

The June 14, 2017 monthly Lansford council meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Martin Ditsky and the pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Secretary Treasurer Jill Seigendall took attendance. Council members present were President Martin Ditsky, Vice President Rose Mary Cannon, Mayor James Romankow, Joseph (Joe) Butrie, Jared Soto, John Turcmanovich, and Solicitor Michael Greek. Absent were Matthew Walsh and Colin Jones.

Public Courtesy:

Christopher Ondrus, 10 Edgemont Road, asked council whether there is a policy regarding council members and borough employees entering the borough building after regular business hours. Rose Mary Cannon explained that some employees and chairman of committees have keys to the borough office for meetings scheduled in the evenings. Ondrus accused people of arbitrarily entering the building, there should be a written policy about entering the building, and video surveillance should be reviewed regularly. Ondrus said there are missing files from the code and borough office. He wants a full forensic audit and accused the group of “moving money around” and that “it has gone on for 20 years.” He said a digital key card reader should be installed on the building and asked for the status of the financial audit. Secretary Seigendall said the auditor has completed its examination however the written document has not been received. He asked who waived the permit fees for the Elks demolition and how many council members reviewed the county’s contract for the demolition. Ondrus yelled, “Somebody answer me.” Council did not answer. Ondrus pointed out that there was no code report listed on the agenda and again urged council to make a policy for entrance to the office after hours.

Mark Jancsics, 506 Center Street, Slatington – is the landlord of 524 E. Bertsch St, Lansford. He asked why houses can divert rain water into the sewer. Rose Mary Cannon explained that the borough has a combined system in some areas of the borough and that landlords are required to register rental units and inform the borough of new tenants. Billing for 2017 Residential Rental Licenses was completed before April 1st. Joseph Butrie urged residents to report any suspicious behavior such as people moving at night or without a moving permit posted. John Turcmanovich added that absentee landlords are a problem. Mayor Romankow left the meeting after pointing out that volunteer help to form a list of residential rental units was denied by council and he did not agree with that decision.

Sonya Kokinda and 3 others members of the Friends of Lansford Pool, a nonprofit group, voiced their support for the borough’s grant application to the Greenways Trail and Recreation Program for the pool project initiated by council woman Rose Mary Cannon. Rose Mary thanked them for their support.

Councilman Joe Butrie stated that the footer for the Elks building remains in tack because removing it would jeopardize the existing adjacent buildings.

Mary Soberick, 109 E. Abbott Street, voiced her opinion for the third (month) time urging council to set aside unspent prior year’s tax money in the Park and Recreation Fund into a separate account earmarked for the pool project. This money was not used because the pool was closed for the 2016 season; \$46,640.00 was unused. Rose Mary Cannon stated that the idea was discussed at the Park & Recreation committee meeting. The borough & Friends of Lansford Pool nonprofit group applied for a \$250,000.00 Greenway Trails and Recreation Program Grant which requires a 15% match (\$37,500.00).

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion that council approves a \$22,500.00 commitment letter as matching funds for the grant. Joe Butrie second the motion, all were in favor. The remaining

\$15,000.00 matching funds will be provided by the Friends of Lansford Pool. Resident Bob Silver pointed out that because the topic was not on the agenda it should be put to the public for comments. Silver asked what the grant application covers. Rose Mary Cannon explained the grant is for the first phase of construction of a new pool.

A second vote was taken on the same motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

Mary Soberick questioned a \$50.00 payment last month for a demolition permit for the Elks building, 6 E. Ridge Street. The \$50.00 was paid to the borough's code inspector Lehigh Valley Inspection Service for the Elk's demolition permit. LVIS normally charges \$100 for a demolition permit but waived ½ because the borough owns the property.

Jodi Mika, Coaldale, a member of Grace Community Church, who organized the planting at the community garden, formerly located at 201 W. Bertsch Street which was previously sold, asked whether the borough had any property to relocate the plants until a new community garden location is found. Martin Ditsky believed that the new owner of 201 W. Bertsch Street, Frank Longo, does not have an immediate plan for the property and may allow the plants to remain there until the next planting season. Rose Mary Cannon explained that council is considering offering a lot to the group, part of parcel #122A-25-L2, however it needs to be surveyed. The lot is located in the 300 block of W. Bertsch and W. Patterson Streets across from Kennedy Park. Jodi Mika said that if the lot is offered to the group it must be put in the agreement that it will not be sold.

Joe Genits, 232 W. Front Street, asked to speak beyond the 3 minute limit and handed out a six page statement he prepared. Genit's read parts of the document and reviewed other parts which outlined his complaints, his recommendations, and his qualifications regarding maintaining order at meetings and the fiscal responsibilities of council; especially those in the area of code enforcement. The document is on file in the borough office. In his 10 minute dissertation he mentioned that Mary Soberick did a fine job as zoning officer during her tenure as a borough employee. He was sad that she was "let go"; when she was dismissed from her position as secretary treasurer. He personally believes one person could address all code and zoning concerns for three towns and that an individual code employee should be hired by the borough instead of using an outside contractor such as Lehigh Valley Inspection Services.

Bob Silver, 17 E. Ridge Street, stated he was worn out by the ranting and chose not to speak during public courtesy.

Mary Soberick, 109 W. Abbott Street, wanted council to know that she appreciated Joe Genits' complement of her abilities but that Joe Genits was on borough council and voted to dismiss her from her position as borough secretary treasurer and it angered her that he used her tonight to support his agenda.

Robert Dobosh, 383 W. Ridge Street, said he would remove the Lansford Alive trash cans in the business district because residents are depositing their home garbage.

Public courtesy closed at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes:

The May 10, 2017 meeting minutes were reviewed.

A motion was made by Joe Butrie to approve the May 10, 2017 minutes. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, the motion passed.

Correspondence:

Joseph Bennett - Zoning Request - Martin Ditsky read a letter from Joseph Bennett dated 6/2/2017, asking that a parcel he owns be rezoned; 100 W. Patterson Street (former Palace building) is zoned R2, residential two, and he is asking it be changed to B2, business two, and 100 W. Ridge Street (former All Staffing building) is zoned B2, business two, and he is asking it remain B2, to construct a parking lot as an accessory use for the 100 W. Patterson Street property, where he intends to build a medical facility. Joe Bennett updated the group on the demolition progress at both property sites. He explained that he plans to use the 101 W. Patterson Street lot for the medical facility, (the building would be closer to W. Patterson Street). His purpose for attending the meeting was to gain approval for reserved parking along Coal Street between W. Bertsch and W. Patterson Streets. There would be very little off street parking on the medical facility lot, about 6 parking spaces. Martin Ditsky explained that the issue must go to zoning and code enforcement. Attorney Greek stated that he met with Mr. Bennett's engineer and explained the procedure to follow.

Community Garden – Letters were received from Grace Community Church on 5/15/17 & Lansford Alive on 6/9/17 requesting that a parcel of borough owned property, (part of parcel # 122A2-25-L2, (60' X 60'), at the northeast corner of the parcel, across from Kennedy Park,) be approved for use as a community garden.

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to have parcel # 122A2-25-L2 surveyed with the intention that it be used by the community garden group as long as a mutual agreement can be established. The motion was second by Joe Butrie. All were in favor, motion passed.

Veterans Day Parade – The annual Carbon County Veteran's Day Parade will be held on 11/5/17 in Nesquehoning Borough. A letter from Nesquehoning Borough Council requests written permission to ask the borough's fire police to assist with traffic control and borrow street barriers for the parade.

Joe Butrie made a motion to authorize the Lansford Fire Police to assist with the Veteran's Day Parade event in Nesquehoning on 11/5/17 and to lend Lansford street barriers to Nesquehoning Borough if the street barriers are available. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.

Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Lodge 13 – Letter dated 5/13/17 states the FOP's intention to commence with collective bargaining with the borough for the police contract beginning January 1, 2018. The issue will be discussed in executive session.

Lansford Coaldale Joint Water Authority – Meeting minutes from March 22, 2017 & April 26, 2017 were enclosed in the meeting packet for council to review.

The following correspondence was noted on the agenda but **not** enclosed in council's packet to conserve paper, copies were available on request:

- *Invitation to Open House, St. Luke's Occupational Medicine, 575 S. 9th Street, Lehighton, 10 a.m. -12 noon on 6/24/17.
- *Beyer-Barber - Police Pension Plan Actuarial Valuation Report as of 1/1/2017
- *Copies of Letters sent by the solicitor on behalf of the borough
- *Fireman's Relief Association Compliance Audit for 1/1/2015 to 12/31/2016

Committee Reports:

Municipal Administration – The June 12, 2017 written meeting report was reviewed by council and read by Rose Mary Cannon. In the report Brimble's Wall was discussed as well as the installation of a fence at the Elks lot, 6 E. Ridge Street. The Route 209 resurfacing project has been postponed until 2018. Key Bank's has a new policy of not waiving bank charges, which it has done since acquiring First Niagara Bank, the borough's depository for 12 accounts. It was noted that LVIS employee Steve Meylach left the company 6/5/17 and his replacement will be working at the same rate. Rose Mary Cannon felt it necessary to defend herself regarding Chris Ondrus' accusations about using the borough office after hours. She has 3 monthly meetings to open up for at the borough hall. While doing so she is on the surveillance camera, and she lets the police know she is in the office. She also took exception with Joe Genits because he threatened to call the police for assistance if he was not allowed to speak over the 3 minute limit. On a final note, Martin Ditsky thanked Cannon for purchasing the Memorial Day banners and hanging them outside borough hall over the weekend.

Public Safety – John Turcmanovich gave a verbal report of the May 22nd meeting.

- Turcmanovich met with the police chief, went over concerns about painting crosswalks and no parking zones. The borough has to follow PennDOT regulations.
- There are parking concerns at the newly opened Coal Miners Bar & Grill, 15 Center Street.
- The pedestrian crossing on W Patterson Street between the mini mall and Turkey Hill is gone. A new permit is needed.
- All police vehicles are in good shape, oldest is 13 yrs. old. There was discussion about a QRS (quick response service) vehicle to be used by police, fire, & EMS.
- Juvenile probation workers are cutting grass in the borough however more equipment is needed. A resident on Water & Sharpe Streets repairs and sells grass mowers and weed whackers at low prices however transportation of the equipment needs to be worked out.
- The air conditioning in the police office failed today and the surveillance cameras are down due to the heat. Turcmanovich should approve the purchase of an air conditioner. It appears one electrical line serves all the computer equipment and it needs to be upgraded. Council was made aware that the lease of five Tasers is about \$1,200.00 per year for five years, includes replacement after five years. Officer Nunemacher is trained to train other officers to use the Tasers.

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to get estimates to upgrade the electric lines that service the computers and cameras in the police department. The motion was second by Joe Butrie. All were in favor, motion passed.

- Thirty two criminal arrests were made in May. It was noted that this is more than Summit Hill, Coaldale and Nesquehoning combined in May. Three federal agencies are in the borough assisting with the arrests. Turcmanovich stated that the police department would like to use \$2,000.00 from its uniform allowance fund to purchase equipment, flashlights, camera equipment, and crime scene processing equipment. Crime scene equipment is needed because the state police R & I team is not always readily available so it is up to borough officers to do these investigations. Also needed is a sponsor for a bike rodeo, a camera registry for all residents having cameras to register in case a crime is committed in the neighborhood, police can ask to view the footage.

John Turcmanovich made a motion to use \$2,000.00 of uniform allowance money to purchase flashlights and crime scene equipment. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.

Mayor Romankow passed around articles about Tasers and explained that the police department needed new Tasers. Since the purchase of a Taser is under the \$750.00 limit allowed for approval

by an individual councilmember, Councilman Turcmanovich was permitted to make the purchase following the usual ordering with purchase order procedure.

Civil Service Commission – Councilman and Civil Service Commission member John Turcmanovich said the advertisement for full time officer testing has been run in the Times News Newspaper and on the PA Chief of Police website. So far one application has been received.

Fire Department – In the American Fire Company May report the company answered 15 calls in May; 8 in Lansford, 4 in Summit Hill, 1 in Coaldale, 1 in Nesquehoning, and 1 in Jim Thorpe.

Ambulance – Leighton Ambulance answered 57 calls in May. The average response time was 8.18 minutes.

Mayors Report – May receipts total \$2,640.12; misc. \$95.00, Parking violations \$345.00, Quality of Life \$175.00, magistrate \$2,025.12. Year to date total is \$17,096.47.

Police Report - The May report included 32 criminal arrests, 10 traffic citations, 15 nontraffic citation, 17 parking tickets and 17 quality of life tickets.

Park & Recreation – The June 12, 2017 committee meeting report was read by Rose Mary Cannon. At that meeting Mary Soberick spoke of allocating past tax money in the Park & Recreation Account #6291 to be used only for the pool. Other park projects; the skate park resurfacing and a fence for Kashmer's court were also discussed.

A motion was made by Rose Mary Cannon to transfer \$40,000.00 from the Park and Recreation Account ending 6291 into the Park & Recreation Pool account ending #1905, to be used exclusively for the pool. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.

Public Works – May 22nd meeting notes were verbally delivered by Martin Ditsky. No written report. In addition to committee members Ditsky, Butrie, and Turcmanovich, Rose Mary Cannon sat in on the meeting. Topics discussed were a lawn mower that needs fixing and used equipment needed for community service workers. The public works department needs a new 10 ton dump truck. Ditsky said a 2002 MACK dump truck (standard transmission) is advertised for \$12,000.00 on the Municibid website. Bidding ends June 23, 2017. Public Work's employees Mario Marconi & Greg Dailey went to look at the truck in Lebanon Township and reported it is in good shape, mileage is 25,000. Martin asked for a motion to bid on the truck as a replacement for the 1990 Ford Dump Truck which is in bad repair. The MACK truck is not equipped with a plow but may be able to retro fit the current plow.

Joe Butrie made a motion to allow Martin Ditsky to bid on the 2002 Mack Truck on the Municibid website auction not to exceed \$20,000.00 to purchase the truck, adding that should the borough be the successful bidder, the payment will come from the Sewage Transmission Account ending #5573 because the truck is used for sewer projects. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor, motion passed.

Joseph Butrie left the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Community Development / Planning/Zoning – The scheduled May 22nd scheduled meeting was not held no quorum.

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to have the solicitor review, revise and advertise the sample blight ordinance distributed at last month's meeting, proposed Ordinance 2017-04, tailoring it to Lansford. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.

Tax Collectors Report – During May Tax receipts total \$491,855.07. Total collected to 6/10/17 is \$704,018.22.

Code Enforcement – No written report was presented to council.

Treasurer's Report - Bills to be approved total \$33,491.46; General Fund \$20,914.72, Liquid Fuels Fund \$5,553.48, Sewer Transmission \$786.28, Street Light Fund \$5,564.95, Park & Recreation \$672.03. The secretary treasurer also asked that the following bills totaling \$793.35 be included for payment: General

Fund: Radocha & Sons \$42.00 for fuel. Liquid Fuels Fund: Radocha & Sons \$250.00 for 2 day roller rental for repairs to Dock Street and 2 invoices from A & H Equipment Company for Street Sweeper repairs \$411.35 and \$90.00. The council packets include Income Statements, Checking Account balances, and Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual for all funds. Cannon questioned a bill in Park & Recreation for repairs at the west end basketball court, stating that the May Panther Valley Lumber invoice \$105.74 should be paid out of the public works budget instead of the Park & Recreation budget because the repair was due to snow plow making ruts at the court.

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to pay the bills including the verbally offered invoices totaling \$793.35, for a grand total of \$34,284.81. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to pay \$80,000.00 from the general fund on the principal of the 2017 Tax Anticipation Note (\$125,000.00) issued to the borough by M & T Government Banking. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor, motion passed.

Account balances at the end of May are as follows:

| 2017 End of Month Balances | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Acct No | Account Title | April | May |
| 0132 | General Acct | \$187,006.18 | \$511,579.12 |
| 0222 | Sanitation Fund | \$96,394.63 | \$88,738.81 |
| 0283 | Investors Money Mkt Acct | \$51,511.20 | \$51,520.95 |
| 1198 | Sewer Transmission(reserve acct) | \$164,100.14 | \$164,129.01 |
| 4685 | Escrow for 22 W(E) Kline Ave | \$3,000.00 | \$3,000.00 |
| 4842 | Escrow for 20 E Kline Ave | \$2,180.00 | \$2,180.00 |
| 1905 | Lansford Pool Account | \$1,329.73 | \$1,329.76 |
| 3886 | Treasurers Special Hi Way | \$112,840.54 | \$111,068.61 |
| 4585 | DCED Grant/Fire Co | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| 5537 | Sewage Transmission | \$190,411.87 | \$199,278.42 |
| 5402 | Loan Proceeds Acct(reserve acct) | \$202,628.13 | \$202,628.13 |
| 5772 | Local Service Tax/EIT | \$33,498.62 | \$36,137.29 |
| 6036 | Sanitation Fund Money Mkt Acct | \$12,155.72 | \$12,155.73 |
| 6283 | Fire | \$36,112.05 | \$47,257.50 |
| 6291 | Recreation | \$60,449.76 | \$73,459.55 |
| 6309 | Street Lights | \$14,978.03 | \$31,733.15 |
| | | \$1,168,596.60 | \$1,536,196.03 |
| | | Est Balance | Est Balance |
| 899-5 | Sewer Transm/Commercial Loan | 1,226,859.99 | 1,212,580.63 |
| 0059 | Gen.Fd./ Tax Anticipation Note | 125,000.00 | 125,000.00 |
| 0060 | Pd from St Light / MEM | 162,664.11 | 154,859.11 |
| 030- | 2014 Loader-5yr loan | 42,486.70 | 42,486.70 |
| New | 2017 POLICE Explorer | 36,521.57 | 36,521.57 |
| | | 1,593,532.37 | 1,571,448.01 |

Solicitors Report: Nothing to report.

Unfinished Business:

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to have the borough engineer Keystone Consulting Engineers put together bid specifications to repair Brimble's Wall. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.

Martin Ditsky said he has not submitted a pre application for any street projects through the County's 2017 CDBG program; however he plans to do so.

New Business:

The contract for fuel oil ends August 1, 2017. Advertising for bids is needed to award contract at July 12th regular council meeting.

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to advertise for oil bids using the same specifications as last year; 15,000 gallons more or less for the period August 1, 2017 to August 1, 2018. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor, motion passed.

Jill Seigendall requested the borough get a credit card with a \$500.00 limit to be used when necessary for office expenses. Seigendall explained that last month two reimbursements, one to herself and one to assistant secretary Wendy Butrie were made because they used their personal credit cards to make purchases. Jill was reimbursed for child abuse history clearances for 3 employees (at \$8.00 each total \$24.00) that were done online and only credit card payment is accepted. Wendy was reimbursed (\$84.70) for (2) Journals for the Police department purchased online from Amazon because all other suppliers were way over the Amazon price (\$65.00 for 1 Journal). Seigendall will get more information on credit card options for the next meeting.

Executive Session:

Martin Ditsky called a short recess at 9:05 p.m. to be followed by an executive session to discuss contract negotiations for full time police, Teamsters Crossing Guards and the final Teamsters Contract.

At 9:25 p.m. the group was back on the record. Martin Ditsky appointed Jared Soto and Joe Butrie to serve with Ditsky on the negotiation committees for the police contract negotiations and the crossing guard negotiations.

Adjournment:

At 9:28 p.m. a motion was made by Rose Mary Cannon to adjourn the meeting. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Seigendall
Secretary Treasurer