West Mayfield Borough Regular Meeting Minutes

4609 W 8th Ave Beaver Falls PA 15010

November 12th, 2025

President Bob Tate called the meeting to order at 6pm followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call:

Mayor: Licia Cogley – Secretary/Treasurer: Jenna White – Solicitor: Joe Budicak

Council President: Bob Tate – Vice President: Bill Heaton

Council Members: Jacob Tate – Justin Wichryk – John McAdoo – Kevin Farkas

Changes to Agenda

- Council will enter executive session after meeting to discuss potential hiring of public works employee
- Under old business: solicitor discussion on pending agreement between borough and Diamond Towers
- Under new business: Mr. Bill Heaton needs a motion to purchase a sewer camera
- Under president: motion to accept council member Ryan Soisson's resignation and motion to approve rental property licensing ordinance
- Under correspondence: Ryan Soisson's resignation letter from council

Correspondence

- Resignation letter from council member Ryan Soisson
- Mr. Jake Tate makes a motion to accept council member Ryan Soisson's resignation which is seconded by Mr. John McAdoo and the motion passed unanimously

Citizens Comments

- Tom Orlowski: presents his resume to be considered for public works position

Strategic Financial Review: Revenues, Expenditures, and Deficits

- University of Pittsburgh partnered with Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic development for municipal strategic management and planning.
- Analysis focused on West Mayfield Borough's financial condition and trend (2020–2024), removing one-time revenues and expenditures for accuracy.
- Total revenues increased by 2.9% ($402,128 to $448,995), but expenditures grew by 5.8%, resulting in a cumulative deficit of $252,633 by 2024.
- After inflation adjustment, core revenues declined by 6.1%; net operating revenue per capita dropped from $337 to $316.
- Major revenue sources (real estate and earned income tax) showed nominal growth but real value declines; liquid fuels revenue fell by 21.56% (inflation-adjusted).

Projections, Recommendations, and Policy Development

- Expenditures increased by $103,000 (5.8% annually) from 2020–2024; revenue grew 2.9% annually.
- Adjusting for abnormal stormwater costs, expenditure growth was 1.2% annually, below revenue growth.
- Per capita expenditures rose from $372 (2020) to $386 (2024), a 3.8% increase.
- Largest expenditure categories: public works (56.2% in 2020), police (14.2%), general government (12.8%).
- Unreserved fund balance declined from $700,000 (2020) to $540,000 (2024); projected deficits continue through 2029.

- Projected revenue growth: 1.8% annually; projected expenditure growth: 2.1% annually (2025–2029).
- Sewer fund ran surpluses, but volume decreased from $21,000 (2020) to $3,000 (2024).

Council Q&A, Community Comparison, and Management

- Review Planning
- Recommend continued development of financial policies and standards, including management of unreserved fund balance.
- Elimination of operating deficits is critical; borough had deficits in each of the past 5 years, totaling $273,000.
- Projected additional deficit of $73,000–$75,000 will bring total overspending to $327,000 if unaddressed.
- A 0.3 mill real estate tax increase would generate $23,000/year, eliminating projected deficits; new rate (3.05 mills) remains below neighboring average (3.6 mills).
- Unreserved fund balance should be used for long-term investments, not to cover recurring operating deficits; maintaining a surplus is advised.

Operational Updates: Public Works, Code Enforcement, Emergency Management

- Truck repair completed; truck operational.
- Park winterized and closed for rentals.
- Paving scheduled for 24th-25th, weather permitting.
- LED streetlight installation ongoing; most completed.
- Garbage contract bids to be solicited from multiple companies with options for unlimited or cart-based service.

Council Actions: Budget, Ordinances, Purchases, and Resolutions

- Approved sale of perpetual easement for tower site for $425,000; includes state/local transfer tax of 2% unless exempt as public utility.
    - Easement allows grantee exclusive use for telecommunications; borough cannot lease to competitors within 10-mile radius.
    - Grantee may terminate agreement with 60 days notice; borough only repays funds if in default.
- Sewer camera proposed purchase for $22,995; includes mapping and measurement features, locator to be purchased separately.
    - Mr. Bill Heaton makes a motion to purchase the sewer camera for $22,995.00 from MPE Equipment and supplies, which is seconded by Jake Tate. Mrs. White calls for a roll call vote which passes unanimously and the motion passes.
- 2026 proposed budget approved; $27,165 deficit to be covered by investment interest and surpluses; minimum fund balances established.
- Council and mayor raise proposed for the first time in 30 years ($50/month, 50% increase), tabled for next meeting
- Rental property licensing ordinance must be readvertised which Solicitor Joe Budicak states he will do on behalf of the borough
- Independent auditor appointed for 2025; audit scope clarified to borough finances only.
- Mr. Kevin Farkas asks for a motion to approve a resolution establishing council's procedure for proposing, amending or repealing municipal ordinances
    - The motion is made by Mr. Jake Tate and is seconded by Mr. Justin Wichryk and the motion passed unanimously.
- Mr. Kevin Farkas asks for a motion to appoint Butler, Agnew & Associates as independent auditor to make an independent examination of the accounting records of the borough for the year 2025
    - The motion is made by Mr. Jake Tate and seconded by Mr. John McAdoo and the motion passed unanimously

- Mr. Kevin Farkas asks for a motion to approve a resolution approving interfund transfers in the 2026 municipal budget and setting goals for minimum balances of municipal funds
    - The motion is made by Mr. Jake Tate and is seconded by Mr. Justin Wichryk and the motion passed unanimously
- Mr. John McAdoo makes a motion to accept the 2026 Proposed Budget which is seconded by Mr. Jake Tate and the motion passed unanimously
- Parking in alleys discussed; enforcement requires signage, cannot obstruct vehicle passage per ordinance.

Executive Session

- The meeting went into executive session at 8:16PM to discuss hiring a public works employee
- The meeting went back into regular session
    - Mr. Jake Tate makes the motion to bring Mr. Gerald Knowlton back as a public works employee for the borough on a 90-day probation, no posting on social media regarding anything borough related, Mr. Brian McNeely is to report any issues directly to Mr. Jake Tate, with his wage remaining at $17.50 an hour for a 40-hour work week. The motion is seconded by Mr. Bill Heaton and the motion passed unanimously

Christmas Bonuses and Gift Cards for Council Members

- Mr. Justin Wichryk makes a motion to purchase gift cards in the amount of $50.00 for each council member, tax collector, emergency management operator, solicitor and the mayor totaling $500.00 and $100.00 bonus checks to all borough employees totaling $300.00 which passes unanimously

Mr. Bob Tate states the meeting is adjourned at 8:48PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenna White

Borough Secretary