

**MINUTES OF PERKASIE BOROUGH
CONSTITUENT OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING
November 13, 2012**

620 West Chestnut Street
Perkasie, Pennsylvania

ATTENDANCE:

Council Member:

Steve Pizzollo

Jim Ryder

Justin Stottlar

Mayor:

John Hollenbach

Assistant Manager:

Andrea Coaxum

Press Representatives:

None

Perkasie Borough Council Member Jim Ryder convened the meeting at 7:02 P.M.

PUBLIC FORUM

Councilmember Jim Ryder convened the meeting and opened the floor to the public for discussion.

Bill Delaney of 250 N. 3rd Street commented on what he thought was a poor paving job on 3rd Street. He also noted that he felt the paving work was very slow as compared to previous contractors. Assistant Manager Andrea Coaxum explained that the Borough has been experiencing more problems this year. The low bidder who was awarded this year's paving projects is working in Perkasie for the first time. However, the Borough's engineers did thoroughly research their qualifications and references before recommending that Council award the bid to them.

With that being said, the Borough has had issues and will continue working with the contractor until all of the issues have been resolved. It was noted that an inspector from the Borough's engineering firm has been on site during the entire paving process to ensure that the job meets the required specifications.

On another note, Mr. Delaney stated that his comment has nothing to do with the electric rates, but he thinks the Borough's Electric Department did a great job with repairing service after the storm. He also thinks the Public Works crews did a great job.

Mr. Andy Rumbold, 502 S. 8th Street, said that he thought the whole point of creating the Outreach Committee was so that residents could get feedback. He feels that he has not received anything back from the Council members regarding his questions about the fee being charged by the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB). As an example, a lady would like to open a hair salon in the building at the corner of 5th and market Streets. The Borough Manager told her that she would have to go to the Zoning Hearing Board at a cost of \$1,000 to be able to do that even though the property at one time had a hair salon.

Council member Justin Stottlar explained that he has spoken to both the Borough Manager and the business owner about the current situation. Borough Manager Dan Olpere had told the lady that because of the current zoning on the property, if it is “abandoned” then it reverts to its original zoning which does not allow a beauty salon without an exemption from the Zoning Hearing Board. Because the owner has been actively marketing the property, the Borough Manager asked the potential new business owner to provide him with evidence from the property owner that states the fact that it was not abandoned and has been marketed. If she can provide that evidence, then she will not need to get an exemption.

Roger Styles, 50 S. 7th Street added to that topic by suggesting that the Borough allow the business owner to make payments on the \$1,000 ZHB fee rather than requiring it up front.

Mr. Rumbold then asked about an update on the police shooting incident. Perkasi Mayor John Hollenbach explained that there are certain processes and procedures in place. He informed the Committee that the Chief had completed his review of the Department’s policies and procedures and sent it to an outside agency for further review.

Mary Anszak, 718 Shadywood Drive, asked if the Borough enforced the property maintenance code on businesses like they do on residential properties. She said that two commercial properties on 7th Street needed to be looked at. Ms. Coaxum stated that the Borough does require commercial properties to be maintained. The one property in question had been sent a letter and had begun clean up. She was not aware of the status of the other property but would inquire about it.

Ms. Anzak then asked if the Electric Department could spend 30 minutes a month driving around to inspect the street lights. She has reported several lights in the past that were on during the day due to a faulty photocell and thinks that the Borough should inspect them instead of relying on residents to report them.

Ms. Susan Green, XX, expressed her concern about the money spent on consulting fees. She thinks that members of Borough Council should inspect problems and use their common sense first before calling in a consultant. She cited the improvements made to the bike path crossing on Callowhill as an example. She also said that the Borough should have never spent any money on bringing in engineers to give a cost estimate for renovating the train station since a quick look at the property would tell you that it would be very costly to renovate and the Borough doesn’t have money to spend on those types of projects.

Mr. Ryder stated that the Borough is currently not considering the train station proposal. He went on to state that the Callowhill bike path crossing required the professional opinion of an engineer due to its high usage and difficult location. The least expensive option was selected for implementation.

Mr. Tom Myers, 66 Fairview Avenue Apt. B, said that he is concerned that the general fund continues to go up. He also wants Council to go out and look at things with common sense instead of always calling consultants.

Ms. Greene asked why the pool used to actually make money and no longer does. Mr. Mayor and Ms. Coaxum explained that since the new pool has been built, the pool has paid for its operational budget, but has not made enough money over that amount to cover its entire debt service.

Mr. Stottlar stated that he was interested in seeing advertising by Borough businesses at the pool. He also wants Council to explore outsourcing the snack bar to a Borough business.

Mr. Styles said that he would be interested in seeing how many Borough families use the pool compared to other popular youth-oriented Borough facilities like the skate park and baseball leagues. Ms. Coaxum followed by saying that the Borough does track a lot of information about pool patrons, including residency.

Mr. Ryder asked the public if they would be interested in the Borough having an e-mail list that would be used to send out quick announcements about things like upcoming meetings, which would be different than the more detailed electronic newsletters.

Mr. Styles started a discussion about the possibility of the Borough converting all of their diesel vehicles to natural gas, and then installing a natural gas pumping station that would be open to the public. He sees it as something that would be popular since there are no pumping stations in the area. He then asked about whether the Borough has considered getting back into generating electric possibly through the construction of a natural gas powered turbine. It could partner with other nearby municipalities like Quakertown Borough.

Ms. Coaxum explained that the Borough has considered many different generation options, including wind, solar, hydro, and a gas powered turbine facility through American Municipal Power. The Borough Manager and electric consultant Garret Cole with GDS Associates has been and will continue to research proposals to meet the newly adopted Master Power Supply Plan.

Mr. Myers would like to see a limit on the number of years out Borough Council can make power purchases.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.
