

November 21, 2016

The regular meeting of Lehighon Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday, November 21, 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, Police Chief Brian Biechy and Fire Chief Patrick Mriss. Absent: Jr. Councilor Addison Howland.

Pledge of Allegiance

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

Alice Wannamaker, 137 South Street. The Chamber is partnering with the D&L to designate Lehighon Borough as a Trail Town. They are doing the same for Slatington Borough. This will open up avenues for LDI and the Chamber to apply for grant monies to better the downtown. They started working on this a month ago. A self-analysis will be done for each borough with Lehighon doing it for Slatington and vice versa. We have a group of 7 so far to do the analysis but usually have 10. The group will look around the borough to see what is there – bike racks, park benches and picnic tables; what is needed. This will hopefully be completed by the end of next year. Lehighon would serve as model trail town for Eastern PA with designation to follow.

Autumn Abelovsky, 501 North 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Three and a half years ago she came before council to ask to start the 150<sup>th</sup> Celebration Committee. She is here now to say thank you for letting the committee to do what they set out to do. They want to end the year with a Lehighon Community Celebration. They partnered with several groups in town to put on a 3-day weekend celebration. Besides the main tree in the amphitheater there were approximately 60 purchase to be divided between the Upper and Lower parks.

Last week the Sesquicentennial time capsule was done. The group has been searching for the infamous 1966 time capsule. At this point the committee is resigned to the fact that it does not exist. It's not in any records or documents that could be looked at by the committee. Here say gave us many locations were remembered and checked out but not found. The last placed we looked at was the cornerstone of Borough Hall. The State Police came in and did an ultrasound of the stone to see if anything was there. They used it as a training exercise and something was found. The stone was opened and the documents were water logged but we are trying to preserve them so they can be displayed to the public. We didn't want to make a big deal about what we were doing in case nothing was found.

We have had our last meeting and will be turning over approximately \$10,000 to the Parks and Recreation Board.

Jesse Jordan of Weissport told council he just moved here from Catasauqua and was interested in sitting down with council to discuss building a skate park next year. He wants to give kids a place to go and do something that will keep them off the street, off drugs and out of trouble.

Councilor McEvoy asked Mr. Jordan if he had a rough estimate of what a skate park would cost. Mr. Jordan said they did one in Catasauqua on property the airport owns. It about 3 years to build on a tennis court size area and cost about \$4,000 for equipment and \$900 /month rent for the property.

President Hunsicker said council will take it into consideration.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### Special Meeting of November 10, 2016

The mayor had a question. He wanted to know why he was always missed as being present at the budget meeting.

Councilors Arner/McEvoy made the motions to approve with the corrections of mayor being present at this meeting and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

#### NEW BUSINESS

#### Motion to approve Resolution R19-2016 adopting the Carbon County 2015 Hazard Vulnerability Assessment and Mitigation Plan Update

Nicole said the county requested this be done to update the county Mitigation Plan. It's a requirement. In 2011 or 2012 we adopted the plan. Councilor Flickinger said this is to be done every 5 years.

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

#### Motion to approve Resolution R20-2016 - approving the submission of the PennDOT Multimodal Grant to be used for the Upper Park Pedestrian Connection Improvements

Nicole said this is the second application we submitted for this project. The first went to DCED for their multimodal funds for sidewalk, walking path and lighting improvements.

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

#### Motion to approve PennDOT Multimodal Grant Funding Commitment letter in the amount of \$149,943

Nicole said the \$149,943 is the 30 percent required match amount.

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

#### Motion to adopt Ordinance 634-2016 amending the Parks and Recreation Board Ordinance

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

#### Motion to approve Resolution R21-2016 for submission of the MAP Grant to update the Zoning Ordinance and SALDO

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

#### Motion to have free parking in the downtown until the New Year

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

#### Discussion on the 2017 Proposed Budget

Nicole said council requested she make cuts to equal a zero to 1 ½ mill increase. She was able to make the cuts as presented in her memo to council to 1 ½ mills.

Councilor Perry asked if any of the repairs to the buildings they discussed were cut. Nicole was not sure what was in there at the time. The roof was not the security upgrades remain in there. What is good about borough hall is that the money for repairs can come from Light & Power, and Sewer; not just the General Fund.

Councilors Rehrig made the motions to go with a zero mill increase and have the borough manager do a rate study. Nicole said she touched on that in her memo that if council wasn't interested in raising taxes the \$121,551 deficit she needs to make up so you could authorize the additional transfer coming from the Light & Power Fund. She requested a rate study over the last two year since mid-2015 and was assured by the engineers that we would be done by budget time and we do not have it to date. She can go back to them tomorrow and say we are relying on this for figures as far as adjusting the electric rate.

#### Motion to adopt the 2017 Proposed Budget

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to adopt the 2017 proposed budget with a zero mill increase and the deficit coming from an increase of the transfer amount from the Light & Power Fund to the General Fund and the deficit coming from the L&P Fund and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Councilor Rehrig/Perry made the motions to have the rate study completed and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

#### Motion to advertise the 2017 Tax Levy Ordinance

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to advertise the 2017 Tax Levy Ordinance with the real estate tax staying a 7.5 mills and the occupational tax staying at 6 mills and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

#### Motion to approve audit engagement letter for the 2016 services

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

#### Discussion/Action on the Gulotta Group Proposal for technical assistance with blighted properties

Nicole brought up information she received at the last meeting. She did talk to Mr. Gulotta. He provided a 3 phase proposal but she doesn't feel we have the insight to really deal with blight especially to the degree we have in town. Phase 1 is \$500. He would provide general technical assistance and spends half a day in the borough going over the nature and extent of the blight in the borough and gives a report. This may provide us with some sort of guidance. If we are comfortable with that we may want to move into the next stages.

Councilors Rehrig/McEvoy made the motions to have phase one completed for \$500 and then decide if council wishes to proceed or not and all were in favor with no questions or objections. Nicole was requested to look into seeing if county funds were available for demolition like Lansford received.

#### Discussion/Action on request to reduce letter of credit for Lehighton Development, LP

Nicole said this is per the Municipal Planning Code. We have our letter of credit with Blakeslee Commons and they are requesting to reduce the letter of credit as per the improvements that have taken place. Bruce did have a chance to inspect them and he'd need to provide certification to the board that it is acceptable. Bruce said everything is

good. Councilor Rehrig said that we usually don't do that and Bruce said we haven't in the past. Scott doesn't think it's a good idea. Solicitor Nanovic said it's not a bad idea. It is required under the Municipal Planning Code. Jim believes that if it is not passed by council after 45 days it may be reduced. The idea is that the bonding is in place to assure they do the work. They did so they do not need the full bond amount in place. He asked Nicole how often this could come up and Nicole said it could be monthly. There is nothing wrong with it. Nicole said the same bank is being used by Jim Thorpe River Adventures so we will be having the same request coming from them also. This is how they do it on their side of things.

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to reduce the Leighton Development, LP's letter of credit by \$32,665 and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

#### 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. Council decided to hold off on this item.

##### Discussion/Action on Letters of Interest for the Parks and Recreation Board

President Hunsicker read letters from Kathy Long and Louise Christman, members of the 150<sup>th</sup> Committee wishing to be appointed to the board. Nicole asked the solicitor if the board can be formed with only 6 members and was told yes. Members are Autumn Abelovsky, Clark Ritter, Kathy Long, Louise Christman, Maureen McTague and Brenda Sacramento.

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to appoint all six persons that submitted letters of interest to the Parks & Recreation board and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

##### Follow Up on Action on Police Station Expansion Project

Nicole said at the last meeting there was discussion and action on expanding the police station into Fire Company #2. The discussion got rather heated and she is hoping that will not happen tonight but she needs some clarification. In the original discussion it was about taking the bay at the meeting the motion said take the whole building. Which is it? Councilor Rehrig said we are taking the upstairs from corner to corner and the bay. The other side of the bay is still used by the fire company. Nicole asked for a time frame as to when to start the expansion. Councilor Rehrig thought by January 1<sup>st</sup> would be good. Nicole's next question was since it is only the bay what will separate the hose room and the engineer's room from the police garage. Councilor Rehrig said a wall. She allocated \$15,000 into the budget for this work. Is that sufficient into 2017? Councilor Rehrig thought so as this will be a slow process.

Chief Biechy said his understanding from the discussions he's had is that police department will have to look at this as a multiyear project and piece things together. If we are doing the downstairs and the upstairs with Public Works doing the work then \$15,000 is enough. If we have a bad winter and the workforce isn't available to do the work that creates other issues. If he is told to come in under \$15,000 he will do that. Brian asked if the borough workforce will be allocated to do the work. Councilor Rehrig said it will

depend if they have time. He suggested Nicole and Kris discuss the availability of men on given days to do the work and go from there.

Councilor Arner said he wishes both departments could hear the discussions on this topic. Council would like to do more for both departments but it just isn't feasible at this time.

#### ADDENDUM

#### Motion to approve Tom's additional list of employees for the Winter Youth Program for 2016-2017

To is requesting a total of 5 employees for the program -3 existing employees - Alex Rubin, Tori Kunkle and Elizabeth Marzen; and 2 new employees needing pre-employment screenings - Mary Kaye Snyder, Chrissy Mayernik.

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

#### Motion to approve the additional list of bills totaling \$18,354.85

To be approved with Accounts Payable.

#### Officials Reports

##### Borough Manager

Council received her report for October and November. There is a lot going on right now. She had nothing specific to touch on unless council had questions about anything.

##### Borough Engineer

Nothing

##### Police

Nothing.

##### Mayor

Nothing.

##### Fire Chief

Nothing.

##### President of Council

Nothing

##### Solicitor

Nothing

##### Treasurer

Additional list of bills.

#### Committee Reports

Finance and Administration - Darryl Arner, Chair; Lisa Perry, Co-Chair - Councilor Flickinger said we received a check from the COG auction totaling \$461.95 for items Light & Power took to be auctioned off.

Streets, Buildings and Codes - Joe Flickinger, Chair; Darryl Arner, Co-Chair - Joe said on the 4<sup>th</sup> & Cedar Streets project - the sidewalks are now done and Public Works dug around the drains.

Police, Fire and Safety - Scott Rehrig, Chair; Jared McEvoy, Co-Chair - Happy Thanksgiving.

Light & Power Committee - Helen Torok, Chair; Joe Flickinger, Co-Chair - Nothing.

Sewer Committee – Lisa Perry, Chair; Helen Torok, Co-Chair – Nothing.

Public Works & Recreation – Jared McEvoy, Chair; Scott Rehrig, Co-Chair --Jared wished all the borough employees a Happy Thanksgiving.

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/Torok 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, Real Estate and Litigation

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to go in at 7:55 p.m.

Motion to go back into Regular Session

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

Action on Items from Executive Session

Motion to allow Mountain Karate to pay \$1,000 a month in lieu of \$1,500 with Tom controlling the gym when not in use.

Councilors Rehrig/McEvoy made the motions to reduce the rent and have Tom use the gym as he sees fit when not in use by Mountain Karate and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to promote Corporal Prebosnyak to Sergeant effective November 21, 2016

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

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 PM and all were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Brenda L. Koons  
Borough Secretary