

**MINUTES FOR THE BOROUGH OF  
WEST MIDDLETOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
JUNE 10, 2024**

The meeting of the Council for the Borough of West Middletown was held on Monday, June 10, 2024 at 5:30pm with President John Opal presiding.

President Opal called the meeting to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

The following members were present: John Opal, Sandra Smith, Ellen Armstrong, Naudette Baxter and Fred Clark. Solicitor Dennis Makel, Mayor Garry Armstrong and Secretary Ruth Brown were also present.

Guests included: John Baxter, Kim Andrews, Michael Hixenbaugh, Patricia Skariot, Lou Muth and Conner Ehrgood.

Under public comments, Patricia Skariot indicated the need for an inspection to be made the day before a pavilion rental. Naudette Baxter indicated that the pavilion will be cleaned before every rental. Fred Clark questioned if a schedule of the rentals could be viewed and John Opal suggested the possible posting of the open dates at the Post Office.

Michael Hixenbaugh indicated that he has been fined for two offenses but has closed up the holes and window and caught the racoon. Concrete footings will be installed where needed.

John Opal gave a clarification clarification of the Borough code regarding the nomination by Council members only to fill vacancies.

Lou Muth stated the necessity for a shut off valve for the kitchen and questioned the installation of a water heater which would require 220. Gary Armstrong indicated that the cost of maintaining same might be prohibitive and Ellen Armstrong said that hot water usage might increase the water usage and cause the holding tank to have to be pumped more often.

John Opal made a motion which was seconded by Sandra Smith to approve the minutes of the May meeting. Motion carried by approval of all Council members.

John Opal made a motion which was seconded by Ellen Armstong to pay the bills from the General Fund as presented. Motion carried by approval of all Council members.

John Opal made a motion which was seconded by Sandra Smith to pay the street light bills from the Roads Only account. Motion carried by approval of all Council members.

John Opal made a motion which was seconded by Sandra Smith to approve payment of the bills from the LSA account as presented. Motion carried by approval of all members.

John Opal made a motion which was seconded by Sandra Smith to approve payment of the bills from the American Rescue Plan as presented. Motion carried by approval of all Council members.

Fred Clark indicated that he was willing to be a check signer for the Borough accounts. John Opal made a motion which was seconded by Naudette Baxter to approve Fred in that position. Motion carried by approval of all Council members.

A separate checking account will be needed for the drainage project at the request of Josh Kale. John Opal made a motion which was seconded by Sandra Smith to create the account. Motion carried by approval of all Council members.

Naudette Baxter will call McKeen Plumbing regarding the security of the plumbing access covers at the park.

The parking project has been approved and needs the proper electronic signature. Naudette Baxter will complete same right after the current Council meeting.

Electrical work at the pavilion needs upgraded and Wyatt Smith's bid does not include conduit. A certified electrician must do the work.

A backflow inspection is required at this time to be completed by a certified inspector. Jack Larson who has previously done this work and does not seem to be available. Naudette Baxter will find someone to do it and it was stated that Alliance does this type of work.

John Opal indicated that Council will find out if the second grant for the ball court will be approved by November but work will start next April regardless of the outcome.

Ellen Armstrong was thanked for the historical pictures.

The borough picnic will be held on Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup> from noon to 4:00pm. Naudette Baxter and Sandra Smith will coordinate it. Lou Muth suggested to have people knock on doors so that everyone knows.

John Opal indicated that movie cost \$300 to \$500 each showing to rent or a special of 3 at \$240 each. He suggested the possibility of a grant from Range Resources and Lou Muth said he would talk with Paris Construction.

Naudette Baxter indicated that she would speak with Mark Craig regarding parking on the ball field.

Naudette Baxter indicated that a rotted out cellar door needed attention.

Naudette Baxter expressed concern regarding the outhouse at the park and stated that it needs repaired or torn down and a porta jon replace it. It should be looked at and a decision made. Fred Clark said the decision should include an assessment of the costs to include a possible monthly rental cost of \$125/\$175 and would need to be handicap accessible. Lou Muth voiced concern regarding possible vandalism and Solicitor Makel indicated that insurance would be needed.

Rental for residents is \$25 at the park. Lou Muth indicated the need for a sign advertising the park rentals and Naudette Baxter will get pricing for a sign.

When the courts are available a decision will need to be made whether they are separate for rentals or combined with the pavilion. Because of handicapped availability it would seem that the courts should be close to the parking area. It was stated that fencing might limit the view of the park.

John Opal made a motion which was seconded by Sandra Smith to continue the meeting at the call of the President. Motion carried.