

**CLARKS GREEN BOROUGH  
COUNCIL MINUTES  
DECEMBER 17, 2014**

---

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Rinaldi called the meeting of the Clarks Green Council to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:** Secretary/Treasurer Brown conducted roll call. The following were present: Mr. Barrasse, Mrs. Earley, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Palmer, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Rinaldi, Mr. Williams, Mayor Thorburn, Solicitor Weinschenk.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mr. Hughes motioned, seconded by Mr. Barrasse to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2014 meeting. Mrs. Earley, Mr. Barrasse, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Palmer, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Rinaldi and Mr. Williams voted in favor.

**VISITORS:** Denny McGraw, Direct Energy representative; Meredith Colohan, Abington Journal reporter.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:** In the absence of a South Abington Township Police officer this evening, Mayor Thorburn reported there were 31 overnight parking violation warnings issued last month. In addition, he reported he received information from the Census Bureau that there would no longer be printouts of the boundary maps for Boroughs. Mr. Hughes asked that an officer be in attendance at the January 2015 meeting to present the year end summary.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mr. Denny McGraw addressed Council to discuss the Borough's Direct Energy contract for street lighting. He reported savings to the Borough have amounted to \$2,100 over an 18 month period. Mr. McGraw stated a long term contract would result in maximum savings. After Council discussion, Mr. Hughes motioned, seconded by Mrs. Earley to enter into a 36 month contract with Direct Energy. Mr. Barrasse, Ms. Palmer, Mrs. Earley, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Williams, Mr. Rinaldi and Mr. Phillips voted in favor.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT:** Solicitor Weinschenk reported the Comcast Agreement was received and executed by the Borough. He reminded Council to set the dates and times for Council meetings in 2015, which need to be advertised. President Rinaldi asked Council for a motion to set the meeting dates for 2015 with the Work Sessions to be held the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and the Council meetings to be held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. which was the practice in 2014. Mr. Phillips motioned, seconded by Ms. Palmer to authorize Secretary Brown to advertise the Work Sessions be held the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and the Council meetings be held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Borough building. Ms. Palmer, Mrs. Earley, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Williams, Mr. Rinaldi, Mr. Hughes and Mr. Barrasse voted in favor.

**TREASURER’S REPORT AND BILL APPROVAL:** Mr. Hughes reviewed the financial statements which were filed for audit. Current fund balances are as follows:

Capital Fund Money Market	\$	19,358.60
General Fund Checking		227,837.32
General Fund Money Market		35,246.94
Sewer Fund Checking		170,058.33
Sewer Fund Money Market		84,931.77
State Funds Checking		<u>4,292.63</u>
Total Checking/Savings	\$	541,725.59

Mr. Hughes compared checking account balances of last month and last year. When reporting on the Borough loan balance at NBT bank, Mr. Hughes discussed the possibility of paying this loan off in 2015 depending on interest rates and the Borough cash position as there is no early payment penalty. With no questions from Council, Mr. Hughes motioned, seconded by Ms. Palmer to accept the Treasurer’s Report and ratify the payment of the bills. Ms. Palmer, Mrs. Earley, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Barrasse, Mr. Rinaldi, Mr. Phillips and Mr. Williams voted in favor. Mr. Hughes then reviewed the Budget vs. Actual figures for the past 11 months. Ms. Palmer questioned the timing of receiving sewer payments. Mr. Hughes responded by stating it is not good to set a precedent for paying bills late. Mr. Hughes then presented the sewer account delinquency report and discussed sewer liens as well as sewer payments received. Mr. Hughes discussed the transfers of \$5,000.00 from the Sewer Checking account as well as the General Fund Checking account to the Capital Fund as a source of funds for Capital expenditures. Mr. Hughes motioned, seconded by Mr. Barrasse to transfer \$5,000.00 from the Sewer Checking account and \$5,000.00 from the General Fund Checking account to the Capital Account. Mrs. Earley, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Rinaldi, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Williams, Mr. Barrasse and Ms. Palmer voted in favor. Mr. Hughes then reported on a phone call the Borough office received from a Borough resident who indicated he has a late fee on his 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2014 sewer bill. The resident stated that he did not receive a 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2014 sewer bill and is asking that his late fee be removed from his bill. Mr. Hughes motioned, seconded by Mrs. Earley to remove the late fee for this resident if the resident pays his 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2014 and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2014 sewer bill by December 31, 2014. Mr. Phillips, Mr. Williams, Mr. Rinaldi, Ms. Palmer, Mrs. Earley, Mr. Hughes and Mr. Barrasse voted in favor. Mr. Hughes then discussed the 2015 Proposed Budget. He thanked his committee, as well as Mr. Rinaldi, for their diligence working on the Budget over the past 3 months.

**PERSONNEL:** Mr. Williams reported the Holiday party for Borough staff will be held at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, December 22, 2014. Members of Council, as well as the Mayor, donated funds to pay for the Holiday party as appreciation for the work the Borough employees do.

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS:** Mr. Phillips reported on the insulation and heating projects in the DPW garage. Mr. Barrasse noted the 220 line and the gas line are tied to each other with a zip strip and wanted to make Mr. Phillips aware of that safety issue. In addition, Mr. Barrasse reported perhaps the old heating systems could be acquired by someone who

was willing to make a donation for them rather than have our DPW staff dispose of them. Ms. Palmer asked if the Borough building has ever been inspected which would indicate any unsafe issues. Mr. Rinaldi reported the Assembly of God Church is having their Nativity Scene this week and that portion of Clark Street would be blocked off.

**HEALTH & SAFETY:** Mr. Barrasse reported he had a conference call with the DPW Foreman and John from Northeast Signal & Electric Company regarding the push button system for the walk signal. This cost of \$606.00 was discussed at the Work Session. This push button issue was discovered after the installation of the controller. After the DPW Foreman and Mr. Barrasse voiced their displeasure of this additional cost during the conference call, Northeast Signal agreed to reduce the current bill either by \$100.00 or \$200.00. In addition, Mr. Barrasse reported there is a new issue with the traffic loop sensor. This repair will cost approximately \$1,000.00 and can be repaired when the weather warms up.

**PUBLIC WORKS:** Mrs. Earley stated the DPW Foreman reported the DPW staff has been helping with the installation of the new heaters in the garage. The Borough Engineer, Mr. Scheuer has completed setting up the new drainage data on the DPW computer. In addition, the DPW Foreman has reported that all DPW employees are working well together.

**REFUSE & RECYCLING:** Ms. Palmer had nothing new to report. She did clarify her comments about not recycling her leaves. She said putting her leaves over the bank at her house is recycling the leaves.

**AAJRB COMMITTEE:** Ms. Palmer reported she did not attend the last Rec Board meeting. She said the most important thing going on is discussion of what to do with the leftover RACP Grant money. In addition, the Rec Board is working on the budget. Mr. Williams reported he received an e-mail indicating more RACP grant funds will be available next year.

**ACOG:** Ms. Palmer reported the members discussed whether to change the night of the meeting due to attendance. For the time being, the meeting schedule will remain the same. Mayor Thorburn inquired whether ACOG has discussed the landfill expansion issues in Dunmore. Ms. Palmer replied they had not. She mentioned many years ago ACOG worked on the 12 year plan regarding a by-pass for Clarks Summit and this will be discussed in the future.

**OLD BUSINESS:** President Rinaldi discussed committee members whose terms are expiring at the end of December 2014. He has asked council members to submit names to him of those who might be interested in serving.

**NEW BUSINESS:** President Rinaldi re-capped the accomplishments of Council members, the Mayor and the Solicitor during 2014 and thanked them, as well as Secretary Brown for their hard work throughout the year. The accomplishments included the work the Mayor did for the successful Centennial celebration. Mayor Thorburn replied that he

had a great committee to work with. Mr. Hughes and Mr. Williams then thanked President Rinaldi for his leadership throughout the year as well as getting issues resolved in a timely manner. Members of Council concurred. President Rinaldi then discussed the approval of the 2015 Budget. The statutes require the municipality to have the Budget available to the public for 30 days after the introduction of the Budget which took place on November 19, 2014. It has been 28 days since the introduction. At this point Mr. Rinaldi asked Council to consider recessing this meeting and to reconvene on Saturday, December 20 at 9:00 a.m. to adopt the Budget. Mr. Rinaldi then called for an Executive Session at 8:13 p.m. to discuss personnel issues. At 8:40 p.m. the Council meeting resumed and then immediately recessed until Saturday, December 20, 2014 at 9 a.m. Mr. Barrasse, Mr. Rinaldi, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Phillips, Ms. Palmer, Mrs. Earley and Mr. Williams voted in favor.

The December 17, 2014 Council meeting was reconvened in the Borough building at 9:00 a.m. on December 20, 2014 for the approval of the 2015 Budget. At this time raises and additional compensation for some Borough employees were discussed. Mrs. Earley, Public Works Chair motioned for two employees of the DPW, Mr. Kohinsky and Mr. Pehonich to receive a 5% salary increase; the office staff would receive a 2% salary increase, with an additional \$1000.00 bonus for Secretary Brown, a \$500.00 bonus for Assistant Secretary Barrett and a \$100.00 bonus for Zoning Officer Harris. Mr. Barrasse seconded the motion. Mrs. Earley, Mr. Williams, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Rinaldi, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Barrasse voted in favor. Ms. Palmer voted against. President Rinaldi announced the bonus is for the year 2014 and, on behalf of six members of Council, he highlighted tasks and thanked Secretary Brown for her work this year. In addition, he thanked Secretary Brown and her husband Ben for volunteering for the Borough during the year. A very appreciative Secretary Brown sincerely thanked members of Council for the bonus and the recognition of hard work.

**ADOPTION OF 2015 BUDGET:** Mr. Hughes motioned, seconded by Mr. Phillips to adopt the 2015 Clarks Green Borough budget. Ms. Palmer, Mrs. Earley, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Williams, Mr. Barrasse and Mr. Rinaldi voted in favor.

Mrs. Earley mentioned to Council that most businesses are closed the day after Christmas and asked Council to consider this for Borough staff. President Rinaldi replied, that although he would like to see that, most government offices are open and it would be appropriate for the Borough to remain open as well.

**MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Hughes motioned, seconded by Mr. Barrasse to adjourn the reconvened meeting at 9:20 a.m. All in attendance voted in favor.

---

Janice F. Brown, Secretary/Treasurer