

Meeting November 20, 2023

The meeting of Mount Pleasant Borough Council was called to order by President Ruszkowski 7:00pm in Council Chambers at 1 Etze Avenue, Mount Pleasant, PA 15666. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. President Ruszkowski asked Borough Manager Lesko to take roll call. Councilpersons present included Barnes, Czekanski, Phillabaum, Lasko, Stevenson and Wojnar. Mayor Bailey and Solicitor Istik was present. President Ruszkowski stated that a quorum is present.

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Stevenson to approve the minutes of November 20, 2023 since Council has been provided with a copy. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Lasko. Motion carried 7-0.

Speakers: None.

Public Comment:

- Zachary Gergas, Director of Medic 10, gave the following report:
 - For the month of November, they have had 157 calls which includes 911 and non-emergency as well as 55 Wheelchair van calls.
 - Year to date calls for Medic 10 is 2361, which is 411 calls ahead of 2022. Previously projected to have approximately 2400 calls by the end of the year; however, they will be over that amount.
 - Holding a toy drive which began on Sunday, November 12, 2023 is doing fantastic. They believe they have collected approximately \$8,000.00 to \$10,000.00 worth of toys. They have drop boxes located at Medic 10, Crivelli's, Hell Town, Speclin and the cancer center at the hospital. The toys will go to local children in Mt. Pleasant Area School District.
 - Thursday, November 9, 2023 a 49-year-old resident suffered a cardiac arrest. Received a call on Sunday, November 12, 2023 from the patient's wife and he has made a great recovery and was due to be released from the hospital. Medic 10 crew worked on the gentleman giving CPR and breathing for him along with 4 defibrillation shocks for approximately 25 to 30 minutes. It is an outstanding accomplishment for the crew. Allegheny Health Network will be doing a presentation for their life saving measures.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Bailey gave the following report:

- Attended the following meetings:
 - Medic 10 Meeting on November 8, 2023.
 - Library Board Meeting on November 8, 2023.
 - Attended the Business District Authority Meeting on November 15, 2023.
- Attended the Veterans Day Parade and ceremony. It was a beautiful day with a nice turn out.

Mayor Bailey read the Mount Pleasant Police Dept. Report for the month of October 2023:

The Department answered the following calls:

Incidents	115
Criminal Arrests	3
DUI Arrests	2
Parking Tickets Issued (Boro)	14
Traffic & Non-Traffic Citations	44
Assist Other Departments (Police Fire EMS)	6

Accidents Investigated	3
Special Details	0
Income	
Parking Tickets	\$405.44
Parking Meters	\$119.00
Fees for Police Reports	\$100.00
Clerk of Courts	\$245.49
District Court	\$572.14
Parking Permit	\$0.00
DUI Task Force Refund	\$0.00
Donations	\$100.00
Total Revenue	\$1,542.07

Solicitor’s Report:

Solicitor Istik reported that she had received an email today from Joyce Novotny from Quatrini Law Group regarding a couple municipal liens filed by the Borough in November 1990, October 1992 and January 2020 against her mother, who owned the Mt. Pleasant NAPA on Main Street many years ago. The business had been sold and they did not own the business at that point and are not certain as to why there are municipal liens filed. Solicitor Istik stated that the amount owed is approximately \$200.00 total. Councilwoman Stevenson asked if they could be forgiven. Solicitor Istik stated that you could file a satisfaction for them and that one is \$192.95, another for \$56.24 and the other is \$40.36.

Borough Manager Lesko asked if the municipal liens are from the Borough or the Business District Authority. Solicitor Istik stated no, that these are the Boroughs the way that it is filed.

Councilwoman Wojnar stated that we need to be sure that they didn’t own the business before we satisfy the liens. Solicitor Istik said that the way the email read was that had progressively worsening health issues which is why they sold the business and if it was sold, you may actually be able to file a new lien under the actual owner.

Councilwoman Stevenson asked how much time do we want to spend on Borough Manager time and Solicitor time for approximately \$200.00. Councilman Phillabaum stated it is closer to \$300.00. Councilwoman Stevenson said it will cost us more to figure it out than to just satisfy it.

Solicitor Istik stated she will let her know that the Borough is willing to satisfy the liens.

Treasurer’s Report:

Councilwoman Stevenson read the following Treasurer’s Report for the month of September 2023:

Mt. Pleasant Borough Treasurer's Report		Oct-23			Balance 2023	Balance 2022
		Prev Bal	Deposits	Disbursements		
General Fund Checking	Scottdale Bank 19069335	1,317,374.17	46,668.38	151,267.37	1,212,775.18	1,008,808.33
General Fund	Standard Bank 321615	1,039,721.74	5,025.33	8,527.70	1,036,219.37	975,772.83
Budgetary Reserve						
**Police	48,591.82					
**Streets	148,604.25					
**Contingency Fund	365,848.52					
**Infrastructure	206,588.62					
**Workers						
Compensation	50,000.00					
**BOMP Gas Wells	26,773.10					
** Frick Park Gas						
Well	29,106.70					
**Levins	0.00					
**Fire	23,400.00					
**K-9	13,828.76					
**Medic 10	100,000.00					

**Marcellus Impact						
Fee Act 13	23,477.60					
Police Parking Tickets & Meters	Scottdale Bank 1026616	31,619.41	335.80	20.00	31,935.21	25,513.42
	Scottdale Bank 19069343	4,511.16	17.64	0.00	4,528.80	4,408.14
Escrow Account	Scottdale Bank 19123645	60,956.80	238.35	0.00	61,195.15	222,806.48
Liquid Fuels / Scottdale Bank	Standard Bank 446635	7,382.80	0.00	0.00	7,382.80	7,382.80
Monument CD	Scottdale Bank 19069350	2,929.54	43,835.83	43,819.02	2,946.35	2,741.81
Payroll Fund	Somerset Trust Co 2003058309	25,454.22	2.38	0.00	25,456.60	24,874.45
Veterans Park Fund	Somerset Trust Co 2004522337	2,500.10	0.23	25.00	2,475.33	0.00
Veterans Military Banners Fund	Scottdale Bank 19069368	1,251.77	4.89	0.00	1,256.66	1,223.19
Storm Water Retrofit Phase II	Scottdale Bank 19123652	454,295.72	1,776.36	0.00	456,072.08	221,840.66
ARPA Covid-19 (American Resuce Plan Act)	Standard Bank 432243	215,254.60	0.00	0.00	215,254.60	215,254.60
Standard Bank CD	Scottdale Bank 318012650	53,527.71	0.00	0.00	53,527.71	53,527.71
Scottdale Bank /MidPenn CD	Standard Bank 6677418044	54,243.17	0.00	0.00	54,243.17	54,243.17
Standard Bank CD (200yr Anniversary)						
Total General Fund Balance					3,165,269.01	2,818,397.59
Medic 10 Checking	Scottdale Bank 19069533	220,175.82	77,329.80	61,141.36	236,364.26	142,637.64
	Scottdale Bank 19069723	58,230.68	227.69	0.00	58,458.37	50,877.02
Medic 10 Savings	Scottdale Bank 19069376	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,023.87
Medic 10 Money Market	Standard Bank 0000358253	10,852.46	36.84	0.00	10,889.30	9,443.42
Medic 10 Pittsburgh Foundation	Scottdale Bank 19145689	250.97	0.00	0.00	250.97	0.00
Medic 10 - 501(c)(3)	Standard Bank 371917	19,458.71	0.00	0.00	19,458.71	19,458.71
Medic 10 CD	Standard Bank 410053	5,269.88	55.54	5,325.42	0.00	5,269.88
Medic 10 CD	Mid Penn Bank 318023688	5,325.42	0.00	0.00	5,325.42	
Total Medic 10 Fund Balance					330,747.03	233,710.54
WWT Capital Reserve Account	Scottdale Bank - 19123702	882,007.21	3,448.77	0.00	885,455.98	891,508.45
Capital Reserve M. A. Savings Acct	Somerset Trust Co 2004521230	473,152.95	1,482.85	0.00	474,635.80	458,043.05
	Scottdale Bank - MidPenn	3,088,600.02	0.00	0.00	3,088,600.02	3,007,516.44
Oceanview Annuity CD	Standard Bank 464569	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Standard Bank CD	Scottdale Bank 318015215	201,508.38	0.00	0.00	201,508.38	201,508.38
WWT Cap.Resv	Scottdale Bank - MidPenn	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Scottdale Bank /MidPenn CD	Scottdale Bank - MidPenn	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
WWT Cap. Resv	Somerset Trust 514,605.11	3,989.63	518,594.74	0.00	507,249.99	
American National (9/5/2023)	Mid Penn Bank - Scottdale Bank	518,594.74	0.00	0.00	518,594.74	
Athene Annuity CD (created Jan. 2021)						
WWT Cap. Resv						
American National (9/5/2023)						
Total WWT Balance					4,650,200.18	5,065,826.31
Total Borough funds					8,146,216.22	8,117,934.44
Councilwoman Cynthia Stevenson / Secretary Sharon Lesko						

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Czekanski to accept the October 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Lasko. Motion carried 7-0.

Borough Manager's Report:

Borough Manager Lesko gave the following report:

- Reviewed the upcoming 2024 budgets. All of the budgets have been reconciled. Borough Manager Lesko reported that liquid fuels have approximately \$137,000.00 this year for paving and that they need to decide if they want to do a small paving project or do a larger paving project next year. General fund budget has been reconciled; however, we needed to transfer approximately \$53,000.00 from the budgetary reserve to do that. There are a lot of big projects for the upcoming year, such as new rooftop furnaces for the Borough building, security cameras, and the engineering costs for Frick Park Hillside project. Borough Manager Lesko suggested raising taxes stating that if we have to reconcile the budget every year with funds from budgetary reserve you will run out of money. Costs are continuously going up but you are not bringing in any more money.

Councilwoman Lasko asked when taxes were last raised. Borough Manager Lesko stated that it was voted in 2016 to raise taxes for 2017. It was raised one time in 18 years.

Councilwoman Stevenson stated that she agrees with Borough Manager Lesko. There are big things coming in the budget and costs are rising. We will need to replace the elevator electronics and mainboard next. The elevator cabinet itself is in decent condition. The parts are becoming hard to find and outdated. Councilwoman Lasko said that anything electronic and having software, same as she said about the digital wall, that it is always going to cost money because technology is always rapidly changing and updating. Councilwoman Stevenson said that is something that will have to be looked at in the following year.

Councilwoman Barnes asked what kind of money are we looking into for the elevator. Borough Manager Lesko stated we have not looked into yet but could be well over \$35,000.00 being that it is the complete electronic system. Councilwoman Stevenson believes that it was much more than \$35,000.00.

Councilwoman Stevenson said that a 1-mil increase doesn't even get us as much as what is being transferred from budgetary reserve. Borough Manager Lesko stated that 1-mil will get about \$44,000.00 and that in discussions last year, Councilman Barrick had stated that it would be approximately \$30.00 per household.

Councilwoman Stevenson stated that we will be transferring the \$53,000.00 from the contingency line in budgetary reserve which she believes is appropriate; however, we cannot continue to do that.

Councilwoman Lasko stated that it was discussed last year of the possibility of having to help Medic 10; however, we do not have to thanks to Zachary Gergas, director of Medic 10, and his crew. Councilwoman Lasko stated that it is withstanding to think that you are never going to raise taxes and that it is a necessary evil. It is hard because everything has gone up. Borough Manager Lesko stated that we have seen that with the quotes that we had gotten for the gazebo. Councilwoman Lasko said it is like your home, you have to put money back into it. It is the same thing; we have to put money into the community. You want to attract people to the area and that these are all things that cost money.

Councilwoman Stevenson stated that we may be experiencing the results of some delayed spending with maintenance or replacement type things that should have been done sooner and a little bit at a time.

Council President Ruszkowski stated that Medic 10 was almost out of money and with Zachary Gergas and his due diligence has been able to turn that around. Medic 10 sustains their own budget, all utilities, expenses, payroll, etc. They do not receive any funds from the Borough for their budget.

Councilwoman Lasko about the funds that were set aside for the parks. Borough Manager Lesko stated that there is money set aside in the Capital Reserve Municipal Authority account. Former Borough Manager Landy had submitted a proposal when the sewage plant was sold distinguishing what the money was set aside for. Council had approved it by a motion. Councilman Phillabaum asked if some of the money could be used for security cameras.

Councilwoman Lasko stated she was going to ask the same if some of that money could be used towards the security cameras in the parks. Borough Manager Lesko said it is for the parks and she didn't see why they couldn't.

- Attended the Medic 10 meeting.
- Held a manager's meeting with Police Chief Grippo and Street Department Leader Jeff McGuinness.
- Went with Police Chief Grippo to California Borough to meet with their Police Chief regarding the security cameras that they have.
- Street Department went to Youngwood Borough to look at their new street sweeper. They were pleased with it and we will be submitting the SLSA Grant for a new street sweeper like the one that they got.
- The Westmoreland County Land Bank has advertised for bids McCali Manor. Bids are due December 1, 2023 and will be awarded before the end of the year.
- Demolition bids have come in for the properties at 405 Howard Street and 405 Braddock Street. They will be awarded tomorrow, November 21, 2023 at the Westmoreland County Land Bank meeting.
- The annual Christmas Parade will be held November 29, 2023 at 6:30pm. Floats will be judged. White Insurance will sponsor the parade.
- The Candlelight Procession will be held on December 10, 2023 at 5:30pm.

President's Report:

Council President Ruszkowski gave the following report:

- Reminded Councilmembers that what is discussed in executive session cannot be discussed outside of that room to anyone other than the people that was there. There has been some feedback that things discussed during executive session is being talked about outside of here. If you are on Council and you are not here for the executive session, another member of Council is not permitted to discuss anything that went on or anything that you may have missed by not being here. Solicitor Istik confirmed that this is correct.

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Stevenson to approve the 2024 Council Meeting Schedule. Motion seconded by Councilman Phillabaum. Motion carried 7-0.

A Motion was made by Councilman Phillabaum to approve 2024 Holiday Schedule. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Lasko. Motion carried 7-0.

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Stevenson to approve employee bonuses in a total not to exceed \$7,000.00 in aggregate. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Czekanski. Motion carried 7-0.

Councilwoman Stevenson stated that the bonuses would be \$500 net pay for fulltime employees, net pay of \$250 for parttime officers that are regularly on the schedule and a net pay of \$100 for parttime officers that are a casual fill in and work a few days out of the month. Police Chief Grippo will determine this. Councilwoman Stevenson said that they do a very hard job for little pay and this would be a nice little thank you. Councilwoman Stevenson and Councilman Phillabaum stated that we did give employees a bonus in the past. Councilman Phillabaum stated that we did them last year. Councilwoman Stevenson stated that Medic 10 will be giving employee bonuses and that they have done it in the past also.

A Motion was made by Councilman Phillabaum to hold an executive session. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Stevenson. Motion carried 7-0.

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Czekanski to reconvene. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Barnes. Motion carried 7-0.

President Ruszkowski stated that the executive session was held from 7:46pm to 8:02pm to discuss personnel issues.

Property Report:

Councilwoman Stevenson gave the following report:

- Met with someone that does laser cutting to possibly do a laser cutting on wood of the Borough Logo to place on the back wall behind where the Council President and Mayor sets.

Councilwoman Wojnar also suggested Blue Sky, a company from Greensburg, that does vinyl decals that are 3d that could go on the wall.

Streets / Stormwater Report:

A Motion was made by Councilman Phillabaum to allow free meter parking on Main Street from November 23, 2023 through January 2, 2024. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Wojnar. Motion carried 7-0.

A Motion was made by Councilman Phillabaum to approve Resolution No. 2023-05 requesting a Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant (SLSA) from the Commonwealth Financing Authority for a street sweeper. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Lasko. Motion carried 7-0.

Councilwoman Czekanski stated that a resident that lives at 157 St. Clair Street near Falcons Field reached out to her regarding a street light that West Penn updated with new LED lights. The light is extremely bright and he has reached out to West Penn several times with no results. He would like to have a cap or an apron put on the light. West Penn has informed him that he is in the queue however they have done nothing as of yet. Council believes that this is an issue that will need to be handled with West Penn and that the Borough does not have a say over their lighting.

Mayor Bailey asked if there were any further discussions about naming the alley off of Bridgeport Street and South Depot Street. Borough Manager Lesko reported that when she attended the PSAB conference this fall, she asked the question about naming an alley and was informed that Council should not be involved in that and it should be directed to the Planning Commission. Councilman Phillabaum stated that he has spoken with both residents that have asked about naming the alley and they are both fine with leaving it unnamed. Councilwoman Stevenson stated that the resolution should be that Council has decided not to act on this. Council agreed to not do anything with the naming of the alley.

Parks & Recreation:

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Lasko to approve Resolution No. 2023-06 requesting a Statewide Local Share Assessment (SLSA) Grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority for the Frick Park Hillside Project. Motion seconded by Councilman Phillabaum. Motion carried 7-0.

Public Safety Report: None.

A Motion was made by Councilman Phillabaum to hire Brice Joll as a full-time Police Officer effective December 4, 2023. Background check, physical, drug test has been completed. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Stevenson. Motion carried 7-0.

A Motion was made by Councilman Phillabaum to transfer \$2,500.00 from line item 450.24; \$2500.00 from line item 430.06 and \$3000.00 from line item 430.08 to line item 410.72 Surveillance Cameras. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Stevenson. Motion carried 7-0.

A Motion was made by Councilman Phillabaum to purchase security camera system from Armory Locksmiths in the amount of \$15,330.00. Money to be taken from line 410.72

(\$12,0000.00) and line 450.16 (\$3400.00). Motion seconded by Councilwoman Lasko. Motion carried 7-0.

A Motion was made by Councilman Phillabaum to approve Medic 10 bonuses for a total amount of \$4,150.00. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Stevenson. Motion carried 7-0.

Councilman Phillabaum reported that there are people going around soliciting for roofing and to please be aware. Borough Manager Lesko stated that if they are authorized to solicit, they will have a badge with their information and it will include the Borough logo. Every individual, whether it be one person or 4 persons permitted to solicit they will have a badge from the Borough. Mayor Bailey also stated when this happens, please call 911 to report it so our police are aware of it and they can have them stop.

Veterans Park:

Councilwoman Barnes gave the following report:

- Mr. Harenchar's military banner has been found and returned to the Borough office. Jeff McGuinness now has it at the street department. It does look like it was run over and will be replaced if it is damaged.
- Will be having a gentleman attend the Veterans Park Advisory meeting regarding the railing at Veterans Park. They will meet at Veterans Park to discuss adding the railing.

Borough Manager Lesko asked if the digital wall is holding up during the cold weather. Councilman Phillabaum said that it is asking for a user and password. Councilwoman Barnes said that she will check on it and let Borough Manager Lesko know if it is working or not. Borough Manager Lesko will reach out to Spectrio if it is not.

Ordinances: None.

Human Resources:

Councilwoman Czekanski gave the following report:

- Spoke with Councilwoman Lasko, Councilwoman Wojnar and Council President Ruskowski regarding 3 resumes that she received regarding secretary position.

Borough Manager Lesko asked that they wait until the first of the year, especially with the events that are going on, the year end reports that she has due and the upcoming holidays. Borough Manager Lesko asked if they were planning on advertising the position. Councilwoman Czekanski suggested interviewing these people first. Borough Manager Lesko asked if she was sitting in on the interviews since they would be working directly with her and believes that she should be setting in on them. Councilwoman Czekanski stated that she could if she would like.

Finance / Grants Report: None.

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Stevenson to approve the 2023-2024 Westmoreland Co Transit Agreement in the amount of \$1,785.00. (Note: 2021-2022-2023 = \$1,785.00 – no increase). Motion seconded by Councilwoman Wojnar. Motion carried 7-0.

Councilwoman Stevenson discussed increasing the millage rate to 18.5, an increase of 1-mil and asked if anyone objected to it. Councilman Phillabaum stated that he objects. Solicitor Istik stated that you cannot raise an annual tax rate until the budget has been approved. Borough Manager Lesko stated that the budget approval will be on the next agenda for the December 4, 2023 meeting.

New Business:

Council President Ruskowski reported that a resident asked about planting a tree at Willows Park in memory of someone. The person was big in sports and the little league and spent a lot of time there. Mayor Bailey stated that this is all preliminary and that they asked would the

Borough be opposed to having a designated area for people who would like to purchase trees and plant them in one of parks in memory. Councilwoman Wojnar stated that this raises a lot of issues because you have to be very specific about where you put it because you can't just cut it down if it is a memory tree. It can't be over a sewage line, near sidewalks, near a road or anywhere that you may want to make a road or do something with the area and who takes care of the tree perpetuity? Councilwoman Wojnar stated that you can't just trim the tree either and if the tree is damaged who is then responsible for replacing it. Councilwoman Wojnar reported that the County just planted a "liberty tree" in Hannastown. It is being taken care of by the Free Masons in perpetuity and was planted by an arborist. She went on by saying that this is a big deal. Councilwoman Wojnar continued by saying if the tree gets damaged by a mower or someone runs into it with a bike or there is a plaque with it and it gets damaged then who is responsible for replacing the tree or the plaque. Mayor Bailey stated that this would be good for the Ordinance committee. Borough Manager Lesko stated that this doesn't have anything to do with Ordinances and that Councilwoman Wojnar has very valid points and that there is a lot to this. Councilwoman Lasko agreed that this is a nice idea but not the best idea and she does love trees but does not think that this would be good for the Borough and the can of worms that it could open. Councilman Phillabaum stated at what point do you cut it off and have to tell someone no when others were approved. Councilwoman Stevenson said it may be worth discussing and possibly putting stipulations on it, such as type of tree, size of tree. Borough Manager Lesko asked how many will you take on. Councilwoman Wojnar asked how do you pick which ones you are going to accept and which ones you don't. Councilwoman Stevenson stated what if we offer someone to pay \$200 for a tree for the Borough and then it would be owned by the Borough. Borough Manager Lesko stated that this person wants a memory tree. Council President Ruszkowski said that they will want a plaque with it. Councilwoman Lasko recommended a bench. Councilwoman Stevenson asked if there was a place that they could have just a plaque. Borough Manager Lesko asked again where do you cut it off. Mayor Bailey agreed with Councilwoman Lasko that although she loves trees, this could be a bigger problem. Councilwoman Wojnar suggested that maybe they speak with the little league and they honor them with a day or place a plaque on their backstop or concession stand. Mayor Bailey will reach out to her.

Reading of Communications: **None.**

Discussion and Payment of Bills:

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Stevenson to pay all authorized and approved bills. Motion seconded by Councilman Phillabaum. Motion carried 7-0.

Public Comment: **None.**

Miscellaneous and Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Councilman Phillabaum to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Stevenson. Motion carried 7-0.

Meeting Adjourned 8:47pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Lesko
Assistant Borough Manager

BOROUGH OF MOUNT PLEASANT

Susan Ruszkowski, Council President

Motions from Meeting of November 20, 2023

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Stevenson to approve the minutes of November 20, 2023 since Council has been provided with a copy. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Lasko. Motion carried 7-0.

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Czekanski to accept the October 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Lasko. Motion carried 7-0.

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