

White Haven Borough Council
Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2024

The monthly meeting of the White Haven Borough Council was called to order by President John Klem at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken and the following members were present: Charlie Best, Julie Fallon, John Klem, Zane Writer, and John Zugarek. Absent: Bob Lamson and Harvey Morrison. Also present: Mayor Fred Meier, Borough Manager Linda Szoke, Borough Attorney Donald Karpowich, Public Works Supervisor Joe Wychock, and Officer in Charge Sergeant Richard Mocofoan.

President John Klem stated that there was a special announcement. He then presented Resolution 6 of 2024 authorizing the participation of White Haven Borough in the 2024 Blue Print Community Program. A motion was made by Zugarek and seconded by Writer to adopt Resolution 6 of 2024. A roll call vote was taken: Best- yes, Fallon-yes, Klem- yes, Lamson – absent, Morrison -absent, Writer-yes, Zugarek-yes. 5 yes, 0 no, 2 absent, and the adoption of the resolution passed.

At this time, President Klem introduced Senator Dave Argall for a presentation. Senator Argall congratulated the Borough on beating the odds. He stated that he and Representative Cabell and members of their staff have been working with the borough on this for some time now. With the passing of the resolution the borough of White Haven is now officially the newest and smallest Blue Print Community in all of Eastern Pennsylvania. Senator Argall stated that if his math was correct, all of the others range from 7 to 17 times larger than White Haven Borough. This initiative began in 2005 by the Federal Home Loan Bank in Pittsburgh. Senator Argall mentioned that he had suggested that Tamaqua and Hamburg Boroughs apply for the program in previous years and has seen firsthand the success of this effort in those communities. He stated that when you drive down their streets, you can actually see the difference so this genuinely is a big deal. It has made a very, very positive contribution in those communities. This is not a one-time effort; this is a ten-year program. In other communities, plans have included strategies to increase tourism, develop better housing, support the business community, and redevelop historic buildings. Senator Argall said he knows we are already doing some of that right here and now it is time to think bigger. We will have the ability with this program to develop plans, to gain support, and to connect to resources to make things happen. Senator Argall looks forward to working with the borough to finalize plans, learn from peer communities across the state, develop partnerships with local and regional funding sources, and to turn a wish list into realities. Amy Michelli from Representative Cabell's Sugarloaf office then spoke. She states that Representative Cabell is in session this week so on his behalf, she states he joins with Senator Argall in giving full support and will help in any way he can with the Blue Print Community Initiative. She stated, council is also to be commended for taking this step to help move forward in White Haven's revitalization. Representative Cabell looks forward to working with everyone in the months ahead. President Klem offers thank you and we appreciate both offices coming on behalf of White Haven Borough and the citizens of White Haven. Linda Miller, President of White Haven Chamber of Commerce, also thanked Senator Argall and Representative Cabell for giving us this opportunity. She stated we know it may not have happened or may not happen for another ten years. She is pleased and excited for all of us to work together.

Minutes from the February meeting and the March 1st Special meeting were presented. A motion was made by Best and seconded by Fallon to approve the minutes. All in favor, the motion carried.

Public Comments on Agenda Items - none tonight

Engineer's Report - report on file

- Working on drone and camera footage of Main Street infrastructure prior to the construction on I80

Attorney's Report – report on file

- Attorney Karpowich presented the options for the garbage collection contract to be put out for bid. There are two options and an add on. The first option is garbage plus two dumpsters, one at the cemetery and one at a place to be determined by the borough. The one at the cemetery would be a one yard, the other one would be a six yard. This also includes a dumpster for apartments with eight or more units and that would be an 8 yard. The second option is garbage, recyclables, and the dumpsters. The add on would be the collection of bulk items 4 times a year. The contract period would be four years and six months beginning August 1st of 2024 and ending December 31st of 2029. A motion was made by Zugarek and seconded by Writer to advertise the garbage collection bid in the Journal Herald and the Standard Speaker general circulation. All in favor, the motion carried.

Manager's Report –

- Borough Manager Szoke presented a request from the White Haven Fire Company to hold their annual Catfish Derby at Linesville Park. This includes fishing, alcohol sales, bonfire, overnight camping, a band on Friday and Saturday night the weekend of August 9th through the 11th. They will provide a certificate of insurance and the paperwork from the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. A motion was made by Writer and seconded by Zugarek to allow the White Haven Fire Company to use the land as long as all the paperwork is in order. All in favor, the motion carried.
- The Borough Manager stated the CD at First Keystone Bank has matured. The current balance is \$104,748.51. She asked for a motion to roll it over for another 18 months. She also stated she spoke with our finance chair, Councilman Charlie Best, and he recommended with interest rates being what they are we would probably do best just rolling it over. A motion was made by Best and seconded by Fallon to roll over the CD at First Keystone Bank. All in favor, the motion carried.
- The Borough Manager stated we have received a written letter from the White Haven Lions Club for the closure of Maple Street for the annual spaghetti dinner on April 15th from 3:00 pm to 6:30 pm. We will be coordinating that with our Police Department and Street Department. A motion was made by Best and seconded by Fallon to allow the closure of Maple Street between Church and Elmira Streets from 3:00 pm until 6:30 pm on April 15, 2024. All in favor, the motion carried.
- A request was made to adopt Resolution 7 of 2024 for the borough to make application for the Pennsylvania Walk Works Funds Grant. This is for a grant with no match up to \$25,000.00 to design the walking path that was talked about for Linesville Park. We will get extra points on this grant because of our connection to the Main Street walking area if we can show the connection of how close Linesville is. The Borough Manager stated she did put some comments out on social media to see if it was something the residents were interested in. From that, we got an

abundance of responses with ideas and suggestions. A motion was made by Zugarek and seconded by Writer to adopt Resolution 7 of 2024. A roll call vote was taken: Best- yes, Fallon- yes, Klem- yes, Lamson – absent, Morrison – absent, Writer-yes, Zugarek-yes. 5 yes, 0 no, 2 absent, and the adoption of the resolution passed.

Tax Collector

- Current taxes collected for February \$35,199.33
- Local Realty Transfer Tax for February \$2,437.75
- Delinquent taxes for January – \$1,226.91

Code Enforcement / Zoning / Building – report on file

Fire Chief – report on file

White Haven Ambulance – report on file

Mayor / Police Chief / Police Committee Report – report on file

- Mayor Fred Meier announced an individual had been interviewed for the part time Police Officer position. Sergeant MocoFan stated that they did conduct a background check and would need council to vote on hiring. A motion was made by Writer and seconded by Best to hire Gilbert Diaz as a part time Police Officer at \$22.00 per hour pending background check and certifications. All in favor, the motion passed.
- President Klem stated the Police Chief position has been advertised and we are accepting applications until March 29th. Interviews will begin after that deadline.

Public Works / Public Works Committee – report on file

- The Public Works Supervisor, Joe, stated that spring cleanup has started with pot hole patching and cleaning up the parks.

Committee Reports

- **Building and Grounds** – nothing tonight
- **Strategic planning group** -nothing tonight
- **Finance** – Vice President Best stated that the money from the taxes is starting to come in so we are keeping up with our bills.
- **Planning** – nothing tonight
- **Parade Committee** – Last meeting was March 13th. They are getting all their paperwork and materials ready to go out for floats and for the Poppy King and Queen. The forms should be available shortly if anyone has any little ones they would like to nominate. The 200th Birthday has joined in with them so there will also be a band, an inflatable obstacle course, axe throwing, face painting, family size connect four games. Also, the concession stand will be open with hot dogs. This event is Sunday, May 26th and the parade starts at 1:00pm.
- **Water** – report on file
- **200th Birthday** – same as above in the Parade Committee Report

Correspondence / Unfinished Business – none

Seminars & Workshops – none

Payment of Bills – The bills were presented for payment, a motion was made by Best to approve the bills and seconded by Zugarek. All in favor, motion carried.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items –

- Branden Andres of representing OBI Garage, the tow truck company behind the park and ride spoke. He stated they are looking to put up an impound lot for police accident calls and especially to help with the traffic incoming from the bridge construction. He stated he is looking to see what the requirements are for size of impound lot and bid work needs to be filed with the borough to get on that list. Attorney Karpowich advised Mr. Andres that he is in Foster Township and would need to contact Brian Maso. Mr. Andres stated he is approved with Foster Township for his current lot but is asking the questions to White Haven Borough to see what he needs to be put on a tow list for the borough. Seargent Mocofofon stated at this time we use Ayres Towing and that there is an insurance requirement and a few other documents that he does not have on him at this time. Attorney Karpowich suggested Mr. Andres submit his name, license, and insurance to the borough to be added to the list. Borough Manager Szoke mentioned that we have had others requesting to be added and Attorney Karpowich suggested we create a rotation to be fair to everyone. Attorney Karpowich said he will take a look at it and draft an ordinance for the borough to adopt in the next two or three months. He will draft it for the next meeting so that it can be looked at and review what we want as requirements. He stated in the meantime we will continue to do what we are doing and that once an ordinance is adopted, we will create an official rotation list. Everyone that is qualified would be placed on that list.

A motion was made to adjourn at 7:27 pm by Best and seconded by Zugarek. All in favor, the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Potance

Holly Potance
Assistant Borough Secretary