

November 2nd, 2015

Council went into Executive Session at 6:08 pm to discuss the hiring of Chief Farneski. This Executive Session was advertised.

At 7:00 pm, the regular meeting of the Cleona Borough Council was held on the above date. The meeting was called to order by President Jim O'Connor with the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Members attending were Bill Bechtel, Ellen Burke, Patrick Haley, Don Hopple, Elizabeth Lindsay and Sam Wengert. Also attending were Mayor Larry Minnich, Attorney Colleen Gallo, Attorney Peggy Morcom, and Borough Manager Kerry Rohland.

Laura LeBeau, WLBR talk show host, responded that she was recording the meeting.

Borough Manager Minutes were presented for October 5th, 2015. **A motion was made by Ellen Burke, second by Sam Wengert to approve the Borough Manager's minutes for October 5th, 2015. Motion carried 7-0.**

The Treasurer's report was presented for October 2015. **A motion was made by Bill Bechtel, second by Elizabeth Lindsay to approve the Treasurer's report for October 2015. Motion carried 7-0.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Kerry did the 2nd reading of the 2016 Budget.
A motion was made by Sam Wengert, second by Ellen Burke to accept the second reading of the 2016 Budget, and to authorize the advertisement of the 2016 Budget for Public Review. Motion Carried 7-0
- **A motion was made by Elizabeth Lindsay, second by Ellen Burke to authorize Colleen to advertise Ordinance #310 – setting the 2016 Real Estate Tax millage rate at 2.77 (no increase). Motion carried 7-0.**

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Jim O'Connor

Jim started a presentation on the process used to hire the Chief of Cleona. Because of the public turnout, **Council recessed at 7:17 to move the meeting to the Fire Company.**

Council reconvened at 7:25 pm in the Fire Company with Jim continuing his presentation of hiring the Chief of Cleona.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There was a large turnout of the community in reaction to an article on Jeffrey Farneski printed by the Lebanon Daily News on October 28, 2015. Because of citizens talking on

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top of each other, I attempted to reflect in the minutes the individuals who spoke and summarized the concerns in general.

Valorie Bowman of 19 South Grant Street asked about the background check performed and did the Borough Council do their due diligence in this matter.

David Bennett of 224 East Penn Avenue asked about the two internal candidates and why one of them were not selected.

David and Annette Seibert of 137 South Harris Street commented that the best candidate should have the characteristics of being helpful 90% of the time and 10% of the time tough.

Morris Coleman of 40 South Mill Street commented that the local citizens expected Council to strongly consider the ability of the in-house candidates.

Joyce Light of 9 Natalie Lane expressed the concern of the article referencing a domestic violence issue and how a victim is afraid to speak up.

Robert Howard of 12 Walnut Mill expressed the importance of the residents having the trust and respect of Chief and Council.

Other individuals that spoke are as follows: Michael Sequinot of 416 E. Penn Avenue, Warren Dunyan of 10 Walnut Mill Lane, Jeffrey Gacono of 133 E. Chestnut Street, and Paul Buck 217 E. Chestnut Street.

Attorney Peggy Morcom clarified the document the newspaper had based the article was a summary and that there were no charges against Jeffrey Farneski.

Jim O'Connor emphasized the hiring process, and assured the audience that Council did their due diligence and had the background check performed by an organization recommended by the PA Chief Association.

The Mayor and Council Members shared their thoughts throughout the citizen comments.

Jeffrey Farneski was in attendance of the meeting and stepped forward and responded to question by the citizens of the Borough.

John Wyatt of 51 Dogwood Lane commented that the community should give Mr. Farneski a chance.

Rick Cheri of 28 S. Water Street, Womelsdorf was on the agenda sharing statistics on domestic violence and a personal experience involving domestic violence.

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A motion was made by Ellen Burke, second by Elizabeth Lindsay to pay the bills for October. Motion carried 7-0.

Jeffrey Farneski was sworn in by the Mayor in the Borough Office at 9:15.

Council adjourned at 9:30 pm

Respectively Submitted

Kerry L Rohland

Borough Manager