

**BOROUGH OF WINDBER**  
**Borough Council Regular Meeting**  
**Monday, December 9, 2024**  
**7:00 p.m.**

The Regular meeting of Windber Borough Council was called to order by Windber Borough Council President, Richard Rummel, at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The following council members were present: Brian Bahorik, Dr. Doug Ledney, Greg Klonicke, Pete LaMonaca, Herb Moore, Joe Pallo, and Rich Rummel. Attorney Joseph Green was present. The Mayor, Michael Thomas, and Manager, Ronald Allison were present.

**Approval Minutes** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Bahorik to approve the Minutes of October 14 and 28, 2024 meetings. Motion carried.

**Visitors** There were no visitors at this time.

**Correspondence**

1. Windber Municipal Authority Report for September 10, 2024.
2. Windber Area Authority Minutes of October 9, 2024.
3. Windber Area Authority letter regarding revised schedule of water rates.
4. Mr. LaMonaca said the library is meeting tomorrow night.

**Approval Bills** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Klonicke to approve bills for November 2024. Motion carried.

**Approval Payroll** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Bahorik to approve payroll for November 15 and 19, 2024. Motion carried.

**Cash Bal. Treasurer's Report** Mr. Bahorik asked about the Tribune Democrat ads. Mr. Rummel said they were for Special Meetings and Workshops and Mrs. Gates said we also advertised the budgets for public review.

**Council Liaison Report** Mr. Rummel said the library is good and Mr. Bahorik said the Fire Department is meeting on Wednesday.

**Mayor's Report** Light Up Night – Friday, November 29, 2024, Mayor Thomas gave the welcoming address and introductions for the event which was followed by Santa at the Arcadia Theater.

Christmas in the Park – The light up ceremony took place on December 7, 2024, at Windber

Recreation Park where Mayor Thomas participated in the ceremony of the lighting of the newly planted Christmas Tree. This project was a combined effort of the Windber Area School District, Windber Borough and the Windber Municipal Authority.

Safety & Security symposium – Mayor Thomas participated in the Safety & Security Symposium sponsored by FEMA in Pittsburgh. Topics covered were policing and cyber security.

Rich Rummel said he was also at the lighting of the tree for Christmas in the Park. He said it was really nice for the first year and hopefully they can build onto it.

**Managers Report** Mr. Allison said he has been away on vacation, but he did want council to know the new truck came in.

**Solicitor's Report** Attorney Green said he did not have anything at this moment but asked for a short executive session.

**Code's Report** There were no questions on the report.

**Ballroom Report** Mr. Bahorik asked how the sportsman event went? Mr. Rummel said it was postponed. Mr. Rummel said he saw Lauren at the Christmas event at the park and she said she booked two more weddings. Mrs. Gates said she has also been booking a number of parties.

**Engineer's Report**

1. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street Bridge Project
  - i. Let date is February 12, 2026; Construction planned for 2026.
2. 24<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Project
  - i. Let date is December 12, 2024; Construction planned for 2025.
3. PENNVEST Sewer Project
  - a. Total Project Cost estimated at approx. \$15,000,000
    - i. Changes in scope
      1. Include 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Streets south of Graham Ave rather than portions of 24<sup>th</sup> & 25 Streets, Cambria Ave and Park Ave
      2. Include necessary stormwater upgrades to remedy surcharges at 13<sup>th</sup> Street & Graham Ave
    - b. Schedule:
      - i. Utility Services Group (USG) to complete CCTV in project areas.
      - ii. Fall 2024: Act 537 Plan Update, Uniform Environmental Review
        1. Work has begun on Act 537 Plan Update.
      - iii. Winter 2024-2025: Survey & Mapping
        1. To begin in December, weather permitting. 1v.
      - i v Spring 2025: Begin Preliminary Design
      - v. August 2026: PENNVEST Submission (Tentative)

4. DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) Program

- a. Submitted Graham Avenue Sidewalk and Light Pole Replacement project.

5. 2024 LSAS Grant Application

- a. Submitted 27<sup>th</sup> Street Stormwater Culvert Replacement Project.

**Approval  
Clerk**

A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Bahorik to move Kristy Barnes from temporary/part-time clerk to full-time Borough Clerk effective January 1, 2024. Roll call vote: Mr. LaMonaca, yes; Mr. Bahorik, yes; Mr. Klonicke, yes; Dr. Ledney, yes; Mr. Moore, no; Mr. Pallo, yes; and Mr. Rummel, yes. One no, Mr. Moore. Motion carried.

**Advertise  
Ordinance**

A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Klonicke to approve to advertise Ordinance No. 2024-2 Levying a tax of 22.39 mills for the Year 2025. Remarks.

Mr. Moore asked for the council's consideration in allowing him to speak in regard to committing to taxes. He said he is sure taxpayers are suffering from inflation also, not only us. Our local struggling businesses, our tax paying property owners and owners sometimes work two to three jobs with both spouses working. Our senior citizens are on fixed incomes with many of them living only off social security. Now they must plan on how they are going to pay their 1.47 mill tax increase this coming year. This is the second year in a row that taxes were raised. That is three out of the last five years that taxes were raised. We were told that taxes would be raised every year from now on. Our borough budget went from 1.85 million to 2.1 million dollars which is a 13.5 increase. Not this past year but the year before we went over budget by 1.87%.

Not only are we facing a 1.47 mill increase but also transferred an additional one hundred thousand dollars from our general fund to balance our budget. That amount is like another 2 mills increase. The borough should not have to take money out of the general fund and raise taxes at the same time to balance this budget. We got this way by overspending and by past and present councils making poor decisions, like overstaffing and giving lucrative and extremely generous contracts. One was over 14% increase. Giving certain working positions unnecessary assistance and hiring workers to help catch up with work that should have been completed in their regular work schedule. By giving MOA's which were 6% raise that was fought very hard when we went through negotiations. Giving excessive fringe benefits. The police department is 64% of our budget. Investing in a 1.7 million white elephant at the ballroom which was previously run by the Windber Municipal Authority without the six additional paid workers we presently have. Which is currently using over \$46,000 a year. Management encouraged workers to join unions which cost more money in salaries and benefits. Giving well over \$100,000 in donations which we cannot afford and spending money which is not necessary especially if we have to raise taxes for the general fund to survive.

We need to stop trying to keep up with the Jone's and trying to be the Taj Mahal of Somerset and Cambria Counties. We do not have the tax base to compete with Cambria County and

large municipalities. Our public works, police and office personnel salaries are higher than any other municipality in our area. According to the newspaper, Paint Borough, Ogle Township, and Paint Township and the surrounding municipalities have the wisdom to not raise taxes. We should do the same. In conclusion, like our taxpayers we need to live within our means and meet our responsibility to not raise taxpayer's taxes by making necessary cuts and sacrifices. He hopes and prays we reject the increase in taxes for 2025.

These are Mr. Moore's opinions, and they do not reflect the opinions of all of the council.

Motion carried to advertise the tax ordinance carried with one no, from Mr. Moore.

- Reappoint Allen Ott** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Pallo to approve to reappoint Allen Ott to the Zoning Hearing Board (3-year term) 2025-2027. Motion carried.
- Reappoint Gregory Domonkos** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Klonicke to approve to reappoint Gregory Domonkos to the Windber Borough Planning Commission. (4-year term) 2025-2028. Motion carried.
- Reappoint David Kormanik** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Pallo to reappoint David Kormanik to the Uniform Construction Code Appeals Board. (3-year term) 2025-2027. Motion carried.
- Reappoint Mark Gyurik** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Pallo to reappoint Mark Gyurik to the International Property Maintenance Codes Appeal Board. (3-year term). 2025-2027. Motion carried.
- Reappoint Richard Wargo** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Bahorik to reappoint Richard Wargo to the International Property Maintenance Codes Appeal Board. (3-year term) 2025-2027. Motion carried.
- Appoint John Holden** A motion was made Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Dr. Ledney to appoint John Holden to Zoning Hearing Board. (3-year term) 2025-2027. Motion carried.
- Reappoint Paul Beahr** A motion was made Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Pallo to reappoint Paul Beahr to the Windber Area Authority Board. (5-year term) 2025-2028. Motion carried.
- Approval Planning Commission** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Bahorik to approve the recommendation by the Windber Borough Planning Commission for a variance approval and conditional approval regarding a boundary line change at 2804/2806 Graham Avenue with conditions set by the planning commission. Remarks: Mrs. Gates said this is regarding the house to the left of the old Windber Builders Store. The boundary line goes through the middle of the house and there is a buyer for that property. Motion carried.

**Approval  
Planning  
Commission** A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Mr. Bahorik to approve the recommendation by the Windber Borough Planning Commission for a conditional use regarding 2303/2307 Stadium Drive with conditions listed by the planning commission. Remarks: Mrs. Gates said this is regarding the old Sulosky property which is for sale and the boundary line needs to be moved back to where it originally was. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. LaMonaca and seconded by Dr. Ledney for the council to convene to an executive session for contractual issues at 7:20 p.m.

The council reconvened from executive session at 7:30 p.m. by Council President Richard Rummel.

**Next  
Meeting** A special meeting will be held on December 18, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

**Adjourn** Meeting was adjourned by Council President, Richard Rummel at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Robin S. Gates  
Administrative Assistant