

White Haven Borough Council meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President John Klem. Roll call was taken, and the following were present: Charlie Best, Julie Fallon, John Klem, Bob Lamson, Zane Writer, and John Zugarek. Absent: Harvey Morrison. Also in attendance: Mayor Fred Meier, Attorney Karpowich, Borough Manager Linda Szoke, Police Chief Rich Mocofoan, and Street Commissioner Sean Reynolds.

Public Hearing –

- President Klem opened a public hearing that was advertised regarding an ordinance amending the White Haven Borough façade ordinance at 7:00 pm. Attorney Karpowich stated it was advertised and sent to the Luzerne County Planning Commission. They reviewed it and issued no comment letter dated September 27, 2024. The local Planning Commission also had an opportunity to review it 30 days prior. Attorney Karpowich stated that Aqua had comment and sent counsel to represent them. Maura Tunis, the Attorney representing Aqua spoke. Dave Hoogstad from Aqua was also present. Attorney Tunis stated that Aqua is for the revitalization of the community but has concerns about how this affects their needs for the Wilmont building 10 & 14 that they purchased from the Rite Aid auction sale. Because of the auction, they were unable to inspect the property and had to purchase it as is. They feel that the ordinance, as proposed, would limit their ability to demolish or retrofit the property to their needs due to the historic building. This would cause cost issues and disrupt their plans. Attorney Tunis stated that because they are a utility, any extra cost to the building could increase rates for the residents. She also said that asking residents to spend more to make these changes, could deter them from trying to improve the community. She asked that consideration be given to these facts and asked that the amendment be voted down. She asked Dave Hoogstad if he had anything else to add and he did not. At this time, resident Chris Roberts spoke. He said he thinks the ordinance is a good idea. He said it keeps the general look of downtown so you don't have a steel building or some sort of pre-fabricated mess. Attorney Karpowich asked for a motion to close the record. A motion was made by Lamson and seconded by Zugarek to close the record at 7:10 pm. All in favor, the record is closed.

Minutes – Minutes from the October 28th meeting were presented. A motion was made by Lamson and seconded by Best to approve the minutes. All in favor, the motion carried.

Public comment on agenda items –

- Borough Manager Szoke read a letter that was emailed to her from Penn Lake Mayor Tom Carter. He wanted to attend the meeting but had still been without power when the email was sent earlier. He wanted to express gratitude to the White Haven Fire Department volunteers for keeping the roads passable and clearing trees and limbs in Penn Lake. He commended them for their time, efforts, and helping neighbors. Councilman Lamson also thanked Street Commissioner Sean for a great job on the streets.

Engineer Report – on file

Attorney's Report –

- Attorney Karpowich stated the only thing he has tonight is the façade ordinance. Council discussed the pros and cons. Aqua representatives also joined the discussion. A motion was made by Fallon and seconded by Writer to adopt Ordinance 3 of 2024. A roll call vote was taken: Best- yes, Fallon-yes, Klem- yes, Lamson – yes, Morrison -absent, Writer-yes, Zugarek-yes. 6 yes, 0 no, 1 absent, and the adoption of the ordinance was passed.

Manager's Report –

- Borough Manager Szoke stated the budget had been made available for inspection. It had been posted on the bulletin board out front of the borough offices and was given to the Journal Herald. No public comment or objection was received.
- A motion was made by Best and seconded by Zugarek to adopt the 2025 General Fund Budget. A roll call vote was taken: Best- yes, Fallon-yes, Klem- yes, Lamson – yes, Morrison -absent, Writer-yes, Zugarek-yes. 6 yes, 0 no, 1 absent. All in favor, the adoption of the 2025 General Fund Budget was passed.
- A motion was made by Zugarek and seconded by Fallon to adopt the 2025 Liquid Fuels Budget. A roll call vote was taken: Best- yes, Fallon-yes, Klem- yes, Lamson – yes, Morrison -absent, Writer-yes, Zugarek-yes. 6 yes, 0 no, 1 absent. All in favor, the adoption of the 2025 Liquid Fuels Budget was passed.
- A motion was made by Lamson and seconded by Fallon to adopt the 2025 Garbage Budget. A roll call vote was taken: Best- yes, Fallon-yes, Klem- yes, Lamson – yes, Morrison -absent, Writer-yes, Zugarek-yes. 6 yes, 0 no, 1 absent. All in favor, the adoption of the 2025 Garbage Budget was passed.
- A motion was made by Lamson and seconded by Fallon to adopt Ordinance 4 of 2024. A roll call vote was taken: Best- yes, Fallon-yes, Klem- yes, Lamson – yes, Morrison -absent, Writer-yes, Zugarek-yes. 6 yes, 0 no, 1 absent. All in favor, the adoption of the ordinance was passed.

Tax Collector –

- Current taxes collected for October \$1,136.52
- Local Realty Transfer Tax for October \$2,459.80
- Delinquent taxes for September \$3,585.63

Building, zoning, Code enforcement – Report on file

Fire Department – report on file

Ambulance – report on file

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

- Mayor Meier stated that we will be advertising for part-time Police Officers.
- A motion was made by Zugarek and seconded by Lamson to accept the resignation of Officer Diaz. All in favor, the motion carried. Chief Mcofan thanked Officer Diaz for his service.

Public Works / Public Works Committee –

- Mileage – F550 30,143 Pick-up truck 51,206

Committee Reports –

- **Building and Grounds** – Councilman Zugarek welcomed everyone to the tree lighting. It will begin at 5:30 pm at the Honor Roll tree and then 6 pm at the Caboose tree. There is also a whole day of festivities planned for everyone to enjoy. Starting with Breakfast with Mrs. Claus and an Elf Parade.
- **Blueprint planning group** – the team must have their 5-year plan done by April. They just had a training 2 weeks ago in Easton. The next training is in February and is virtual.
- **Finance** –
- **Planning** – no meetings. President Klem stated he had received a verbal resignation from the Planning Committee from Bob Lamson. We will need to advertise for a new member.
- **Parade Committee** – no meetings
- **Water** – report on file

Correspondence / Unfinished Business – none

Seminars & Workshops – Borough Manager Szoke and Chief MocoFan attended a webinar through PSATS for personnel / HR on general policies and procedures.

Payment of bills –

- A motion was made by Zugarek and seconded by Lamson to pay the bills. All in favor, the motion carried.

Public Comment on non-agenda items – none tonight

Adjournment - A motion was made to adjourn at 7:40 pm by Lamson and seconded by Best. All in favor, the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Potance

Holly Potance
Assistant Borough Secretary