

BOROUGH OF CHURCHILL  
2300 WILLIAM PENN HIGHWAY  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15235

Minutes of Meeting

December 10, 2013

The regular monthly meeting of the Borough of Churchill was held in the Municipal Building on Tuesday, December 10, 2013 and was called to order by Robert L. Ferry at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Ferry led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Members present include Ms. McAbee, Mrs. Pantlik, Messrs. Lepidi, Kline, Jurewicz, and Dworin. Also present were Mayor McKenna, Police Chief Park, and Donna Perry. Mr. Duerring was absent.

MINUTES – There was a motion made by Ms. McAbee and seconded by Mr. Dworin that the minutes of the Regular Meeting held November 12, 2013 be approved as previously presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

MAYOR – Mayor McKenna asked Chief Park to report on an incident that involved a police chase and carjacking with three of our police officers. The Chief stated on November 27 there was a reported carjacking at the Golden Corral Restaurant on Business Route 22 in Monroeville. Officer Akerley spotted the vehicle near the intersection of Lower Rodi Road and William Penn Highway. A car pursuit began that traveled through the area of Edgewood Towne Center and down through the Borough of Swissvale. The actor eventually crashed the stolen vehicle. A foot pursuit ensued and the actor was captured with a weapon, drugs and money in his possession.

There was a motion by Mr. Lepidi and seconded by Mr. Jurewicz to accept the report. The motion was unanimously approved.

MANAGER & FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORTS - Mr. Robinson reported the Fire Department responded to 13 alarms, bringing the year-to-date total to 174. They had one joint practice with the Edgewood Fire Department. There were no significant events in the Borough.

Under the Manager's Report, Mr. Robinson reported the road crew is still busy picking up leaf bags. Some interruptions have occurred due to snowy weather conditions.

There was a motion by Mr. Lepidi, seconded by Mrs. Pantlik and unanimously approved by Voice Vote that these reports be accepted and filed.

REAL ESTATE TAX COLLECTOR – Mr. Robinson reported that the taxes collected at face for the month of November were \$5,967.69 plus penalties of \$596.77 for a total of \$6,564.46. The balance collectable is \$42,787.31.

**TREASURER'S REPORT – Mr. Robinson read the following report for the month of November, 2013.**

It showed the following:

<b><u>CHECKING ACCOUNT</u></b>	<b><u>BEGINNING BANK BALANCE</u></b>	<b><u>RECEIPTS</u></b>	<b><u>O/S CHECKS AND DISBURSEMENTS</u></b>	<b><u>ENDING CASH BALANCES</u></b>
REGULAR ACCOUNT	575,987.93	293,781.53	421,212.24	448,557.22
CAPITAL RES. ACCT.	158,518.46	6.30	-0-	158,524.76
ROAD & HIGHWAY	123,432.13	4.87	-0-	123,437.00
SEWAGE AGENCY	103,259.14	83,640.19	47,157.04	139,742.29
SPECIAL ACCT.	12,353.02	5,803.43	5,606.24	12,550.21
POLICE PENSION FUND	3,405.75	3,616.58	7,022.33	-0-
EMPL. PENSION FUND	853.36	853.36	1,706.72	-0-
WELFARE BENEFIT	1,210.73	-0-	-0-	1,210.71
EMPL. SEC. 457 D.C.P.	-0-	2,500.00	2,500.00	-0-

There was a motion by Mr. Lepidi, seconded by Mrs. Pantlik and unanimously approved by Voice Vote to accept the Tax Collector's Report and Treasurer's Report for the month of November and have it reproduced in the minutes.

**EARNED INCOME TAX  
DEED TRANSFER**

**DELINQUENT REAL ESTATE TAX** – Mr. Robinson reported that the Earned Income Tax Collector had collections of \$36,970.91 for the month of November.

Deed Transfer Tax collection totaled \$6,240.42 for the month of October.

There were no delinquent Real Estate Taxes collected.

There was a motion by Mr. Jurewicz, seconded by Mr. Dworin and unanimously approved that the reports be filed.

**MAYORAL PROCLAMATION TO JIM TRUSILO** – Mayor McKenna presented and read a Proclamation to Jim Trusilo for his unique contribution to community identity through the creation of a logo for the Borough.

MAYORAL PROCLAMATION TO RICK J. KLINE – Mayor McKenna presented and read a Proclamation to Councilman Rick J. Kline honoring his years of service to the Borough. Mr. Kline began his service in September, 2004.

SECOND READING – 2014 PROPOSED BUDGET – Mr. Ferry announced that the regular meeting would be recessed to hold a Public Hearing on the proposed 2014 Budget.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Lepidi read the proposed 2014 Budget Statement. The amounts appropriated for various functions were as follows:

A.	<u>NET ANNUAL REVENUES</u>	
	1. Real Estate Tax – Current, Prior and Liened	1,292,248
	2. Earned Income Tax	600,000
	3. Real Estate Transfer Tax	30,000
	4. Local Services Tax	23,000
	5. Misc. Sources (Fines, Permits, Interest, Etc.)	177,790
	6. Liquid Fuels Tax Reimbursement (state)	65,644
	7. Grants, Gifts, Transfer, Contributions	<u>154,000</u>
	TOTAL REVENUE	2,342,682
B.	<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	
	1. Payroll	1,057,724
	2. Employee Fringe Benefits	567,163
	3. Compensation (Auditors, Tax Collector)	8,750
	4. Debt Service	6,000
	5. Operating Expenses & Supplies	202,665
	6. Garbage & Rubbish Collection	34,000
	7. Snow & Ice Control	100,000
	8. Maintenance – Streets, Building, Cars, Parks, Radios, Traffic Signals	172,550
	9. Professional Services	60,200
	10. Rentals – Hydrants, Street Lights	20,400
	11. Police Cars & Equipment; Fire Truck	27,000
	12. Contributions – Fire Co., Ambulance, COG	18,000
	13. Capital Outlays	<u>140,000</u>
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	2,414,452
	EXCESS EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUE	(71,770)

Mr. Lepidi stated the deficit would be covered by the cash carryover.

There was a motion by Mr. Lepidi, seconded by Mr. Kline to adopt the budget.

Mr. Ferry proceeded with a summary of some of the budget items. The budget includes a one mill increase. For example, if a home is assessed at \$150,000 the real estate tax bill would

increase by \$150 per year. Naturally, every home will be evaluated differently. The increase in millage is due greatly to the decreased assessment valuation of the Westinghouse property. An extremely hard decision included in this budget was to furlough one police officer decreasing the force from ten men to nine. The immediate savings aren't as great for the first year, primarily due to unemployment benefit costs. There would also be some additional overtime costs. Mr. Ferry assured that this move would not jeopardize the safety of the community. The number of officers on a shift may decrease but the Resource Officer, especially during the daylight shift, would also be available if needed. The police budget consists of 60% of the overall budget. The average police base office salary is \$76,000. This is a little high compared to some other communities. There will also be an increase in health care costs next year, possibly as high as a 45%.

Mr. Lepidi concurred with Mr. Ferry's comments and stated that we have to start the process of saving costs to accrue benefits for the future. Mr. Lepidi based his overtime cost figures as much of a savings from the first year from \$9,000-38,000, for the first year to a second year savings of a minimum of \$66,000 to as much as \$97,000. He said that when he started on Council there were nine officers and it remained as such for quite some time. He voted for the tenth officer when the Resource Officer position became available for the high school and the Borough received funding. Prior to this time, a lot of time was spent at the high school by our Police Department during a regular daylight shift detail. When you look at the crime statistics of the Borough, most of it is attributed to the high school. The problems at the high school have become more stabilized with the implementation of the Resource Officer position. Mr. Lepidi said that when your revenue base decreases the prudent thing to do is to make some adjustments in expenditures.

Mr. Jurewicz stated we definitely need a balance of costs to provide infrastructure services to the residents. We want people to move into the Borough we don't want them to leave. He's not sure it's a positive move to furlough a police officer from a security standpoint. He believes it's better to have a little too much security than not enough.

Mr. Dworin stated he has been on the fence with cutting an officer and was previously vehemently opposed to cutting an officer. He called a former intern of his who does crime statistics with the FBI in Los Angeles. She indicated that a ratio-based approach is incorrect. His conclusion at this point is wondering if Council did an appropriate analysis for cutting an officer and he is having a hard time moving forward with a decision.

Mr. Ferry called for audience participation.

Jennifer Suiters of 1640 Jamestown Place, spoke as a resident and also noted that she is President of the Blackridge Civic Association.

She stated that the residents of Blackridge value the police coverage in their area especially due to the municipal boundaries. She made some suggestions to Council regarding the budget that included cutting costs since there was a 3% increase and to come up with an alternative to saving costs to reduce the \$100,000 cost for snow removal. She further asked if Council is trying to market the Westinghouse property. Mr. Lepidi responded that we can't do that since we don't own it. Ms. Suiters opinion was that it is important to have more police coverage than less.

Mr. Ferry addressed some of her issues noting that much of the 3% increase is due to contractual items with the police and Council does not much flexibility.

Mrs. McAbee noted that we have the second highest police force in Allegheny County and they don't pay anything toward health care costs. She stated the police force is draining our budget.

Ms. Margie Darbut of 1503 Williamsburg Place stated that she feels Council needs to look forward five years in advance with formulating a budget. She further said Council has a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers to control expenses. She had a conversation with one of our police officers who commented that he would be comfortable with the safety of the community if we lost one officer.

Ms. Peggy Hill of 60 Churchill Road stated that we cannot afford to lose a police officer and jeopardize the safety of our community.

Mrs. Dolores Patterson of 2525 Greensburg Pike stated her experience with the Police Department over the years has been great and any time they have been needed to respond to an incident at the Churchill Mansions has been met with a quick response. She further questioned if the cash balance of the 2014 budget of \$530,600 includes the one mill planned increase. Mr. Ferry stated it does. She noted that there are a high number of senior citizens in the Borough and said any increase in property taxes can be a problem. She asked Council to reconsider this decision.

Mr. Ferry called for a vote to adopt the budget and it was as follows: McAbee - No, Dworin – No, Jurewicz – No, Pantlik – No, Kline – Yes, Lepidi Yes, and Ferry – Yes. Motion to adopt the budget as read was not passed by majority vote.

Mr. Ferry noted there was a secondary budget. Mr. Jurewicz was asked to explain any changes to a second proposed budget. Mr. Lepidi made a point of order noting that this budget was not read nor made available to the public and no one on Council has reviewed it.

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Mr. Lepidi asked for the Solicitor's opinion on this matter. Solicitor Robb stated that the Borough Code requires that a preliminary budget be made and advertised that it is available for public inspection ten days prior to Council taking action. At the conclusion of this time period, Council is able to revise the budget as they deem advisable and pass a budget that a majority of Council determines is appropriate for the Borough. The budget must be passed by motion on or prior to December 31 of each year.

Mr. Lepidi made a motion to adjourn the budget meeting and reschedule another meeting for at least a week so the public and Council can have a chance to digest it. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kline. Mr. Ferry stated that what is probably going to happen will be a 1.3 mill increase with no officer lay off. A Roll Call Vote was as follows: McAbee – Yes, Dworin – Yes -, Jurewicz – Yes, Pantlik – Yes, Kline – Yes, Lepidi – Yes, and Ferry – Yes.

SET TAX MILLAGE RATE – This action was postponed until the next budget meeting.

2014 SEWER BUDGET – Mr. Lepidi read the 2014 Sewer Budget that included the sewer surcharge rate remaining at \$3.50/1,000 gallons of water. Revenues are \$825,560 and expenditures are \$796,510. The budget is attached and made a part of the meeting minutes, along with the Project Timeframe of sewer work projects. Mr. Lepidi made a motion to adopt the Sewer Budget, seconded by Ms. McAbee and unanimously approved by Voice Vote.

MAYORAL PROCLAMATION TO BONNIE L. PANTLIK – Mayor McKenna read a Proclamation to Councilwoman Bonnie L. Pantlik honoring her two years of service to the Borough that began January, 2012.

MAYORAL PROCLAMATION TO ROBERT L. FERRY – Mayor McKenna read a Proclamation to Councilman Robert L. Ferry honoring his eight years of service to the Borough that began January, 2006.

APPOINT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR – There was a motion by Mr. Jurewicz, seconded by Mr. Dworin and unanimously approved by Roll Call Vote for the adoption of Resolution No. 4285 to appoint Ralph G. Zatlin as Emergency Management Coordinator for a two-year term to end December 31, 2015.

**APPOINT 1<sup>st</sup> DEPUTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR** – There was a motion by Mr. Dworin, seconded by Mr. Jurewicz and unanimously approved by Roll Call Vote for the adoption of Resolution No. 4286 to appoint Roch J. Kujava as 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator for a two-year term to end December 31, 2015.

**APPOINT RECREATION BOARD MEMBER** – There was a motion by Mrs. Pantlik, seconded by Ms. McAbee and unanimously approved by Roll Call Vote for the adoption of Resolution No. 4287 to appoint Kelly Stouffer on January 1, 2014 for a three-year term to the Churchill Recreation Board to end December 31, 2016.

**ADVERTISE 2014 MEETING DATES** – There was a motion by Mr. Kline, seconded by Mrs. Pantlik and unanimously approved by Roll Call Vote to authorize the Borough Secretary to advertise the 2014 meeting dates.

**APPROVE TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE** – This action was tabled until the new budget is adopted.

**PAY THE BILLS** – Mr. Robinson read the bills for the month and they totaled \$290,315.32. There was a motion by Mr. Dworin, seconded by Mrs. Pantlik and unanimously by Roll Call Vote for the adoption of Resolution 4288 to pay the bills.

**AROUND THE TABLE** – Mr. Jurewicz thanked all of the outgoing members of Council for their years of service and stated he will miss them. He is optimistic for the future of the Borough and is looking forward to meeting the challenges and needs of the residents.

Mr. Dworin also extended thanks to the members of Council who are leaving. He told them he appreciated all their hard work.

He also addressed budget issues and wants to make sure an appropriate analysis is done.

Mayor McKenna complimented all of Council for the incredible amount of time they spend on managing the Borough. He stated there is a brief reception and refreshments after the meeting and invited everyone to stay and enjoy.

Ms. McAbee thanked all the departing members of Council.

As far as a vote on budget, she hopes the police will give a little more cooperation next year.

She also addressed a recent waterline break on Beulah Road that caused an 18-hour delay

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of water restoration. She feels there needs to be better communication between the water authority and the residents of how long water disruption could be expected.

Mrs. Pantlik thanked fellow Council Members and the Borough Staff during her two years term in office. She also thanked the borough residents who volunteered their time and talents to help with the recycling initiative, the welcome kiosk at the park, the photo contest, and creating a logo for branding our borough. She said that there was not one person who ever turned her down when she asked for their help. She ending by commenting that it has been a privilege to serve Churchill Borough.

Mr. Kline stated it has been an honor and privilege to serve the community. He stated Council is a group of volunteers all wanting to make the best decisions for the Borough.

With regard to the budget, he stated it is unfortunate that there was an up and down vote regarding a police officer. There were nine officers when he came on Council. He stated that it is a shame that the budget could not be adopted based on one budget line item. He feels that within two years there has been a 50% tax increase in the Borough.

Mr. Robinson thanked his very conscientious staff of Sandy, Donna and Ralph. Without these individuals the Borough would not be as well maintained. He also thanked Chief Park for his cooperation and also thanked Council for being able to work for and with them.

Mr. Lepidi thanked the outgoing members of Council for their service. He thanked Mr. Ferry for the job he did tonight in conducting the meeting and for his courage on his vote for the budget.

He commended Mr. Kline for his efforts and work on the Sewer Committee.

He also thanked the residents who attended the meeting and for their courage to agree with the budget.

Mr. Ferry thanked all the residents who elected him and his Council Members for all their efforts.

ADJOURN – A motion was made and duly seconded to adjourn.

**CRAIG A. ROBINSON  
BOROUGH SECRETARY**