

Regular Meeting of California Borough Council, October 14, 2021

President Alfano called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm

ATTENDANCE: Mr. Alfano, Mr. Bittner, Mr. Difilippo, Mr. Glab, Mrs. Gutosky, Mr. Maddiex, Mr. Mariscotti, Mayor Stetar and Junior councilmember Ms. Winwood

ABSENCE:

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Maddiex added Vitchoff subdivision

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments at this time

SPEAKER – GUY KUZAK

Lieutenant Guy Kuzak introduced himself and stated he works for Cecil Township police department full time and for the last seven years he has run the Washington Regional SWAT Team. He stated with the passing of your Chief and the next Chief and currently you do not have a Chief. He stated he is here because SWAT is a regional team and we don't come into your town without being invited and normally the Chief invites us. He stated with the incident on Oct. 6th where you guys had a shooting on Union Street and the DA's office was here and it was an active scene and they called SWAT and asked why they were not here and he had to answer that no one called him to provide the SWAT team. He stated he is here to clear up some details on what they are about and how it works. He stated the SWAT Team is made up of police officers of communities who participate and the Chief of those participating communities sit on the Board. He stated you guys have paid for the last three years to be involved in the SWAT team and a lot of small towns do that because of limited police force. You guys are still part of the team until January 1st. He stated they currently have 22 members in the County to handle large incidents. He stated the team trains every other week for 8 hours. They have standards through National Tactical Officers Association that says how many hours of training are required to be certified to come out and operate in your towns. Another part of the confusion came in with your ex-chief who was in office only about a week and he called and said your department will no longer be attending training and Cal borough will stay on till the end of the year but no one from your department will attend training. Mr. Kuzak explained that doesn't work because if they are not in training they are no longer certified and can't be on the team. He stated it didn't make any sense to him because he's the one who schedules. He asked council if they have any questions. Mrs. Gutosky asked who the members were comprised of? Mr. Kuzak stated there are 12 municipalities and from the communities we have 22 members. He stated they have 22 guys as operators, the guys with the guns, five medics, 7 negotiators, 4 support staff and it is a big team. Mrs. Gutosky asked if we were not a member what would it cost the borough for SWAT to come into town. Mr. Kuzak stated between \$6,000.00 and \$10,000.00. Mr. Kuzak stated you may not call us you may call the State Police but most people don't because their response time is usually out in 4 hours if they are not too busy and it could take up to 2-3 days for them to assemble a team to come out. Mrs. Gutosky asked how many officers need to attend the training. Mr. Kuzak stated typically you pay the yearly dues and right off the bat your officer gets \$3,500.00 worth of gear the day they start and we ask for at least one guys from your police officers. He stated you use to have two before they weren't allowed to come to training any longer. Ms. Evans asked if there is a week training. He stated yes in the summer time there is a week training and its called Advanced SWAT and you need 40 hours of training for explosives and things that can't be trained in 8 hours. Sometimes the board will waive the \$2,000.00 fee if the municipality applies for it. He stated in one instance they waived a fee for a municipality who had three officers join the SWAT team. Ms. Evans asked how long California has been a member. Mr. Kuzak stated a little over three years. Dr. Martin stated his training schedule was out in October of last year and we did not deviate it at all this summer, now last summer it was modified due to COVID and they split the team in half and trained two weeks so if one team got COVID the other team would not. Dr. Martin stated the overtime is straining on a small municipality. Mr. Kuzak stated in his police department they do not pay overtime, it comes from the officer's own time. Mayor Stetar stated so we can schedule their training on their days off so it does not cost the borough

anything. Mr. Kuzak stated for their week of training their guys are given a week of time served and they get no extra money for coming to training. He stated most of the small departments do it. He stated his training schedule is given out a year in advance those days are scheduled as a work day but they get no extra compensation for doing it. Ms. Evans stated that is not how it has been scheduled here. Mr. Glab asked if one of our officers would get called out to another community through SWAT who would pay him. Mr. Kuzak stated you would pay him that overtime. Mr. Kuzak stated on average they only get called out every other month for one call out. He stated most call outs average between 3 1/2 to 5 hours but could go longer. He stated so you are looking at 5 hours overtime every two months. Mr. Kuzak stated we are on a mutual agreement with all stations. So if there is a large incident 911 will dispatch all CALL so anyone with a radio that hears it can respond and SWAT. Mr. Kuzak stated should be notified of call outs also and those are sent to the Chief. Mr. Glab asked what all departments are involved with SWAT. Mr. Kuzak stated Cecil, North Strabane, South Strabane, Canonsburg, Cal University, California Borough, Sheriff's office, Mon City, Washington, State probation, Charleroi, Trinity School District and Smith Township. Mr. Mariscotti stated if we were a non-member and we called you out and you billed us and we paid, where does that money go. Mr. Kuzak stated it goes back to reimburse the officers. Mr. Kuzak stated the organization is supposed to be for the towns that pay and participate but the Board of Chiefs got together and stated we cannot leave officers out there high and dry, getting shot at or possibly killed, we have to respond if they call. Mrs. Gutosky stated when guys go to training we are paying overtime. Ms. Evans stated that is a scheduling issue on our part, the scheduler is allowing it to be scheduled as overtime. He stated you have his number and you can call him anytime 24 hours a day. He stated he really hopes SWAT does not lose California Borough as a member. Your new Chief should be notifying you of the schedules and when there are call outs. He stated after the incident he understood there was a lot of confusion about how SWAT works and he stated he assumed the Chief made you fully aware of how things work but now he knows that was not the case.

MINUTES

Motion by Mariscotti/Difilippo to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting on Sept 2, 2021 carried with all members present stating aye.

Motion by Difilippo/Mariscotti to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on Sept. 9, 2021 carried with all members present stating aye.

Motion by Mariscotti/Difilippo to approve the minutes of the Special meeting on Sept. 23, 2021 carried with all members present stating aye.

Motion by Mariscotti/Maddiex to approve the minutes of the Continued Special meeting on Sept. 30, 2021 carried with all members present stating aye.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Evans read the accounts payable and bank balances as of Sept 30, 2021.

Motion by Mariscotti/Bittner to accept the Treasurer's report carried with all members present stating aye.

PRESIDENT ALFANO'S REPORT

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Alfano apologized for the late start of this meeting and said it was due to a lengthy executive session.

PLAYGROUND PROJECT

Motion by Maddiex/Mariscotti to request California Recreation Improvements (Mechanic Street playground) project to be undertaken as part of the Washington County Community Block Grant CV program duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – DR. MARTIN

Nothing to report

**PUBLIC HOUSING – MR. MADDIEX
VITCHOFF SUBDIVISION**

Motion by Maddiex/Mariscotti to approve the Vitchoff subdivision plan 5 with the conditions that it is reviewed and approved by the Washington County Planning Commission, Borough Engineer, and the Solicitor duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

COMPUTER PROGRAM FOR CODE VIOLATIONS

Mr. Maddiex stated this is a program that Mike asked to purchased. He stated the only caveat is the bid is for \$2,500.00 but that amount is only good until Oct. 21st of this year. He stated he's not sure what it is but Mike said it will help with the fines and that. He stated he will also mention that they are over in this budget line item. He stated he'll make the form of the motion this way that we accept this motion but he will put a table motion in if you want to wait till next month and hopefully the price will hold. Ms. Evans stated if you are over budget now you are still going to be over budget next month. Mr. Maddiex stated we could do it tonight. Mrs. Gutosky stated the zoning office is low on income and they are not bringing in what they should have. He stated this is not the rental program that he was hoping for but this is for the code violations and inspections. Ms. Evans stated so this will replace the Comcate program they currently have. Ms. Evans stated she thinks it is only \$700.00 more than the one they currently have. Ms. Evans stated she thinks this is for when Mike does code violations he enters them and this tracks them and provides the paperwork. Mr. Bittner asked if the \$2,500.00 is for this year and we have to pay the whole package price next year. Mr. Alfano stated we need to know that if it is going to cost us \$12,000.00 next year. Mr. Bittner stated it is a one-time setup. Mr. Difilippo stated it says on the bottom this amount will be invoiced once a year of \$2,500.00. Mr. Mariscotti stated those other costs are for one-time set-up fees for merging data conversions and things. Mr. Difilippo stated this is reoccurring for three years minimum. Dr. Martin stated after speaking with Mike, he believes this is a more comprehensive system and a better tool for that office and it does more of the things that Mike needs to be doing in that office. Ms. Evans stated if you don't renew for three years you are still required to pay the three years at time of termination. Ms. Evans stated if you want to pay it from Gaming Revenue fund to keep the price there are funds available then budget for it next year.

Motion by Maddiex/Mariscotti to purchase the program IworQ at a cost of \$2,500.00 to be paid from Gaming Revenue and cancel Comcast duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

PUBLIC WORKS – MR. BITTNER

Mr. Bittner stated Jeff has provided a quote in your packets to temporarily replace the cameras on the pole that the truck took out. He stated we can't go six months without cameras until the permanent pole is put in. He stated this should all be reimbursable through insurance claim and the total is \$2,920.00 plus an unknown amount when they put the permanent ones in on the permanent pole down the road. Ms. Evans stated she spoke to our insurance adjuster who stated she put a contingency on the claim that there will be another cost forthcoming in future months.

Motion by Bittner/Mariscotti to approve the quote of \$2,920.00 for the temporary fix of the cameras on the traffic signal pole plus any future additional costs duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

Mr. Bittner stated he thinks the street crew has done a good job on the sidewalks going to Coal Center and we have some very talented workers.

**PUBLIC SAFETY- MR. DIFILIPPO
SIANA LAW INVOICE #87846 - \$7,269.72**

Motion by Difilippo/Maddiex to pay Siana Law invoice in the amount of \$7,269.72 duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

EJ LOWERY INVOICES

Mr. Difilippo stated these are the last two invoices for the new police vehicles and they are for a push bar on one and a cage in the other and the total of both of them is \$2,365.00.

Motion by Difilippo/Mariscotti to pay EJ Lowery invoices in the amount of \$2,365.00 duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

FINANCE – MRS. GUTOSKY

MONTHLY BILLS

Motion by Gutosky/Maddiex to pay the monthly bills as presented duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

BUDGET WORKSHOPS

They are advertised for Oct. 18th, 20th, 25th, 27th and Nov. 3rd & 10th at 10:00 am here at the borough bldg.. She stated hopefully we won't need the November dates and we'll put a sign on the door canceling those.

PUBLIC HEALTH- MR. MARISCOTTI

Nothing to report

MR. GLAB

Nothing to report

JUNIOR COUNCILMEMBER CAYLEE WINWOOD

Ms. Winwood stated the homecoming game was rescheduled until tomorrow at 7 pm against Carmichaels. The homecoming King will be crowned at the pep rally tomorrow and the Queen will be crowned before the game at 6:30. The School board meeting was rescheduled till Oct. 27th at 6:30 pm. There is a new COVID 19 test that is administered at the elementary building for students and staff at California campus and there is a YouTube video out there from Dr. Jacobs for anyone with questions. The senior government has started the senior fund raiser and Bee Graphix has all the trojan gear there. Substitutes are needed at the school so anyone with a bachelor's degree in any area the school district can submit for an emergency permit and the pay will be \$100.00 per day. Senior portraits will be provided by Spellman studio. She asked council if they could look into some way to provide notifications to citizens of California concerning emergencies and such. Ms. Evans stated we did have a program in the past but the only thing we ended up notifying residents of was monthly meetings.

MAYOR'S REPORT – DR. STETAR

Mayor Stetar stated there were several trainings we discussed last week and the only one we need to approve is the Armory training. Ms. Evans stated we approved that at the last meeting and the other two you were going to do tonight.

ENGINEERS REPORT – MR. EBY

UPDATES

Mr. Eby stated they are working on permits for the Third St. extension projects and the guys were out today core drilling for the weight limit study.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – MR. AGRAFIOTIS

Nothing to report

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Maddiex stated when we presented the fire extinguisher to the police dept. for training he offered to cover the first cost of recharging. He hasn't found out yet how much that would cost. Ms. Evans stated when they discharge it all and it needs recharged she will notify him of the cost.

NEW BUSINESS

SRO PROGRAM

Mr. Glab stated we need to contact the school district to see if they want to continue the SRO program into next year.

MORGAN EXCAVATING INVOICE

Mr. Eby stated he needs a motion to pay Morgan Excavating invoice for the 2021 Paving Project in the amount of \$228,478.61 which is \$ 25,097.61 under budget.

Motion by Mariscotti/Difilippo to pay Morgan Excavating \$228,478.61 for the 2021 Paving project duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes.

TOWING BILLS

Ms. Evans stated we received three bills from Weld Towing with a note stating they sent them to the paver who told them to send them to the Borough. She stated they towed three cars from Park Street. Ms. Evans stated we did not authorize the towing. Mr. Mariscotti stated Park Street was marked no parking in plenty of time. Mr. Difilippo stated send them back to Weld and have them bill whoever they towed. Mr. Taday stated they only towed three cars and moved them on another street so they could pave Park St. Mr. Bittner stated they should have received citations from the police dept. for parking there in the first place. Mr. Glab stated we should send the bills to the property owners. Ms. Evans stated there is no identifying information on the bills like license plate, owner etc.

Motion by Mariscotti/Bittner to pay the Weld Towing bills and give the bills to the police department to cite and get payment duly carried on a roll call vote with all members present voting yes except Mr. Difilippo who voted no.

RECOGNITION OF CITIZENS

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Glab/Bittner to adjourn at 8:45 carried with all members present stating aye.