

DAN

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West Hazleton to vote on abandoned vehicle agreement

■ Council will also vote on the joint purchase of a sewer camera shared by several municipalities.

By AMANDA CHRISTMAN
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West Hazleton Borough Council will vote on two issues dealing with the Mountain Council of Governments (MCOG) at its Thursday meeting.

The items deal with a multi-municipality abandoned vehicle agreement and the purchase of a sewer camera to be shared by several municipalities. Both items were discussed at Thursday night's work session.

Councilwoman Karen Makuta-Reynolds, who attended the MCOG meeting last week, said the agreement with the abandoned vehicle ordinance would prevent people from finding loopholes in the current borough ordinance.

Using an example at Thursday night's work session, she said that if someone has an abandoned car in West Hazleton and moves it to Hazle Township to avoid getting cited in West Hazleton, Hazle Township could still cite the vehicle's owner for the time it was abandoned in West Hazleton.

Reynolds said the ordinance would prevent these repeat offenders from abandoning their vehicles in several municipalities. Reynolds said she wasn't sure which municipalities are looking at joining the agreement.

The sewer camera would cost the borough \$4,000 this year and an additional \$12,000 over the following three years. Reynolds said Hazleton City accepted the deal and will provide housing for and transportation of the camera. The camera

would be used to troubleshoot problem areas in the borough's sewer system and as a tool for maintenance.

Council President Julie Ehlers suggested that council find out exactly how often the camera would need to be used before it decides if it will take the MCOG offer.

Councilman Mark Yeager said the idea sounded good and would be beneficial to the borough.

Mayor Mark Rockovich was leery about entering into the agreement, though he wasn't opposed to the idea, he said. Rockovich questioned how much a sewer camera would be used and how and who would operate it. Reynolds said the streets department would have to be trained to use the camera. She said the MCOG would offer the training.

In other news,

□ Council will decide when it will distribute the last of its recycling bin stock. The borough has several stacks of 20 bins in the borough annex building on Broad Street. The bins must be distributed by May, as per the borough's agreement with a state recycling grant it received in 2004.

Council was considering holding the distribution on a Saturday in April. Ehlers suggested that residents bring a driver's license and a mailing with their name on it to prove residency. As part of the grant, the borough will also hand out literature on recycling as residents pick up bins.

□ As part of CAN DO's 50th anniversary, MCOG asked its members, including the borough of West Hazleton, to hold a CAN DO day, week or month in June. Council will vote on that proclamation during its Thursday meeting.