

**MINUTES OF PERKASIE BOROUGH
CONSTITUENT OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING
September 11, 2012**

620 West Chestnut Street
Perkasie, Pennsylvania

ATTENDANCE:

Council Member:

Steve Pizzollo

Jim Ryder

Justin Stottlar

Mayor:

John Hollenbach

Assistant Manager:

Andrea Coaxum

Finance Director:

Joseph Berardi

Press Representatives:

Intelligencer

Channel 69 News

Perkasie Borough Council Member Jim Ryder convened the meeting at 7:03 P.M.

PUBLIC FORUM

Councilmember Jim Ryder read the mission statement of the Constituent Outreach Committee and explained that it would be an open forum where Borough residents were welcome to discuss any Borough-related topic. The Council-appointed members of the Committee would do their best to answer any questions. He further explained that if a question could not be answered, they would ask the resident to fill out a form so that a staff member could get back to them in a timely manner or their question would be addressed at the next meeting.

Mr. Andy Rumbold, 502 S. 8th Street, asked the committee when residents would get follow up on questions from the last meeting. He had asked about rezoning the old Royal Pants Factory building. Mr. Ryder explained that the Committee would start giving a regular update to Borough Council at the Borough Council meeting. Specifically referring to the rezoning of the old Royal Pants factory, Assistant Manager Andrea Coaxum believed that his inquiry had been answered at the last meeting. The property owner should put the request in writing to the Borough if they are interested in going through the process for getting their property rezoned.

Mr. Ryder then read a prepared statement regarding pending litigation.

There was discussion related to the June police shooting incident. Mary Anczak, 718 Shadywood Drive, said that she believes the Borough needs to get a 3rd party to investigate the incident. Mr. Ryder then reiterated the fact that Borough Councilmembers were not able to comment at this time on the issue because of the pending litigation.

Amy Nees, 512 Spring Court, asked if there was a timeline for when the Chief of Police would have his report completed. Councilmember Steve Pizzollo stated that there is no timeline at this point.

Mr. Rumbold said that the Borough should hand out a review form to every Borough

resident. Another man who failed to identify himself made a motion to propose that the Borough get a 3rd party independent review. Councilmember Justin Stottlar said that he appreciates the comments being given by the public at the meeting. He encouraged them to attend the next regular Borough Council meeting to express those same comments.

The discussion regarding the 3rd party review and the Chief's review of policies and procedures continued. Perkasi Mayor John Hollenbach that he hears everybody's concerns, but that the Borough has been informed of pending litigation regarding this incident. He went on to explain that there is a lot more going on behind the scenes that neither side will be able to speak about for a while. He assured the audience that their concerns were being heard and asked for patience during the process.

A woman who failed to identify herself stated that it had been three months since her son was killed and said that there was free training available through the County for police officers. Mr. Ryder said that they will follow up with Borough Manager Dan Olpere and the Chief of Police.

A man named Brian Lutz spoke further about the Marino case. There was then a question about who was allowed to speak during public comment at a Borough Council meeting.

Resident Mary Anczak brought up a question about the changing of the street lights in town. She said that the new lights will save the Borough money because they use less electricity, are less expensive to replace, and last a long time. However, she thinks the lights are dimmer and will cause an increase in crime in the Borough. Mr. Ryder stated that all of the lights had been replaced in his neighborhood and he thinks that he can now see his yard better than with the old lights. There was more discussion on the lights. Ms. Anczak would like the Borough to list where the lights have been replaced so residents can see for themselves. And decide if they approve of the new lights.

Mr. Rumbold asked if the meters being installed in the Borough were the same ones that just caught on fire in the Lehigh Valley.

Mr. Tom Myers, 66 Fairview Avenue Apt. B, suggested that the Borough Council take roll call votes at their meetings instead of the current method. He also wants Council to again talk about the skate park because he wants it to be struck down. Councilmember Stottlar said that he believes once something has been brought in front of Council and voted on, they should move on. He doesn't feel that revisiting an item is a healthy way to govern.

Mr. Myers asked if the Borough would consider removing the fence around the skate park.

An unidentified person asked if there was any chance the Borough could soften the electric bill. Mr. Stottlar replied that Council needs to get serious about "cutting the fat" out of the budget. He reminded everyone that the first public budget meeting would be on Saturday, September 29th. Committee members asked the Borough's Finance Director, Joe Berardi, how much would need to be cut from the budget to decrease electric rates. Mr. Berardi stated that for every \$100,000 cut, the Borough could lower rates 1%.

Amy Nees stated that the Borough should get out of the electric business. Mr. Ryder explained how the Borough owns the infrastructure and believes that would not be in the best

interest of the Borough residents. There was interest in learning exactly how many councilmembers have “all electric” homes. There was a question about why the two-year extension of the electric contract was purchased. It was explained that the extension allowed the Borough to level out the rates of the original five-year contract. The Mayor stated that it was a good debate to have on balancing of revenue from the sale of electric versus property taxes. Mr. Myers said that he feels like a victim to the Borough’s electric.

Mr. Stottlar said that the Borough needs to cut the budget without cutting the services that benefit the residents. He doesn’t think the Borough should get rid of the electric department because those crew members also help with plowing the roads, chipping the roads, etc. Ms. Nees said that she didn’t realize what was going on until the rate hike. She thinks the Borough needs to advertise better than just the Borough website, printed newsletter, message on electric bills, and press releases. Mr. Stottlar suggested that the Borough talk to the Pennridge High School to see if they would create a broadcast channel for the Borough.

Ms. Nees asked if the Borough Council meeting minutes could be more detailed. She also said that Sellersville Borough resident should be allowed to comment during the public forum since the Borough’s Police Department covers their town. The Mayor responded that Sellersville Borough residents with concerns about the Police Department should go to the Sellersville Borough Council meetings. The Chief of Police attends those meetings as well.

A lady who lives on Market Street stated that she was a friend of Mike Marino and thinks that the police officer involved in the incident should not still be on the police force in the Borough.

Justin Stottlar asked all at the meeting to help increase attendance by bringing a friend to the next meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, November 13, 2012.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.