

McKees Rocks Borough  
Public Meeting  
August 14, 2018

The meeting was called to order by President of Council, Mr. Paul Krisby. President Krisby requested roll call. Present were Council Shallegra Moye, Council Elizabeth Delgado, Council Maribeth Taylor, Council Leslie Gee, Vice-President Kathy Evich, Council Craig Myers, Council Sarah Harvey, and Council Joe Mixer. Also present were Mayor John "Jack" Muhr, Controller Julia Chambers, Borough Manager Ruth A. Pompey and Administrative Assistant LeeAnn Wozniak. Mr. Douglas Evans from NIRA Consulting Engineers and Borough Solicitor Ms. Megan Turnbull, of Weiss Burkhardt Kramer, LLC were present.

**Agenda Comments/Changes:** None

**Community Meeting:**

- Mayor Muhr convened the community safety meeting by reassuring all in attendance that the recent shootings in Hays Manor, as well as other areas in our community are a major concern for the community. Mayor Muhr invited local and state level officials, as well as concerned citizens who have reached out to the Borough to attend this evening's meeting to participate in the discussion. Present were McKees Rocks Chief of Police Richard Deliman, Allegheny County Housing Authority Chief of Police Mike Vogel, Representative Dan Deasy, Rev. Murray of Second Baptist Church, Pastor Hogan of Faithbridge Community Church, and Pastor Moye of New Testament Christian Church. Mayor Muhr also invited County Executive Fitzgerald, but wasn't able to attend due to short notice. County Executive office will be in contact to follow up.
- Allegheny County Chief of Police Mike Vogel addressed Council by stating he is aware of the increased crime and recent gun violence in Hays Manor. Chief Vogel stated that all applicants who apply for county housing are screened and found free of crime before being approved for a lease. The problem at hand he feels is the "live-in boyfriends" who are not approved tenants nor do they reside in our county. County housing has a detective working on these situations. Chief Vogel also recently met with Magistrate Boni to discuss an upcoming warrant sweep. A warrant sweep would potentially find wanted individuals and hold them accountable for their charges. Chief Vogel recently applied for a grant that will hopefully be approved to obtain a better camera system and plate readers. He also mentioned increasing foot patrol and enforcing curfew ordinance.
- Representative Dan Deasy first commended Chief Deliman for a successful National Night Out on August 7, 2018 commenting it was well planned and very well attended by the community because our community does care. Representative Deasy secondly expressed his concern regarding our recent community violence and supports Chief Vogels' future efforts in addressing the crime issue. He fully supports Allegheny County Housing Authority moving into our community, by building new construction. He also spoke to District Zappala about updating our security camera systems here, and doing anything possible to assist in the Police Departments services.
- Rev. Murray, of Second Baptist Church came forward to express his concern not only for Hays Manor, but the community of McKees Rocks as a whole. Rev. Murray feels in order to restrain gun violence and crime, it needs to be a community effort as a whole. We need to come together on all levels and look out for one another as neighbors, because no one is safe and it can happen to anyone. We need to stop pointing fingers and start acting for everyone's safety. Rev. Murray also feels success starts at the foundation of home where children should grow up in a safe, healthy and happy home. He will continue to fight for the children so they make it to the future.

- Pastor Hogan, of Faith Bridge Community Church first thanked Borough Council for approving the Community Block Party last week, which was a success. He then commented how horrible it's been lately as our community experienced three major traumatic events involving a 12 year old suicide, 18 year old Sto-Rox graduate homicide, and the shooting in Hays Manor. Pastor Hogan agrees with Rev. Murray that in order to move forward, we need to work together as a whole. Our community needs to stop bashing each other's ideas and throwing around so much negativity. In order for change, we need to get our momentum rolling and not allow bouts of negativity pull us backwards. Pastor Hogan commented that he is going to initiate a fundraiser to assist in the cost of a plate reader for our police department, which Chief Deliman commented earlier in the meeting cost \$14,000-\$18,000.
- Pastor Moye, of New Testament Christian Church came forward to also express his concern for our community. Pastor Moye feels that until we realize what we are dealing with is trauma and not normal, we cannot educate our children to be receptive to community help, authority, self-ownership, a loving family at home. We must bring awareness to our community in order to turn our community around and it's going to take everyone's effort in order to flourish. Community needs to start thinking "what's in best interest of community at large."
- Ms. Samantha Levitski, member of Sto-Rox School Board was present to make Council aware that a meeting was held with the teachers to discuss the welfare of the children in the community. Ms. Levitski commented that the majority of the children in the district are affected by some form of trauma such as mental health, incarceration, drug and alcohol addiction, bullying, et al. These children need tools available to assist in working through the trauma, and the tools need to be presented in a non-threatening manner. The Boys & Girls Club and Allegheny Intermediate Unit were recognized as two community resource groups.

#### **New Employee Introductions:**

President Krisby recognized the following individuals as new borough employees: Ms. Kara Netz as Part-Time Office Clerk, Mr. Tom McAllister as Full-Time Code Enforcement Officer, Mr. John Stahl as Full-Time Building Code Official, and Mr. Keith Dix as Full-Time Street Department Laborer.

Mayor Muhr recognized the OVR Summer Intern Students for their hard work over the summer weeks and presented achievement awards to each student.

#### **Guest Speaker:**

Ms. Kate O'Brien wanted to first thank the Pastors for recognizing trauma as our community's problem during the community meeting. Ms. O'Brien then wanted to voice her concern that she doesn't understand all the anger against the McKees Rocks CDC. She feels the McKees Rocks CDC revitalization ideas are fabulous, promoting community growth and financial stability. Ms. O'Brien does not agree with the plans of another gas station or the housing authority building their base in the municipality.

Ms. Carolyn Yagle, of Environmental Planning and Design was present to address Council regarding the plans to update borough zoning ordinances and policies in accordance to the 2011 Comprehensive Plan with Stowe Township and Neville Township. Ms. Yagle commented that she would like to form committee/focus groups involving members of Council, the Planning Commission, Borough residents, and members of the McKees Rocks CDC to work with this upcoming Fall season. Once committees are formed and meetings are held to discuss land use and redevelopment, Ms. Yagle will get back to the Planning Commission and Council with updates.

Ms. Amy Dora, the Political Director for Conor Lamb was present to let Council know that Conor Lamb is interested in meeting residents and representatives in the Borough and would appreciate any information regarding any upcoming events that he might be able to attend. President Krisby recommended Ms. Dora to contact Mr. Taris Vrcek, for follow-up.

**Last Month's Minutes:**

A motion was made by Council Taylor and seconded by Council Moye to dispense the reading of July 10, 2018 Public Meeting minutes. The motion was adopted by acclamation.

A motion was made by Council Myers and seconded by Vice-President Evich to dispense the reading of July 24, 2018 Special Meeting minutes. The motion was adopted by acclamation.

**Committee Reports:**

- Council Moye read the July 2018 activity report from the McKees Rocks Independent Volunteer Fire Department. The Fire Department received a total of 26 calls. There were 8 false alarms, 5 at Hays Manor, 2 at Buildings 11-14, 2 at Buildings 19 and 1 at Buildings 24. Response also included 4 motor vehicle accidents and 3 gas leaks, 1 carbon monoxide alarm, and 2 assist EMS calls. There was 1 car fire and 7 structure fires, 1 which was a three alarm fire on Woodward which rekindled three times due to hot spots under the debris. No one was hurt at any of these calls.

Engine 189 responded to 15 incidents. Engine 189-2 responded 6 times. Rescue 189 1 time, Truck 189 2 times, Utility 189 – 3 times and persons in private vehicles responded directly to scene 12 times. VFD cancelled enroute 5 times. Mutual aid provided by Presston Station 277 on all calls. In addition, Stowe Station 275 provided aid to us 1 time, Kennedy Station 181, provided mutual aid 1 time, Seville Station 251 provided mutual aid 5 times, Fairview Station 250 1 time, Emsworth Station 148 1 time, Moon Run Station 245 1 time. All mutual aid was for the fire on Woodward Avenue. Seville Station 251 is on all first alarm structure fires. We provided aid to Station 275, 2 times and Station 181 one time for structure fires. Total person response from Station 189 to calls in July was 152, averaging 5.6 persons per call.

- Council Moye read the monthly Activity Report from the McKees Rocks Police Department for July 2018. Chief Deliman reported a total of 781 events. There were 183 cases reported, 38 arrests, 50 citations (36 traffic, 11 non-traffic), and 14 impounded vehicles. Total mileage on patrol vehicles 4,726. Total money submitted to the Borough Manager was \$5,673.15.

**Council Committee Reports:**

Real Estate – Council Taylor commented that a blighted/abandoned/vacant property meeting sponsored by McKees Rocks Borough and McKees Rocks CDC is set for August 23, 2018 6:30 PM at V.F.W. Post 418 to address the vacant, abandoned, blighted properties in the borough. Public is invited to attend.

Council of Government (COG) – Council Delgado mentioned that she talked with the Board and Executive Director of COG regarding trying to obtain animal control for the Borough, as our municipality among many other western cities are having similar control problems. Animal control through the COG should be on the agenda for September.

**Mayors Report:** Mayor wanted to remind all in attendance that garbage pick-up for the Borough is Thursday, and garbage should not be placed outside before Wednesday evening. Mayor also commented that there is an ordinance regarding hedges be trimmed and not exceed a height requirement.

**Borough Manager's Report:** None

**Engineer's Report:** A written report was provided to Council during last evening's Caucus meeting and there are no additional items to report at this time.

**Solicitor's Report:** Borough Ordinance 1680 Residential Rental Licensing is currently being reconfigured to incorporate all amendments, including the 3 strikes policy and Act 90. Proposed ordinance will be presented to the Borough Manager and Council for review and any necessary changes will be made for advertising and proposed adoption for October 2018 meeting.

**Building Code Official Report:** July 2018 - 4 building permits, 3 zoning permits, and 18 rental permits were issued. 7 code enforcement notices of violations were mailed. 3 court cases were heard, totaling 4 hours. Over 80 hours of zoning research/corrections in accordance with the PA Uniform Construction Code and corrections to Zoning Ordinance 1726 "Door to Door Soliciting." Matters for Council to consider: Council needs to discuss and vote on a designated height requirement for grass/weeds, pertaining to the 2009 International Property Maintenance Code adopted years ago. Most municipalities enforce 10 inches height requirement. Also, any future changes to zoning/building matters will be submitted directly to the EPD for the new version of the borough zoning ordinance.

**Code Enforcement Officer Report:** Week of July 30, 2018 – August 7, 2018 – 36 code enforcement violations were mailed consisting of the following: no rental permits, debris, overgrowth, unsecure property/vacant, debris/fire hazard, and condemnation (unsafe structure or imminent danger). Streets of violations included Woodward, Boquet, Railroad, Broadway, Alexander, Churchill, and Wayne. Miscellaneous comments: During first week of employment, Code Enforcement Officer gained knowledge of borough boundaries while working with Building Code Official securing buildings, to prevent potential fire or loss of life and keep residents safe. Also, holding property owners accountable to ensure properties are being repaired and/or demolished.

**Controller's Report:**

As of July 31, 2018 General Fund, both income and expenses have annual budget of \$3,781,218.00. Expenses totaled \$1,871,124.02; approximately 49.48 % of annual budget. Balance remaining in the annual budget is \$1,910,093.98. Balance in the General Fund Checking Account is \$258,018.28.

As of July 31, 2018 Sewer Fund, both income and expenses have an annual budget of \$1,694,243.00. Expenses totaled \$706,944.49; approximately 41.23% of the annual budget. Balance remaining in the annual budget is \$987,098.51. Balance in the Sewer Fund Savings Account is \$349,093.36

A motion was made by Council Taylor and seconded by Council Moye to accept the Controller's Report.

**Bills:** A motion was made by Council Mixter and seconded by President Krisby to pay the bills.

**Agenda:**

1. A motion was made by Council Myers and seconded by Council Moye to approve Borough Ordinance No. 1752 adding a stop sign at Harriet Street/Churchill Street to reduce speeding. The motion was adopted by acclamation.
2. A motion was made by Council Moye and seconded by Council Myers to authorize Borough Engineer to obtain CCTV photos of the sewer line owned by Ms. Emma L. Davis. The motion was adopted by acclamation.
3. A motion was made by Council Myers and seconded by Council Gee to accept Borough Engineer's recommendation to award State Pipe Services, Inc. as the lowest bidder for sewer cleaning and televising at Olivia Street and Ella Street in the proposed amount of \$10,680.00. The motion was adopted by acclamation.
4. A motion was made by Council Taylor and seconded by President Krisby to authorize Borough Engineer to have contractor look at Hickory Street inlets and provide a quote for work. The motion was adopted by acclamation.
5. A motion was made by Council Mixer and seconded by Council Myers to approve payment to Char-West COG in the amount of \$1,900.00 for U&S Construction completion of the Catch Basin Repair Project for CD Year 43 projects. The motion was adopted by acclamation.
6. A motion was made by Council Taylor and seconded by Council Moye to approve Council Harvey's request to place "Don't Give Up" signage in high traffic areas of the community. The motion was adopted by acclamation.
7. A motion was made by Council Gee and seconded by Council Delgado to approve Council Harvey's request to place "No Loitering/Keep Community Clean" signage in the community. The motion was adopted by acclamation.
8. A motion was made by Council Myers and seconded by Vice-President Evich to authorize Borough Manager to advertise future Borough job postings on the free version of Indeed.com. The motion was adopted by acclamation.
9. A motion was made by Council Mixer and seconded by Vice-President Evich to authorize Borough Manager to purchase office furniture for the Police Department and Borough personnel, including: \$750.00 for Police Department chairs and \$1,550.00 for office desks/chairs for the Tax Collector and Code Enforcement Officer. The motion was adopted by acclamation.

**New Business:**

In conjunction with a discussion at last evening's Caucus meeting regarding property redevelopment, Council Taylor requested a motion to authorize the Real Estate Committee to begin working with the Borough Solicitor in gathering vacant/abandon property addresses that might be able to be acquired for a potential developer to rebuild for new home ownership status. A motion was made by President Krisby and seconded by Council Mixer to authorize the Real Estate Committee to begin working with the Borough Solicitor. The motion was adopted by acclamation.

**Old Business:**

Council Moye asked for an update of the re-opening of Chartiers Ave Ext since the land slide. Mr. Douglas Evans, Borough Engineer commented that he is waiting on a report from the Geotechnical Engineer with information regarding the analysis of the drilling recently done of the road. A report should be ready for review for the September meeting, and the road will remain closed until further notice.

Council Delgado commented that she contacted Network Solutions regarding the issue trying to access the old domain server, and emailed instructions to the Borough Manager. Borough Manager replied to Council Delgado that she has recently been on the phone with support, and Network Solutions doesn't even recognize our zip code to gain access. Borough Manager will continue to make necessary phone call(s).

**Audience Participation:**

Ms. Marianne Ritenour, owner of 830 Railroad Street was present to express her ongoing concern of water damage to her property, from water run-down coming from Meyers Ridge Community Homes. The most recent rain has washed her window out and she cannot use her washer/dryer because the vent was washed out. Owner has photographs of water damage to property and condition(s) and is asking for any assistance from Council to hold Meyers Ridge accountable or remedy the problem. She stated nothing has been done in years past and the Mayor and Council have known. Council Taylor requested that Borough receive copies of any documentation she has regarding the water problem so the Borough can look into for any assistance in the matter. President Krisby advised owner the Street Department will definitely look at property conditions and follow up as needed to address the water problem.

A motion was made by Council Taylor and seconded by President Krisby to adjourn the meeting, Meeting adjourned.