

APRIL 20, 2015 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The April 20, 2015 Council Meeting was called to order at 7:33 P.M. in Council Chambers at the Municipal Building. Mayor Anthony DeLuca presiding.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Anthony DeLuca – Good Evening, we will call this meeting to order. Under Citizens to Address Council Frank & Elaine Lang are not going to be here tonight, the rest of the Agenda will stand as presented. Will you please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance?

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Underwood – Absent
Mayor DeLuca
Dr. Kincaid
Mrs. Kuhn
Mr. Palumbo

Also present were Manager Rayan, Purchasing Secretary Yeager, Planning Director Blackwell, WPCD Director O’Grady and Solicitor Alexander.

Mayor DeLuca – first we have an award. Let me just say it gives me great pleasure to present this award to one of the most dedicated employees for the Municipality of Penn Hills and people in Penn Hills are really lucky to have him working for us. He is here six o’clock in the morning, he leaves six o’clock at night, he is here on the weekends and he always does such a fantastic job with our finances and he has won multiple awards for our financial statements and I could go on and on and he is just a great guy and great employee. Does anyone else want to say anything before I present?

Mrs. Kuhn – well I have known Ed because we grew up together, there are no words that can be expressed no matter what time I ride by the Municipal Building Ed’s vehicle is out front. He never starts work at 8:00 or 8:30 and he is always here between 6:30 and 7:00. I will go to the bank on Saturday and Ed’s truck is sitting out here so I mean he has done wonders for our Municipality and one reason why is with him and Mayor and Council and Moe that The Municipality is in the financial state that it is today and it comes from the heart, dedication and hard work that Ed has given. He is so loyal to the people of Penn Hills, so very loyal to the people of Penn Hills. It is his hometown, it is our hometown and that is why he works so hard, but I don’t want Ed to think

because he is getting this award means he is a loud to retire, Ed has given a promise and he has to keep that promise or I am going to come to his house and take the award off the wall.

Dr. Kincaid – I have known Ed for twelve years and those twelve years have been really delightfully blessed. A man that knows his job does and it with expertise but a humble man and I have been very delighted to be part of this Council with a man of his integrity and particularly his expertise in regards to his position so I commend him for his good work, for his work ethic and he must love what he is doing because most people don't like figures, most people cannot read a balance sheet, most people don't know about math much less balancing a check book but this man has such great expertise and I certainly commend him for that and thanks to his family for allowing him to serve Penn Hills in which he has done for these many years and I thank you and congratulate you Ed.

Mr. Palumbo – and I also echo everything that everybody else said here. I went back before the meeting and told your wife you aren't allowed to retire. So I thank you Ed for everything you do for us.

Mayor DeLuca – o.k. I am going to present this plaque. In appreciation and recognition to Ed Schrecengost “Schrec” for Fifty Years of devoted service. Ed began his career with The Municipality of Penn Hills in September 1965. His years of service have been marked with exemplary dedication and timeless effort to maintain the highest level of fiduciary responsibility to the Community and the employees of The Municipality of Penn Hills and this is presented on the 20th of April 2015. Congratulations Ed.

CITIZENS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Dalili Hall, 102 Urban Drive, Verona, PA 15147 – I am very unfamiliar with the process and I am not sure who my representative is on Mt. Carmel?

Mayor DeLuca – we represent all of Penn Hills.

Dalili Hall – oh o.k. that is great. I have three things that were on my Agenda, do you have that?

Mayor DeLuca – yes we have the letter that you sent us.

Dalili Hall – so I just wanted to talk about three things in particular, 1 being the vacancies, 2 the two public parks one is closed and the last being noise and I was informed that we do not have a Noise Ordinance. So starting with the first the vacancies I walk through the Community between Mt. Carmel and Bramble so I do that big circle. Between that there are 21 vacant homes that I know of that are not for sale. There are some with sales signs but there are 21 that are vacant and I wanted to address the Council on what is the process of getting those properties maintained

maintenance or sold or if there is a program that they can be sold so they can increase the value.

Mayor DeLuca – if you can give the numbers of the houses.

Dalili Hall – I have those.

Mayor DeLuca – if you can give us that then we can send The Code Department to check it out. A lot of times if the bank foreclosed on the property they just might be sitting on it and with the new Ordinance we will have Code go and check it out and try to have the bank go and take care of the property.

Dalili Hall – o.k. so are there any programs that you know of that deals with vacant properties, some of them are over three years? I have talked to the neighbors and they have been more than three years.

Mayor DeLuca – we cut the grass like once.

Dalili Hall – are there any purchasing efforts going on, something that is very deliberate so that they cannot be vacant? I know that there are some cities that have purposely implemented programs that allow people to come in and buy properties that may be for less than what the value is and they negotiate that, I am not sure.

Mayor DeLuca - if you give us the numbers we can do like a sheriff sale. Really that is the only thing that we have.

Dalili Hall – o.k. well that was one that was concerning myself and my neighbors especially those that are adjacent to the vacant properties. Second are the two public parks. The one that is at the bottom of Blackadore that is really a dumping spot. I am not sure if the public park can be a closed public park as far as a gate so it won't allow vehicle traffic but just foot traffic cause it has a lot of bags and tires just dumped inside of not even on the side any more on the road you have to move in order to travel that road so I am not sure if anyone is aware of that but that is what is going on at the bottom of Blackadore and at the top of Aber is a closed park but it is a very unattractive closed park with the amount of litter and nobody is really taking care of that. I mean as far as just walking past and picking up things but there are piles and piles of debris, brush and things that have been deposited there and it is very unsightly. Those are the things that are of concern right now. The last thing the noise and I spoke to a couple people about it and I know we don't have a Noise Ordinance but I would like to know what we do have in place to address neighbors that may be abundantly noisy as far as you can hear music while you are in your home and you have to turn your TV up in order to enjoy whatever you are enjoying. I spoke to someone in the Police Department they just said call the Police but I didn't know if there was something else that would be able to address it if it is a repeated behavior besides me going over and knocking on the door and I am tired of that.

Mayor DeLuca – yes the best thing is to call the Police and have them come over there and file a complaint. They are not a loud to sit there and be blasting music that loud.

Dalili Hall – and is there a consequence that happens after a repeated amount of calls because I can't call all the time but if there is nothing that is a consequence beside them knocking on the door and turn it down my experience is it just repeats itself.

Mayor DeLuca – yes with the landlord tenant we can site them for noise now. If they are the owner of the property or renting the property after the second try we can The Municipality can tell the landlord they have to evict the tenants out of there.

Dalili Hall – and do you know about how many times before they become cited, is it a year?

Solicitor Alexander – there is no way we can gauge how many times it is going to take we just hired two new Code Enforcement Officers who are really out there cracking down on the Code Enforcement, this Mayor and Council is really cracking down on the various Code Enforcement issues. The problem with a Noise Ordinance you have to measure noise in decibels and you have to have a noise reader. I went all the way up to the Commonwealth Court and back again with a Noise Ordinance in Monroeville where I won every step of the way but the Commonwealth Court ruled it is very difficult to get because what is noise to one person is not noise to another person. It is almost impossible to police without some measuring device on how noisy something is.

Mayor DeLuca – and I was talking to you about that before like if you had a device you have to have it checked and then you have to be a certain distance. If you are in the house and hear their music then I would call the Police and tell them.

Dalili Hall – last weekend I was up Friday and Saturday two in the morning.

Mayor DeLuca – definitely call 911 to have the Police come out there. They will handle the situation.

Dalili Hall – and the last in conjunction with that is is there something that is in place that deals with the traffic as far as parking on the street. My neighbor in particular there can be ten to fifteen cars and it is not a big road it is Urban Drive so it is difficult to move through.

Mayor DeLuca – we will have to check the Ordinance to see if there is no parking on the street. Usually there is no parking either on one side or the other.

Dalili Hall – we don't have that as far as a designated no parking here or there.

Mayor DeLuca – it might be someone might have taken the signs down, so we will check.

Mrs. Kuhn – on the Blackadore and the park that is closed didn't we have a discussion or was that a different park that we were going to close the entrance so that vehicles couldn't get down there, we knew it was difficult as far as having foot traffic.

Moe Rayan – correct and that was Bon Air Park. The resident speaking with regards to on Aber Road that particular park was closed I believe in 2000 or 2001 by way of installing guide rails in front of it and removing all of the playground equipment and intentionally back then the thoughts were to let the weeds and natural habitats grow again to prevent the kids from going down there. However that is Aber Road and it is a State Road and it is maintained by the State and I have notes here to send a service request to the State to pick up the litter on the State Road, so we will send that.

Mayor DeLuca – Moe let me ask you to try and prevent the foot traffic can we plant maybe the bushes that have the thorns on them that prevents people from

Craig Alexander – jagger bushes

Mayor DeLuca – to prevent foot traffic from going down there. I know if we have enough of them in there and just let them grow I mean people will think twice before going in there.

Moe Rayan – we have plenty of growth there I think the problem that you are talking about is the litter and the dumping. We can probably invest in a no dumping sign.

Mayor DeLuca – well we could put a no dumping sign but think if they are able to walk down there they are probably going to take their trash down there so the entrance way where there is possible foot traffic if we can put those bushes there people will think twice before heading down there.

Moe Rayan – I am trying to visualize.

Dalili Hall – there is a road but it is kind of brushed over. The main dumping is

Moe Rayan – right on Aber Road itself.

Dalili Hall – yes and then the top part of the hill it goes right over but not so much where the park use to be.

Moe Rayan – that is what I thought you were talking about.

Dalili Hall – now does Penn Hills own that property or is it the State?

Moe Rayan – well it is a State Road so it is maintained by the State however if it is on the park itself that is considered our property.

Dalili Hall – oh o.k.

Mrs. Kuhn – so then what you are stating is that the tires and mattresses aren't really down in where the park was?

Dalili Hall – that was on Blackadore. On the Blackadore part that doesn't have any barrier to the vehicle traffic and I was suggesting or see if it could happen that there is a barrier so that vehicles can't back down there.

Mrs. Kuhn – right so that was why whether it was Bon Air Park I would say any park in the Municipality that has been closed I was hoping that all

Moe Rayan – it is not closed. Ross Park is not closed. It is a corner, the way Ross Street is the park itself is situated around a bend so there are walkways and you can walk through the grass and access any area in the park and in order to close it you would have to run a chain or anything the whole way around.

Mrs. Kuhn – and I know it is difficult to close the walk traffic but I was just concerned there isn't a park that is closed that doesn't have the roadway.

Moe Rayan – all the other parks they have gates that prevents after hours and so forth.

Mrs. Kuhn – most people walking aren't going to walk in a mattress.

Moe Rayan – exactly.

Mrs. Kuhn – so I just want to make sure that anything that is a dumping site that we do have at least a gate so they can't get their vehicles in.

Moe Rayan – Ross Street and the park is situated on the corner. It is right along the street itself.

Dalili Hall – the park is well maintained as far as litter. The entrance way is where all the garbage and debris is.

Moe Rayan – right it is the road itself.

Mayor DeLuca – put a No Dumping Sign it may help.

Mrs. Kuhn – and just to let you know as far as where the number of the abandoned homes we alluded to you that we did pass an Ordinance that before if banks owned them there wasn't much that we could do about it but now that the new Ordinance they can't hide behind the fact that well the bank owns it and they are not really the owners. We do have every year in our Budget where we have so much money put into the budget for demolition on these homes also and there is a list and unfortunately it is an ongoing list and we might have twenty-five and then you turn around and have ten or fifteen more but we do have that so I mean the Municipality does have a program and funds for it but unfortunately we don't have enough that we just get rid of everyone in the Municipality it goes by like I said a list and you know new ones go on the list and they are taken care of when the other ones are already demolished.

Dalili Hall – o.k. the last thing. In regards when I was speaking of the purchase program some of those houses are o.k. houses they just need a little love and maybe some bushes moved and maybe a roof so instead of knocking them down maybe sell it for a little bit little less not a lot less and see if we can get that as a way of bringing in income and increasing the value of the property, because the vacant land is fine but then it doesn't attract people to come and want to purchase and I am at the point where I am like o.k. I have been here all my life but I have been considering you know moving.

Mrs. Kuhn – no one wants to live in that situation.

Dalili Hall – no we don't want to move but those are the concerns right now for me as the next generation of homeowners that you make sure it is a Community that we can build and it can increase in value and not depreciate and make sure that it is a pretty neighborhood.

Mayor DeLuca – if you can give us the numbers of the houses then we will have Code check and see like I said if it is a bank that owns it then the new Ordinance they have to have a manager that will maintain that house.

Dalili Hall – o.k. I will make sure that I drop that off so that everyone can get one and I will have that here tomorrow morning, I could not print it off today but I will have those addresses so that you can at least have some reference points. Thank you. Is there a way I can have some type of updates as what is going on?

Chris Blackwell – I will just give you my card if you want to e-mail me that list and save you a trip up and then there are some things on here that we would and I don't have a phone number for you but we could definitely contact you I think there are some things that we are going to resolve or find out about. There are others that are long term issues that need more time.

Dalili Hall – if I am speaking on behalf of some on the neighbors do you want their addresses and they are seniors and they are not going to be coming up but when I am speaking with them that is their concern because they might not be there long and if they want to sell their property and they are next to something that they wouldn't be able to sell at what they believe their value would be so what is that process to represent what they might be bringing to the table?

Mayor DeLuca – just give a list of the residents and have them sign a petition with their name and address and bring it up here and maybe a reference point of what house they live next to.

Dalili Hall – very productive thank you and I have some work to do. I appreciate it.

Mayor DeLuca – you are welcome.

Gary English – 119 Ashley Drive – I will begin my comments that I moved to this Township in June of 2005 and Code Enforcement inspected my home after the sale of my house and required several things such as a second handrail on my porch deck and a second handrail going into the basement along with some other minor repairs. There was no follow up, yet I don't even know if today there was an occupancy permit issued for my home but I have been there ten years I really don't think it is an issue and you look at my house I probably have one of the nicer homes on my block. I raised issue to that after I moved in because in 2005 they were forecasting one of the coldest winters ever although we just experienced the coldest one we have had in a long time. I didn't know what to expect if I was going to freeze to death so I invested in a pellet stove and I asked the Township what requirements are made do you need a permit and I was told that you did not need one and I thought that was kind of interesting because you make all these other regulations and then you do not follow through and they said what do you mean. Well you had all these requirements I had to do when I bought the home and then you never followed through and inspect my home and they said oh that is up to you and I said no if you want me to do it you come back and follow up on it. Well they came back and they did inspect it and everything was done but that is beside the point. Code Enforcement in my opinion has done a very poor job in this Township and I think it follows or mirrors what happened where I came from Wilkinsburg and the housing stock and what is happening in Wilkinsburg where the property values are plummeting and taxes continue to rise to make up for the difference. I do want to bring out some addresses; 5834 Saltsburg Road has been a problem, an ongoing problem for years. The owner of that property moved from another part of Penn Hills down near Milltown from what I have heard and left that area in disgrace as well. Code Enforcement on unlicensed vehicles, a pool without a fence, garbage, working on commercial vehicles, we could go down the list of violations. How about a dirty soiled mattress on the front porch for over a year or taking out garbage and maybe it is too heavy for the garbage man to pick up or putting it out too early and then the animals get to it and then it gets thrown all over the road and these things have been on going with this particular

property for a long time so it should not be anything new to you as far as that particular address.

Moe Rayan – when you and I spoke on Friday or I believe Thursday today I had the Code Inspector with me and the Fire Marshall and went to these locations.

Gary English – on that particular road?

Moe Rayan – on Saltsburg yes.

Gary English – on Saltsburg and did you find violations?

Moe Rayan – well he was with me and we were driving through and I pointed out based on the discussion that you and I had.

Gary English – o.k. the next property I don't have the street address but I will tell you where it is located and it has been this way for ten years. The real street address would be one of the homes on Shannon Road but the back portion of the property touches Claymont. This is a barn and this is a picture I took today so this is only a couple of hours, who do I want to give this to.

Mayor DeLuca – hand it to me.

Gary English – I would say that that barn is very unsafe especially for kids to explore, snakes, rats who knows but that should have been taken down a long time ago. 172 Claymont it is the corner house on Claymont and Poketa Road this home has a spring that is coming from underneath the driveway and dumps right on to Claymont. It is an issue and I know it is a spring because last year when the water department comes out and flushes the hydrant I have them test the water and there was no chlorine so we know it is fresh water not filtrated so it is a fresh water spring they could easily dig a french drain tie it right into the sewer system, issue resolved.

Mayor DeLuca – what other issues do you have? If you already talked to the Manager

Gary English – but it hasn't been done, it is over a year.

Mayor DeLuca – but you just talked to him Friday.

Moe Rayan – I talked to you on Friday for the first time sir.

Gary English – but I contacted Public Works.

Moe Rayan – I am not aware of it.

Gary English – 5806 Verona Road, are you familiar with that address? If you notice that vehicle, it should be familiar. It is the Rosedale Fire Department. Take a look behind the Rosedale Fire Department and then there is also a culvert and creek littered with cans and garbage. That is not setting a good example to the rest of the Community. Another problem is 7258 Shannon Road. I will give you a picture of that. This property for as long as I have known it I didn't even know it existed and it is right on Shannon Road. Why? I go down Shannon Road and it is covered in vines in the Spring and Summer time you don't even know there is a home there. Shingles blew off, a hole is now in the roof, and weather has been getting to this house. You know what, it is a pretty nice house if someone would have taken care of it and the problem of what we are having is Code Enforcement is not intervening quick enough please please please.

Mayor DeLuca – no no first of all, we just got Code up to full staff. You just talked to the Manager on Friday.

Gary English – but this has been going on for ten years.

Mayor DeLuca – I understand that but we just got a new staff of Code Officers.

Gary English – but you have had staff for ten years to address one home that has been going downhill. I think the problem that we are having and I am making a suggestion not just a complaint

Mayor DeLuca – well let me ask you this, you said ten years, did you contact them in the ten years.

Gary English – I have contacted Code Enforcement several times nothing ever gets done. Now I realize you have been short staffed and I think Code Enforcement let me say it is a money making operation and I say it that through fines yes the Township can make up for the cost of paying these officers but it also protects the values of other homes. So I think that is a well worth investment to have it up to full staff all the time.

Mayor DeLuca – do you have the other addresses so we can get Code, if you give us the addresses

Gary English – I am giving you addresses but I do want to make a suggestion and I think this is something we could pilot this idea and bring it to other Communities and let us be the first. How many of our men and women who have served this Country have come home with missing limbs and I will tell what they would be tickled pink to have a home given to them, maybe this home that has a hole in the roof well maybe they would make that investment. If we could just get these back on the tax rolls and producing taxes and with this late intervention it gets to the point that we have to scrap around for County, State or Federal grants to tear it down and we are biting our nose off to spite our face cause now what we are doing we are tearing down a tax producing

property although they haven't been paying taxes we are getting rid of this tax base and that hurts the Community. Now the last point I will make was my better half was sick a couple of weeks ago and I had to pick her up in downtown Pittsburgh and she parks at The Rosedale Fire Department and pays for that quarterly and I walked down to pick her vehicle up because she was too sick and that is when I noticed all of the litter on Poketa Road and that is where I got the idea of taking that picture that you have of the Volunteer Fire Department Car from the bottom of Claymont all the way up Poketa up the hill to the ZoZo's Sunoco Station and all the way around the German Cemetery I picked up about three hundred gallons worth of garbage. Yes ten bags that are all 30 gallons. I had so much garbage I didn't have enough bags I piled it up in a triangle lot between the Sunoco Station and the Cemetery and I contacted Public Works and Public Works said that is a State Road well that is fine and all well but it is still Penn Hills Township and while you are out there policing it wouldn't be a big deal just to pick it up. Well the Penn Dot did pick up about two to three days later and all the garbage that I didn't have bags for they left there. Three or four days later all of what I cleaned up and I just didn't pick up three feet off the curb I went into the woods. Four, five days later I picked up another thirty gallon bag of garbage it is never ending.

Mayor DeLuca – unfortunately that is a problem everywhere.

Gary English – I thought about it and if you could have a Penn Hills Police Officer sitting there for an entire shift hoping that he catches a couple people littering and that would be very difficult.

Mayor DeLuca – thank you. If you give us all the addresses we will have the Manager get back in touch with you with the Resolution.

Gary English – we need to start cleaning up and we have Earth Day coming up on Wednesday and did Penn Hills do anything to get people involved in cleaning up this Community and it is only two days away. Thank you.

MINUTES

Mr. Palumbo made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 6, 2015.

Dr. Kincaid seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion the motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

EXPENDITURES

Dr. Kincaid made a motion to approve the Expenditures, these are dated April 20, 2015, Journal Vouchers 0, \$0.00, CD Requisitions 0, \$0.00, Master 30766 – 30888 - \$1,525,746.39, the Grand Total \$1,525,746.39.

Mr. Palumbo seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion the motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Palumbo made a motion to approve **Resolution No. 2015-022** awarding a one-year Contract to John Capone and Ken Rowe for The Boarding Up of Abandoned Buildings and Cutting High Grass, Hedges, Bushes and Shrubs.

Dr. Kincaid seconded the motion.

Gary English – Just one question, was this put out for Public Bid?

Mayor DeLuca – yes it was.

Gary English - Advertised in the legal section of the newspaper?

Mayor DeLuca – yes it was.

Mrs. Kuhn – I see that we do have all the documentation that it was sent out for bid but unfortunately we only received the one proposal but as the gentlemen and the young lady in the audience this just shows you to board up an abandoned building is \$500.00 for the structure and to cut the grass and the hedges is \$410.00 per property, so it is costing The Municipality \$910.00 for each of those properties that we have to address and that does come out of the Code Enforcements budget, is that correct Moe.?

Moe Rayan – that is correct.

Mrs. Kuhn – so this is what I was telling you that The Municipality does budget for but at that cost as many homes as in Penn Hills we can't do all of them. I did want you to see that we do do what we have to do to try and get it accomplished.

(Resident did not come up to microphone just asked question in audience and it was inaudible).

Mrs. Kuhn – I mean that question doesn't have any substance as to what this Resolution is today because this is what it cost us today to do this. And so I just wanted to let you know that it is not that the Municipality doesn't take care but we do but the cost is so absorbent and so many homes in The Municipality so that is why they are not all taken care of as fast as we would like them too. But I didn't want you to think that we don't take care of the situation.

There being no further discussion the motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

Mrs. Kuhn – made a motion to approve **Resolution No. 2015-023** awarding Contract A for The 2015 CCTV Inspections and Excavation Repairs to State Pipe Services, Inc. in the amount of \$185,500.00.

Dr. Kincaid seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion the motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

Mr. Palumbo made a motion to approve **Resolution No. 2015-024** awarding Contract B for The 2015 CCTV Inspections and Excavation Repairs to State Pipe Services, Inc. in the amount of \$917,000.00.

Dr. Kincaid seconded the motion.

John Dugan – 731 McFarland Drive – no big deal. Is there a difference what is to be done because of the two?

Tom O’Grady – the first one Contract A is just for televising. The Contract B is actually for televising and doing repairs while they do the televising.

Mrs. Kuhn – I just want to make the statement that the last Resolution that we passed and the one we are passing today right now, the total is over a million dollars and it is under our consent decree that we are doing this and under our consent order, I am sorry and I just want it to be noted that once again we are doing over a million dollars worth of repairs and we have not had to borrow any money to take care of these sewer problems and we also have not had to increase the rates for over five years even though we keep doing the projects that are before us. So I commend Tom and everyone else who works on these projects, the Manager and this Mayor and Council because of the fact that is something that we should be proud of that we are able to do.

There being no further discussion the motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

Dr. Kincaid made a motion to approve **Resolution No. 2015-025** in support of a proposed Comprehensive Trail System advocated by The Allegheny Blue Way Coalition.

Mr. Palumbo seconded the motion.

Gary English – 119 Ashley Drive – Just if you could explain The Proposed Comprehensive Trail System and if there are any costs to the taxpayers, State, Federal or Local?

Mayor DeLuca – no this is just a Resolution that we supported a trail on Allegheny River going through the different Communities.

Gary English – what about maintenance?

Mayor DeLuca – there is nothing in the pipeline, they are just trying to get all of the Communities along the rivers in agreement to have to try and get grant money for a trail along the river.

Gary English – so these are State or Federal grants then?

Mayor DeLuca – yes.

Gary English – thank you.

There being no further discussion the motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

REPORTS

Mrs. Kuhn – I just wanted to bring to the attention that the Mayor and I had received a letter from the House of Representatives Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and our State Rep. Anthony DeLuca and it is addressing the blight that we have in the Community. If you don't mind I would like to read it, I know it might take a little while but I take this opportunity to commend you and Council Members Underwood, Palumbo and Kincaid on your continued fight against blight with your recent actions to approve a Landlord Registration Ordinance for Penn Hills. This Ordinance is a monumental step forward in keeping rental properties free of Code violation and ensures they are maintained and safe living condition. It creates a system of inspections and renewals of occupancy permits and requires landlords to apply for licenses to operate in Penn Hills. Additionally your ability to issue fines and penalties is a necessary enforcement tool that benefits all those living in the Community. The residents of those buildings as well as the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods have such strong efforts to keep landlords actively involved in the Community in which they own or operate rental properties makes Penn Hills a better Community for young and old alike. Furthermore, directly addressing the issue of blight by creating an additional Code Enforcement Officer position sends a strong message that The Municipality of Penn Hills will not tolerate code violation and expects landlords to actively maintain their properties or face consciousness. Too many of our Municipalities have suffered adverse effects from the recent housing or financial crisis. Many Communities particularly older neighborhoods have seen a rise in homes foreclosure. These foreclosures only result in homes becoming vacant and in many cases the properties fall into disrepair and become blight to the Community. I have introduced House Bill 434 which is designed to help Municipalities fight blight by closing a loop hole in Act 90. The neighborhood blight reclamation and revitalization act. Act 90 took significant steps to help Municipalities fight blight unfortunately Act 90 contained a major flaw. It treats mortgage lenders that

have taken possession of property falling foreclosure differently than it treats other owners. So it goes on to address this and I just wanted to say that Code Enforcement and the rules have not changed. I have lived here all my life and this Council is the first Council to introduce an Ordinance where we were permitted to take abandoned vehicles off of private property. Before that you were only able to take them off of the street and people would pull them in their driveway or put them in their yard. Mayor DeLuca's administration had enacted a Resolution which took time to be able to do so that we could go on private property. Our hands are sometimes tied and so is Code Enforcement and the Police Department because of the fact if you don't own the property you can't just go on it and do what you want even though they are in violation. So we did bring that Ordinance into play and then we also brought in the Ordinance about making the banks responsible and we have increased our Code Enforcement Staffing and I have said it is the first administration that ever did any changes in Code so I don't want the public to think that we are not working hard to keep up with the code violations and no one wants to live on a street where there is a house next door or across from you that is in disarray. It not only takes away from your property value but no one wants to go out on their front porch or their front yard and have to look at that day in and day out. So we are doing the best that we can but we also feel that there is going to be a large improvement with the Resolutions and the new staffing. Thank you Mayor.

Mayor DeLuca – we will go into an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters and real estate.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor DeLuca entertained a motion to adjourn.

Dr. Kincaid made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Palumbo seconded the motion.

Mayor DeLuca – this meeting is adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 P.M.

DATE

MAUREEN M. SORCE
MANAGER'S SECRETARY

