

**BOROUGH OF GREEN TREE
COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 26, 2018**

Call to Order / Moment of Silence / Pledge of Allegiance

Green Tree Borough Council met on Monday, November 26, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. at the Green Tree Municipal Center, 10 West Manilla Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Roll Call

Members Present:

Edward Schenck, Mayor
Mark Sampogna, President
Arthur Tintori, Vice President
Rino Lindsey
David Lorenzini
John Novak
Ron Panza
David Rea

Also Present:

W. David Montz, Borough Manager
Louis A. Casadei, P.E., Borough Engineer
Chief Colin Cleary, GT Police Department
Gregg Earley, Code Enforcement Officer
Kary Rahner, Public Works Superintendent
Babette K. Legler, Finance Director
Jennifer Mathie, Recreation Director
Adaena Tray, Library Director
Deborah N. Gawryla, Stenographer

HEARING OF THE CITIZENS

There was no one present who wished to be heard.

MAYOR'S REPORT - Mayor Schenck

Mayor Schenck had nothing to report at this time.

REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMITTEES

A. FINANCE - Mr. Tintori

1. Presentation of the 2019 Proposed Budget by the Borough Manager

Mr. Tintori turned the meeting over to Mr. Montz to begin the 2019 budget presentation. Mr. Montz stated that each department head would be presenting a PowerPoint presentation to highlight what his/her department had done over the past year and what might be anticipated in 2019.

Ms. Adaena Tray, Library Director

Ms. Tray said the mission of the Green Tree Public Library is to nurture the educational and intellectual needs of the community and to be a place for reading, thinking, reasoning, and work. The total 2018 operating budget was \$240,800; the library's General Fund budget was \$316,000, for a total of \$556,800.

Ms. Tray said that children's programming was increased in 2018 to include more drop-in programs, family movie nights, and library scavenger hunts. The library will be starting family board game events soon.

Ms. Tray said that the library's adult programming was increased by 72% in 2018. The library had sought out feedback from its patrons and tried to respond to their requests. Registration for the 2018 Summer Reading Challenge doubled. She listed a number of programs and library events that had been added in 2018.

In 2018, 93,000 items were borrowed from the library, 3,700 e-resources, 199 children's programs were offered, over 60 adult programs provided, over 12,000 log-ins to the public

computers, and over 5,500 Wi-Fi log-ins. This year's Friends of the Library Used Book Sale was the most successful one yet. Ms. Tray showed photos from a number of library events and programs.

In 2019, the library hopes to build up ongoing and monthly groups for adults. The library promotes its programs, but hopes to promote the availability of library services, too. The library recently received a \$2,000 grant for STEM learning, so these types of programs will be increasing in 2019. The library hopes to grow its Touch A Truck event in 2019.

Mr. Tintori asked how the various services (lending materials, computer usage, etc.) compare to previous years. Ms. Tray replied that circulation has been slightly down, which appears to be a countywide trend, but the circulation of e-books has increased. Library computer usage has decreased somewhat, but Wi-Fi log-ins by patrons using their own devices has increased. Discussion continued regarding the electronic usage statistics.

Mr. Lorenzini asked if the library had considered offering more programs in conjunction with the Green Tree Historical Society. Ms. Tray replied that the library has done one or two programs a year in conjunction with the historical society. Discussion continued regarding the details of various library services, programs and events.

Ms. Jen Mathie, Recreation Director

Ms. Mathie outlined some of the recreation programs that have taken place in 2018 and showed photos of these events (Light Up Green Tree, 4th of July, Summer Recreation, Valentine's Dance, Halloween Parade, etc.). Ms. Mathie said that registration for the Summer Recreation Program increased again in 2018 and the program has been well received by the community. The program not only provides activities at Wilson Park, but also takes groups to the library and pool on special days and offers special events such as Science Days, yoga, etc. In 2018, 215 children were registered for the Summer Recreation Program, five children attended on a daily fee basis, with 45 employees and 25 volunteers.

Ms. Mathie said the Senior Picnic had about 180 attendees. Concerts in the Park continue to be popular and plans for more concerts are underway for 2019.

Coming up on Thursday is the annual Holiday Wreath Workshop. In 2019, Ms. Mathie said there will be plans for an event at the Nature Center, the Bike Rodeo, along with all the ongoing recreation programs and classes. She hoped to add some new fitness classes in the mix, too.

Kary Rahner, Public Works Superintendent

Mr. Rahner said that 2018 had a very wet summer and the Public Works Department spent a good portion of its time cutting grass and addressing water problems throughout the borough. Autumn brings leaf collection season for the Public Works Department. Recently the borough's leaf collection machine went down, but the department attempted to maintain the leaf collection schedule as closely as possible, along with help from Collier Township that lent the borough one of its leaf collection machines. Once the leaves are collected, the leaves are composted, which takes about 40 hours.

Mr. Rahner said that the 1998 Public Works truck #104 was recently sold through MuniBid and will be replaced with a 2019 International that will be put into service in early 2019. He noted that the borough also sold a John Deere posthole digger and a 2013 police SUV through MuniBid.

During the winter, Public Works renovated the basement of the Wilson Park house where the Summer Recreation arts and crafts are held. The walls were scraped and pressure washed, holes patched, and it was painted from floor to ceiling. Work was also done to improve the work counter, additional storage area was provided, and a rug was added at the entrance to the basement to prevent slipping.

Mr. Rahner said that the roofs on the Public Works building and the pool building were replaced in 2018. All the sunlights were replaced. Work was done to fix some water issues. When asked, Mr. Rahner detailed some of the additional work that had been needed during the roof replacements that had increased the actual cost over the original budgeted amount.

In 2018, the Rook gazebo at the entrance to Rook was built and installed, along with an Historical Society plaque noting the history of the Rook area. Trees and grass were planted. The gazebo is used as a bus shelter and is used daily.

Mr. Rahner said that the Municipal Center Park gazebo was repaired in 2018 after it was considered to be an unsafe structure and closed. The cupola was rebuilt and a contractor came in and secured the structure. Public Works employees repaired the wooden shingles and installed the cupola.

Public Works installed the new notification system at the fire station that notifies pedestrians and motorists of firefighters arriving to the facility and of emergency vehicles heading out.

Other work included replacement of the pool heater refractory and assistance with the eLoop electronics recycling event in April where over 28,000 pounds of electronics were collected.

Mayor Schenck asked how often there is street sweeping in Green Tree. Mr. Rahner replied that the streets are swept twice a year. They rent the equipment from A&H Equipment. Mr. Lorenzini asked if the borough would consider purchasing its own street sweeper. Mr. Rahner said he would prefer renting since it seems that street sweepers often break and are a high maintenance piece of equipment. It is easier to rent the equipment twice a year.

Louis A. Casadei, P.E., Borough Engineer

Mr. Casadei said the borough did not do a lot of sanitary sewer repairs, but instead focused on lining some of the sewers. There are about three miles of sewers that are cleaned and televised each year. Discussion continued regarding how a sewer is lined. Mr. Casadei detailed the sewer collapse that had recently taken place with the sewer that runs down Whiskey Run and under the Parkway.

Mr. Casadei said that new frames and covers were installed on several manholes during 2018. Mr. Casadei showed a map of the borough detailing where the sewers have been lined and where lining is scheduled in 2019. He said that the recent Poplar Street sewer project will reduce storm sewer infiltration into the sanitary sewer. Mr. Casadei described how the percentage of decreased infiltration is calculated. Discussion continued regarding the difference in cost between replacing pipes or lining them.

Mr. Montz said the borough would be focusing on identifying the very deep sewers and getting them lined before there is a collapse. Additional attention will be given to the sewers in the woods at the end of Parkedge and Sheldon. This area of pipes does not get

a lot of attention and the wooded area creates problems with root growth into the pipes. It is more cost-effective to line these sewers before greater problems might occur. More discussion occurred regarding sewer problems and lining the pipes.

Mr. Casadei presented photos of the Poplar Street storm sewer project. The GROW grant was a big help and the borough hopes to apply for future GROW grants to complete other sewer projects. About 30 storm sewer inlets were repaired or replaced by Casper Colosimo & Son, with whom the borough has an ongoing contract. Another project on McMonagle was addressed to help reduce flooding issues.

Mr. Casadei presented photos of the borough's storm water detention ponds. Mr. Montz said that the borough must maintain detention ponds. Detention ponds regulate the flow of water by holding water back during heavy rains or snow and then slowly releasing the water after the storm. Mr. Casadei said the detention ponds will help with the MS-4 requirements to reduce the flow of storm water. Discussion continued regarding plans for new detention ponds to reduce flooding and storm water infiltration.

Mr. Casadei said one of the easiest fixes to reduce pollution and sediment would be to improve the stream channel along Whiskey Run Creek. Calculations must be made to determine how much sediment can be removed based on how many feet of creek improvement would be made. Discussion continued regarding methods to improve the creek and remove sediment.

Mr. Montz said that the flooding problem on McMonagle appears to be resolved, but work is still need on the Elmhurst flooding issue. Discussion continued regarding various scenarios that were being considered to correct the Elmhurst problem.

Mr. Casadei said this past year has seen a high incidence of quick and heavy rainfalls that the sewers are unable to handle. Mr. Montz said he hoped the Elmhurst flooding issue could be addressed in the next several months.

Mr. Casadei said the borough collected \$42,875 in permit fees in 2018. Several municipal repair projects were completed in 2018. A drainpipe was put behind the front wall of the Municipal Center and the flowerbeds were rebuilt. A new drain was installed from the soffit in the front of the Municipal Center by the front steps to fix a water problem. He highlighted the new roofs on the Public Works and pool buildings. Mr. Lindsey said that there have been recent problems with the drains on the fire station roof. Discussion continued regarding the roofs on the various municipal buildings.

Gregg Earley, Code Enforcement

Mr. Earley stated that he has been the Code Enforcement Officer for approximately eight months. He said he has responded to three tree complaints, four animal complaints, nine reports of high grass/weeds, and seven complaints for trash/junk in yards. In addition to handling code enforcement complaints, he has also addressed a problem with the Dale Drive detention pond. The pond was created when the Dale Drive development was built and over the years it has become covered with rocks and debris, preventing the smooth flow of water and resulting in flooding and bubbling up of nearby yards. The pond was made into a more grassy type of holding pond instead of the original stone making it easier to maintain.

Mr. Earley said that work was also done on the Parkedge detention pond at the end of Parkedge. It had become overgrown and was cleared out to allow the free flow of water.

When asked how deep the detention pond was, Mr. Casadei said it can be as deep as six or seven feet deep after a rainstorm, but there is generally never water in it except after a hard rain. There is no fence around the detention pond because it is more of a depression than a sharp drop off. Now that it is cleared, the pond drains quickly. Discussion continued regarding how the detention pond works.

Mr. Earley said there were a number of complaints regarding a vacant home on Cherry Street. Mr. Earley said the homeowner had passed away a number of years ago, but he was able to get in touch with the homeowner's daughter who was unaware of the poor condition of the property. After exchanging a number of emails, the daughter got the property cleaned up without a violation having to be issued.

Mr. Earley said he had worked on the Hollow Oak Nature Center clean up. There were 14 volunteers who helped clean up the Nature Center in October and helped build a new walking trail. It was a labor-intensive day of work.

Mr. Earley said that code enforcement's 2019 goals are to continue to be responsive to resident complaints and issues. There is an unsafe, unoccupied home on Noblestown Road that needs to be demolished. He detailed the condition of the house. He hoped to get together with the Borough Solicitor to initiate the legal process for demolishing the home. It is difficult to estimate when the borough will be able to actually demolish the home. Mr. Montz estimated that it should be done by mid-summer 2019. Discussion continued regarding the details of the home and the demolishing process.

Colin Cleary, Green Tree Police Department

Chief Cleary stated that Green Tree is a safe community. In 2018 there have been:

- 97 people charged with criminal activity,
- Eight burglaries with five of them being residential burglaries. Four of the five burglaries were solved with an arrest.
- One robbery.
- Three drug incidents that tied into a wider theft ring and eventually culminated the solving of a murder in Pittsburgh.

There were 40 summary offenses, 24 of those for public drunkenness, a few for disorderly conduct, and some ordinance violations. The most commonly reported crime was for internet-based fraud and theft from vehicles.

Chief Cleary said that traffic is a big concern for Green Tree. The GTPD has stopped over 3,400 people, which is triple the amount stopped in 2014 (the year before Chief Cleary started). Many were warnings with 909 traffic citations. Of the citations issued, 190 were driving while suspended without a license and 101 for driving without insurance. There were a number of investigations for crashes.

Chief Cleary stated that the department has been working on active shooter instruction. Officer Zane is the department's active shooter instructor and certified through SHACOG. He is an instructor for SHACOG and Char West COG joint training.

SWAT and other first responders were introduced to Aiken students during a lock-down drill to introduce the students to the strange uniforms worn during an active shooter event.

Chief Cleary said he has been working on greater community involvement between the citizens, students, and the cops. He has held a number of Coffee With A Cop, National Night Out, school bus escorts, and participated or held other community events, along with other officers, in an effort to get the community familiar with its police and first responders.

Mr. Tintori asked what the response has been to the Coffee With A Cop sessions. Chief Cleary replied that he has had anywhere from two to 13 individuals come to these events. Some are regulars, others want to air grievances, and others who have just dropped in.

Two new hires were made in 2018: Full-time Officer Dannielle Ripper and part-time Officer Mike Kelly. There is a new part-time administrative assistant, Ms. Denise Hosbach, who started in October. Two new police vehicles were put into service in 2018: one SUV and one sedan. One of the other police sedans will need to be replaced in late 2019. The Police Department has proposed a capital purchase to replace the 911 data laptops in the police vehicles that were purchased in 2014. Mr. Montz said they were ordered today. Discussion continued regarding the details of the newly purchased laptops in the vehicles.

2019 Highlights

Revenues

Mr. Montz stated that there would be no tax increase in 2019, and this is the 17th consecutive year without a tax increase. He said he could not guarantee that next year. He anticipated a number of large real estate tax appeals in 2019 that could result in the loss of about \$100,000 in real estate value. Mr. Montz said the real estate escrow fund has been a big help as well as the MRM insurance dividend. The insurance dividend from workers comp has been a result of Green Tree employees being safe, utilizing a light duty program, and a best practice policy.

Mr. Lorenzini said that 2017 earned income tax (EIT) revenue was estimated at \$850,000, but the final amount collected was \$1,021,000. He asked if the same might happen in 2018. Mr. Montz replied that he is not projecting that much in EIT revenue. Ms. Legler said that the borough is having more retired seniors among its residents which reduces the total amount of earned income tax. Discussion continued regarding EIT collection and workers compensation.

Mr. Montz said Green Tree has spent over \$7 million in Capital Projects since 2005 to provide great improvements to the borough. The borough is fortunate to have its commercial properties. Mr. Rea asked for the approximate vacancy rate in the borough's office buildings. Mr. Montz replied that it is somewhere between 10% and 20%.

Expenditures

Mr. Montz said that the big expenditure for 2019 will be the switch to curbside recycling. He said that there have been many good ideas regarding the implementation of curbside recycling. Ms. Legler stated that there are also changes in what can be recycled beginning January 1. Residents will be to be re-educated on what can or cannot be accepted for recycling. Mr. Montz said the upcoming newsletter has focused on the recycling issue. New signs at the recycling center will be made instructing people of the new recycling rules.

Mr. Montz said that the grant for the purchase of home recycling containers is a reimbursable grant where the containers must first be purchased and then submitted for reimbursement. Discussion continued regarding the details of trash and recycling collection.

Capital Fund

Mr. Montz read through the Capital Fund expenses in the budget, including exterior repairs to the Municipal Center, Greentree Road reversible lane signals, sidewalk grant for reconstruction of the sidewalks from Pocono to Orchard along Greentree Road and also along Mansfield from Holiday Drive to the Trumbull Drive bridge area, improvements to the Veterans Memorial, Trumbull Drive Bridge replacement engineering, sewer repairs on Elmhurst, and pedestrian crossing signals. Mr. Montz noted that the borough obtained a little more than \$1 million in grant money in 2018.

Other Budget Items

Mr. Montz said that the weekly Greetings from Green Tree has been very successful with 1,130 subscribers. The website, newsletter, Facebook and Twitter also help provide residents keep up to date with borough events. Discussion continued regarding the newsletter.

Mr. Montz said that at the beginning of 2019 he plans on asking all department heads to find ways to cut their budgets, so that if a tax increase proves to be necessary next year it can be certain that all methods to save money have been reviewed.

The library finances are being moved to the borough budget and that will help show the public what it costs to run the library. The Library Board has been receptive to this plan. Discussion continued regarding the library funding.

Mr. Montz said he would like to increase pool pass prices in 2019. Discussion continued regarding various details of the budget including details of the Trumbull Drive Bridge repair. PennDOT plans on reviewing the Parkway interchanges at Green Tree in 2019 and will be seeking the borough's input. Mr. Montz thanked Council and the Mayor for their support and said if there were additional questions about the budget that could contact him or Ms. Legler.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

Mr. Panza made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lindsey, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Sampogna, President

W. David Montz, Manager