

MARTINSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES
NOVEMBER 4, 2024

The regular meeting of the Martinsburg Borough Council was held on Monday, November 4, 2024 in the municipal building. The meeting started at 7:00 p.m. with prayer by Richard Brantner, Jr. and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Mayor Richard A. Brantner, President P. Robert Dickson, Vice-President Ed Bennett, Charles E. Kensinger, Pro-Tem, Councilwoman Janet E. Blattenberger, Councilman James C. Dell, Councilman Neil E. Gartland and Councilman Darin B. Meck

In addition to council, present were Borough Manager Richard Brantner, Jr., Secretary/Treasurer Jane Staily, Chief Kerry Hoover, Attorney Nathan Karn, Amy Hockenberry Dustin Russell, Linda Smith, Ed Kreider, Ken Ake, Brittany Diehl, Patrick Shurr, Mark Ickes, Jeffrey Cipriani and Carl Crider and Cati Keith of the Morrisons Cove Herald.

Chief Kerry Hoover introduced **BRITTANY DIEHL** to council as one of our new part-time patrol officers. She was hired back in August 2024. She has been in law enforcement for fifteen years and has been a police officer for eight years.

Executive Director for **EXPLORE ALTOONA** Mark Ickes and three other individuals were present to give a brief presentation for Explore Altoona regarding Act 18 of 2016.

Carl Crider – President and GM - DelGrosso's Park and Laguna Splash
Jeff Cipriani – GM – Hampton Inn
Partick Shurr – Director of Partnership Development – Explore Altoona
Mark Ickes – Executive Director – Explore Altoona

The Blair County Commissioners have voted to decertify **EXPLORE ALTOONA** to get a new tourism group that the county feels more fairly benefits all twenty-nine municipalities across the county. Part of the process to decertify them is the county will need to pass a resolution and the resolution must be approved by municipal governing bodies representing more than 65% of the county population. These four gentlemen were here to persuade the borough to not participate in the decertification process. One of their points was they felt the hotel tax was being wrongfully used for other things like trails that do not directly help them. Council commended them on their presentation.

[Mark Ickes, Carl Crider, Jeff Cipriani and Patrick Shurr left at 7:25 p.m.]

Ed Kreider, Linda Smith and Ken Ake of the **MARTINSBURG BOOSTERS** were present and mentioned that the Boosters will be celebrating their 100th Anniversary in 2025. They also asked council's approval to use the vacant lot on the corner of E. Allegheny and S. Walnut Streets to put up a Christmas tree. It will be a cut tree not a planted one and will be on a trailer with an antique tractor. It was the consensus of council to approve them using the lot for their Christmas display as long as it doesn't obstruct the view for traffic.

[Ed Kreider, Linda Smith and Ken Ake left at 7:30 p.m.]

The MINUTES of the meeting of October 7, 2024 were approved on a motion by Janet Blattenberger, seconded by Charles Kensinger. The motion passed unanimously.

The **FINANCIAL AND TREASURER'S REPORTS** for October 2024 were prepared and presented by Secretary/Treasurer Jane Staily.

*The **LIST OF BILLS** for October 2024, check nos. 11499-11541 in the amount of \$140,854.30 was approved on a motion by Janet Blattenberger, seconded by James Dell. The motion passed unanimously.*

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MAYOR RICHARD BRANTNER presented his report as written.

Police Chief Kerry Hoover presented the **POLICE REPORT** as written. Trick or Treat Night went well. There were not as many Trick or Treaters out as expected giving the nice weather we had. The police department has lots of help keeping the streets safe. Chief Hoover handed out 300 treats. Janet Blattenberger reviewed Chief Hoovers solar speed sign data and questioned the speeds coming into town. The signs are all located a little further out than right where the speed decrease changes to get traffic slowing down before the speed changes. Also speeds from both incoming and outgoing traffic are recorded from the side of the sign.

BOROUGH MANAGER Rich Brantner reported:

OCT 14 – met at **MINGLE CONSTRUCTION** on Blattenberger Street with Josh Mingle and Gunnet Engineers to go over some storm water management for the Mingle property

OCT 16 - **BLACKTOPPED** water and sewer hook ups on Park Street

OCT 21 – did some water and sewer **TAPS** for the house beside traditions

OCT 28 – **TARED SOME CRACKS** on various streets

OCT 31 – **DUKES ROOT** foamed about 4,500 feet of sewer main for root control

NOV 3 – **BRIAN MILLER’S** last day of work

NOV 4 – **TODD BOOKHAMMER’S** first day of work

The **MARTINSBURG MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY** will start holding their regular meetings at 1:00 p.m. during the day instead of at 7:00 p.m. beginning with their regular meeting on November 21, 2024.

Attorney Nathan Karn explained that there is no legal requirement for municipalities to do anything regarding the decertification of **EXPLORE ALTOONA**. The borough’s choices are 1) vote for it, 2) vote against it, or 3) do nothing. Explore Altoona was approaching council to not vote with the county to decertify them.

Rob Dickson reported that the General Fund **INTEREST INCOME** is currently at 204%.

Neil Gartland commented that since the new time change from 7:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. for the regular monthly **MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY MEETINGS** he will not be able to attend since he works during the day.

The **AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN** money must be either spent or obligated to be spent in a contract before December 31, 2024.

Last month council voted to advertise for bids to be opened this evening for a used **STREET SWEEPER**. For the past ten months Manager Rich Brantner has been working on a DEP requirement

for the municipal authority to identify each and every waterline service on the water system as either plastic or galvanized/lead pipe. So far 700 have been identified but the remaining 500 have not been identified. It is the municipal authority's responsibility to identify each and every one. The municipal authority's engineers are seeing some of their clients either buying or renting hydro vac trucks to core hole and vacuum out the debris to see the actual line at each service to get the requirement done with minimal

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disturbance to the property. Renting a hydro vac truck system costs about \$500 per service (500 x \$500 = \$250,000). The one new demo street sweeper that was previously looked at and was being considered for municipal authority held a special meeting this morning and voted to approve of paying for half the new demo street sweeper for the hydro vac truck system if the system does what they want it to do (\$115,000 x 2 = \$230,000). The demo will be brought back out tomorrow to see. A pressure washer and vac system are on that particular new demo street sweeper but not on the used one advertised for bids. ***Council on a motion by Charles Kensinger, seconded by James Dell, approved to spend \$114,062 (half of \$228,124) as the borough's share for the NEW STREET SWEEPER to be paid from a combination of the balance in the American Rescue Plan Account and the Reserve Fund and the municipal authority will pay the other half \$114,062 provided the demonstration tomorrow is satisfactory to the municipal authority on the hydro vac portion of the truck. The motion passed unanimously.***

An advertisement was placed in the Morrisons Cove Herald for bids to be received by today for a used street sweeper. One bid was received from Speedy Automotive in the amount of \$99,950.00. ***Council on a motion by Darin Meck, seconded by Charles Kensinger, accepted the bid for review in the amount of \$99,950.00 from Speedy Automotive for a USED STREET SWEEPER to be awarded or rejected at the December 2, 2024 council meeting. The motion passed unanimously.***

The sale of the **OLD STREET SWEEPER** was tabled.

Gary Calvert geologist for the 114 W. Penn Street lot submitted another invoice. This one is for \$1,743.78. Council was curious how much longer the borough will be obligated in the testing of this site. The initial agreement was written up by our prior solicitor Attorney Matthew Gieg so Attorney Karn was not familiar with what was in it. ***Council on a motion by James Dell, seconded by Janet Blattenberger, authorized Attorney Nathan Karn to review the agreement between the Borough of Martinsburg and the Zimmermans on the testing obligations for 114 W. PENN STREET. The motion passed unanimously.***

Council on a motion by Darin Meck, seconded by Janet Blattenberger, approved to pay the invoice to Gary Calvert in the amount of \$1,743.78 to be paid for from the Reserve fund for work done at 114 W. PENN STREET. The motion passed unanimously. The Zimmermans agreement is to refund the borough for one-half of the invoice.

Council on a motion by Janet Blattenberger, seconded by James Dell, approved to advertise the 2025-2 BUDGET for the 10-day public inspection period to be considered for adoption at the December meeting. The motion passed unanimously. There is no tax increase in the 2025-2 Budget.

The Borough Code was amended a few years ago approving that **REAL ESTATE TAX** can be adopted by resolution if there is no tax increase. Resolutions do not need to be advertised. A resolution for the 2025 Real Estate Tax with no increase for 2025 will be prepared for the December 2024 meeting:

- ***Resolution No. 2024-1202-01 REAL ESTATE TAX FOR 2025 as 1.967 mills***

Council on a motion by James Dell, seconded by Janet Blattenberger, approved to advertise the 2025 TAX ORDINANCES as follows with no tax increases for 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

- *Ordinance No. 2024-649 PER CAPITA TAX FOR 2025 as \$5.00*
- *Ordinance No. 2024-650 EARNED INCOME TAX FOR 2025 as ½ of 1%*
- *Ordinance No. 2024-651 LOCAL SERVICES TAX FOR 2025 as \$52*

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Council on a motion by Janet Blattenberger, seconded by James Dell, approved to donate \$500.00 to the 2024 COVE CHRISTMAS LOVE PROGRAM. The motion passed unanimously.

Council on a motion by Janet Blattenberger, seconded by James Dell, approved to advertise the 2025 BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING DATES as follows. The motion passed unanimously.

JAN 6	APR 7	JUL 7	OCT 6
FEB 3	MAY 5	AUG 4	NOV 3
MAR 3	JUN 2	SEP 2 (Tue)	DEC 1

The next SOUTH CENTRAL COUNTIES BOROUGH ASSOCIATION meeting will be held Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at the Prime Sirloin in Duncansville. Reservations are needed by November 7th.

Minutes of the MARTINSBURG VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY'S meeting of October 14, 2024 were included in the agenda. Manager Rich Brantner, Jr. reported that it has been a busy year for the fire company.

The meeting ADJOURNED at 8:32 p.m. on a motion by Janet Blattenberger, seconded by Darin Meck. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Jane Staily
Borough Secretary