

TOWN OF McCANDLESS
MINUTES – FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 9, 2016 TOWN HALL

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:53 p.m. by Committee Chairwoman Powers with the following in attendance: Council members Zachary, Aufman, Mertz, Walkauskas, LeDonne and McKim; Town Manager Cordek, Assistant Town Manager Ebner, Zoning Officer Betty, John Bojarski, Communications Assistant, Marie Haller, Administrative Assistant and citizens as the sign-in sheet.

FURTHER DISCUSSION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Committee discussed the use of social media by the Town. Councilwoman Powers asked John Bojarski, the Town's Communication Assistant to provide a live demonstration of sites Facebook sites facilitated and maintained by area municipalities. Mr. Borjarski presented recent postings on the Ross, Cranberry, Mt. Lebanon and Upper St. Clair sites which ranged from posting of items of general and specific interest such as municipal postings, various community events and public information postings. He has reached out to several municipalities to obtain input and stressed the importance of keeping content fresh to attract people to the site. Also noted, comments appear to be permitted on all sites. Ross Township allows the public (referred to as visitors) to post items on their site; Cranberry Township does not allow visitor postings. The Mt. Lebanon site is utilized as an official magazine page and visitor postings are permitted. Upper St. Clair limits comments to municipal postings. Town Staff and legal counsel are researching the levels of site management.

Councilman McKim provided an overview of an email received pertaining to the use of social media by area municipalities. The Committee discussed management of the site, the necessity of establishing guidelines along with appropriate monitoring. Town Manager Cordek commented that the Cranberry staff is larger than McCandless and includes an administrator and several staff members assisting to provide thorough monitoring of their Facebook page.

Councilman LeDonne discussed legal advice received at the last month's meeting regarding obligations and increased risks involved with the use of social media in the municipal setting, which was differentiated from a business or corporate setting. He referred to examples provided of potential liabilities involving public records, record retention, employment and labor issues and 1st Amendment disputes know to occur. Councilman LeDonne expressed concern that there are many more pitfalls than benefits. He questioned the need for a Facebook site, pointing out the Town currently has a website and communications assistant who monitors it on a regular basis.

Rita Martin, 10585 Grubbs Road, commented that the school districts currently have Facebook pages. Town Manager Cordek noted in some municipalities the Facebook pages are often used as a tool to aim people toward its website where they may obtain additional information. Chairwoman Powers asked if Town staff is adequate to take on management of a Facebook page. Mr. Cordek remarked the Town's current staff may be adequate to initially launch a Facebook page providing guidelines are in place for comments restricted to Town postings. He explained guidelines would be

stated. If postings meet guidelines the information stays; if not, it would be removed. He would report if staffing was inadequate to maintain the site. Chairwoman Powers asked the Committee if they would like the Town to set-up a basic Facebook site for their review; the Committee was agreeable to this. Town Attorney Ries stated he would ask Attorney Biedinger to draft guidelines.

Barbara Richards, 305 Manor Court, stated she agrees with Town Manager Cordek and suggested that the committee may be overthinking this. She agreed with the suggestion to start small, evaluate the effort involved. Councilwoman Powers concurred, asking if a rough draft of the guidelines could be prepared for review at the next meeting. Mr. Cordek responded if possible; if not, then by the following month.

SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Commissioners (PSATC) 2016 Annual Conference will be held June 23-26, 2016 the Crown Plaza in King of Prussia, PA. The registration deadline is May 20.

The Annual Western Association of Township Commissioners Conference/Dinner will be held May 26, 2016 at Shannopin Country Club, further details will be provided.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Marie A. Haller, Administrative Assistant

TMC/mah