

The regular monthly meeting of Lansford Borough Council was held 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 10, 2016 at the borough hall, 1 W. Ridge Street. President Martin Ditsky opened the meeting and led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken by secretary treasurer Jill Seigendall. Councilman attending were president Martin Ditsky, vice president Rose Mary Cannon, vice president pro temp Colin Jones, councilmen Matthew Walsh, Joseph Butrie, Jared Soto, John Turcmanovich, mayor James Romankow and solicitor Michael Greek. Approximately 17 residents and 2 reporters; one from Time News Newspaper and one from TV Channel 13, were in the audience.

PUBLIC COURTESY

Martin Ditsky opened the floor for public courtesy and thanked Blue Ridge Communications for sprucing up its building at the corner of Coal & W. Bertsch Streets. Ditsky reminded residents to keep their comments to 3 minutes. Councilman Joe Butrie commented that he is grateful that Lansford Alive holds "Music in the Park" events throughout the summer, "it is something the community can be proud of." There were complaints of kids doing damage to community facilities; Kennedy Park, scaffolding at St Katherine Drexel Church, the pool and the park. Jared Soto got photos of some damage.

Deborah Rank, resident of Summit Hill, representing the Summit Hill Heritage Center, is requesting that Lansford join a collaborative effort to apply for an Appalachian Regional Commission Grant. Rank explained it must be a collaborative effort among municipalities. She is trying to get Summit Hill, Lansford and Coaldale involved and is looking for a verbal commitment from council to have a council representative work with the collaborative committee to improve the overall quality of life in Panther Valley; its businesses, parks, and signage. It will be Lansford's decision to decide what improvements are needed in Lansford and to perform the work on any projects involving Lansford. Jared thanked her for bringing this to our attention and commends any activity that will bring the towns together for advancement. Jared Soto volunteered to serve on the committee. **Rose Mary Cannon made a motion that borough council work with the collaborative, council members to serve on the committee will be determined at a later date. Motion was second by Joe Butrie, all were in favor, motion passed.**

Irma Leibensperber, 164 W. Ridge Street, made comments about the borough millage rate in Lansford (33.53) and compared it to Lehigh's (7.5) millage rate. Rose Mary Cannon explained that although the millage rate in Lansford is higher, the assessed value of property is lower in Lansford and therefore yields less income per mill to the borough. Also, Lehigh has more commercial establishments to bring in tax money.

Warren Balliet, 518 E. Bertsch St, came to a previous meeting complaining about street line painting near his residence. The painting still isn't done. Ditsky explained that line painting hasn't started yet due to the work load on the public works department and the limited number of borough workers. The department is involved in projects with shared services in Summit Hill and Coaldale. Ditsky said line painting will eventually be done this year.

Marie Ondrus, 36 Coal Street, asked Mayor Romankow whether the borough enforced its curfew and loitering ordinances. Mayor answered yes. She asked if the crime watch organization is still in existence. Mayor said yes and explained that residents are calling in crime tips on their own, especially using social media sites like face book. Romankow explained 2 officers are not working due to injuries. Solicitor Greek explained curfew enforcement is used as a tool however it can be challenged in court, so officers are more likely to issue citations on loitering instead of curfew violations.

Pat Whalen, 341 W. Ridge Street, complained about the yearly sewage transmission fee (\$90 residential and \$145 commercial). She feels it should be done away with and asked whether the fee is going up next year? Ditsky said it has not been discussed by council. Councilman Walsh said he is looking at going back to the \$90 fee for residential and commercial customers. Secondly, in the future, the sewer lines may be under the control of a separate entity (should the CLSH Sewer Authority take over control of the entire sewer system) and the issue may be out of the hands of council. Cannon explained that Lansford has a combined sewer system where both sewage and water runoff are running through borough sewer lines and go to the CLSH Sewer Authority owned sewer plant. There is currently a moratorium on new construction (adding new sewer connections) due to an overburdened sewer system. (The Department of Environmental Protection, DEP, requires separate lines for sewer and water runoff). Whalen was unaware that a 3 million dollar loan for a sewer line project was being paid off with sewage transmission funds. Additionally, Joe Butrie explained sewage transmission funds are used to repair sewer inlets, line breaks in the street, and sewer upgrades. Marie Ondrus asked whether there was a third or final stage for the sewage transmission plan. Ditsky explained the combined Act 537 Plan (which defines and remediates problems with the current waste water systems in Summit Hill, Lansford, & Coaldale) has been submitted to DEP by the

CLSH Sewer Authority. To date DEP has not responded to the submitted Act 537 Plan. Solicitor Greek explained that previously there was a joint meeting between the 3 municipalities agreeing to come together and file a task activity report (Act 537 Report) which is the first step in dealing with the current sewer separation problem and aging lines and eventually leading to the CLSH Sewer Authority taking over control of the entire sewer system. There has been no response from DEP at this time.

Pat Whalen said she heard the public is going to pay for the proposed pool. Rose Mary Cannon explained this is false. Council is looking to apply for grants to build a pool, and furthermore, residents from Lansford and other municipalities use the pool. Conversation turned to the conduct of children at the pool.

Gwyneth Collevchio, 118 W. Bertsch Street, a member of the Lansford Friends of Recreation nonprofit organization, was called upon by Cannon to explain the pool rules. Gwen explained that anyone under 11 must have an adult with them and daycare facilities bring teachers and supervisors with them. Pool access is by membership or paid guests. Entry is monitored by a visual computer screen and membership swipe fobs.

Mary Soto, 335 E. Patterson Street, asked whether the Quality of Life Ordinance is being enforced. She sees corners of intersections with high grass and weeds. The borough is responsible for weeds between the curb & street. Ditsky said the borough street crew is too busy to address the problem. Mary Soto added that properties overgrown with weeds seem to be the same problem every year. For private homes the mayor explained the process a resident should follow to report property maintenance problems; fill out a complaint form and submit it to the borough office. Property maintenance issues are sent to the police department. The police will refer some cases to code compliance when necessary. The mayor suggested residents make a list of dilapidated properties and give it to the borough office personnel.

Joe Horvath, 232 E. Ridge Street, asked Ditsky what gives a former council member the right to use a current council member (Ditsky) as a puppet to harass him (Horvath) by contacting code enforcement about Horvath's past zoning and code issues that have been resolved. Martin denies he was involved with a former council member to have code enforcement harass Horvath. Horvath asked who is being billed for the hours code is spending on harassing him. Joe Butrie said he believes Steve Meylach is doing the best he can with the limited time (2 days per week) he works. Horvath said he likes the code officer and has no gripe with him. Rose Mary Cannon said Horvath has gone through the correct channels for his projects but Horvath is being harassed repeatedly by this former councilman. Joe Horvath wants this to stop. Ditsky recommends Horvath deal directly with the former councilman. Joe Horvath feels Ditsky is encouraging the former councilman by perpetuating the problem. He just wants the harassment to stop. Jared Soto sees this as a larger issue and wants to keep this from happening in the future.

Sonya Kokinda, Summit Hill, voiced her concern about the feasibility study for the Lansford pool.

Sarah Curtis, 340 W Abbott St, is concerned about drainage behind her home. The sewer drain on Water Street above and behind her home drains a significant amount of water coming off the mountain. The lot above her house becomes a swamp. When it rains hard it comes within an inch of coming into her home. She is asking for the water to be diverted. Joe Butrie & Martin Ditsky have looked at the area in the past but they do not see how this is happening. The property owner above the Curtis property, Marie Ondrus, explained that a sidewalk was put in along the property. Ditsky asked the two parties to continue their discussion outside.

BID OPENING FOR OIL

Attorney Greek opened the three oil bids received for the advertised 15,000 gallons more or less:

Evans Fuel Company	\$1.599/gal
K&K Oil Company	\$1.899/gal
Superior plus Energy Services	\$1.599/gal add.25 for any delivered over 15,000 gallons

Colin Jones made the motion to accept the bid from Evan Fuel Company bidding \$1.599 per gallon, for the period between September 1, 2016 through August 1, 2017. Motion was second by Matthew Walsh, all were in favor, motion approved.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

- **JULY 13, 2016 monthly meeting minutes** – Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to accept the minutes as written, second by Joseph Butrie, all were in favor, motion passed.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Carbon County Dept. of Veterans Affairs; Veterans Day Parade Nov. 6th in Palmerton.
- First Niagara Bank transitioning to Key Bank; October 8-10, 2016.

- PA. Public Employee Retirement Commission; Notice of Distress Determination: Lansford score: - 0 (zero) not distressed, not eligible to participate in the recovery program for municipal pension plans.
- Bobby O'Gurek \$140.00 invoice for Webhosting services; seeking approval of the \$100 annual fee, and \$40 per month. **Motion to approve the webhosting service at the aforementioned prices of \$100 per year and \$40 per month, was made by Jared Soto, second by Matthew Walsh, all were in favor, motion carried.**
- Carbon County Council of Governments (COG); Minutes & surplus items auction. Martin Ditsky explained that COG is in the process of purchasing a zipper, milling machine, which could be available to participating municipalities.
- Lansford Alive Letter offering its portable/movable signs to the borough to promote community events.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

• **Solicitors Report :**

- Attorney Greek gave his report ahead of the agenda because he had to leave the meeting. He asked for a motion to approve a resolution showing it was the intent of council to approve the transfer of a liquor license from Nesquehoning Fire Company to Frank L Enterprises LLC. The original resolution 2016-06 had the liquor license number (6 & 7) transposed. The new resolution will correct the error. **Motion was made by Joe Butrie to correct the liquor license number and submit the corrected resolution & correspondence to Frank Longo's attorney, Attorney Almonti. The motion was second by Rose Mary Cannon, all were in favor, motion passed.**
- Attorney Greek prepared a minor subdivision ordinance and sent it to Mike Kafkalas for review by the borough planning commission. It addresses instances where residents want to combine or separate lots.
- Another ordinance was presented to set permit parking along the unit block of W. Ridge Street. Criteria for the permit parking needs to be addressed.
- There is still an issue about the wall along the Clewell property. A survey would determine whether it is on borough property (as it appears to be on the deeds with no reference of a right of way) and can be repaired by the borough or if it is on Clewell property, an issue arises as to whether the wall is necessary to support the road, and if so, Greek recommends an easement for the wall and its repair.
- Attorney Greek addressed the legality of the 3 strikes law specified in the Residential Rental License Ordinance. He explained that nothing prevents the ordinance from being enforced. Mayor Romankow asked that a copy of the Residential Rental License Ordinance be sent to all of council.
- **Municipal Administration:** Outlined by Rose Mary Cannon – it included estimates to replace the borough building doors & an outdoor faucet.
- **Public Safety:** read by John Turcmanovich – no applications for full time officers have been received – requests more advertisements in more papers. Request new barrels for shot guns, discussion on converting Tunnel St, between Snyder & Ridge to one way south bound, and "NIMS" disaster training.
- **Am. Fire Co. Report:** read by John Turcmanovich – responded to 1 dwelling fire, 18 total calls in July.
- **Ambulance Report:** read by Martin Ditsky – There were 61 responses during July.
- **Police Report:** 623 calls for service, 9 criminal arrests, 18 traffic citations, 36 non traffic citations, 5 meter tickets, 2 parking tickets & 34 quality of life tickets.
- **Park & Recreation:** read by Rose Mary Cannon - Report on the status of Wade Associated return of \$2,000.00, research on the firm Aquatic Facility Design for the feasibility study, concern for support from council in the future pool project, and Jared Soto is getting prices to pave the skate park.
- **Public Works:** read by Martin Ditsky – request a land line for the borough garage, prices are needed for a utility box for the 2001 F350 pickup, prices for snow "no parking" signs and the pursuit of an LSA grant for a borough garage building.
- **Treasure's Report:** General Fund Balance is \$475,220.67. Bills to be approved totaled \$61,762.40 from the following funds: General \$ 25,232.05; Sanitation \$ 25,335.84; Sewer Transmission, \$1,998.43; Park & Rec, \$2,035.34; Hi Way, \$1,649.08; Street Light, \$5,511.66 . **Motion to pay remaining loan balance on the Tax Anticipation Note (approx. \$64,221.70) was made by Jared Soto, second by Matthew Walsh, all were in favor. Motion passed. Motion to pay the bills was made by Rose Mary Cannon, second by Matthew Walsh, all were in favor, motion passed.**

- **Tax Collector's Report:** Amount collected in July \$ 74,965.57.

All Committee Reports are on file.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Advertisement of Ordinance 2016-10; permit parking on north side of W. Ridge St. between Tunnel & Coal Streets. **Motion to advertise ordinance 2016-10 was made by Rose Mary Cannon, second by Joseph Butrie, all were in favor, motion passed.**
- Request for a council member to serve on the Handicap Parking Committee with the mayor and secretary/treasurer. Jared Soto volunteered to serve on the committee.
- Local Share Account: LSA Grant Application for Borough Garage; USDA Rural Government Loan

NEW BUSINESS

- Aquatic Facility Design – Rose Mary Cannon explained the cost breakdown for feasibility study proposal for Lansford Pool. A visit to the Berwick Pool designed by Aquatic Facility Design is planned in the coming week. **Colin Jones made a motion to use the services of Aquatic Facility Design to perform a pool assessment and feasibility study per PA DCNR guidelines at a price of \$14,000 plus \$2000.00 testing services, motion was second by Rose Mary Cannon, all voted to approve the motion except for Martin Ditsky and Matthew Walsh who voted against it. Motion passed.**
- Estimates for Borough Hall front door; C Polete Glass & Aluminum, \$9,400.00 or \$ 3,362.00. Issue tabled.
- Estimates for outside faucet installation; Tom Reigel \$1,554.64, issue tabled, more information needed.
- Special Event Application; New Univac Realty, basketball event at the court on W Water Street on 8/27/16, the event was not approved, no insurance, no security, and court is not borough property.
- Special Event Application; Zoostock 2016, 9/5/16 at the Zoo Sports Bar, event approved
- Special Event Application; Lansford Alive Fall Festival on 9/24/16 in the unit block of W. Ridge Street, A motion was made by Jared Soto to approve the event, Rose Mary Cannon made the second, all were in favor, motion passed, event approved.
- Resolution 2016-07; setting salaries for non-union employees (as a result of Memorandum of Understanding with F.O.P.) **Motion to approve the resolution was made by Colin Jones with stipulation that the salaries for part time CDL drivers will be revisited, second was made by Matthew Walsh, all were in favor, motion passed.**
- Rose Mary Cannon explained the finances to pay for the pool feasibility study; that previously RIRA money was approved for the feasibility study. **Cannon made a motion to transfer the balance of the RIRA account, \$7,179.91, earmarked for recreation, into the park & recreation account (6291), and closing the RIRA account. Motion was second by Jared Soto. On roll call vote, all voted to approve the transfer of money from the RIRA account (7437) into the park and recreation account (6291), and closing the RIRA account. Voting against the motion were Martin Ditsky, Joe Butrie and John Turcmanovich. Motion passed.**
- Streets needing repair: Martin Ditsky met with John Davis from PA Dept of Transportation and noted the following streets need repaving:
 - parts of W Ridge Street,
 - 200 & 300 block of W. Water Street and replacement of sewer inlet
 - Center Street
 - Chestnut Street between Kline & Bertsch

Additionally, these streets were mentioned: Front Street, Snyder, 300 block of E Bertsch St., (Joe Butrie said there is a sewer problem in front of foot doctor and repaving it before this is repaired is a mistake), & 100 & 200 block of W. Bertsch St. Council considered applying for CDBG money for street repair.

There were no topics for executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Colin Jones, second by Joe Butrie, all were in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Seigendall
Secretary/Treasurer