

Windber Borough Council Meeting
February 21, 2022
7 p.m.

The Meeting of Windber Borough Council was called to order by Council President John Holden at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call The following council members were present: John Holden, Pete LaMonaca, Dr. Doug Ledney, Ron Mash, Joe Pallo, and Rich Rummel. Mark Portante was absent. Mayor Mike Thomas, Manager, Ron Allison and Solicitor Joseph Green were present.

Recognition Visitors There were no unscheduled visitors at this time.

WMA Grohal Recreation Director, Matt Grohal passed copies of a map of the park out to council. Mr. Grohal said not having access to the dancehall obviously puts us into somewhat of a dilemma. He has been brainstorming and last year he did a walk through with the borough's insurance adjuster and the skate park is not in good condition and some notes were made. Kids take it apart and he was up there today, and pieces and parts were found laying on the ground.

Mr. Grohal said he had asked Mr. Pallo to talk to his father and get his thoughts about it because he was a member of the Dog Run which raised the money to build that skate park. He said he did not want to upset the members of the Dog Run because of all the great things they did for the community.

Mr. Grohal said he is asking council for their blessing to get rid of the skate park. If we can't, we would like to relocate it to one half of the tennis courts. They will be resurfacing the tennis courts this spring it is way past due.

The building we would put up would be 40' x 80' which is very similar to the one that was just put up, up the road here which is 40' x 74'. It will be a pavilion that will give us some more revenue.

The plan is to hold the day camp at the community building and bus them up to the park. We do not know if this building will be done in time. He said we had talked last year about closing off one of the pavilions but that would not be big enough. Our day camp has really taken off. It will also give us access for some of the other events that we do every year.

Mr. Grohal said the building would be similar to St. Peter and Paul's with garage door access on both sides. If we do use it for day camp, we will have direct access to the pool.

Mr. Holden asked if it would be available for rent as well? Mr. Grohal said yes. Mr. Allison asked if there would be utilities? Mr. Grohal said there would be electricity. He said a few years ago we put a new 200-amp service up there and we are going to reroute that and take it into the building. Mr. Pallo asked how much a building like those costs? Mr. Grohal said between \$80,000 and \$120,000. Mrs. Gates asked how many people it would seat. Mr. Grohal said 100.

Mr. Pallo said basically his dad's opinion; he said if it is junk its junk and its not like there is money laying around to restore it. His only concern was if Matt could move the sign that says Funded by the Dog Run, so people can see it, over to the playground because they funded that also. Mr. Grohal said yes, he will take a look at it.

Mr. Grohal said he talked to Mr. Furmanchik about it last week also and told him he was reaching out to one of the Dog Run members. Mr. Pallo said his dad felt Mike Hunter would feel the same way as he did about it.

A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Rummel to allow the Windber Municipal Authority to proceed with their plans to relocate the skate park if needed and to proceed with building a facility for day camp on the site of the old skate park. One absent, Mr. Portante, motion carried.

**Funding
Options
Ballroom**

Mr. Holden said he has been in constant contact with Mr. Furmanchik, Project Consultant and the Windber Area Economic Committee as well as Dr. Ledney, Mr. Pallo, Attorney Green, Mr. Bryan and Mr. Allison in seeking funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission to see what kind of funding we can secure to cover the additional amount over the grant we received.

Mr. Holden said we would like to start the project and sign the contract to have CNC Construction to begin to work on the project as soon as they can break ground with the million dollars, we currently have from the RACP Grant. As the project proceeds, we will continue to investigate loan options. We already have an option with Somerset Trust to negotiate. Mr. Bryan said it would be adding onto \$300,000 in soft costs for any overages that would not be covered if we can not seek that funding. They seem to be very favorable towards that.

Mr. Bryan said right now in the respective of the WAEDC, the interest rates are still low, so we do not want to push that option but if that is where our hand is forced then looking at that note with the last overage added into the \$300,000, the monthly payment would work out to be around \$3,700 a month. Once the ballroom is up and running and fixing our costs for events and weddings should easily cover that payment. It at least seems feasible if we must go that way but hopefully, we can get some funding from some of the other organizations.

Mayor Thomas asked what kind of funding are we looking for from the Appalachian Regional Commission? Mr. Bryan said we are looking to meet the \$430,000. That is what we are hoping for. That process is tedious.

Mr. Holden said that is the thought process of starting construction and finding out what we can get through them and then go to Plan B for additional bank funding, but we are hoping to get funding verses having to go to the bank.

Mr. Bryan said the bank has looked at our situation and is amiable to making up what we'll need to incur the obligation of CNC Construction. He said the pandemic cost overages were more ambitious than what we first went on board with that money.

Mr. Holden said the less we finance the lower the monthly payment would be. Mr. Pallo asked what the terms are on the loan. Mr. Bryan said it is 20 and we will not incur any prepayment penalty. If we do not have to use it all we can take that and repay/pay it down.

Attorney Green asked don't we need to get the loan first because with the Appalachian grant invoices are paid first then reimbursed like the RACP grant? Mr. Holden said yes hopefully we get the ARC Grant and reduce our liability for the extra money to complete the project and hopefully it's the full \$430,000 and we are golden with a completed structure and not much financial liability and creating a true revenue stream.

Mr. Holden said we do not want to get kicked out of line with the contractor who could move on to other projects then we would be put on the back burner. Mr. Bryan said prices are fluctuating all the time. We ask council to proceed with the project.

Attorney Green said he spoke to Bond Counsel, and he thinks he can do better than the first go around because he basically has the documents already prepared, he just has to change numbers and dates. We still must go through DCED for approval. Mrs. Gates said that takes time also. Attorney Green agreed.

A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Pallo to award the contract for the ballroom renovation to CNC Construction. Roll call vote: Mr. LaMonaca, yes; Mr. Pallo, yes; Mr. Holden, yes; Dr. Ledney, yes; Mr. Mash, yes; Mr. Portante, absent; and Mr. Rummel, yes. Motion carried.

**Next
Meeting**

Next meeting date will be Monday, March 14, 2022, at 7 p.m.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned by Council President, John Holden at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Robin S. Gates
Administrative Assistant