

December 19, 2016

The regular meeting of Lehighon Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday, December 19, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 7 PM by Pres. Grant Hunsicker. Members in attendance were: Lisa Perry, Jared McEvoy, Joe Flickinger, Helen Torok, Darryl Arner and Scott Rehrig.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

GUEST SPEAKER: Mr. Josh Schaeffer, On the Grind Association – Proposal on Skatepark

Mr. Schaeffer of 901 Beaver Run Drive owns and operates JEM Concrete for the past 8 years. He is a mason by trade and knows his job from the ground up. He works for all types of clients including boroughs and townships. The On the Grind Organization goals are to come into parks that kids enjoy. The organization handles all grants for the park and rehab of existing playground equipment. There are 6 million skaters in US and only 10,000 Skate parks. It is a \$4.8 billion market and grows daily. They were looking at the Grove or Skyline to build the Skatepark.

The Borough Manager met with Mr. Schaeffer, his team and Tom. She and Tom thought Skyline would be better because we are not sure of the outcome of the Grove at this time. Their request seems reasonable without asking much from the borough. They will fundraise and do the grants themselves. They currently have 4 fundraiser lined up and ready to go for the spring. Councilor Perry asked if insurance was an issue. Mr. Schaeffer said it would go under the standard liability policy as an additional rider. You have an unstaffed park with signs posted to wear a helmet and to skate at your own risk the liability is basically the same as if a kid fell off a sliding board.

Council asked the approximate cost to build a park. The On the Grind Organization will handle it all. Most parks cost \$70,000 total for a 14,000 square foot park which is about \$10 a square foot. Lots of concrete and rebar is used to build this type of park. Solicitor Nanovic asked who will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance. Mr. Schaeffer said they will police the park and clean it up each week. The park will be closed at night. Nicole said she and Tom were impressed with their leg work. They came in with a plan, they are willing to do the grant work, and they have an online petition going with over 350 signatures.

Mr. Schaeffer said Change.org. has the petition. Tony Hawk gives up to \$25,000 but kids must stay involved or grant money stops. Tom Mase asked if this would create more liability for borough. Nicole said no it would just a rider like for any other park. Mrs. Schaeffer said skateboard injuries are very low. She said the park must be built to accommodate any skater from beginner to expert. It's a grant requirement. It must also be able to be used by bikes, rollerblades and scooters too. The Organization will clean up and take care of it. Minersville, Frackville and Tamaqua has them. Mr. Schaeffer said they want to make it nice for years to come. Councilor Rehrig asked if the park would be open

to anyone and was told yes. It would be designed for 25,000 people to use and the Borough only has 5,000.

Mr. Schaeffer said the group was originally looking at the empty lot at the Grove but now that the grant was received for the Grove it may not be feasible. Grants must be submitted by January 17, 2017. Councilors McEvoy/Rehrig motion to continue to look into a Skatepark with oversight by the borough manager and to proceed with applying for grants to build a Skatepark at Skyline and all were in favor with no question or objections.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

Racine Miller 132 South 2nd Street. She said there is a nuisance property at 134 South 2nd Street selling heroine. Lots of traffic in and out of there. She has called it in and so has her daughter. She had been here for 16 years and said there are a lot of deaths in this area. She will do everything to get rid of drugs. She also supports the Skatepark.

Bruce Morrison 277 S 1st St. Temple Alley in bad condition. He said homes and driveways back up to this alley. He has been trying to figure out how to get remediation for that. Nicole said the borough stopped maintaining it years ago. She suggested doing what was done for Betty's alley if council is interested. Councilor Torok said the legal advisor for the temple is in the process of sending a letter to Attorney Nanovic on this issue so the process has begun. The Borough Engineer asked if they are looking at the whole area or just the temple area. Councilor Torok said the whole area. Mr. Morrison said there are people moving in & out every other week. Councilor Torok said the temple must present the issue to the legal person here and go from there. A meeting may be involved with the neighbors. The Borough Engineer asked if a remediation was in process and Councilor Torok said no. Solicitor Nanovic said when we did Betty's Alley a majority of the property owners were in favor of this. When we know the 2 end points of property to be turned over to the borough; we will go from there. Bruce said he will work on talking to the neighbors. When the alley was paved before it was not done with proper drainage. He has lived there for 12 years. Solicitor Nanovic asked if council is open to this. The Borough Engineer said there is a sewer line in the alley. Nicole asked the Borough Engineer if he knew anything. Mr. Steigerwalt said the Housing Authority did work on their section of the alley. He is not sure if the deeds show the property's going to the center of the alley or to the alley and stops. It will take research to see who owns what part of the alley. Rehrig/Flickinger tabled this item until further study can be done and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of October 24 & November 21, 2016

Councilors Torok/Perry made the motions to and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion/Action on L&P 35 Bay proposals

Nicole said the request for proposals went out and the cost did go up since out original request. The low bidder is Service Construction with a bid price of \$19,344 for labor only. She said the borough will purchase the materials.

Councilors Flickinger/Perry made the motions to award the bid to Service Construction for \$19,344 and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to advertise Police #3 – 2011 Ford Crown Victoria for bid

Chief Biechy said the new car #3 is here and the old vehicle is parked at the Public Works building.

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

Motion to advertise the 2017 Meeting Dates

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

Motion to approve 2017 Reappointment List with permission:

Planning Commission – Henry Long, Sr.

David Krum

Shade Tree – Robert Strausberger

Ken Leffler

Scott Wingert

CCMA – Jim Deebel

Water Authority – Lamont Ebbert

Zoning Hearing Board – Clark Ritter

Property Maintenance Board – Brian Rubin

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

Motion to adopt the 2017 Budget

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

Motion to adopt Ordinance 635-2016 setting the tax levy rate for FY 2017

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

Motion to adopt Resolution R022-2016 setting the 2017 rate of contribution to the Police Pension Fund

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

Motion to adopt Resolution R023-2016 setting 2017 salaries for non-union employees and professional staff

Councilor Rehrig/Torok made the motions to adopt the resolution and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to approve the AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement for the term of January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2019

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

Motion to approve invoices to be paid prior to December 31st

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

Motion to approve lease agreement with William Moyer for property for digital sign

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

Motion to approve Transfer of \$40,000 from General Fund to Wells Fargo for the Fire Equipment Fund

Nicole said this is the ½ mill we put on for new equipment.

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

Motion to approve Transfer of \$160,000 from General Fund to Fire Station Construction Fund

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

Motion to approve changes to the Borough's Group Health Plan

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

Motion to adopt the Cafeteria Plan Agreement

Nicole said this is a result of the AFSCME collective bargaining. There were some changes to the health care there and there is a \$1,000 monthly opt out limit in the Cafeteria Plan.

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

Councilor Rehrig said he was in contact with Senator Yudichak thanking him for his efforts to provide grants to the borough of \$200,000 for Baer Memorial Park Improvements and \$40,000 for a Mater Site Development Plan at the Grove. This was through the efforts of Mrs. Koons who did the grant and thanks to Representative Heffley for supporting the borough.

Unfinished Business

Continued discussion on request from Tax Collector to consider increase

Nicole said council had asked for a comparison at the last meeting and she provided one in the packets. She does receive 2 ½% on all taxes collected. You can see her increases over the years on the spreadsheet provided. You can still decide up until the January meeting. Nicole will see what her total salary for the county and school district is and she will estimate a ¼ and ½ percent increase for the next meeting.

ADDENDUM

Motion to approve the Christmas Light Contest Winners List

Nicole thanked LDI for going around and choosing the winners.

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

Motion to approve Resolution R024-2016 authorizing the Borough Manger to execute lease agreement with William Moyer

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

Motion to approve the Madd Batters 5K on Saturday, May 13, 2017

Councilors Flickinger/Rehrig made the motions to approve the 5K and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to advertise Ashtown Drive Bridge Rehabilitation Project as per correspondence from Coleman Environmental Engineering, LLC

Nicole said she will advertise January 23 with a site showing in early February and have the bids for the February 27th meeting. Work is restricted in the stream from March 1st thru June 15th. We hope to have this completed by August 11th.

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

Fireman's Relief Letter Concerning the Air Cleaners in Garage Bay

The solicitor said we can table this item and give it some thought. He's not sure what happens if you just give them back to Fireman's Relief. This way nothing should be affected. Councilor Flickinger said the blowers filter out CO2 from the cars in the bay. Nicole pointed out that if we don't take them we still need to find a storage space for them

Councilors McEvoy/Rehrig made the motions to table this until next meeting and to do further research and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Officials Reports

Borough Manager

Council received her report. She approved closing down Borough Hall for December 23rd and 30th. This was not presented in time to advertise this so she is asking if council wants to act on this. Nicole, Scott, Grant and Lonny met with Utility Engineers to discuss the rate study.

Councilors Perry/Flickinger made the motions to close borough hall December 23rd & 30th and all were in favor with no question or objections.

Borough Engineer

Nothing

Police

Chief Biechy said the new SUV is in service and being used as we speak. The surveillance system has been installed in the office. It is up and running but we still need the in house training. Two officer completed the bomb recognition training along with our fire chief. He is looking to hire another part time officer – Elias Batihk. He would like council to act on his last request.

Councilors Rehrig/McEvoy made the motions to hire Allais as a part time officer and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Mayor

Mayor Mase commented on all the hard work that went into making Leighton look good for the holidays this year and thanked all those who were a part of it.

Fire Chief

Absent

President of Council

Merry Christmas

Solicitor

Nothing

Treasurer

Additional list of bills totaling \$68,302.11 and the final budget transfer of \$346,450 from L&P Fund

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

Committee Reports

Finance and Administration – Darryl Arner, Chair; Lisa Perry, Co-Chair – Darryl said it was heartwarming to see how nice the town looks with the trees in the parks.

Streets, Buildings and Codes – Joe Flickinger, Chair; Darryl Arner, Co-Chair – Joe said Public Works did great work with this past weekend's snowstorm.

Police, Fire and Safety – Scott Rehrig, Chair; Jared McEvoy, Co-Chair – Scott said all departments are outstanding. Merry Christmas

Light & Power Committee – Helen Torok, Chair; Joe Flickinger, Co-Chair – Helen wished everyone a memorable holiday season and safe travels.

Sewer Committee – Lisa Perry, Chair; Helen Torok, Co-Chair – Lisa wished all a Merry Christmas.

Public Works & Recreation – Jared McEvoy, Chair; Scott Rehrig, Co-Chair --Jared thanked everyone for their hard work throughout the 2016 year and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Acceptance of Officials Reports

Councilors Flickinger/Rehrig 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 Arner/Rehrig made the motions to accept the accounts payable plus the additional list of bills as presented and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to go into Executive Session for Personnel

Councilors McEvoy/Perry made the motions to go in at 8:11 p.m.

Motion to go back into Regular Session

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to go back in at 8:18 p.m.

Action on Items from Executive Session

Motion to approve Chief Biechy's contract

Councilor Flickinger asked why we are not waiting until after reappointment and Nicole said we do not reorganize in 2017 and his contract runs out at midnight December 31, 2016.

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

Councilors Rehrig/Perry motions to allow Tom Evans to buy back unused vacation time and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Councilors Rehrig/Perry made the motions to allow Kris Kunkle to buy back 56 vacation days and carry 3 days. All were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 PM and all were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Brenda L. Koons
Borough Secretary