

REGULAR MEETING
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
JUNE 27, 2022

Mayor Chegwidden called the Meeting to Order

Mayor Chegwidden read the Open Public Meeting Statement

Mayor Chegwidden requested Roll Call:

Council President Vasquez- Present
Council Binkoski- Present
Councilwoman Hayes- Present
Councilman Norton- Present
Councilwoman Wickenheisser- Present
Councilman Yeager- Present

Also in attendance were Administrator Joseph Kovalcik Jr., Attorney Roman Hirniak, and Borough Clerk Gabrielle Evangelista.

Flag Salute

Mayor Chegwidden led those in attendance with the salute to the American Flag.

Presentation

On behalf of the Wharton Police, Chief Young presented former Crossing Guards Joyce Hon and Martha Hoffman with plaques in honor of their retirement. He thanked them for their service to the Borough and wished them the best in their retirement, which was echoed by everyone in attendance.

Open to the Public

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public.

No one wishing to be heard, Mayor Chegwidden closed the meeting to the public.

Resolution

Councilman Yeager introduced R-86-22, “Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of a Police Sergeant.”

A motion was made by Councilman Yeager and was seconded by Councilwoman Hayes to adopt R-86-22.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA-6 NAY-0 ABSENT-0 ABSTAIN-0

MOTION CARRIED

Sergeant Ornelas was sworn in and congratulations were offered by all in attendance.

Resolution

Councilwoman Hayes introduced R-87-22, “Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of a Police Officers.”

A motion was made by Councilwoman Hayes and was seconded by Councilman Binkoski to adopt R-87-22.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA-6 NAY-0 ABSENT-0 ABSTAIN-0

MOTION CARRIED

Resolution

Council President Vasquez to introduce R-88-22, “Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of a Class II Police Officer.”

A motion was made by Council President Vasquez and was seconded by Councilwoman Hayes to adopt R-88-22.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA-5 NAY-0 ABSENT-0 ABSTAIN-1 (Norton)

MOTION CARRIED

At this time, two Police Officers, Ryan Smith and Jack Rand, who were previously appointed, but not ceremonially sworn in, were sworn in. Congratulations were offered by all in attendance.

Discussion

- **Request for road closure of Cross St. for a block party on 7/16. We have previously approved this request with no issues. The Council approved this request via voice vote.**
- **Referring a potential ordinance relating to chickens to the Board of Health: Mayor Chegwidden advised that he asked the Housing and Zoning Officer and the Health Officer to attend the meeting because a potential new ordinance would be passed by the Board of Health, but concerns the Housing and Zoning Officer as well. Housing Zoning Officer, Mr. Lewthwaite advised that following complaints and other issues with backyard chickens in town he reviewed multiple other towns ordinances for guidance and put together a draft for the Board of Health**

to consider as a starting point. It is not too restrictive and allows most people who would want to have backyard chickens to do so, but with some regulations. There are sanitary concerns as well as safety and traffic concerns with this issue. Health Officer, Trevor Wiegler advised that some of the health concerns about this include the type of coop, food for the chickens, waste management, rodent control, and that chickens are prey for other animals. He advises careful wording of the ordinance. A discussion on this item followed including multiple members of the Council. Items that were discussed included- other towns ordinances to review, number of existing homes with chickens in town, roosters, and yard size in relation to coop size. Mr. Lewthwaite noted that this is not to stop people from having chickens, but to regulate it so it's safe and healthy for everyone.

Mayor Chegidden opened the meeting to the public relating to this topic.

Ana Jones, 124 Old Irondale Rd.: Ms. Jones has chickens on her property. Prior to getting them, she educated herself on proper ownership and takes good care of her coop. Her yard is cleaned well and she hasn't seen any rodents. She likes having a food source and teaching her granddaughter about where food comes from.

Scott Hutchins, DPW Director: Mr. Hutchins clarified that the intent is not to not allow people to have chickens, but to make it so that it works for everyone. Responsible owners are not the problem, but there are always people who don't follow the rules. We may want to consider including an educational component for those looking to register.

Russel Sieb, NJ Pest Control: Mr. Sieb has a lot of experience in this area and is willing to consult if necessary. Any regulations have to be a well written program and you need responsible owners.

This matter will now be referred to the Board of Health.

Consent Agenda

The following items are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Mayor and Council and are approved by one motion. There is no separate discussion of these items unless a council member or citizen so requests, in which case, the item is removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in a normal sequence on the agenda.

Approval of Bills: Approve all bills referred to the Finance Committee

Approval of Minutes: 4/25/22, 5/9/22, 5/23/22
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R-89-22: Approve Contract KV Carriage
R-90-22: Liquor License Renewals
R-91-22: Approve Refund of Tax Overpayment

Approve Recreation Application- Andrea Sebastian

A motion was made by Council President Vasquez which was seconded by Councilman Yeager to approve all of the items on the Consent Agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence

- Notice of Ordinance- Mine Hill

Council Reports

Council President Vasquez: No report.

Councilman Binkoski: He attended the Morris County League of Municipalities meeting where they discussed County and State finances.

Councilwoman Hayes: No report.

Councilman Norton: Congratulations to the WALL Minor League Tri-Town Champions. He attended National Night Out, which was a great event.

Councilwoman Wickenheisser: She attended the Morris County League of Municipalities meeting. She attended National Night Out and thanks the DPW, Fire Department, and Police Department for that event.

Councilman Yeager: He attended National Night Out, which was a great event. Congratulations to our new officers who were sworn in and appointed this evening.

Mayor Chegwidde's Report: He is appointing Ana Jones into the vacant position of Planning Board Alternate for the remainder of a two-year term to expire 12/31/22. He signed onto a letter put together by the NJ League of Municipalities and the NJ Conference of Mayors about encouraging the State to return the energy tax monies back to the Municipalities. He also attended National Night Out and it was a great event.

Open to the Public

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public.

No one wishing to be heard, Mayor Chegwidden closed the meeting to the public.

Closed Session

Councilman Binkoski introduced R-92-22 to close the meeting to the public for discussion on Litigation.

A motion was made by Councilman Binkoski and was seconded by Councilman Norton to approve R-92-22. This Resolution was approved via voice vote.

Following Closed Session, a motion was made by Councilman Yeager and was seconded by Councilwoman Hayes to return to open session. This motion was approved via voice vote.

Councilman Yeager then introduced, R-93-22, “Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Discretionary Contract for the Borough of Wharton,” and made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Councilwoman Hayes.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA-6 NAY-0 ABSENT-0 ABSTAIN-0
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MOTION CARRIED

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilman Binkoski and was seconded by Councilwoman Wickenheisser to close the meeting. This motion was approved via voice vote.

June 27, 2022

ATTEST:

Gabrielle Evangelista,
Borough Clerk

BOROUGH OF WHARTON

WILLIAM J. CHEGWIDDEN,
MAYOR