

WRIGHTSVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 19, 2008 MEETING
COUNCIL MEETING ROOM

A special meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Young, who led the salute to the flag. Also present were members L. Kirkessner, E. Sipes, M. McDonald, T. Groft & N. Habecker, along with Mayor Rambler & Solicitor W. Tilley.

Patrons: Robin Geesey again asked who was in the police office on 11/08, 4:40 AM. The Mayor answered that no one was there; the light had been left on. She stated that Bryan Rambler was last paid 9/13/07, so is he a Borough employee or not? She asked why there had been no meeting of the CSC since December. The Mayor said he couldn't get into his office for papers necessary for a meeting. Mrs. Geesey pointed out that his office was available thru mid-January. She thought the Mayor should be liable for calling his grandparents on tax-payer money.

Chris Kelly read a letter from a Vice President, Eastern Region of Northwest Savings Bank authorizing police officers to enter the Wrightsville office during regular hours on a routine basis. The letter also noted that Chief Pearson has not responded on a \$1,500.00 fraud case. Mrs. Kelly asked identification of the person giving information that no officers should frequent the bank.

Anna Weirich thought that Officer Leaman's hours were cut because he was accused of giving her confidential police information, the issue having been overheard being discussed in a public place.

Pat Estel, 115 Locust, said that police have stopped staking out the 100-block of South Alley, the location of his garage. He said that kids have been hanging out in the alley from late afternoon thru the evening & committing vandalism. He said that the police responded well when incidents are reported, but he requested that they return to monitor the area regularly. When State police have been called, there has been a long response time.

President Young announced that the main purpose of the meeting was to appoint a new Borough Secretary recommended by the Personnel Committee. Mr. Sipes moved, Mrs. McDonald seconded, to appoint Bonnie Dietz at an hourly rate of \$16.00, effective Monday, 2/25/08. Motion passed unanimously.

As a result of an executive session after the regular Council meeting on 2/4, Mrs. Young called for a motion to accept the resignation of Bryan Rambler who had not worked for the Borough since last fall, according to time sheets, so his resignation was assumed. Mrs. McDonald so moved, seconded by Mr. Groft. Mr. Habecker asked if a resignation can be accepted when none was submitted. Mr. Tilley said that he was an employee at will & his not coming to work appears to be a defacto resignation. Mrs. McDonald said that Bryan needs to stay out of the police office. Mr. Habecker said he has no concern that the police department will suffer by the elimination of the position & there would be no need to hire a new clerk, but he is concerned that the Borough may be open for liability. The Borough has an on-going record of mis-handling employees. After comments from the public, Mr. Tilley said that there should be no further discussion in public of a personnel matter. The motion passed with Mr. Habecker abstaining.

Mrs. McDonald made a motion to change the locks in the Borough/Authority building. Mr. Tilley asked that this be deferred to an executive session.

Kevin Fedors said he has been living in the Borough for 4 years & commented on the divisive atmosphere in town & the information being reported in newspapers. He said that it is important that Council represent the community & act as adults. He sees the town not moving forward, but remaining stagnant because of the inappropriate behavior. He asked what individual Council members have in mind for the direction of the community. Council should work as one, not divided, so they can focus on important issues. Mrs. McDonald thought Council was working on improvement by getting rid of an employee that put us in the newspaper. Mr. Fedors said that in-fighting has to stop; there is no need for Council to be nasty to each other. Mr. Groft said that he had run for election because the previous Council forced the creation of the police department without paying attention to the will of the public. He feels that the Borough can't afford 24-hr. coverage, which we had been getting with the Hellam Twp. contract. He wants to be involved in decisions that cost the taxpayers. Mr. Fedor asked who is responsible for grants. Mrs. Lindeman said that the previous Streets Supervisor had gotten grants & was pursuing other funding, but was fired. He has been giving information to Josh Groft that will benefit the Borough. Mr. Habecker said that the Borough needs an up-to-date Comprehensive Plan to qualify for most grants. The existing plan was adopted in 1976. An up-date requires community participation and may cost \$30-50,000.00. The Borough does not have zoning for control of development, nor does it have a property maintenance code, which had been considered in the past. The issue of law enforcement stirred up controversy, making it difficult to make progress on other issues.

Council recessed at 8:05 PM for an executive session. The meeting was again called to order at 8:20 PM. Solicitor Tilley reported that the issues discussed were Northwest Bank, the Police Chief & the Authority/Borough agreement in regard to the physical location of the Mayor's office. An invoice in the amount of \$1,102.50 to be paid to Michael Fenton (attorney to Mayor Rambler) was approved for payment by motion of Mr. Sipes, seconded by Mr. Groft. Mr. Tilley said payment is appropriate, according to the Borough Code. Motion passed unanimously.

Darvin Shelly did not agree that the meeting was nasty & commended Council for allowing people to talk. He advised Council not to get too tied up with the Comprehensive Plan. He worked on the original plan with YCPC & said that there is no change expected in town. As to the proposal to change the ward system of voting, he thought Wrightsville is a unique town with 3 unique polling places, providing more fair representation. He asked Council to "go slow" in considering any change to the voting system.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 PM by motion of Mr. Habecker, seconded by Mr. Groft.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne C. Knorr, Secretary