

Waynesburg Council Appoints New Mayor



Duncan Berryman was appointed by council Monday to be Waynesburg Borough's new mayor. (Bob Niedbala / O-R)

WAYNESBURG – A former councilman who has been active with the Waynesburg Borough special events commission for many years was selected Monday by borough council to be the borough's new mayor.

Duncan Berryman was selected from among four residents who had expressed interest in the position which became vacant last month following the resignation of Blair Zimmerman. Zimmerman resigned after being appointed county commissioner.

Berryman served on council for about nine years and was last a councilman, representing Ward I, in 2001. He has been a member of Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful and for many years has served on the special events commission which organizes Rain Day festivities.

Berryman said he looks forward to being mayor. "It will give me an opportunity to continue to serve the borough as I have in the past and which I've always enjoyed," he said.

The main duty of the mayor is to oversee the borough police department. Berryman said he intends to talk with police Chief Tim Hawfield as well as with Zimmerman to get a better understanding of the department's needs.

Part of the mayor's job also is to represent the borough at various events such as the annual car fest and Rain Day, events that Berryman said he always attends. "I've been here my whole life and I know all the people and I enjoy being around them," he said.

Berryman works in sales for the Tarter Farm and Ranch Equipment Co. He said he is fortunate in having the ability to plan his own work schedule so he can be available in the borough when needed.

Others who submitted letters of interest were W. Bryan Pizzi III, Laura D'Eletto and Ramona Mills.

Mills addressed council after Berryman had been nominated but prior to its vote. She told council she was interested in the position because she wants to make the borough a better place for everyone.

She said she believes the marketing skills she has would serve the borough well and she would bring to borough government not only a "new perspective" but also a "female perspective."

Council President Charles Berryhill noted Berryman has been very active in the borough. He suggested Mills consider running for council.

Berryman will serve as an appointed mayor until the end of the year.

In other business, council authorized borough manager Bruce Wermlinger to have a structural engineer inspect the former Waynesburg Floral building on High Street to learn whether the building is salvageable or a complete loss.

The property, owned by Jay Gardner, is to be placed up for judicial sale and if salvageable, it's possible someone might want to purchase it and rehabilitate it, Wermlinger said. If it's not salvageable, the borough may have to purchase it and tear it down, he said.

The building is in poor condition, and debris blows off its roof during high winds. Wermlinger said the borough closed the alley beside the building Monday because of the wind.

He also reported efforts were continuing to find a new owner for the old county office building.

Council voted to increase the commission paid to borough tax collector Mary Jane McClure from 2.5 percent to 4 percent of collections. The commission has not been increased in the last 25 years and most other municipalities pay 5 percent, Wermlinger said.

The new commission will not be effective until Jan. 1, 2014. The position is up for election this year and the raise will apply to the person who takes office next January.

Council agreed to hold workshop meetings at 6 p.m. Feb. 25 and March 25. Wermlinger asked for the meeting to discuss among other things replacing people in several positions. Wermlinger is one of the persons who will be leaving the borough this year.

Fayette Engineering also will be at the Feb. 25 meeting to give council an update on the proposed sewage project, he said.