

MECHANICSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, BOROUGH OFFICE BUILDING
36 West Allen Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-6257

January 4, 2005

7:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER: At 7:30 PM President Winchell called the Council meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: President Winchell lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

ROLL CALL: Roll call taken with the following present: President Winchell, Vice President Whitcomb, Councilmen Humes, Kautz, McDermott, Ryder, Seagrist, Jr. Councilperson Ravindraraaj, Mayor Ritter, Solicitor Schorpp, Chief Spotts, Chief Seagrist, Manager Stough and Assistant Secretary Boyer.

Also in attendance Cress- Sentinel; Daryl Ackerman, Bruce Barclay, James Clay, Kirk Corliss, Tim DeWire, Bob Dietrich, Mary Eberly, Nancy Hanlon, Paul Heeter, David Hoover, Lissa Geiger, James & Joyce Kosier, Barbara Marbain, Mike McCoy, Jack Neibert, Jay Stoner, Cese Viti, Douglas Wendt, Darrell Westby, Al Whitcomb and Rebecca Yearick.

GUESTS:

Barbara Marbain, spoke at the request of the Hershey Capital Region Visitors Bureau, on the Tourist Promotion Law and distribution of the hotel room tax. Ms. Marbain expressed her support of the new Cumberland County tourist promotion agency; however, she did express some reservation about the initial start up time and possible lack of support for the hotel industry in Cumberland County during the initial structuring phase of the new Bureau. Vice President Whitcomb asked about the funding process for the Hershey Capital Region Visitors Bureau. Ms. Marbain explained the process, stating that Cumberland County provides more dollars than Dauphin County and this provides Cumberland County establishments with the right to use the "Hershey" name in promoting their establishments. Additional discussion followed.

Mike McCoy, President of the Cumberland County Lodging Association, informed Borough Council that as a member of the Cumberland County Lodging Association he would like to read a statement on the Lodging Association stance on the Cumberland County Commissioners decision to de-certify the Hershey Capital Region Visitors Bureau as the County's TPA and replace it with a TPA of their own.

"For the past fifteen years Cumberland County has been part of a regional TPA. We feel that the regional destination marketing efforts by the Hershey Capital Region Visitors Bureau for Dauphin, Cumberland, Franklin and Perry Counties is a very effective way of promoting our area to those who make travel decision from outside the area. We strongly feel that fifty percent of our County's total room tax dollars that currently go to the Bureau should continue to be used by the Hershey Capital Region Visitors Bureau to do regional destination marketing. We also feel that it will take years for a new marketing effort to build the relationships and be able to demonstrate credibility to the state and other organizations that offer grants. We do not feel an adequate effort can be launched knowing the collective benefits we currently receive by joining forces with the other three counties. Our association membership is made up of industry leaders who collectively have many years of tourism marketing experience. We feel our industry in the County will be adversely affected if this decertification is completed. Thank you for your time and careful consideration in this matter. You are making an important decision that can greatly impact tourism in our County."

Bruce Barclay, Cumberland County Commissioner, addressed Council asking for support of the proposed Cumberland County tourist promotion agency. He then introduced Douglas Wendt, who would be outlining the tourist plan for Cumberland County. Mr. Barclay explained that the Commissioners are seeking to correct inequities in the funding/service proportions in place under the current system. He further indicated that the County plans to work with agencies from the surrounding Counties to promote tourism, but is looking for accountability in the expenditure of funds.

Douglas Wendt, Executive Director of the Economic Development Office of Cumberland County, introduced himself and provided Council members with a handout (Exhibit A). Mr. Wendt reviewed his work since he came on board in 2004

toward the goal of tourism as a component to economic development. He indicated that the County has adopted an Economic Development Strategic plan which was adopted in July of last year, which includes plans for tourism promotion on a County and regional level. Mr. Wendt explained that the Hershey Capital Region Visitor's Bureau only promotes businesses that are members of their organization that pay an additional fee to the Bureau. Mr. Wendt indicated that this leaves many Cumberland County locations without promotion. Mr. Wendt noted that the visit Cumberland Valley Website has been a resource for visitors and residents of Cumberland County. He reviewed all the developments to promote tourism over the past year, noting that Carlisle Productions is onboard with this change and the car shows they promote account for ninety percent of the hotel reservations made in Cumberland County. He noted that the County agency currently meets or exceeds all the state guidelines for a tourism promotion agency. Mr. Wendt reviewed the regional approach the new agency would be taking, which would promote the region's accessibility to other tourist areas including not just Hershey, but also Lancaster, Gettysburg, Harrisburg and York. Mr. Wendt explained the graph on the handout provided and stated that it demonstrates the disproportionate amount of tax generated in Cumberland County is being used to promote tourism in the surrounding counties. After his presentation, Mr. Wendt answered Councilmember's questions regarding the proposed Tourist Promotion Agency. After the exchange of much information, President Winchell thanked Mr. Wendt for his time.

Councilman Seagrist asked Mr. McCoy why his organization was in opposition to this change. Mr. McCoy indicated that he remembers what it was like seven years ago, when Cumberland County did not belong to the Hershey Capital Area Tourist Bureau and he feels that Cumberland County will be going backwards and his industry is competing in a difficult economic climate. He feels that the County has not presented a plan to his organization to show how they plan to offer service to replace the services being lost. Mr. McCoy indicated that his group favors working with the Hershey Bureau, not pulling out of it.

CITIZENS COMMENTS:

President Winchell opened the floor to citizen comments

Jim Kosier, 302 South High Street, asked Mr. Wendt who audits the collection and distribution of room taxes. Mr. Wendt explained the process of collection and how they are audited. Mr. Kosier stated that he feels that the room tax would amount to more than the one million dollars stated. Mr. Wendt stated that Dauphin County generated three times the revenue generated in Cumberland County.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:

Manager Stough asked to add the re-approval of the Trindle Station Plan.

A request was received to remove a handicapped space, which will be added to the agenda.

Manager Stough asked that Council send one delegate from Council to an informal meeting with Nancy Sadis and Tonya Brown prior to the meeting to review the feasibility study for the capital campaign on January 17th.

President Winchell asked the letter from West Shore EMS, which is on the table for Council's review, be added to the agenda.

Councilman Ryder asked that a Resolution be prepared in honor of Sheldon Rodgers and his successful community event on New Year's Eve. Manager Stough will have a Resolution prepared and contact Mr. Rodgers to attend the next meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Councilman Seagrist made a motion, second by Councilman Ryder to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried with all in favor.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Manager Stough report:

1. A letter was received from Cumberland County Lodging Association voicing opposition to the replacement of the Hershey Capital Region Visitors Bureau with a County agency.
2. Information was received on the Central Tri-County Boroughs Association dinner to be held on January 25th at La Campana in Mechanicsburg. Councilman Ryder, Seagrist, President Winchell and Vice President Whitcomb will be attending
3. Information was received on the Spring Legislative Conference to be held March 20 -25 at Holiday Inn Harrisburg.
4. West Shore COG dinner – January 17th Councilman McDermott, Ryder and Seagrist will attend.
5. PA Environmental workshop will be held on January 25th at 4:30 PM and Councilman Ryder will attend.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Vice President Whitcomb made a motion, second by McDermott, to approve the minutes of December 21, 2004 as with the correction made. The motion passed unanimously.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Manager Stough reported that he met with the tax collector as a follow-up to the last meeting. Manager Stough indicated that he would be e-mailing some additional information out to Borough Council.

Manager Stough reported that we received with the annual payroll tax information notice that the allowable mileage allowance could be raise to 40.5 cents and we are currently paying 34.5 cents.

Manager Stough indicated he spoke with West Shore Tax Bureau regarding the EMS tax and they cannot provide income amounts to correspond with the OPT information, as the information is in two different data bases. They did provide a list of employers and the number of employees they employ. A discussion followed on the complications created by the new tax and many municipalities rush to enact it.

Manager Stough reported the receipt of a donation for the pool in the amount of \$50,000 from an anonymous donor. Manager Stough indicated that the \$125 setup fee for the brokerage account will keep the account open to receive any additional donations for a period of one year.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

December 31st – Mechanicsburg wrench drop was a success. Thanks to Eagle Scout Sheldon Rogers for his work building the wrench and the Washington Fire Company for hosting the event.

January 10th - Crime Watch topic will be common chemicals used to support drug dependency. Larry Fento from the Steelton – Highspire School System will be the guest speaker. The State Department of Education has recognized Larry's research and teaching abilities.

Trivia Question: The Eberly brothers manufactured wooden wheels in 1850 for civil war cannons, wagons and buggies. They incorporated with Orris and became Eberly and Orris. Wooden wheels and baseball bats were made at this location as recently as 1968. Who last owned this facility on West Allen Street and under what name did it trade?

Answer: John and Ray White trading as Consula Wood Products. (J & R Hobbies today). Nancy Hanlon, 38 West Allen Street, had the correct answer.

CHIEF OF POLICE REPORT:

Chief Spotts had no report.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Schorpp had no report

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Seagrist had no report.

JR. COUNCILPERSON REPORT:

Jr. Councilperson reported that yesterday was the first day back to school after winter break, which was too short.

Over the holiday vacation the Basketball team participated in the Sauve Bros Tournament; Girls Basketball competed in a tournament at Suburban York School District and the Wrestling team competed in a tournament at Conestoga Valley.

A fund raiser is being conducted at the school for kidney cancer research. Mid-terms are fast approaching.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Community Development/Downtown – Humes- The Main Street Mechanicsburg Group is meeting frequently and Ms. Humes read a passage from an editorial in the Patriot News called Facelift – “the state needs to align its policy with small towns for revitalization and what does seem to make a difference is local leadership. It can come from the Mayor, Council or local citizens action groups or in the best of all worlds, all three”. Councilman Humes expressed her hope that will happen here in Mechanicsburg.

Finance/Appropriations/Insurance – Winchell – President Winchell reported on the donation of \$50,000 for the pool

Fire Committee – Ryder – Councilman Ryder stated the Committee will meet next Wednesday evening.

Health/Recreation – Seagrist – Councilman Seagrist reminded Council that the next Recreation Commission meeting is January 10th. The meeting with Nancy Sadis is scheduled for January 17th. Councilman Seagrist reported that he spoke

with Wayne Wade and he estimates that most of the start-up costs for formation of an authority is legal fees, which would range in the neighborhood of \$2,500 to \$3,500. Councilman Seagrist asked to schedule a Health and Recreation Commission for January 18th at 6 PM to discuss formation of a pool authority. Manager will advertise the meeting and invite the Recreation Commission. Councilman Seagrist asked the Manager to compile the financial data on the pool project for the January 18th meeting.

Highway/Public Safety – Kautz – No Report.

Loan Review Committee – Humes – No Report.

Ordinance/Administration/Legislative Action – Whitcomb – Vice President Whitcomb noted that the Historic District Ordinance is on this evening's agenda.

Property/Buildings – Kautz – No report

Public Communications – McDermott – Councilman McDermott stated that the copy deadline for the spring edition is February 4th. Councilman McDermott stated he is looking for future survey questions. A notice will be placed in the newsletter for possible additional members to the Citizen's Advisory Recycling Board.

Recycling Committee – Ryder – Councilman Ryder reported that the Committee met this evening to discuss the trash contract, possible change in bid specifications for the next contract. Councilman Ryder also noted that changes were proposed to changing the scope of the committee to include all environmental issues.

School Board – Ryder – Councilman Ryder reported that he attended a concert at the Middle School and was impressed with the performance.

W.S.C.O.G. - McDermott – No report.

AGENDA ITEMS – January 4, 2005

- ◆ **Consider Resolution 01-2005 in support of the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau.**
Vice President Whitcomb made a motion, second by Councilman Seagrist, to adopt Resolution 01-2005 in support of the formation of a Cumberland Valley Tourist Promotion agency. The motion passed with all in favor.
- ◆ **Consider Resolution 02-2005 in memory of Elmer & Annie Finkenbinder.**
Councilman Seagrist made a motion, second by Vice President Whitcomb to adopt Resolution 02-2005 in memory of Elmer and Annie Finkenbinder. The motion passed with all in favor.
- ◆ **Discussion and possible authorization to advertise the Historic District Ordinance.**
Councilman Ryder made a motion, second by Councilman McDermott, to authorize the solicitor to advertise the Historic District Ordinance as presented. The motion passed 6:1 with Councilman Seagrist in opposition.
- ◆ **Update on sale of train station property.**
Manager Stough indicated that Bill Walsh will be performing an environmental study of the passenger station property, but the details have not yet been received.
- ◆ **Approval of the Trindle Station subdivision and land development plan.**
Councilman Ryder made a motion, second by Councilman Humes, to approve the Trindle Station subdivision and land development plan. The motion passed unanimously.
- ◆ **Authorization to remove the handicapped parking permit of Harriet Major, 45 West Keller Street.**
Manager Stough indicated that Mrs. Major is no longer residing at this location and her daughter has requested removal of the sign. Vice President Whitcomb made a motion, second by Councilman Humes, to remove the handicapped space as requested. The motion carried with all in favor.
- ◆ **Discussion on letter received from West Shore EMS.**
President Winchell reviewed the letter with Council. After some discussion, it was decided that Ranny Singiser will be invited to attend a meeting and address Council on the needs of the West Shore EMS. Councilman McDermott motioned, second by Vice President Whitcomb, to table this matter till a presentation can be arranged. The motion passed with all in favor.
- ◆ **Authorization to schedule a meeting with Nancy Sadis to go over preliminary findings.**
Manager Stough asked that Council authorize himself, Tonya Brown, one Council member and one Recreation Commission member to meet with Nancy Sadis to discuss the preliminary findings of the report. President Winchell stated that he would be happy to attend the meeting. Councilman Ryder asked Manager Stough to schedule Ms. Brown to make a presentation to Council at a Council meeting similar to the one she did at the School Board meeting. Manager Stough will schedule the presentation.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:47 PM, President Winchell adjourned the meeting to executive session on a personnel matter, with possible action.
At 10:05 PM, President Winchell reconvened the public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 10:10 PM President Winchell adjourned the meeting.



Jonathan S. Stough
Borough Secretary