

June 26, 2017

The regular meeting of Lehighon Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday, June 26, 2017. 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, Scott Rehrig and Darryl Arner. Absent: Jr. Councilor Addison Howland.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

PRESENTATION: CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION - Lehighon High School Girls Track Team 2017 District Champions

President Hunsicker and Vice-President Rehrig presented the team with a certificate of appreciation. Mr. Blakeslee said that Sarah Gaston is a record breaker. She broke the 1981 record for the 2 mile relay. It was a really good year.

GUEST SPEAKER: Jerry McAward - Lehighon Outdoor Center

Mr. McAward told council he hopes to have his project completed by mid-August. He would like to put a sign behind Castle Grill at the switchback suggesting people turn left to visit his outdoor center. He said it is a bit self-serving but once the Jim Thorpe Bridge project is complete; people will come down the towpath but won't turn up to his business or Trailhead.

Solicitor Nanovic said that he may need to go through zoning for the sign.

Councilors Rehrig/Torok made the motions to allow the sign provided it is approved by zoning and all permits are gotten to put a sign behind Castle Grill and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Mr. McAward would also like to work with the borough to clean up the enclosure and area around the old sewer plant. He would like permission to use that area to park buses. He is willing to put up a new 8 foot fence and lease it from the borough. He would not need the building only the area inside the fence to park his buses and maybe a trailer or two.

He could certainly use the area behind his building but he is required to keep some "green space" and has also started planning so events there with the borough during months that don't impact his business.

Councilor Flickinger said the fire department uses it for training. We practice quite often and as Mr. Rehrig has said our police and fire departments are the best around. If we have nowhere to train we cannot protect the town. That would be his main concern as they have nowhere left to train anymore.

Jerry asked if he could use a corner of the property. Councilor Flickinger asked about the place where KIA parks their extra cars. President Hunsicker said he thought the fire department would be going to the county facility when it is finished for practice. Chief Mriss said that facility is not for weekly training. He also reminded council that at the fire departments Strategic Planning meeting council does not want the department leaving town each week for practice. The county facility will be used mostly for class training.

Councilor Rehrig asked if the space can be shared between Mr. McAward and the fire department. Chief Mriss said yes; short term on a year to year basis. He said football practice has started at Baer Memorial so they can no longer hold their weekly training there and have moved to the old sewer plant until the season is over.

President Hunsicker asked if the borough owns any of the property where KIA parks their extra cars.

Council wants the fire department and Mr. McAward to meet and discuss how to make this work.

Guest Speaker: Christopher Strohler & Dennis DeMara – Wildlands Conservancy

They were at the meeting to discuss with council the possibility of a designated water trail for boaters and a parking area. They work with the 10 counties touching the Lehigh River Watershed. Over the last 10 years they have been working on the Lehigh River Water Trail with DCNR, PA Boat Commission and PA Environmental Council came together and established a series of partnerships throughout the state that are designated water trails with public access points and local managers to help build partnerships to see that there is public use of these areas. Wildlands became the manager back then and we put together a website and helped establish public access areas along the way. They are looking at the beach area near Dunbar Bottling through Lehigh River Access and Stewardship Program. They are looking at putting in signage, parking, restrooms, etc. down the road.

Wildlands proposed stepping back to look at 3 potential sites down the line for construction with Dunbar's being the 3rd location. We are requesting to look at putting in new infrastructure/public access there. Maybe help to balance some of the activity that is going on there. The ownership of some of this property has be questionable over the years. We are proposing to use some of the possible Fish and Boat Commission money to survey the property to see if it is feasible. Would it be possible to have a memorandum of understanding with the borough to take to the Fish & Boat Commission to show that we do have borough support for this?

Councilor Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to have a Memorandum of Understanding drafted for the borough manager and solicitor to review and for the borough to partner with the conservancy on this possible project and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Mr. DeMara said he did present this to the County who said they were not interested at this time. He did say that Mr. McAward is interested in partnering with them.

Mr. McAward said this ties in to making the borough a destination. The area chosen is away from the commercial area of rafting and tubing and will do the borough well.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

Mr. Steve Mazalewski of 111 N 1st Street and owner of Bonnie & Clyde's told council he applied for a permit to construct a deck on the back of his building. He said that everything has been approved except for burying the wires. Dr. Ghali signed off on it but Mr. Joe McConnell, who owns a small garage behind Bonnie & Clyde's still has not signed off. Mr. Mazalewski finally met with Mr. McConnell and he said no. Mr. McConnell complained about the trash & his tenants. Mr. Mazalewski is at a halt because of a 20

foot piece of wire from the pole to Mr. McConnell's garage. He is asking the borough if there were is anything that can be done to help get this project going.

Councilors McEvoy/Rehrig made the motions to have the borough manager look into the Bonnie & Clyde/McConnell issue to see if a resolution can be found and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Ryan Bowman of 85 West Bridge Street, Nesquehoning, Founder of PA Outdoor Veterans. He wanted to ask council about a property on Gypsy Hill Road owned by Radha Devani. For about 3 years he had an agreement with her to maintain it for her. It is his understanding that this project has become an eye sore. His daughter is entering 9th grade and needs to do a senior project. He thought of this property. His organization is in a position now to give back to the community. If the borough would be interested in working under the Blight & Abandonment Act to move forward with a petition he and his organization would be interested in working with the borough to get that property up to par.

Nicole said that council did adopt the Blight & Abandonment Act a few months ago. Mr. Bowman is asking if the borough would be willing to start this process on this property. It is a lengthy process and would require a lot of the solicitor's time and her time. The property is for sale. However this property is not a priority of council.

The solicitor suggested having code enforcement go out and look at the property to see what needs to be done to if first and bring his findings back to council what we can and can't do.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of April 24, May 22 and Special Meeting of June 12, 2017

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

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to approve request from Nesquehoning Borough to utilize our Fire Police for traffic control during the Veteran's Day Parade November 5, 0217

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

Motion to approve 4th Annual Carbon Adventure Race along Lehigh Drive and Trailhead on July 22, 2017

The borough manager said that she is not sure fire police are needed for this event. She has been going back and forth with Alice Wanamaker but has received no answer. She then asked Councilor McEvoy if he could answer a few things before approving it. Nicole had asked if the fire police were needed if there were going to be any road closing and the number of attendees expected. Councilor McEvoy said the number of attendees is still fluctuating but is around 50 now and possibly 20 volunteers. They may need fire police to help people cross the street. There may be parking down along Lehigh Drive but thinks they will need to use some of the borough parking lots across the street as well as use of the old sewer plant.

Councilors Perry/McEvoy made the motions to approve provided the details are worked out and ok with Nicole and the fire police are contacted to see if they are available for traffic control and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to approve resignation of Logan Hine as part time laborer for Public Works

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

Motion to adopt Ordinance 638 authorizing vending carts and food trucks

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

Motion to adopt Resolution R015-2017 amending the fee schedule for cart and food vendors

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

Motion to sign Community Planning and Management, LLC agreement to proceed with the Map Grant

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

Discussion/Action on the Iron & Bridge Streets 12,470 Volt Circuit Upgrade Project Bid Opening

Nicole said we received 4 bids. The low bid was received from MetroTek and have worked them before with no issues. The materials have been purchased. This is for the work. Utility Engineers recommendation is to move forward with the bid from MetroTek

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to award to Metro Tech in the amount of \$318,900 and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Discussion/Action on the request for line of credit reduction for Blakeslee Commons

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to approve a reduction in the amount of \$382,389.78 and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Discussion/Action on the Police Facebook Page Proposal

Chief Biechy said they have been discussing this for a while and have some issues with it as far as controlling public comment. We are looking at it as a one-way avenue to get information out to the public. Officer Ahner has gotten several proposals from several different departments across the country on how they use it. We wanted council's thoughts on it before proceeding any further.

Councilor Rehrig asked what constructive tool would there be for your department by doing this. Chief Biechy said everything is on social media. People check Facebook before the news media and official websites. Some of the issues is that we don't want it turning into a negative comment page. It would be used by us for closing streets of like with 2nd Street. "We are closing the street. Public Works needs to have it done." It's a great way to let people know what's going on like for snow removal. Events that the police department are helping with or hosting like National Night Out.

Councilor Rehrig said he would like to see a copy of the policy before making a decision. His only fear is that is that people will post incidents to the police department instead of Comm center. Chief Biechy agrees. They won't be able to respond or post on it. It will literally be a one-way feed of information from us out.

Motion to advertise the Storm Water Management Ordinance

Nicole said that there were some suggested changes from the borough engineer. If you are interested in moving forward with this the motion would be to advertise once amended based on the borough engineer's suggestions and the solicitor's review.

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

Unfinished Business

Discussion/Action on Dilly Dogs Request

None required being Dilly Dogs will go through application process through borough manager.

ADDENDUM

Motion to approve reclassification of Jeffrey Repsher to Lineman 1 effective July 9, 2017

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to approve the reclassification and all were in favor.

Motion to approve the additional list of bills totaling \$14,777.87

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

Officials Reports

Borough Manager

Council received her report. She did forget to include the DEP periodic report but will see that everyone receives a copy of it. Public Works has started the 2nd Street paving project. We are in the process of replacing transformers at the substation. Ours are out of date. She wanted to ask council for permission from council if we can get the volunteers to do a "Touch a Truck" or "Meet the Fleet" event during Fall Fest with Parks & Rec. We would bring some of the borough trucks and other equipment if our employees are willing to come out to do this on September 23, 2017.

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to allow the trucks and employees to be part of the event and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Borough Engineer

Nothing other than he is continuing to do various inspections on the projects going on throughout the borough.

Police

Chief Biechy said the two new police hires are in the audience. He introduced Officers Gulla and Green.

The new portables we purchased through the equipment grant we were handed out today. He finished the bulletproof vest grant and it is submitted. The license plate readers that were part of the grant were ordered. We hope to have that installed on the car by July.

The heroin epidemic, the Fentanyl, the Car fentanyl has a big push on by the DOJ for personal protection equipment. They want us to switch to nitro gloves. The hospital donated some masks to us and he is in the process of getting safety glasses so each officer has their own equipment. It's not really going to help on the stops at the time but this is meant to be used if we are going to spend some time searching a car or going inside a house. It is the recommended protocol at this point.

Mayor

Mayor Mase asked if council got their Borough News book. It has a lot of good information on skate parks and suggests council reads it.

Fire Chief

Nothing.

President of Council

Nothing.

Solicitor

Nothing.

Treasurer

Nothing.

Committee Reports

Finance and Administration – Darryl Arner, Chair; Lisa Perry, Co-Chair – Nothing.

Streets, Buildings and Codes – Joe Flickinger, Chair; Darryl Arner, Co-Chair – Joe said Nicole touched on the 2nd Street project starting. Public Works did a phenomenal job on the parking lot around their facility and the various alleys that they were working on last month.

Councilor Arner commented that there are a lot of weeds and lawns in town are not being mowed and the grass is over a foot high. In the curbs and gutter the weeds are 2 foot high.

Police, Fire and Safety – Scott Rehrig, Chair; Jared McEvoy, Co-Chair – Scott said that the chiefs of police and fire are doing an outstanding job and he would like to have that passed on to their departments that council appreciates their good work. Councilor McEvoy said that he witnessed an accident this weekend between a motorcycle and a car while the farmers market was going on at South and 2nd Street. He said the police, fire and fire police came down swiftly and acted as a team and it was very impressive seeing them in action. It makes him proud to be part of this community.

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 said great job on the parking lot and alleys. They are doing a great job.

Acceptance of Officials Reports

Councilors Arner/Flickinger 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 and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to go into Executive Session for Personnel

Councilors Rehrig/Arner at 8:21 p.m.

Motion to go back into Regular Session

Councilors Flickinger/Rehrig at 8:30 p.m.

Action on Items from Executive Session

None.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger at 8:30:30 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Brenda L. Koons

Borough Secretary