish Collection	34,000
7.	Snow & Ice Control	100,000
8.	Maintenance – Streets, Building, Cars, Parks, Radios, Traffic Signals	164,050
9.	Professional Services	60,200
10.	Rentals – Hydrants, Street Lights	20,400

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11.	Police Cars & Equipment; Fire Truck	27,000
12.	Contributions – Fire Co., Ambulance, COG	18,000
13.	Capital Outlays	<u>134,230</u>
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	2,425,000
	EXCESS EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUE	(1,790)

There was a motion by Ms. McAbee, seconded by Mrs. Pantlik to accept the budget.

**LISTEN TO VISITORS** – Mr. Collins of 307 Homer Drive, and a newly elected Councilman beginning in January 2014, thanked Council for their comments. He agrees with a one mill increase and reduction of one man on the police force. He has a concern with going forward if expenses are not reduced. He further has a concern with other tax increases not to mention the proposed Alcosan increases.

Ms. Yankes of 2210 William Penn Highway thanked various Council Members for their efforts.

Mrs. Dolores Patterson of 2525 Greensburg Pike urged Council to hold the millage increase to one mill instead of 1.25. She asked consideration for the high number of senior citizens in Borough and for all the other increases they face. She questioned if there was any major crime in the Borough and Mayor McKenna stated there wasn't any. She then stated the reduction of a police officer would be a good fiscal choice.

Mrs. Melanie Henninger of 32 Churchill Road stated she is encouraged by the new Council elect who were in attendance at the meeting. She had a concern about cutting a police officer and felt Council needed more time to consider this issue.

Mr. Dave Riehl of 2015 Hampstead Drive stated that there is little control that Council or the citizens have when it comes to certain issues such as Westinghouse, Churchill Valley Country Club, Alcosan, or school district. However, what Council does have control over is the budget. Increasing the millage rate by 1.25 is not much, but it does add up. He felt this as a way to dodge a hard decision. There are hard decisions that Council has to make going forward into the future. He did, however, thank Council for their efforts and stated he doesn't envy the cards they have been dealt.

Ms. Peggy Hill of 60 Churchill Road stated she just heard about Council's decision to consider a reduction of one police officer. She said she is against reducing the police force.

Ms. Margie Darbut of 1503 Williamsburg Place stated that it is important for people to understand accounting and fiscal policy when you are a member of Council and also as a resident.

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It works together because expenditures and revenues work hand-in-hand. She commented that Larry pointed out the Borough will save over \$50,000 next year on pensions alone if the police force is reduced. She noted that the savings could go toward road paving. She further stated Council may need more fiscal responsibility and a knowledge base when it comes to accounting. She did, however, thank Council for all their hard work.

Mayor McKenna stated he works with Police Chief Park on police scheduling and wanted to advise the safety of the Borough would not be compromised if the force was reduced by one man. He further noted that if we defer the purchase of a police car next year, we will ultimately have to buy one sooner or later.

Mr. Ferry asked the Assistant Secretary for a Roll Call Vote to adopt the budget that was read tonight and the vote was as follows: McAbee – yes, Dworin – yes, Jurewicz – yes, Pantlik – yes, Kline – no, Lepidi – no and Ferry – yes. The budget passed by Majority Vote.

ADOPT 2014 MILLAGE RATE – There was a motion by Mr. Jurewicz and seconded by Mrs. Pantlik to adopt Ordinance No. 719 to set the 2014 millage rate at 5.48. The Roll Call Vote was as follows: McAbee – yes, Dworin – yes, Jurewicz – yes, Pantlik – yes, Kline – no, Lepidi – no and Ferry – yes. The millage rate of 5.48 passed by Majority Vote.

APPROVE A TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE – There was a motion by Mr. Dworin and seconded by Mrs. Pantlik to adopt Resolution No. 4289 to approve a Tax Anticipation Note in the amount of \$350,000. The Roll Call Vote was as follows: McAbee – yes, Dworin – yes, Jurewicz – yes, Pantlik – yes, Kline – no, Lepidi – no and Ferry – abstained. The resolution passed by Majority Vote.

ADJOURN – There was a motion duly made and seconded to adjourn.

DONNA J. PERRY  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY