

WILKINS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR MEETING, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2007

The Regular Meeting of Monday, November 12, 2007 was brought to order by President Sylvia Martinelli at 7:00 PM. A quorum was present as follows:

Mrs. Martinelli	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Padula	Mr. Costa
	Ms. Fialla

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence was observed for our current and past veterans.

(7-224) MOVED PADULA-COSTA to approve the minutes of the second stated meeting of October 29, 2007. The motion was adopted by a four to one vote with Ms. Fialla abstaining.

Citizens' Comments:

Mr. N. Leonard Hill, 405 Kingston Drive stated that he had received a copy of the "Wilkins Advisor," a political newsletter sent out to a number of households in Wilkins prior to the election of November 6<sup>th</sup>. He stated that he wanted to clear up one of the items that was printed in this document. Mr. Hill has been a volunteer firefighter in Wilkins Township for fifty three (53) years; was appointed as the fire marshal in 1970; served as the deputy emergency management coordinator for three (3) years and was then appointed the emergency management coordinator for the Township and has served in that capacity for the last twelve (12) years. Mr. Hill has also spent the last ten (10) years as the code official and building inspector for the Township. The Township adopted an ordinance in May of 2007 requiring property owners to meet the Residential Property Code prior to the transfer of property – an occupancy inspection program. This program has been instituted by the following communities: Rochester Borough in Beaver County, Plum Borough, the Municipality of Penn Hills, Wilmerding Borough, Turtle Creek Borough and the Borough of Swissvale. Wilkins Township did not reinvent the wheel. To date, Mr. Hill has performed two hundred nine (209) inspections. He has not received any complaints about the costliness of repairs necessary to bring these properties into compliance and is unaware that any complaints have been filed with the manager. The items that he most often requires are: smoke detectors, hand rails, fire doors, fire walls, fire ceilings, blow-off tubes on hot water tanks, peeling, cracking or chipped paint repair and removal/repair of excessively cut/notched floor joists. As the fire marshal for the Township, he believes that a number of these items are critical to the safety of the occupants of these establishments. He also believes these items increase the safety of volunteer firefighters who may have to respond to these structures. Mr. Hill stated that the information that was contained in the newsletter was erroneous and he felt the need to respond with the facts.

Mr. Adam Knight, Woodland Hills Emergency Management, spoke at the request of Commissioner Padula. Included in the political newsletter that was mailed to Wilkins residents was an article about why WHEMS vacated the Rescue #1 station and relocated to Forest Hills. Commissioner Padula requested that Mr. Knight provide the Board and the audience with the facts of why WHEMS consolidated their operations, instead of the mistruths that were published in the political newsletter. Mr. Knight stated that the move made by WHEMS was mostly due to financial considerations. The ambulance company had outgrown the Wilkins facility and the costs to upgrade the facility were not within the financial ability of WHEMS. In addition, having 2 crews in 2 separate facilities was not cost-effective. WHEMS response time average from Forest Hills is approximately 7.5 minutes.

In addition, during daylight hours, WHEMS stations an ambulance at VFC #4, to ensure an appropriate response time to calls along the Route 22 corridor.

Commissioner Martinelli requested that Mr. Knight provide additional information regarding an incident at the Italian American Club where response time for emergency services personnel (both ambulance and police) was thirty minutes. Mr. Knight agreed to look into this and report back.

(7-225) MOVED WILSON-COSTA to waive the reading of all reports with the exception of the Solicitor's report. The motion was adopted by the following vote: Costa, Martinelli and Wilson – YES, Padula and Fialla – NO.

Solicitor's Report:

Mr. Matta stated that the Board met in executive session, prior to the budget meeting to discuss the potential ProCare settlement. At this point, Mr. Matta stated that it appears that the negotiated settlement will not result in the Township repaying funds that are not currently being held in escrow (the 2007 payment) and will provide the Township with the ability to audit returns in the future. He stated that he needs authorization from the Board to formulate a written agreement with ProCare to settle this issue..

(7-226) MOVED FIALLA-PADULA to authorize the Solicitor and the Manager to formulate a written agreement between the Township and ProCare to settle the tax appeal issue. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote..

Reports:

Police Report – October 2007

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Total Police Calls Logged	292	271
Total Criminal Offenses Reported	32	33
Criminal Arrests/Persons Charged	20	16
Criminal Offenses Cleared	16	17
Traffic Citations Issued	20	40
Parking Tags Issued	11	3
Parking Citations Issued	8	4
Alarm Fees/Fines	-0-	\$725.00
Total monies collected – October	\$2,441.29	\$5,419.59

Mr. Paul Vargos' Report for October – Filed in the Managers' Office

WTVFD #1 reported the following: 18 Fires – Man-hours 85.50; 4 Drills – Man-hours 106; 2 Specials – man-hours 126; Meetings & Training – man-hours 166. Total man-hours for the month 483.5.

WTVFD #3 reported the following: 11 Fires – Man-hours 38.64; 2 Training Sessions – Man-hours 60; 14 Schools and Non-Incident Activities – 303.36. Total man-hours for the month 402.00.

The WHEMS October Report is on file with the VFD's Reports.

Building Permits issued during October 2007: 1 Deck, 2 Roof Replacements, 1 Interior Alteration, 1 Disaster Restoration and 1 Wall Sign.

The Township received \$5,156.88 in real estate transfer tax during the month of October (representing September's transfers). Year to date revenues are \$449,893. Penn Towers has not yet sold, but it is expected to sell before the end of the year.

Tax Collectors Report for October 2007:

Balance Collectable – beginning of month	\$64,558.62
Additions	252.24
Adjusted Collectable	64,810.86
Less Face Collections for Month	1,873.50
Balance Collectable – End of Month	62,937.36
Total Refunds to date	2,010.40
Face Amount of Collections	1,873.50
Plus Penalties	187.35
Total Cash Collected	\$2,060.85

PA Municipal Services – Act 511 Tax Report

Earned Income Taxes:

Current Month	\$17,091.09	Previous Year	\$15,949.78	Difference
Current YTD	494,928.41	Previous YTD	479,823.37	\$15,105.04

Emergency & Municipal Services Tax:

Current Month	1,978.48	Previous Year	312.00	Difference
Current YTD	286,549.43	Previous YTD	247,144.83	\$39,404.60

Mercantile Tax

Current Month	1,705.55	Previous Year	-0-	Difference
Current YTD	1,278,222.09	Previous YTD	1,103,269.99	\$174,952.10

Business Privilege Tax:

Current Month	1,441.52	Previous Year	-0-	Difference
Current YTD	180,987.42	Previous YTD	177,430.33	\$3,557.09

Mr. Matta's report is on file in the Manager's Office.

The Senate Engineering Company's Report is on file in the Manager's Office.

(7-227) MOVED FIALLA-WILSON to approve the payment of the schedule of bills in the amount of \$235,067.37, as presented. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

Question on the Motion: Chairman Martinelli confirmed with Commissioners Wilson, Padula and Fialla that all bills had been reviewed and appropriately signed-off on. Each Commissioner replied that they had reviewed and signed-off on their bills.

(7-228) MOVED WILSON-PADULA to accept the recommendation of Chief Guthrie to purchase one (1) Opticom unit from Traffic Products, LLC at a cost of \$600. (not including installation), with funds to be drawn from the Emergency Management Fund. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

(7-229) MOVED PADULA-COSTA to authorize the expenditure of \$600. per Volunteer Fire Department from the Emergency Management Fund for the purchase of one (1) Opticom unit each. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

(7-230) MOVED WILSON-PADULA to accept the recommendation of Chief Guthrie to enter into a two (2) year agreement with Hoffman Kennels for animal control, with the cost for 2008 to be \$205. per month plus \$50.00 per service call; and the cost for 2009 to be \$210.00 per month plus \$50.00 per service call. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

(7-231) MOVED PADULA-FIALLA to approve the budget provided by the Recreation Advisory Committee for the children's Christmas Party - \$3,000.00. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

- (7-232) MOVED COSTA-WILSON to accept the recommendation of the Recreation Advisory Committee to change the name of “Community Days” to “Summer Festival”. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.
- (7-233) MOVED PADULA-FIALLA to accept the recommendation of Chief Guthrie and Mr. Matta, Solicitor, authorizing officials to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the Wilkins Township Police Department and the Woodland Hills School District, outlining the response of the Police Department to incidents at Woodland Hills School facilities, or busses and designating Chief Guthrie, Sergeant Randy Lamb and Sergeant Anthony DeMarco as the liaisons between the Department and the District. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.
- (7-234) MOVED WILSON-COSTA to authorize the preparation and mailing of a final newsletter for 2007, to include the 2008 recycling and refuse removal calendars. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

Commissioners' comments:

Mr. Costa: No comments.

Mr. Wilson stated that he too was appalled by the misinformation contained in the political newsletter mailed to Township residents. Mr. Wilson asked Mrs. Bradley whether any Township residents, specifically those named in this letter (Greco, DeRiso or Nese) received a tax abatement. Mrs. Bradley replied that Mr. DeRiso is eligible for a tax abatement because he has constructed a new home on Churchill Road. However, he has not yet made application, which would have to be approved by the Board of Commissioners, at a public meeting, in accordance with the tax abatement ordinance. Neither Mr. Greco or Mr. Nese are eligible for a tax abatement and neither have applied to the Township. Mr. Wilson questioned whether the information contained in the political newsletter regarding these tax abatements was a lie and Mrs. Bradley confirmed that there were a number of lies in the newsletter, as has been pointed out this evening. Mr. Wilson directed Solicitor Matta to provide a copy of the Wilkins Advisor to the District Attorney's office and inquire as to whether any criminal and/or elections violations exist.

Mr. Wilson thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and thanked all of our current and past Veterans for their service to our Country.

Ms. Fialla thanked everyone in attendance for coming to the meeting and also thanked our Veterans' for their service.

Ms. Padula echoed Mr. Wilson's sentiments with regards to the political newsletter. He stated that the information contained regarding only Commissioner Fialla being at the scene of the floods on Washington and Brown was false. Maybe he wasn't recognized because he was acting in the capacity of firefighter at the scene but he was there, as were Commissioners Martinelli and Wilson and former Commissioner Greco. Mr. Padula thanked the Veterans for their service and also thanked Mr. Hill and Mr. Knight for their comments this evening; congratulated Dr. Szoko on his recent election to the Board of Commissioners; thanked Mrs. Bradley, Chief Guthrie and Mr. Vargo for their efforts in preparing the 2008 budget and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mrs. Martinelli thanked Mrs. Bradley, Mr. Vargo and Chief Guthrie for their work on the 2008 budget; congratulated Mr. Wilson for the excellent Veteran's Day salute ceremony held at the Elks over the weekend and announced that she was honored to receive the Citizens' of the Year award on behalf of the Century Club at a banquet held over the weekend by the Monroeville Area Chamber of Commerce.

(7-235) MOVED WILSON-PADULA to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Bradley  
Secretary