

December 17, 2018

The regular meeting of Lehighon Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday, December 17, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 7 PM by Pres. Grant Hunsicker. Members in attendance were: Lisa Perry, Jared McEvoy, Autumn Abelovsky, Ryan Saunders, Darryl Arner and Joe Flickinger. Absent: Jr. Councilor Addison Howland.

Officials in attendance were: Borough Manager Nicole Beckett, Borough Secretary Brenda Kreitz, Solicitor James Nanovic, Borough Engineer Bruce Steigerwalt, Mayor Clark Ritter, Police Chief Brian Biechy, Public Works Superintendent Kris Kunkle and Recreation Director Tom Evans. Absent: Fire Chief Patrick Mriss and Light and Power Superintendent Lonny Armbruster.

Pledge of Allegiance

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of November 19, 2018, Special Meetings of November 28 & December 6, 2018

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

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to approve reappointment list with permission:

Water Authority – Brian Rubin

Sewer Authority – Manny DaCosta, Jim Deebel

Zoning Hearing Board – Richard Zimmerman, Denise Murphy, Ricky Graver\_

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

The borough secretary also said that a term has expired on the CCMA Board. She asked if a member of council wished to be appointed. The meetings are the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 4 p.m. President Hunsicker stated that if there is no interest from borough council then Helen Torok would like to be reappointed to the board for another term.

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

Motion to approve the 2019 Meeting Dates

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

Motion to adopt Ordinance 649-2018 vacating a portion of Lentz Avenue

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

Motion to approve time extension until March 31, 2019 for Subdivision/Vacation Plan & Land Development Plan for Debra & Joseph Bennett

Councilors Arner/McEvoy made the motion to approve the extension and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 650-2018 setting the tax levy rate for FY 2019

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

Consideration on the vacation of part of Penn Avenue, part of Jefferson Street and all of Graver Street for the Bennett 443 Project

Councilors Abelovsky/Perry made the motions to advertise once the executed petition is received and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to approve invoices to be paid prior to December 31, 2018 with list to be provided to council in January

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

Motion to adopt Resolution R23-2018 setting 2019 salaries for non-union employees and professional staff

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

Motion to adopt the 2019 budget

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

Unfinished Business

Continued discussion on sidewalk ordinance

Councilor Abelovsky asked to have this item brought back at a later date.

Addendum

Motion to approve additional bills totaling \$79,638.33

President Hunsicker will include this item with the list of bills to be approved.

Consideration on Approval of the Parks & Rec Capital Campaign

Councilor Abelovsky said the board met and discussed the Upper Park renovation project. In looking over what the project included park benches were not included. Autumn said the number one complaint she gets from residents about the benches is that they are uncomfortable. The board would like to fundraise to replace the benches with new ones. They feel it is a necessity because of the amount of use the Upper Park is now getting.

The board is estimating the cost to be \$1,000 per bench. There are currently 40 benches in the park now. Autumn said the board reached out to the community to see what kind of response this fundraiser would get and received a matching donation of \$20,000 so we would need to raise \$20,000. Autumn had provided a draft flyer for the campaign to council and requested permission to place it in the billing early next year.

Councilor McEvoy/Perry made the motions to approve the fundraising initiative by Parks & Recreation and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Officials Reports

Borough Manager

Nicole provided her monthly report. She then followed up on Mr. Dombrosky request from the October meeting to widen 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue or add additional parking.

Because of the width of the street there is no room for diagonal parking nor does widening the street seem feasible due to the cost at this time.

The Main Street Steering Committee is scheduled for January 15, 2019.

Borough Engineer

Nothing.

Mayor

Mayor Ritter said he submitted a report this month. He then went on to say that on October 8<sup>th</sup> of this year Chief Biechy, Kris Kunkle, Brenda Kreitz and himself had a meeting regarding the snow emergency routes in town. The mayor had also contacted Chief Mriss and Joni Gestl from the Ambulance Association. The ordinance to is 213-77. The paragraph he is referring is "B" pertaining to restrictions. He said that once a snow emergency is called it is unlawful to drive or operate a vehicle unless that vehicle is equipped with snow tires or chains. The mayor believes that all weather tires are snow tires requiring no changes needing to be made to the signs. However, he would like to add to paragraph "B" that is unlawful to "park" to this section of the ordinance.

In paragraph "C" designation of emergency routes 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Constitution Avenue is one of the snow emergency routes he would like changed. He would like to change the designation from between Iron Street and Carbon Street to between Ochre Street and Carbon Street. He feels the street is wide enough and it would allow for more parking and extra room for residents on Iron and Carbon Streets to have a place to park.

Councilor Saunders questioned the change to paragraph "B." If he is reading the ordinance correctly it says as long as the vehicle has snow tires on it the vehicle can be parked on the snow emergency route during a de cleared snow emergency. The mayor said no. The purpose of declaring a snow emergency is to keep the vehicles from parking there so the street can be cleared.

Councilor Abelovsky said so we change it to say it is unlawful to park on a snow emergency route. It is unlawful to drive or operate a vehicle unless it has snow tires or chains.

Nicole said the solicitor can amend the ordinance as long as council is in agreement with the changes.

Councilors Abelovsky/Saunders made the motions to amend the ordinance to add no parking on snow emergency routes in paragraph "B" and change the snow emergency route designation for 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Iron Street to Carbon Street to Iron Street to Ochre Street and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

The mayor's next items was odd/even parking. He said Palmerton has been doing this for years and he has spoken to Kris and Brian who think it will work here as well.

Kris said if you do 1<sup>st</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Streets going the North & South routes with 2 signs per block will cost about \$8,000 - \$10,000.

Councilor Abelovsky asked how odd/even parking will help Public Works. Kris said it will make clearing the streets more efficient and alleviate the citizens from going out and shoveling as much as they have too. They would only have to shovel a path from their sidewalk to the street.

Councilor Saunders asked what the time frame was for moving the cars. Brian said we changed it a lot during the season which added to the confusion. The discussion continued for several minutes on what was done in the past. Kris and Brian are in favor of the odd/even parking.

Councilors Saunders/Perry made the motions to move forward with drafting the odd/even snow emergency procedure and all were not in favor. Roll call: no – Councilor Hunsicker; yes –Councilor Abelovsky, Flickinger, Saunders, Perry, McEvoy and Arner. Motion carried.

The mayor's next item was regarding fire police attending events. He wanted to know the protocol for handling this. Nicole said under the S.O.G. of the fire police they fall under the fire department. Under the ordinances they are to be directed by the police for traffic. As far as the special events in town it went through the police department. That started changing because of getting requests to go out of town it had to come to council for permission. The fire police captain just asked to have everything to be pushed through council to make it uniform.

Brian asked to continue this discussion in executive session because he received an email that he feels would best be discussed in executive session. The mayor said he will then save his next to last item for executive session also.

The mayor said he has been approached after meeting by people who have been at the meeting with something to say on a certain agenda item but felt they couldn't say anything. The mayor would like to know if comments are allowed. The solicitor said you typically would raise your hand and if Grant wants to call on them he can. Council agreed to have people voice opinions during the meeting by raising their hands for council president to call on them.

#### Police

Brian said he is still working on the body worn camera grant. He has another phase due by December 31<sup>st</sup> and he should have it completed by the end of this coming week. Car #5 is at Blocker's getting fixed and should be back by tomorrow. Car #6 is in and in service and striped.

#### Fire Chief

Absent.

#### Light & Power Superintendent

Absent.

#### Public Works Superintendent

Kris said that after a 4 month wait from the state the permit is in and they can finally hook up a new sewer line for a resident on South 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

#### Recreation Director

Nothing.

#### President of Council

Nothing.

#### Solicitor

Nothing.

#### Treasurer

Additional bills totaling \$79,638.33.

#### Committee Reports

Finance and Administration – Nothing.

Economic Development, Buildings & Codes – Councilor Flickinger wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Police, Fire & Safety – Nothing.

Light & Power Committee – Nothing.

Sewer Committee – Nothing.

Streets, Public Works & Recreation – Councilor McEvoy thanked Public Works for all the work that was done this year and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Acceptance of Officials Reports

Councilors Flickinger/Saunders 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 Saunders/Arner made the motions to accept the accounts payable plus the additional list of bills totaling \$79,638.33 as presented and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to go into Executive Session for Personnel

Councilors McEvoy/Arner made the motions to go into executive session for personnel at 7:55 p.m.

Motion to go back into Regular Session

Councilors McEvoy/Flickinger made the motions to back into regular session at 8:15 p.m.

Action on Items from Executive Session

Motion to approve Tom Evans request to buy back 200 hours of vacation time

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

Motion to approve Denise Niehoff's request to carry over 64 ¼ hours of vacation time into 2019

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

Motion to approve the employment agreement with the Borough Manager

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

Motion to approve the employment agreement with the Police Chief

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

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors McEvoy/Saunders made the motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM and all were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Brenda L. Kreitz  
Borough Secretary