

**BOROUGH OF GREEN TREE
COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 4, 2017**

Call to Order / Silence for Meditation / Pledge of Allegiance

Green Tree Borough Council met on Monday, December 4, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. in the Green Tree Municipal Center, 10 West Manilla Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Mr. Sampogna stated that Council had met in Executive Session prior to this meeting to discuss personnel matters for the Police Department and the Public Works Department, as well as a real estate matter. Mr. Sampogna asked those present to reflect on things they are thankful for this year.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Edward Schenck, Mayor
Mark Sampogna, President of Council
Rino Lindsey
David Lorenzini
Ron Panza
David Rea
Arthur Tintori

Also Present:

W. David Montz, Borough Manager
Peter Molinaro, Jr., Borough Solicitor
Harry Faulk, Assistant Borough Manager
Colin Cleary, Chief of Police
Deborah N. Gawryla, Stenographer

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE 2018 PROPOSED BUDGET

Mr. Sampogna opened the public hearing.

Shannon Barron, 8 Pocono Drive

Ms. Barron said she was pleased to see that the 2018 budget is proposing curbside recycling. She said curbside recycling is a plus for modern families who want to make Green Tree their home. When talking to other people about considering Green Tree as their home, curbside recycling is one of the first things they ask about. Green Tree should be showing that it is a modern community that takes pride in our environment. She encouraged Council to bring curbside recycling to Green Tree.

Jane Terlion, 14 Elmhurst Road

Ms. Terlion said she noticed some trends where the revenue is being reduced. One was the revenue of the pool, and the other was business privilege tax, which generates revenue from the businesses.

Mr. Montz said that business privilege tax is somewhat unique to Green Tree Borough. Many of the surrounding communities do not have business privilege tax. There are some businesses that have left the borough as a result of business privilege tax. Those businesses have probably considered the business privilege tax as a liability to their bottom line. However, the business privilege tax is one of the main reasons that the borough's millage rate is so low at 3.61 mills. The borough works hard to make sure that all businesses are paying it so it is a fair tax throughout the community.

Mayor Schenck stated that between 2011 and 2015 the business privilege tax was \$1.4 million, in 2016 it was \$1.2 million, 2017 it is projected at \$1.2 million, and 2018 is projected at \$1.2 million. He said business privilege tax collection has dropped since 2015, but it appears to have stabilized since then.

Mr. Montz distributed some recent recycling statistics to Council. Although Green Tree does not have curbside collection, it has a very robust recycling drop-off area, which the borough does not have to provide by law. Curbside recycling, if adopted, would only be provided every other week, and would require residents to keep their recyclables at their homes. Mr. Montz did not anticipate an increase in recycling if the borough should switch to curbside recycling. Green Tree's current population is estimated to be 4,927 and curbside recycling is mandatory for communities with populations exceeding 5,000. The additional expense in implementing curbside recycling will be the purchase of recycling containers for the homes. Mr. Montz hoped that the State would have some recycling grants available to assist with this purchase.

Mr. Montz said that from mid-2016 through 2017, Green Tree has been successful in obtaining \$1.7 million in grant money for a number of projects. He detailed the various grants the borough had received over the past year and a half.

Mr. Montz said the decrease in pool revenues most likely had to do with weather conditions. He detailed many of the amenities that Green Tree Borough provides its residents.

Mr. Lorenzini asked Ms. Barron how long she had lived in Green Tree. Ms. Barron replied that she had lived in Green Tree for two and a half years, but was Assistant Director of the Green Tree Public Library for seven years. Mr. Lorenzini said that Green Tree's real estate taxes have not been raised in 15 years and the businesses are paying a larger percentage of the taxes, but taxes may need to be raised in the future.

Mayor Schenck stated that funding for Green Tree's excellent police department would be continued in 2018. The borough has a reserve fund of \$550,000. Mr. Montz said that the borough has many excellent departments with outstanding employees who are dedicated. It also has a great volunteer fire company, and MRTSA ambulance service.

There being no other people wishing to comment on the proposed 2018 budget, Mr. Sampogna closed the public hearing.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

November 6, 2017

Motion:

Mr. Lindsey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rea, to approve the November 6, 2017 Council minutes as presented.

Motion carried, with Mr. Tintori abstaining because he had not attended this meeting.

November 20, 2017

Motion:

Mr. Lindsey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tintori, to approve the November 20, 2017 Council minutes as presented.

Motion carried, with Mr. Sampogna abstaining because he had not attended this meeting.

HEARING OF THE CITIZENS

There was no one present who wished to be heard.

MAYOR'S REPORT - Mayor Schenck

- A. Mayor Schenck thanked Recreation Director Jen Mathie and the Recreation & Community Affairs Committee for their hard work in putting together the recent Light Up Green Tree event.
- B. Mayor Schenck said that a new accounting firm, H2R, recently moved into 7 Parkway Center and a Verizon store would be opening tomorrow. Burger King will also be opening in the near future.

REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMITTEES**A. RECREATION & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS - Mr. Panza**

1. Mr. Panza thanked Council for its adequate funding of the borough's recreational programs and activities, including Octoberfest. Despite personnel changes, Mr. Panza said he has been assured that Octoberfest would run smoothly again this year.

B. PUBLIC SAFETY - Mr. Lindsey**1. Discussion on Ordinance for Green Tree Volunteer Firefighter Tax Relief**

Mr. Lindsey said this ordinance would give the borough the opportunity to reward, retain, and possibly recruit new volunteers to the fire company. Mr. Montz said the ordinance has been advertised according to State law for 30 days. It is currently in the middle of the 30-day period, so no action can be taken on it until the January meeting. When passed, it would be retroactive until February 1, 2017 and it has been budgeted.

Mayor Schenck said that it is an excellent program to provide tax relief for volunteer firefighters who are borough residents, but those volunteers who are not residents of the community do not benefit from this ordinance. Discussion continued regarding the details of the program.

Mr. Sampogna suggested that Section 2.(D) should be changed to read, "A volunteer shall be deemed a Qualifying Active Volunteer who has attained an annual participation score of **100 points or more** during the eligibility period." Mr. Molinaro said that would not be considered a substantial change and would be made. The ordinance would be placed on Council's January agenda.

Mr. Rea asked about the status of the volunteer fire company's staffing. Mr. Lindsey said new members are always needed. There has been a good influx of younger members and he hoped they could be retained. The Green Tree Volunteer Fire Company attempts to be a visible part of the community at Octoberfest, in the schools, at events such as National Night Out, the Sportsman's Bash, and their annual solicitation in March. Mr. Lindsey said that at the current time the fire company is in pretty good shape.

Mr. Lindsey said he needed to leave the meeting at this time to respond to an active fire in the community. Chief Cleary also left at this time.

C. PLANNING & ZONING - Mr. Lorenzini**1. Appointments to the Planning Commission****Motion:**

Mr. Lorenzini made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tintori, to reappoint Mrs. Cheryl Bakin and Mr. Ed O'Donnell to the Green Tree Planning Commission for four-year terms.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board

Mr. Lorenzini reported that Planning Commission met on November 15 and voted on their 2018 schedule of meetings and re-elected the same officers to the Planning Commission for 2018: Chair - Ms. Rebecca Chembars, Vice Chair - Mrs. Cheryl Bakin, and Secretary - Mr. Ed O'Donnell. Planning Commission met with PA American Water representatives at the same meeting to discuss renovations of the property at 500 Noblestown Road. The building will be used as an operations center for PA American Water with indoor parking, office space and training rooms. He detailed some of the improvements that had been discussed at the meeting.

Mr. Lorenzini said that Zoning Hearing Board met and unanimously voted to approve three different variances. The first variance granted was for an increase in the sign for Julian Gray Associates on Greentree Road. The next variance granted the DoubleTree Hotel permission to install another freestanding sign for their business. The third variance granted was for a resident on Churchill Road who requested to have a fence built in his yard and had the support of his neighbors.

3. General Report

Mr. Lorenzini said that everything is ready for the Burger King to open.

Mr. Lorenzini noted that the dry cleaner, next to the former 7-Eleven on Greentree Road, recently closed that location and moved to Mt. Lebanon.

D. STREETS & PUBLIC HEALTH - Mr. Novak

1. Resolution #1250

Authorizing the Borough Manager to enter into a utility reimbursement agreement with PennDOT for the repair of manhole structures within the area of Poplar Street to be repaved by PennDOT.

Motion:

Mr. Novak made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tintori, to adopt Resolution #1250 by title only.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Molinaro read Resolution #1250 by title only.

Roll Call Vote

Mr. Novak	Yes
Mr. Tintori	Yes
Mr. Rea	Yes
Mr. Lorenzini	Yes
Mr. Panza	Yes
Mr. Sampogna	Yes

Motion carried unanimously.

E. PUBLIC PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT - Mr. Rea

1. **Authorize Borough Manager to purchase one (1) Administrative Vehicle through COSTARS 26-019.**

Motion:

Mr. Rea made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lorenzini, to authorize the Borough Manager to purchase one (1) administrative vehicle through COSTARS 26-019 in the amount of \$22,917 for a 2017 Ford Escape SE, four-wheel drive vehicle.

Mr. Lorenzini thanked Mr. Montz for providing comparative information for this purchase, which allowed Council to select the best, most efficient use of taxpayers' dollars. Mr. Montz said that the borough continually looks for the best deals and considers a number of alternatives before reaching a decision on such purchases.

Motion carried unanimously.

F. FINANCE - Mr. Tintori

1. **Motion:**

Mr. Tintori made a motion, seconded by Mr. Novak, to ratify the actions of the Borough Manager in paying the November 2017 invoices from the General Fund totaling \$305,801.06, Capital Projects Fund totaling \$4,200.00, Payroll Account totaling \$312,997.98, and Educational Service Agency totaling \$7,117.77.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Motion:**

Mr. Tintori made a motion, seconded by Mr. Novak, to approve payment of the December 2017 invoices from the General Fund totaling \$85,974.31, Capital Projects Fund totaling \$1,710.00, and Fire Department Apparatus Fund totaling \$56,831.96.

Mr. Lorenzini asked about the Fire Department Apparatus Fund payment. Mr. Montz said it was a loan payment for the rescue truck with three more years of payments due.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Mr. Tintori said he would present three ordinances for approval at the same time.

Ordinance #1778

Adopting the Budget for the year 2018, pursuant to Section 501 of the Home Rule Charter of the Borough of Green Tree.

Ordinance #1779

Fixing the real estate tax rate for the fiscal year 2018 and providing for discount and penalties as authorized by law.

Ordinance #1780

Setting the Sanitary Sewer User Fee/Surcharge at \$5.00 per one thousand (1000) gallons of water used effective January 1, 2018 for water usage on and after January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018.

Motion:

Mr. Tintori made a motion, seconded by Mr. Panza, to place Ordinances #1778, #1779, and #1780 on first and final reading by title only.

Mr. Montz said that Ordinance #1780 keeps the borough's surcharge at \$5.00 with no increase. The ordinance increases the ALCOSAN treatment fee part of the billing.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Molinaro read Ordinances #1778, #1779, and #1780 by title only.

Motion:

Mr. Tintori made a motion, seconded by Mr. Novak, to pass Ordinances #1778, #1779, and #1780 on first and final reading by title only.

Roll Call Vote

Mr. Tintori	Yes
Mr. Panza	Yes
Mr. Novak	Yes
Mr. Rea	Yes
Mr. Lorenzini	Yes
Mr Sampogna	Yes

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion:

Mr. Tintori made a motion, seconded by Mr. Novak, to authorize the proper officers to sign Ordinances #1778, #1779, and #1780 and that they be advertised according to law.

Motion carried unanimously.

LIAISON REPORTS

A. MRTSA - Mr. Montz

Mr. Montz said MRTSA adopted its 2018 budget and for the first time in a number of years there is a \$170,000 deficit. MRTSA anticipates an increase in its fees next year (2019).

B. Char West COG - Mr. Novak

Mr. Novak said that Magistrate Anthony Savakis had been the guest speaker at the last COG meeting. He spoke about problems with illegal drugs being shipped through the airport, and various ways to deal with the opioid crisis. The next COG meeting will be held in Green Tree on December 21st.

Mr. Novak said an alternate COG member was needed. Discussion took place regarding which Council member would be interested in being an alternate.

Motion:

Mr. Novak made a motion, seconded by Mr. Panza, to appoint Mr. David Lorenzini as Green Tree's alternate COG representatives.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Library - Mr. Sampogna

Mr. Sampogna said that Library Board had discussed the 2018 budget at the last meeting and the budget would be adopted at the December Library Board meeting.

The library continues to review computer and wi-fi usage. In September 2017, the combined usage was up approximately 50 hours over the previous September's usage.

Storytime with Santa will be held on December 21.

A vacancy on the Library Board is expected in January. Anyone interested in serving should apply.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Mr. Sampogna

A. CONNECT

Mr. Sampogna said he attended a CONNECT Executive Committee meeting on November 16 where a number of topics were discussed. CONNECT received a grant from the Heinz Endowment to fund a position within the health department to work specifically with CONNECT communities to combat the opioid epidemic. Additional details will be provided later.

B. Mr. Sampogna said Light Up Green Tree night had been a great success with record attendance. He thanked Ms. Jen Mathie, the RCA Board, and all of the volunteers who worked at the booths, along with Public Works assistance, to make it a great community event.

C. Mr. Sampogna wished borough employees and residents a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT - Mr. Molinaro

Mr. Molinaro had nothing to report at this time.

MANAGER'S REPORT - Mr. Montz

Mr. Montz reported that the fire call that had come in earlier this evening prompting Mr. Lindsey and Chief Cleary to leave the meeting was on Robinhood. There were no injuries and the fire company has the fire under control, but there was substantial damage to the home.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Sampogna, President

W. David Montz, Manager