

July 25, 2011

The Regular Scheduled Meeting of the Lehighon Borough Council was held in the Municipal Building on Monday, July 25, 2011. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Grant Hunsicker. Members in attendance were: Dale Traupman, Bessie Bauchspies, Melissa Ebbert, John Bird, Darryl Arner and Scott Rehrig.

Officials in attendance were: Solicitor James Nanovic, Officer-in-Charge Cpl. Neal Ebbert, Mayor Donald Rehrig, Fire Chief Gary Frable, Borough Engineer Bruce Steigerwalt, Secretary Brenda Koons and Treasurer Nicole Beckett.

Pledge of Allegiance

Presentation by John Drury RE: Judge's Stand

Mr. John Drury of Jim Thorpe was first to speak. He was present to address council with his ideas for refurbishing the Judge's Stand. He feels that if the Judge's Stand is in town along First Street where passersby can see activity going on and draw attention to the project it will be a benefit.

He plans on moving it by bracing and re-enforcing it internally and then bundle, encase and crate it just as if it was going to be shipped by Fed Ex. He will put skids on the side and move it to the new site using a roll back truck. Mr. Drury estimates the restoration will take 2-3 years. He plans to put a 6' chain link fence around it while it is being renovated. He would get experts in the various areas to help determine how to go about the restoration. He would gather funds and use the existing grant money the borough already has for the site preparation, moving and the start of the restoration. Then he would want to raise funds in the community and perhaps acquire other grants if possible using the Mauch Chunk Museum's 501c3 status. Mr. Drury has used CCI students in the past for projects in his community and since Lehighon is in the county he's sees no reason why those students couldn't be used again for this project. Doing this, getting pictures taken of the students involved in the newspaper is a good thing and residents would see it as a good thing. This all helps the community.

Mr. Drury would also like to re-create the Lehighon Historical Society and apply for a non-profit 501c3 almost immediately. He knows that up until about 2 years ago there was one in existence with Sandy Duda in charge of the organization. He feels the Hi-Rise will be full of volunteers for this project. He has also been busy looking at store fronts to lease where there could be an ice cream parlor and coffee for people to gather and socialize. Programs could be developed dealing with local history as people have a lot of collections they'd be willing to share with the public. Students could do oral histories on the area there as well to get them in touch with the area's history.

Mr. Drury did climb inside the structure and feels that it would be a good idea to repair the bottom while it is on its side. Councilor Traupman asked what the cost estimator was to do this. Mr. Drury said he believes it

can be moved and renovations started with the funds already available. He believes it will cost about \$3,000 to move it depending on if he can get free help or not but does know he can get pretty far along especially with volunteer help. The process in doing it is what is important through the 2-3 year period.

The Treasurer said the borough has about \$20,000 for the project as they were just given an extension on the grant. Mr. Drury said he believes the Historical Society has \$5,000 in the bank from their grant with some potential for using that in the formation of another historical society.

Council asked if they could have some time to look over what Mr. Drury had prepared and get back to him and Mr. Drury said yes, that would be fine.

Presentation by Lehigh Fire Department RE: New Fire Station

Mr. Steve Ebbert thanked council for being allowed to give a presentation to them concerning their current working conditions. He started by saying this presentation came about because of their Strategic Planning Meeting, which only one councilor showed up for.

When they were discussing some of the issues, particularly the lack of bathroom facilities, the councilor was unaware that that was the case. There are currently over 50 firefighters and only one bathroom for two fire stations. It is also to ensure that the firefighters and council are working toward the same goal-providing the best and most efficient fire protection possible. That is all they really want.

They need to go to one fire station to get their gear on then jog to the next fire station to get in the truck. It delays their response time. They must enter the fire station through the front doors where apparatus is coming out. Space is used to the max with none to spare and very little clearance to maneuver there apparatus in and out. There is no room to spare as shown in their Power Point presentation.

Also, in Station 2 next to the new police station there is a problem. When walls were blocked off to construct the new station, the bathroom facilities were cut off for the firefighters because the door was cinder blocked shut as was done to all the doors that gave access from one building to another. Mr. Ebbert does not think anyone was aware of that.

In station 2 if the ladder truck is not needed they must back the engine out the back door and down the alley. The slide showed how close the apparatus comes to the building while the engine is being backed out. They must also go thru 2 locked doors to get to their gear because of the doors to the hall and the social club which means they have to carry a key with us to unlock the doors as they go through and up the steps. This is not a safe and secure way to respond to a call.

They are not asking for a Taj Mahal just a station they can function in. They have gone over their drawings for 3 years now. They have cut out anything that was not necessary. The plans presented to council are the bare minimum of what they need to have an efficient functioning station to protect this community. Now they are asking for guidance.

Hearing of Person's Present

Mr. Rodney Snyder of 145 Millway was here to complain about the pole and weeds again.

Approval of Minutes

No minutes were submitted.

New Business

Motion to approve allowing Kidder Township to join the Joint Board of Appeals

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

Approval for SS Peter & Paul School to hold a Soap Box Derby Race during the Block Party on Saturday, August 6, 2011

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

Approval for Officer Bender to wear the Lehighton Police Department uniform at Cadet Camp Graduation ceremony July 29, 2011

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

Motion to approve Resolution R-008-2011 authorizing participation in the PLGIT Merchant Service Program, supplemental agreements and purchase of equipment for the acceptance of Credit/Debit Cards in the utility office

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

Motion to approve the installation of ductless heating/air conditioning units in the Administrative Offices by Andreas Plumbing & Heating at a cost of \$7,979 (budgetary transfer from insurance savings)

Councilors Ebbert/Traupman made the motions to approve and all were in favor.

Motion to approve the installation of Security Monitoring System and Panic Buttons at Borough Hall

Council chose to go with Blue Ridge Communications because the system goes directly to 911. Eight panic buttons are needed at a cost of \$1,200 which includes installation and an annual fee of \$75.

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

Motion to approve pool staff as seasonal employment roster

Seasonal is from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

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

Motion to adopt Resolution R-007-2011 adopting the Borough's Right to Know Policy

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to adopt and all were in favor.

Unfinished Business

Continued discussion of Judge's Stand

Nicole talked to Mr. Drury again of the Mauch Chunk Museum. He is still interested in the project and the grant has been extended for one year. Mr. Drury is willing to stay involved and be a leader in the project. He has some residents of the borough interested and is looking to relocate it by taking the roof off and moving it to the lower park. He was also looking to put a 6' chain link fence around it while it is being worked on.

Councilor Traupman asked how long it will be worked on or is the fence going to be there for 3 years. Nicole said he did not give her a time line. He would be working to raise additional funds if necessary and not taking any compensation for doing this.

Council decided to have Mr. Drury address all of council at the next meeting to explain how he plans to accomplish this project.

Official's Reports

Borough Engineer

The Borough Secretary said he did give information on the salt shed for council to look at. The first estimate is for a larger building but the second, smaller building Bruce feels will be big enough to hold the salt plus some extra room for stone, sand or whatever they could use it for.

Timber Tek works with keystone and can draw up the specs for it if we so choose at a cost of \$3,000. This would be an additional cost to the estimate.

Councilors Ebbert/Rehrig made the motions to proceed with looking into this company and pay the \$3,000 for design and all were in favor.

Officer in Charge

They are in the process of buying some new meters. Some of the residents are upset with the 15 minute meters and the residents call them a trap because it isn't enough time to go in a store and buy something. Joe talked to the company and they can be programmed to be 30 minute meters and then they could go in the 15 minute meter spots now. If we get them programmed the other way it would cost \$300 to get the equipment to do it ourselves.

Councilors Ebbert/Bird made the motions to change the 15 minute meters to 30 and all were in favor.

The current surveillance system in borough hall is old and outdated. To upgrade the system he got a quote for \$9,000 and had budgeted \$10,000. He feels this is worthwhile because of the improvements to some of the borough properties. He does want the system to be installed at the new station.

Council asked him to get a firm price on it and get back to them.

The server for the new station is not compatible with the new software they purchased. In order to have the Windows 7 system work with the alert system they would need to upgrade which is the software program for the police department with the server which created another problem. The server couldn't adapt to the new software system. They are looking for estimates for a server. They could not get a firm estimate on labor but have a ball park estimate of \$7,500 for everything along with an anti virus system. Joe feels it is worthwhile to get. The server itself is \$3,200. Councilor Ebbert said this is a legitimate price.

Councilor Rehrig said to speak with the company and set up a meeting with Joe and the Mayor and if they wish to have Grant and himself sit in they will be happy to and see what it is really gonna cost. Joe said he will do that.

The old cell in borough hall was ripped out by the last person they had in it. The surveillance camera captured him doing it and is going to make restitution for it. The estimate from Andreas is \$949. Officer Lawrence recommends getting the restitution for it but not doing anything with it.

Mayor

Nothing

Fire Chief

Absent

President of Council

He asked if everyone wants to sit in on interviewing for the police chief and borough manager and council said yes.

The Treasurer asked if they would like to make a short list of interview everyone.

President Hunsicker said they will hold a special meeting for this.

Frank from Castle Grill asked about two dead trees in the lower park. He knows a company called Chainsaw Chicks who would like to carve one of the trees into an eagle with a flag on it at no cost to the borough.

Councilors Arner/Rehrig made the motions to allow an eagle with flag into one of the dead trees in the lower park and all were in favor.

Solicitor

He said members of the planning commission have been getting paid \$200 annually. Under our ordinance they are to serve without compensation. So as of this time they will not be paid. The question is would you like them to be paid and if so the ordinance would have to be amended providing that we pay them.

The second thing is our tax collector. When houses get bought/sold, the attorney or final abstractor contacts the tax collector to get a tax certification to see if taxes have been paid and routinely all tax collectors in Carbon County charge anywhere from \$5-\$15. The question has come up is whether or not they are allowed to do this. Some municipalities have now decided to make it clear for the tax collectors by adopting a resolution or an ordinance authorizing them to collect this money. It doesn't cost the borough anything but legitimizes what the tax collectors are already doing.

The tax collector has contacted him and the treasurer asking to have this brought up at a meeting to see if they would be willing to adopt whichever is appropriate so that she can assess the \$5 fee she is already charging.

Councilors Rehrig/Ebbert made the motions to allow the resolution/ordinance to be drawn up and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

There is ongoing litigation with the Packerton Yard project. He had received a stipulation from Attorney Hughes who represents the county. Solicitor Nanovic had made comments to it and said here is what you need to change and Attorney Hughes has made the changes he has suggested. The question is does council wish to discuss it executive session or do you need to hear more? Council President feels it needs executive session.

The changes have been made to the Police Civil Service Commission Rules & Regulations. Solicitor Nanovic reviewed it and it is ok to be approved.

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

Treasurer

She did meet with the building committee, Mr. Bird and USDA earlier today regarding the fire station project. They have some items to go over and she would like to meet with the finance and administration committee within the next month to go over the financing of the project hopefully in the 2nd week of July.

USDA needs to be recognized with council that their loan is for 40 years. She doesn't know that we want to go out for 40 years. If council is not for that she will not proceed with the formal application.

We also received a contract for a \$40,000 grant for a pavilion at Baer Memorial and that was through a Regional Economic Development District Initiative Program. That paperwork is in process.

The Local Share Funds grant applications start July 1 until September 31, 2011. She provided a list of examples of projects they are approving. If interested, please see her with your project ideas by July 8 to get the grant application going.

LDIC is not interested in pursuing the LUPTAP grant as far as obtaining the matching funds so it comes back to council. If council is not interested in matching the grant she needs a motion to put a stop to it and cancel it.

Councilor Traupman said LDIC has secured an independent party to refurbish the band shell but is not sure to what extent. Could the LUPTAP funds be used to fix the benches in the area above that? Nicole said no it is strictly for drawing up plans. That was where it was left.

Committee Reports

Finance & Administration – Darryl Chairman, Melissa Co-Chair -- Nothing to report.

Streets, Buildings & Codes – Dale Chairman, Bessie Co-Chair –He expanded on his previous comment regarding the corporation who is willing

to at their own expense refurbish the bad shell for the borough. A formal announcement will be made at next month's meeting.

He also said that flowers are being thrown in the fountain as well as other things going on in the park. LDIC is willing at their own expense to purchase cameras for the lower park after Bike Nite when they have some extra money to provide for extra security down there.

He also had a request from a resident on 1st Street to have trash receptacles put back. There is no where to put your trash. Officer Lawrence said they were mostly destroyed buy the kids.

He asked if we can get pedestrian cones for 1st Street of not and Officer Lawrence said he can get them in Allentown for free. It is just a matter of getting down to pick them up.

President Hunsicker asked if she checked into getting Mahoning, North and South Streets redone. She will check into it.

Police, Fire & Safety – Scott Chairman and John Co-Chair – Nothing to report.

Light & Power Committee – John Chairman, Scott Co-Chair -- commented on what was in Lonny's report.

Sewer Committee – Bessie Chairwoman, Darryl Co-Chairman -- Nothing to report.

Public Works & Recreation – Melissa Chairwoman, Dale Co-Chair -- Nothing to report.

Acceptance of Officials' Reports

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

Approval of Accounts Payable

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

Councils Rehrig/Arner also approved releasing the 2nd quarterly payment to the library.

Adjournment

Motion to go in to Executive Session for Personnel Reasons

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to go into executive session at 8:31.

Motion to go back into Public Session

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to go back into regular session at 8:47.

Action on Any Items Necessary as a Result of Executive Session

None

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Rehrig/Arner made the motions to adjourn at 8:49 p.m. and all were in favor.

Brenda L. Koons

Borough Secretary