

August 24, 2015

The regular meeting of Lehighon Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday, August 24, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 7 PM by Pres. Grant Hunsicker. Members in attendance were: Helen Torok, Joe Flickinger, John Kreitz, Bessie Bauchspies, Darryl Arner and Scott Rehrig.

Officials in attendance were: Solicitor James Nanovic, Borough Manager Nicole Beckett, Borough Secretary Brenda Koons, Borough Engineer Bruce Steigerwalt, Mayor Tom Mase, Police Chief Brian Biechy, and Fire Chief Patrick Mriss.

Pledge of Allegiance

GUEST SPEAKER – Clark Ritter & Duane Dellecker – 150th Anniversary Committee

Mr. Ritter said the event is under a year away. Planning the events are hectic and a tentative schedule of events is ready. Council was given a copy of the tentative schedule for review to voice their concerns or make comments. He said insurance will be needed for all 8 days of the celebrations with added insurance for the coaster derby and a few other events. The opening and closing ceremony will include the Shade Tree Commission planting the 1st and 150th tree accordingly. The commission would like the both trees to be planted in front of borough hall with the time capsule bench there as well. The seat of the bench will be the time capsule and will be sealed the last day of the celebration before the fireworks begin.

Mr. Ritter said they are now looking at the area behind the welfare office to set off the fireworks but they still need to contact the owner of the property. The cost will go up by 50% or more to shoot them off from that location but it should eliminate council's concerns about the debris falling on homes and cars and thus be approved by the insurance company. Nicole will check with the borough's insurance company to be sure.

Autumn said the committee has raised over \$33,000 and are working hard trying to raise more. She presented a map of the events and requested comments/concerns be addressed as soon as possible.

Jim Zurn introduced Mathew Marks who is the Director of Government Affairs for the Greater Lehigh Valley Realtors. Other realtors were also in the audience. The group wanted to discuss the proposed sidewalk ordinance. GLVR had sent a letter to council expressing their concerns over the new ordinance mostly because it affects the point of sale putting an added cost on the seller/buyer. They are open to discussing the matter with council.

Councilor Arner who is also a realtor said the letter echoes what he has been saying at past meetings. The ordinance is detrimental all the way around and their letter hits the nail on the head.

Councilor Rehrig said his intent for 2015 is for no one to be forced to walk in the streets because there are no sidewalks in place. Under the current ordinance council can mandate residents to put them in right now with 4 votes tonight.

Mr. Marks said the ordinance makes them nervous and may have homes for sale longer because of the ordinance. Look at places now and do a study to repair/put in sidewalks now or put in/fix sidewalks prior to putting a home up for sale and then come back with ideas.

The mayor said a 21 year old got hit because of no sidewalks up near Hanover. This is the reason and doing it this way saves an older person from undue expense and puts it on a younger couple buying the home.

Mr. Zurn said it puts it mostly on the seller who must meet certain criteria to sell the home and this could hinder the sale. There is a grey area at the point of sale inspection. There are 80 homes for sale currently that aren't being sold because of the economy. What can the realtors do? They are glad to have Councilor's Arner, Rehrig and Hunsicker asking the realtor's for their ideas and to help in finding a solution. Perhaps selective enforcement would be a good idea.

Gail Christman questioned the validity of having/not having sidewalks. Councilor Rehrig said by not having sidewalks you are not required to shovel causing children to walk in the street and making it unsafe for them. That is the entire reason behind this ordinance - safety.

Councilor Rehrig said they will table this item if the realtors are willing to come back with some sound ideas at the next council meeting. The realtor's agreed.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of June 22, 2015

Councilors Flickinger/Arner made the motions to approve and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to advertise Clark loader for sale

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

Motion to hire Stacy Smith as substitute crossing guard (clearances received; pending pre-employment physical/screening)

Councilor Rehrig asked the police chief if he met with her and Brian said no but she passed all her clearances. Councilor Rehrig requested Brian meet with her first.

Councilors Arner/Torok made the motions to hire once the chief meets with her and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to advertise Sewer Ordinance

This item was not acted on.

Action on the PennDOT Winter Traffic Services Agreement for the Winter Seasons of 2015-2016

The borough manager said it is a lump sum payment of approximately \$5,000. In 2014 we received and about an additional \$2,500.

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

Approval of Resolution R007-2015 authorizing the Borough Manager to execute the PennDOT Winter Traffic Services Resolution

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

Discussion/Action on sale of real estate located on South 9th Street

Councilor Rehrig asked if the appraisal that was done is legal and the solicitor said yes. Council can approve if the price is under the \$1,500 limit. This meets that criteria. This item was then tabled for discussion in Executive Session.

Discussion/Action on quotation for the onsite valuation for insurance purposes from Mutual Inspection Bureau, Inc. in the amount of \$7,350

The borough manager said the borough has lots of properties and building with values assigned but they are not the true value. The \$7,350 will give us true values should any issues arise with any of them.

Councilors Flickinger/Kreitz made the motions to have the valuations done and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to reject bid for 2015 Street Program

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

Unfinished Business

Adoption of Ordinance 624-2015 pertaining to the construction and maintenance of sidewalks in the borough

Councilors Flickinger/Kreitz made the motions to table this item until the realtors come back next month with their ideas and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Adoption of Ordinance 625-2015 vacating a portion of Parkway and Third Avenue

Councilors Arner/Flickinger made the motions to adopt and all were in favor with Councilor Bauchspies abstaining from the vote with a letter of abstention being submitted. No question or objections.

Officials Reports

Borough Manager

She had nothing to report.

Borough Engineer

Bruce said he can't find anyone to do the patching so Public Works is doing it in house. They have already started on North 7th Street.

He is working on the drawing of Lentz Avenue for the petition to vacate the street. He is also doing inspections at the stadium project as necessary.

Police

Chief Biechy said there are 2 reports in this month's packet bringing things up to date. He is currently working on site distances.

All the smoke detectors in the police station were covered up in the ceiling of his building when the drop ceiling was installed and he is working on fixing this issue.

The annual crossing guard meeting was held and Channel 13 was there. More substitute crossing guards are still needed. Officer Bender and Detective Prebosnyak are attending trainings.

Mayor

Mayor Mase will hold a department meeting in early September. He has asked that any ideas should be put in writing and left in his mailbox. The parking meters on 1st Street are being ticketed more vigilantly.

Fire Chief

Nothing.

President of Council

Nothing.

Solicitor

Nothing.

Treasurer

Additional list of bills totaling \$4,737.29

Committee Reports

Finance and Administration – Nothing.

Streets, Buildings and Codes – Councilor Flickinger asked that councilors wishing to be in the parade let him know asap so he can be sure cars are available.

Police, Fire and Safety – Councilor Rehrig asked if a list of site distance problem areas were given to Tim Dow. Chief Biechy said he discussed them with Tim.

Light & Power Committee – Councilor Torok liked the enclosure at the L&P building. Councilor Flickinger met with one person Lonny is interested in hiring.

Sewer Committee – Nothing.

Public Works & Recreation – Councilor Kreitz said Kris is doing a good job. He told Kris that council is pleased with what the department is doing and to keep it up.

President Hunsicker said the pool is closed except for weekends.

Acceptance of Officials Reports

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to accept the official's reports as presented and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Acceptance of Accounts Payable

Councilors Rehrig/Bauchspies made the motions to accept the accounts payable as presented and addition list of bills and all were in favor with no questions were objections.

Motion to go into Executive Session for Personnel and Real Estate and Litigation

Councilors Flickinger/Rehrig made the motions to go in at 7:45 p.m.

Motion to go back into Regular Session

Councilors Arner/Flickinger made the motions to go back in at 8:25 p.m.

Action on items from Executive Session

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to approve Alton Steigerwalt's retirement effective August 28, 2015 and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to adopt the L&P part-time laborer job description and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to hire Joel Rutter as a part-time L&P laborer at a rate of \$10/hr. and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Councilors Flickinger/Torok made the motions to hire David Hill as a part-time Public Works laborer at a rate of \$10/hr. and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Councilors Rehrig/Kreitz made the motions to approve the sale of real estate proposed by Blakeslee Commons for \$1,100, with all costs incurred paid by the developer, a separate plan must be submitted for subdivision/consolidation and reviewed/approved by the borough engineer, subdivision fees will be waived as it is a borough project and a sales agreement must be executed. All were in favor with no questions or objections.

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to adjust the rate of pay for part-time employees from \$8 to \$10 effective August 24, 2015 and all were in favor with no question or objections.

Motion to go back into Executive Session

Councilors Rehrig/Kreitz made the motions to go back in at 8:35 p. m.

Motion to go back into Regular Session

Councilors Rehrig/Kreitz made the motions to go back in at 8:36 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 PM and all were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Brenda L. Koons
Borough Secretary