

December 9, 2013

The Special Meeting of the Lehighon Borough Council was held in the Municipal Building on Monday, December 9, 2013. The meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m. by President Grant Hunsicker. Members in attendance were: Bessie Bauchspies, John Kreitz and Scott Rehrig.

Officials in attendance were: Borough Manager Nicole Beckett and Borough Secretary Brenda Koons. Absent: Councilors Darryl Arner and George Kogut. Late: John Bird.

Hearing of persons Present

None

Motion to adopt the 2014 Proposed Budget

Councilor Rehrig said Tom could probably get some money from Blue Ridge for parking if the water did not run over the parking lot. Maybe it could be trenched to solve the problem and bring in a little revenue.

Councilor Rehrig doesn't agree that there is no need for a light at 9th Street. He thinks this should still be looked at and if necessary an officer could direct traffic there twice a day for 45 minutes.

Councilor Rehrig said the Annex needs to be maintained better and the utility billing office needs better security now that the police are gone.

Councilors Rehrig/Kreitz felt a generator at the Rec Center was not a necessity. They do want ID cards and punch clocks. No one can justify where Public Works or L&P are today. President Hunsicker wants clocks punched at the end of a job. Scott said punch clocks will not solve the problem but it's a start. We have to hold all departments and the supervisors accountable. Nicole wants a computer system that will monitor job progress. Councilor Kreitz said we need punch clock that allow employees to punch on/off the job. He said we need to have control to manage and the punch clock will help supervisors keep record of how long a job took. He said we need legal means to hold employees accountable. They need to stop bleeding the borough. There are departments that are getting paid top dollar and aren't working. We are only being told what was being done and we are being hoodwinked. It is time for wasting time to go bye-bye.

Nicole said what you are talking about now is not something a punch clock can do. You are talking about a software system that can do all the tracking you're discussing here. Scott instructed Nicole to look for a system that will give an accurate view of what is going on. If this is not liked then Nicole or council will escort you and your belongings to the door.

Councilor Rehrig's new motto for those who say "what are you going to do to me if you don't like my job" is now "resign. You're done." Councilor Kreitz said we can have private business come in for grass cutting, snow removal and L&P department. Scott said he went by the L&P building and saw coffee and donuts going in and all the doors were closed and they are probably still hiding in there. Then they brought up the patching by the state store and numbering the parking spaces in the PNC lot and the lot between East Alley

and South 2nd Street. By doing permit parking there we will bring in additional revenue. Sometimes you need to spend money to see a profit.

The police car was brought up. There is money to buy the car in the budget but it can be purchased with only the camera in it. Nicole is to tell the police that only one car will be purchased with the camera only and no new officer can be hired.

Councilor Rehrig said the police department is in disarray and needs leadership. He feels the mayor has been the problem. We could name an officer-in-charge in house for 6 months and see if they can get the department on the streets and solving crime.

Council liked this idea because if they are no good then they go. Scott said the borough manager can do up a schedule for the police department if council so wished. Council president can also do it or a person he designates to do it. We need to start with the next negotiation to reel things in.

Councilor Rehrig then went on to overtime. He is not against it but feels it should be approved by Nicole or council because it is being abused. Overtime should only be used in emergencies. Raises for "at will" employees needs a standard to justify giving them a raise. He would agree to give "at will" employees a cost of living increase. We have been very generous over the years with raises. It isn't our job to make people happy and if he could get rid of the union he would. We can't just put "X" amount of tax on for salaries. President Hunsicker said they should get what the contract gives the union employees. He said AFSCME contract amount is 56¢ and cost of living would be 1.5% and the police get 2.5% per contract. 56¢ is more cost effective and council agreed.

Councilor Rehrig said we will have to put mills on at some point. He said maybe we offer too many services in the borough. Do we really need to really remove snow from the gutters or is plowing the street enough? We do need to account for spending. Vehicles have to be maintained and used as long as possible. We don't need to get new vehicles just because the ones we have are old. We can't raise electric because we are already 5¢ more than PPL. There is some wiggle room in the budget but not much.

Councilors Rehrig/Kreitz are in favor of a ½ mill going for accountability and 1 mill if we add security to the building.

Councilors Kreitz/Rehrig made the motions to adopt the proposed budget with a 1 mill increase with \$20,000 going to security for borough hall, \$42,741 going for punch clocks and \$15,000 going for trenching of the pool parking lot and all were not in favor. Councilor Rehrig also wanted this stated in the newspaper. A roll call vote was taken. Councilor Bird voted a symbolic no because 4 years ago he said he wouldn't raise taxes but agrees we need the increase and wanted that explained. All others present voted yes. Motion carried.

Councilors Rehrig/Kreitz made the motions to have job descriptions in place for next year prior to raises being given for "at will" employees and all were in favor with no questions or objections. They also decided on a 9:30 a.m. special meeting on December 20th to finalize the budget.

Motion to advertise the 2014 Tax Levy Ordinance at 7.5 mills

Councilors Rehrig/Kreitz made the motions to advertise and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to advertise ordinance declaring and acknowledging Colonel Jacob Weiss and Upper Park as borough Property

Councilors Bauchspies/Kreitz made the motions and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Rehrig/Bauchspies made the motions to adjourn at 11:07 a.m. and all were in favor.

Brenda L. Koons
Borough Secretary