



Western Chester County Council of Government

Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January
25, 2023

Held at Parkesburg Borough Hall, 315
West 1st Avenue, Parkesburg, PA 19365

Members in Attendance:

Atglen Borough/Charles Palmer; Janet Watts/Avondale Borough; Caln Township/Jane Kennedy; City of Coatesville/ Charrisse Allen, James Logan; Honeybrook Borough/Chandler Matlock; Honeybrook Township/John McHugh; Modena Borough/Jennifer Daywalt; Parkesburg Borough/Josh Mellinger; South Coatesville/Monica Watson; Valley Township/Kathy O'Doherty; West Brandywine Township/Ryan McLaughlin; West Nantmeal Township/Debi Kolpak

Also attending: M & T Bank (Government Banking)/John Jablowski Jr.; Western Chester County Chamber of Commerce (WCCCC)/Rachel Cathell; Joy Hurst, COG Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Josh Mellinger at 7:05 PM. Josh Mellinger started the meeting welcoming the attendees and telling the members Rachel Cathell will send information on online ballots for voting on 2023 positions. Rachel will send online link.

Josh Mellinger goes down the current list and ask for any other nominations. There were no nominations for President, Vice President or Treasurer positions. Voting started; no one wanted the position of President and Josh Mellinger was voted in for a second term. A motion to approve Josh as President was moved by Jennifer Daywalt and seconded by Ryan McLaughlin. Motion carried unanimously.

Josh Mellinger recommended Jennifer Daywalt for position of Vice President. A motion to approve Jennifer was moved by Josh Mellinger and seconded by Janet Watts. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was then made to keep Charles Palmer on as Treasurer. Motioned was moved by Jennifer Daywalt and seconded by Chandler Matlock. Motion carried unanimously. After voting, roll call of participating Municipalities was taken.

Josh Mellinger then handed the meeting over to our guest speaker, John Jablowski of M & T Bank (Government Banking). John first introduced himself and then went straight into talking about cyber-attacks. He said municipalities should really look at cyber use and look at Positive Pay (ability to approve checks ahead of time). He explained how bots learn your keystrokes. Phishing and Bots are techniques being used to get into your accounts. John stated extra steps should always be taken when banking. He stated the less checks the better as it can limit the possibility of check washing. ACH and scanning checks received is always more secure than taking checks to the bank. ACH transactions can be reversed more quickly. John said you should get in the habit of looking at your accounts regularly. John then talked about Debt and Financing of municipalities.

- A banks collateral is the municipalities tax mils
- Municipalities have unlimited debt (Full faith in credit – how banks lend to municipalities)
- Bonds (will sell and put cost on the municipality)
 - o Banks will hold the loan and not sell the loan
 - o Cost of borrowing is simple; not a lot of complexities
- Look at short and long term factors
 - o May be more feasible to use your own money

Top ways to protect your accounts

1. Positive Pay
2. Writing less checks
3. ACH
4. Staff Education

John ends his presentation and hands out his business card. Josh Mellinger thanks John for coming out.

A motion to approve the December 2022 minutes was moved by Jennifer Daywalt and seconded by Charrisse Allen. Motion carried unanimously.

Charlie reported the checking balance stands at \$14,026.95. Receivables were \$4,000 for total assets of \$18,026.95.

A motion to approve financials was moved by Ryan McLaughlin and seconded by Charrisse Allen. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

It then came up that maybe it would be a good idea to invest some of the money since it's just sitting in the account and interest rates are higher now.

Josh agrees with Kathy's ideal.

Rachel stated that the COG's present bank does not offer high yield accounts.

Kathy will check with Valley Township treasurer for recommendations.

New Business (continued)

Josh Mellinger said that we could always bring Peter Barsz in to speak to the group.

Josh then brought up having a scholarship program for students interested in Government. Rachel says, the Chamber has a portal already setup, so it would be hard to get this started.

Josh stated, the Chamber can get it out to the school districts. Scholarship should be specific to maybe books rather than tuition.

Rachel will put together a packet for next meeting. Josh said we should talk about stipulations and amounts so we can just vote on it next month.

It was said that this would be good for Public Relations. Josh Mellinger asked if there were any objections to having a scholarship program? No member present or online objected to having the program. This has to be started ASAP. Josh also mentioned having a junior COG under the WCCCOG.

The scholar would pay the expense and the scholarship program would reimburse them for the qualified expense.

Stipulations

- Active high school level student government participation
 - Participation minimum of 2 years and/or college bound (public administration degree, political science degree, or urban development)
 - Higher education program
- Specific to cost associated with classes
 - tools/supplies
 - books
 - tuition
 - lab fees/kits

How many scholarships should we considering doing? It was agreed that the WCCCOG start with 1 and then maybe increase the number later as COG membership increases, Amount- \$2000 max

New Business (continued)

Sponsor match or contribution

- Banks
- Lawyers
- Solicitors

John Jablowski said M & T would be happy to partner, but would prefer to be the only sponsor. Just send him an email with something written up.

Josh said, we will not limit to just one bank, so go ahead and make calls if you have another bank in mind.

Refer the banks interested in partnering to Rachel who will be the point of contact. Please call her and give her a heads up.

Old Business

Website updates- Valley Crossing came back with a cost of over \$3,000. The WCCCOG budget is \$1,200-\$1,300 - Jen Daywalt reached out to PSAB and the cost is \$597 per year for members (at least half the WCCCOG are members) and \$726 for non-members.

The would be for design and time. Once all setup you will have full access to update, add tabs, add documents and pics.

Site is pretty simple to use. Josh thinks we need to get this done and this is a much cheaper option. Rachel will go with whatever the WCCCOG wants to go with. They will not come out like Braedon (Valley Crossing Digital), but all that is needed to get started is to fill out a template and send via email. The designated person would continue to work with PSAB via email.

A motion to approve the designing of the WCCCOG website by PSAB for no more than \$1,000 was moved by Kathy O'Doherty and seconded by Jennifer Daywaly. Motion carried unanimously.

Rachel made a new WCCCOG logo. Jen will start pulling together all the things needed and reach out to PSAB to get the process started.

Officer Reports

- President
 - West chester COG wants to merge with WCCCOG on certain things.
 - End of March Commissioner meeting for combined meeting on pros and cons of consolidating fire companies.
 - No fire companies or any one with interest may attend

- Vice President
 - Animal Control will be picked up again next month
 - Good to see more members joined the WCCCOG
- Treasurer
 - \$4,000 collected in dues
 - \$849 spent this year
 - \$186 December meeting

Rachel added that if anyone wants their events added in the Spring and Summer Magazine they must have it to her by the end of the week.

James Logon mentioned Scott Newman from PECO has retired. He thinks that all cities, townships and boroughs need to get with their utility reps to get them onboard with the work they do in our communities. We should try to get them all in a room in 2023 to make sure they are all on the same page.

They mean well, but just jack up our streets.

ACTION

Next meeting February 22, 2023 – hybrid and in person at Valley Township Building, and virtually via GoToMeeting.

Motion to Adjourn meeting at 9:10 PM moved by Jennifer Daywalt, seconded by Josh Mellinger. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joy Hurst