

**PRE-MEETING (Return to Session)
BADEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MAY 22nd, 2017**

Council President Mr. Besong called the Pre-Meeting Return to Session of Council to order at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Baden Municipal Building, 149 State Street, to conduct business of general purposes.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mrs. Furr, Mr. Kotula, Mrs. Montell, Mr. Shelkons, Mr. Stuban, and Mr. Trzcianka and Mr. Besong

ALSO PRESENT:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OTHER RECORDING DEVICES

AGENDA (Changes and/or Deletions)

VISITORS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Stuban noted that the reason why he asked Council to recess the meeting was to:

1. Go over the budget
2. Address things that we have been holding off on that need discussed
3. Any long term plans and goals

Budget - Mr. Stuban reviewed the budget commenting that the budget presented is a quarterly budget and no one is over budget.

Employee Wages and Benefits - Our budget is \$2,110,000. If you take out garbage which is an in/out account, the firemen relief checks of about \$20,000 the budget is about \$1,709,000. Wages and benefits in our budget account for 55% of our total budget. He wanted Council to be aware of this figure for any discussion regarding the hiring of an additional police officer. One police officer costs the borough approximately \$90,000 per year. The Chief is \$106,000. Mr. Stuban noted that there really isn't anything that could be cut from these costs because they are contractual items.

Conversation took place regarding the costs and the jobs/duties that are handled by police department. Mr. Trzcianka commented that we only collect \$900 in fines for the month. With 153 calls in one month, that is 5 calls per day or 1.75 calls per shift. Mr. Stuban noted that this is not picking on the police, but he wants Council to understand the costs at hand.

Discussion took place regarding the unique structure of the Police Pension that is defined by the state as well as the non-uniform employees not paying into their healthcare plan.

Uniform allowance for part time officers was also discussed. Mrs. Rakovan explained that there have been no new hire of part time police since the agreement for reimbursement of uniform/vest by part timers went into effect by council.

Mr. Stuban commented that each employee will receive a personal summary of their full cost to the borough.

Code Enforcement Officer - Mr. Stuban addressed the Code Enforcement Officer, Bob Weber wanting a smart phone so he can take pictures and send them to the courts, judge and attorney. Under the budget there is a line item for cell phone as well as operating supplies. Discussion took place regarding getting a digital camera that has the ability to upload pictures. Mr. Trzcianka stated that if the phone is broke then get him a new phone. Mr. Weber also purchased a printer that he needs reimbursed for. Mr. Stuban stated that Mr. Weber needs a new phone, a camera and reimbursed for the printer. Mrs. Rakovan stated that she will check with the company that the borough gets their cell phones from.

Mercantile License/Tax – There are some businesses/people that do not follow the rules for mercantile licenses. The borough does not have a procedure. Mr. Stuban was given permission by council to have the solicitor review this matter.

Buildings – Discussion took place regarding the repair/replacement of the roofs at the library, borough building and fire department. Conversation included putting a pitched roof on the building to alleviate the water leaks caused by a flat roof. Pricing was discussed as well as holding off on road repairs to fix the roofs. Mrs. Rakovan noted that she is waiting on pricing for the repair/replacement. Mrs. Montell commented that she does not want to give up road repairs for the roofs. Mr. Kotula asked about how often the library get used. He sees the library as an expense because the Ambridge Library is close and gets a lot of use. Mr. Stuban commented that he views the Baden Library more as a community center and not a traditional library. Mr. Stuban asked Mr. Shelkons and Mrs. Furr for a report from the library as to how many patrons they have that use the library and if possible what do they use the library for. Mr. Stuban noted that if the borough closes the library within 50 years of the grant the borough would have to return approximately \$45,000 to \$50,000 back to the state. This was a stipulation of the grant. Further discussion took place regarding the cost for repairs as well as utilities, donation and what would the borough do with the building.

Speaker System for Council Chambers – Mr. Stuban stated that the Mayor requested that council consider getting a new speaker system for Council Chambers. Mr. Trzcianka, Mrs. Montell and Mr. Besong all noted that the entire speaker system was inspected and set by a professional company.

Door Locks – Mrs. Rakovan stated that the current software of our keyless entry is out dated and can't be updated. It is from 2002. To update the system would cost approximately \$5,921. Mr. Trzcianka asked that the fire department be included in the update.

Baden Memorial – Mr. Stuban asked Mrs. Furr for an update on what the Baden Memorial Committee was doing. Mrs. Furr stated that there were two meetings and only she and Mr. Weber were present. Mr. Stuban stated that the memorial was built by a group of citizens back in the 1940's and it expanded in the 1970's. The Mayor at that time organized a special committee, but who is actually in charge of it. If damage was done to the memorial who would be in charge of repairing it? Discussion took place as to who in the end is in charge and responsible because anyone can form a committee. Mr. Stuban wants answers to these questions so that 10 years down the road this doesn't become an issue again. Mr. Kotula stated that no matter who forms a committee in the end Baden Borough has the final say and control. Mrs. Montell commented that liaison from Council would be needed for the committee. Mr. Stuban was given authorization from Council to present this matter to the attorney for review and direction.

Borough Owned Property – Mr. Stuban reviewed the properties owned by Baden Borough to see if there are any that the borough may sell. He also commented on unopened borough streets and alleys within the borough and those that are no longer borough property because they have not maintained them for 21 years. He asked that the council have the street department go through town and document on a map which streets and alleys are actually maintained by the borough. Mr. Stuban stated that if the borough can make some money by selling off property that is not necessary or used by the borough.

Mr. Stuban mentioned some properties that the borough may have an interest in selling which included the end of Grant Street, basketball courts on Ehman Avenue and the tot

lot. Mr. Trzcianka asked about changing the zoning so that people may build garages on some smaller vacant lots in Baden. Mr. Stuban with council's permission is going to ask the street department to map out the unopened streets and alleys that the borough does not maintain and he will be asking the solicitor about the guidelines for selling these properties as well as zoning for garages.

Christmas Lights – Council discussed putting the lights on one side of the street since there is no electricity on the other side and getting banners to put up on the side without lights.

Lack of Storage – Mr. Trzcianka addressed the lack of storage space at the borough building and fire department. He mentioned that part of the long term plan be adding onto the building.

Streets that need repaired – Mr. Stuban went over a list of roads that Mike Josapak made of streets that need repaired and noted that Wilson Avenue, Steel St. and Moore Avenue are included in this year's paving project. Mr. Stuban asked council if a package could be put together to pave all the streets would council object to it. He would like to see what we can borrow from the bank and use Liquid Fuels to pay it off over three to five years. Mr. Besong felt that we should do them all get it done with. Mr. Stuban got approval from council to get pricing and costs. Mrs. Montell asked if there would be any money for the roof repairs. Mr. Stuban stated that it depends on the cost so there may be some funds available.

Hydrants – Mr. Stuban noted the two hydrants cost \$7,000. Mr. Trzcianka stated that there are approximately 18 hydrants in town that do not work. Discussion followed regarding how many hydrants should be fixed and over what time period. Mr. Trzcianka noted that all of Kellinger Drive hydrants do not work. Mr. Stuban stated that for over five years we stated that hydrants need replaced.

Remote Meters – Mr. Stuban commented he and Mr. Trzcianka spoke to some vendors at convention regarding remote meters. Currently each employee spends 5 days, 4 times per year reading meters. He asked that the company contact the borough to get pricing. Mr. Stuban noted that this is something to look into for next year. Mr. Trzcianka stated that all of the new meters that are being installed are remote access compatible.

Water Ordinance – Mr. Stuban asked Council to have the solicitor update the borough ordinances regarding utility billing.

Grants – Mr. Stuban stated that we have not heard back from the CDBD Grant, but he and Mr. Trzcianka heard about some additional grants while they were at convention. Council gave him approval to see and go after other grants that may be available for the borough.

Weed Killing – Mr. Stuban stated that Mr. Josapak asked him about having an employee get trained to apply weed killer within the borough. One of the companies is willing to train them. Council agreed to have one of the employees (Randy Dobich) get trained.

Condemnation of Properties – Mr. Stuban went over a list of properties. He noted that the Harmony Road house is already torn down. Mr. Borriello's property has exceeded the thirty day notice so Mr. Stuban will be meeting with Mr. Luff to proceed with filing with the magistrate. The Jefferson Street property owner is working with the borough. The Chestnut Street property is new to the list. The Riverview property owner has gotten a permit for the property to start repairs but nothing has started yet. Straube Avenue, Grant Avenue, Jones Avenue and First Street is being worked on, as well as the Center Street house. Complaints have been made about Olson's old house on State Street so that one is being looked into too. There are other houses within Baden that look structurally sound on the outside and although vacant there is nothing we can do at this time since we have no access to the insides for inspection. The building inspector and code enforcement officer have been asked to review the list. Mr. Stuban had approval from Council to work on the properties in question.

Non-Uniform Negotiations - Street Department has asked when negotiations are starting.

Sewage Rates – Mr. Stuban stated that Mr. Besongs water bill was reviewed to determine how much additional money was paid by him for sewage when filling up his swimming pool. Mr. Stuban commented that it is additional \$16. This was based upon his normal usage. He explained the cost breakdown per thousand gallons of water for water and sewage. Mr. Stuban further explained what would be involved to have a person monitor and meter water that is used to fill a pool. The cost for this would be beyond \$16. Mr. Besong disagreed with Mr. Stuban. Mr. Stuban showed Council the cost breakdown for sewage at other towns throughout the county. Baden's sewage rates per quarter averages to be \$103. The most expensive is Economy Borough is \$195 per quarter.

Short Term Disability (STD) for the Non-Uniform Employees – Mrs. Rakovan explained to council that the Non-Uniform contract states that they get STD at 2/3 of their salary. Currently the Teamsters cover \$375 per week of STD with the borough making up the difference. There is a lot involved when this occurs because the employee has to give the Teamster check to the borough and in turn the borough gives them a check for the 2/3 of their pay. She asked council to approve the purchase of STD insurance so that the process would be easier and not hold up payments to the employees. She explained that one employee being off for six weeks would cover the cost of the insurance for the year. Twenty-six weeks of coverage for all 7 employees would be approximately \$250 per month. Council agreed to move forward with purchasing the insurance.

Borough Convention - Mr. Stuban noted that during convention it was noted that the House and Senate are looking at the decrease in the retention of volunteer firemen and giving partial property or wage tax exemptions for volunteer firemen. They also discussed looking at tax exempt non-profit organizations and the state possibly giving money to municipalities with a large percentage of non-taxable properties. Currently Baden is about 18% non-taxable properties.

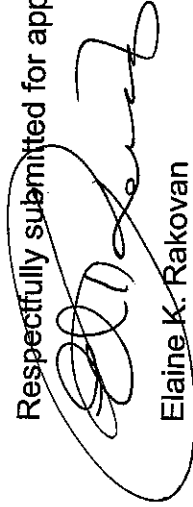
Fire Calls and Borough Employees – Mr. Stuban stated that council agreed to let volunteer fireman, Randy Dobich to attend fire calls within Baden. Randy asked that it be put in writing. Mr. Trzcianka stated that he did write something up but forgot it at home. It states that Randy should respond to the fire station for all calls except if he is on a waterline break, sewage line break or other borough priority. He should respond to all borough structure fires. Anything else, Randy will stay at the fire department until he sees that there is efficient staffing of 4 or more firemen. Council asked to see the information in writing before anything is given to Randy. Mr. Trzcianka stated that he will send it to the secretary tonight and she can make copies for Council to review.

Long Term Plans – Mr. Stuban commented that the borough needs to look at the long term plans for Baden. The demographics of Baden are changing and Council needs to take this into consideration for our future.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Stuban, second by Mr. Kotula, carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting 8:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted for approval,



Elaine K. Rakovan
Borough Secretary
June 19, 2017