

**WERNERSVILLE BOROUGH  
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING  
December 6, 2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**JIM SWARTZ, VICE PRESIDENT  
LINDA DAPCIC-ANGST  
JIM PIERCE  
KEEGAN WORLEY  
ROB GORDON**

**ALSO PRESENT:**

**MAYOR, MELISSA DEAN  
MICHAEL GOMBAR, SOLICITOR  
DEBRA PIERCE, SECRETARY  
JENNIFER VELEZ, ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
MATT ZERR, ROADMASTER  
TIM CROUSE, PUBLIC WORKS  
CHIEF HOOK, SOUTH HEIDELBERG POLICE DEPARTMENT  
JARED RENSHAW, WESTERN BERKS FIRE DEPARTMENT  
KEN FULMER, GVC  
GLENN KRAFT, KRAFT MUNICIPAL GROUP**

**ABSENT:**

**DAVID LATINO, PRESIDENT  
JOSH FIDLER**

J. Swartz called the Wernersville Borough Council Meeting to order at 7pm.

Motion made by J. Pierce to approve the minutes from the November 1, 2023 Council meeting and Special budget meeting on November 20, 2023. R. Gordon seconded and carried unanimously.

**Visitors:**

Dan Guzman, 274 E Penn Ave  
Jack Keener, 23 W Penn Ave  
Jeanine Schweitzer, 420 Franklin St.  
Ashley Christman, 415 Franklin St

Dan Guzman: Mr. Guzman spoke to Council about the sidewalk installation at his property, along South Church St. The sidewalk will be installed up to about a foot from the light poles at the Corner of Penn Ave and S Church and continue down to the driveway on the other side. The sidewalk will be 4 foot wide and not connect with the sidewalk on Penn Ave due to the Electric Box and poles on the corner of the property. The Borough will need to remove 2 signs and then replace them after the sidewalk is installed. Motion made by J. Pierce to approve the installation,

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as described. Motion seconded by R. Gordon. Opposed by L. Dapcic-Angst. Motion carried with a 4-1 vote.

Jack Keener: Mr. Keener spoke to Council about his plan for the old Herb Motor Building at 23 W Penn Ave. The building will be gutted on the inside and about 90 climate controlled self storage units will be constructed on the inside. The outside will also be redone. Variances are needed for the use of the building and for parking.

Jeanine Schweitzer and Ashley Christman: Ms. Schweitzer and Ms. Christman spoke to Council about concerns that they have with the amount of traffic and speeding on Furnace Rd, Franklin St and South Pearl. They presented a petition, signed by other residents asking for stop signs, speed limit signs, speed bumps, etc. which may help with the issues. Chief Hook will conduct a traffic study in that area and determine what could be done to alleviate the issues.

Police Report: Written Report Submitted. 384 calls for November and 105 In the Borough. Chief Hook spoke to Council about the Crime Prevention event, “Coffee with a Cop” that South Heidelberg Police are holding at the Borough Hall on Tuesday, December 12 at 6:30pm.

Fire Report: Written Report Submitted. 98 Calls for the month of November. 16 calls were in the Borough.

Jared told Council that the LSA Grant was submitted for their equipment and he appreciates the help from L. Dapcic-Angst.

Also, the Western Berks Fire Department will again be doing their Operation Santa this year and helping out a family in need.

Western Berks Ambulance: Written report submitted. 67 calls for the month of November. 12 calls for Phoebe Berks.

Wernersville Public Library: Written Report not submitted.

Engineer Report: Written report submitted.

West Ridge Suites: Nothing to Report.

Bachman Roofing Land Development 208 W. Penn Ave.: Sent Memo

November 28<sup>th</sup> regarding Escrow Release and Maintenance Agreement.

Pat Moore requested Release of Escrow by email on November 29<sup>th</sup>. I

recommend release of \$37,209 after financial security of \$5,581.37 is received by

Borough for the maintenance requirement. Motion made by L. Dapcic-Angst to release

the \$37,209 subject to the deposit with the Borough of the \$5,581.37 for the 18-month

maintenance period. Motion seconded by K. Worley and carried unanimously.

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**Stone Ridge Subdivision:** Sent memo November 30<sup>th</sup> regarding Escrow Release No. 3. Received proper paperwork on Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> so our revised recommendation is to release \$90,241.25 for Escrow Release No. 3. Motion made by J. Pierce to release the \$90,241.25 after the outstanding bills have been paid to the Borough. Motion seconded by L. Dapcic-Angst and carried unanimously.

**Optimist CDL Coaching School:** Sent memo November 30<sup>th</sup> regarding Completion of Phase One Paving.

**Fastbridge Fiber Optic:** Prepared my response to questions submitted by Fastbridge Fiber representative and forwarded same to Solicitor Gombar for or reply to FastBridge.

**274 E. Penn Ave.:** Attended a field meeting with Mr. Guzman and J. Pierce at Mr. Guzman's property along S. Church Rd. on November 15<sup>th</sup> to respond to his questions regarding installation of sidewalk.

**Zoning and Building Enforcement Report:** Written report submitted for November. 9 permits were issued. 7 property maintenance issues and 6 zoning issues.

**Public Works:** Written report submitted.

Matt told Council they have collected about 630 Cubic Yards of Leaves so far.

He also told Council that ProMax is working on the Fence installation at Greth Memorial Park.

**Mayor's Report:** Written Report Submitted.

Mayor Dean told Council that the Tree Lighting event was a success.

The Mayor presented a framed proclamation to Jim Swartz, declaring December 31, 2023 "James Swartz Day". She also presented a plaque to him thanking him for his 40 years of service to the Borough.

The Mayor also discussed Business Case Development for a design/build project with Schneider Electric that can be discussed further at a later meeting.

**Council's Report:**

**Linda Dapcic-Angst:** Linda spoke to Council about 2 Grants which can be discussed at a later time. One Grant is for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations and the other would be for up to one million dollars to refurbish the minehole area. These can be discussed further at the January meeting. A brief discussion was also held regarding the Borough ordinance prohibiting outdoor burning in response to a constituent question.

**Rob Gordon:** Rob told Council that he would like to represent the Borough as its appointed member on the Board for the Fire Department.

All Council members Thanked Jim Swartz for his 40 years of service to the Borough.

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**Solicitor's Report:** Written report submitted.

**Public Hearing:** The Solicitor recessed the general business meeting and opened the Public Hearing for the Zoning Ordinance Amendment. See Exhibit "A" attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference for minutes of the Public Hearing. At the conclusion of the Public Hearing, the Solicitor reconvened the general business meeting.

**Ordinance to amend Zoning Map:** Motion made by R. Gordon to approve the Ordinance to amend the Zoning Map. Motion made seconded by J. Pierce and carried unanimously.

**Berks County Hazard Vulnerability Assessment and Mitigation Plan Update:**

Motion made by J. Pierce to adopt the resolution. Motion Seconded by R. Gordon and carried unanimously.

**2024 Tax Ordinance:** Motion made by R. Gordon to authorize the Solicitor to prepare and advertise the 2024 Tax Ordinance. Motion seconded by K. Worley and carried unanimously.

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

**Representative for WBFD:** Motion made by J. Pierce to appoint Rob Gordon to the Western Berks Fire Department starting January 2024. Motion Seconded by L. Dapcic-Angst and carried unanimously.

**Trash Rate for 2024:** Motion made by J. Pierce to set the trash rate at \$100.00 per Quarter per unit. If paid in full for the year by Jan. 31, 2024, a \$15.00 discount per unit will be given. Motion Seconded by K. Worley and carried unanimously.

**Trash Liens:** Motion made by J. Pierce to file a lien for Thomas Goerner 268 E Penn Ave. for \$1,487.90 and a lien for William Chavez 18 E. Washington St. for \$1,166.10. Motion seconded by R. Gordon and carried unanimously.

**2024 Meeting Dates:** Motion made by L. Dapcic-Angst to advertise the 2024 Meeting Dates for Council Meetings and Planning Commission meetings. Motion seconded by J. Pierce and carried unanimously.

**2024 Proposed Budget:** Motion made by J. Pierce to Authorize advertisement of proposed 2024 Budget and hold a Special Meeting on December 28, 2023, at 8 am to adopt the Budget. Motion seconded by R. Gordon and carried unanimously.

**Monthly Bills:** Motion made by K. Worley to approve the bill list and bills previously paid to avoid penalty. L. Dapcic-Angst seconded and carried. J. Pierce abstained.

**Balance Sheet:** Motion made by R. Gordon to accept the Balance Sheet. K Worley seconded and carried. J. Pierce abstained.

**Next Council Meeting:** Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 7pm.

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Motion made by K. Worley to adjourn meeting at 8:06 pm. Motion seconded by J. Pierce and carried unanimously.

**Executive Session** held to discuss a potential litigation matter. No Action taken.

Attest:

Borough Secretary

EXHIBIT "A"

**WERNERSVILLE BOROUGH  
BOROUGH COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING  
December 6, 2023**

The Solicitor called to order the public hearing at appx. 7:45 p.m. to discuss a proposed amendment to the Southwestern Berks County Zoning Ordinance of 2004, as amended. For the sake of information, the Borough has a joint zoning ordinance with Lower Heidelberg Township and South Heidelberg Township. Accordingly, any changes to the Zoning Ordinance must be approved by all three municipalities even if the proposed changes only affect one of the municipalities.

The purpose of the public hearing is to give members of the public an opportunity to state their views and positions on the proposed ordinance and for the Borough Council to gauge public opinion on them. This is an informal type of public hearing. The purpose is simply for questions to be asked for explanation on the ordinance and statements to be made regarding the proposed ordinance.

The ordinance was prepared at the direction of Lower Heidelberg Township. This ordinance is proposing to update the Joint Zoning Ordinance Map in order to memorialize the previously approved zoning ordinance amendment from 2022 to rezone the Jesuit Center property in LHT from A-1 to R-7 (Retirement) for the benefit of Phoebe Berks retirement community that is looking to expand. The ordinance is also memorializing a map change for the Glen Ridge subdivision in LHT that was subject to a court challenge and settlement agreement several years ago in order to locate those properties in a new zoning district known as the A-1 Glen Ridge Estates Residential. This is basically a housekeeping matter that should have been presented by LHT for approval several years ago when the lawsuit was resolved but is being done now because the subdivision is nearing completion of construction.

None of the changes in this proposed ordinance directly impact any properties in Wernersville Borough.

The Solicitor then entered the following exhibits into the record for the public hearing:

- Exhibit 1 is a copy of the proposed zoning ordinance amendment.
- Exhibit 2 is a copy of the review letter from the Berks County Planning Commission dated Aug. 29, 2023 indicating no adverse comments beyond some substantive changes that were addressed in the final draft of the ordinance being considered tonight.
- Exhibit 3 is a copy of the Borough Planning Commission meeting minutes from it November 15, 2023 meeting indicating that the PC, at this meeting, unanimously approved a motion recommending approval of this proposed ordinance.
- Exhibit 4 is a copy of the proof of publication from the Reading Eagle evidencing that public notice of tonight's hearing and ordinance enactment was advertised on November 24, 2023 and November 28, 2023.

- Exhibit 5 is a proof of posting from LHT indicating that Mr. Bertolet posted notice of tonight's hearing and ordinance enactment at the subject properties on November 28, 2023.
- Lastly, for the sake of information and the record, the SW Berks Joint Planning Commission did informally review this proposed ordinance at its last meeting but there are no meeting minutes or correspondence to enter as an exhibit at this time.

The Solicitor then opened the floor for comments on the proposed ordinance. There were no comments from the public, Borough Council or the Mayor.

The Solicitor then adjourned the public hearing at appx. 7:55 p.m. and reconvened the general business meeting.