

The October 11, 2017 meeting of Lansford Borough Council was held 6:30 p.m. at the borough hall, 1 W. Ridge Street, Lansford. The meeting was called to order by President Martin Ditsky and The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken by Secretary Treasurer Jill Seigendall. Council persons attending were President Martin Ditsky, Vice President Rose Mary Cannon, Joseph (Joe) Butrie, Jared Soto, John Turcmanovich, Mayor James Romankow and Solicitor Michael Greek. Council members absent were Matthew Walsh and Colin Jones. About twenty residents attended.

Rose Mary Cannon was first on the agenda to explain the Junior Council Person Program. Rose Mary Cannon had written to local high schools for high school juniors & seniors interested in local government to serve as junior council persons. A letter of interest was received from Isabella Blasko, a senior at Marian High School. Martin Ditsky read Resolution 2017-20 authorizing the borough's participation in the Pennsylvania State Association of Borough's Junior Council Program.

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-20 authorizing participation in the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs Junior Council Program. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor, motion passed.

Borough Council welcomed Isabella Blasko as its Junior Council Person. Isabella was sworn in with the Junior Council Person Pledge by Attorney Michael Greek. She will serve on borough council through May of 2018. She is permitted to attend all borough council and committee meetings but is not afforded the right to vote or to attend executive sessions. After a round of applause, Rose Mary Cannon welcomed Isabella and encouraged other young people to get involved in local issues and politics.

Rose Mary Cannon addressed council regarding the Letter to the Editor of October 9, 2017 in the Times News Newspaper. This letter was submitted by zoning board members Donna Valent, Tim Kurchak and alternate Bob Silver. The letter stated the executive session of the board, at the hearing of August 24, 2017, was interrupted due to the presence of council woman Rose Mary Cannon and secretary treasurer Jill Seigendall in the borough office (an area divided from the board meeting area). Attention was called to their presence by Martin Ditsky to Attorney Mousseau, zoning solicitor. Mousseau then requested Cannon and Seigendall leave the building to avoid any complaint. They immediately left the building. Cannon questioned the legality of any meetings to form the letter to the editor because zoning board meetings must be advertised. Cannon then made note of an invoice received from Attorney Mousseau in the amount of \$245.50 for service provided for e-mails received from alternate zoning board member Bob Silver during the month of September – weeks after the zoning board hearing. The invoice will be addressed under the treasurer's report "Bills to be Paid" on the agenda.

Attorney Michael Garfield representing Joseph Bennett (Lansford Palace LLC) asked Council to approve seven street parking spaces to be used by patients, with signs marked "for medical center only during business hours" (estimated to be weekdays 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). Attorney Garfield explained financing is ready and this is the last hurdle. Six of the parking spaces are on Coal Street; between W. Bertsch & W. Patterson Streets on the west side of the proposed building and one parking space is on W. Patterson Street. Attorney Garfield requests that the yearly fee (\$150.00 per space X 7=\$1,050.00) be waived because the project is the construction of a 1.2 million dollar building and will produce about \$20,000 per year in real estate tax revenue. Jared Soto asked that if the request is granted, and later the property is sold, can the decision be changed. Garfield said to write that into the agreement. Rose Mary Cannon suggested council approve the request but keep the option to change the \$1,050.00 loss every year.

Rose Mary Cannon made motion to grant, free of charge, the request for parking spaces as set forth in the site plan provided by Lansford Palace LLC and that set authority to utilize those parking spaces is granted at the discretion of Lansford Borough Council and can be withdrawn, and that set authority is specifically for Lansford Place LLC and is not assignable, not to any successors or assignees. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor, motion passed.

Eric Snyder, Keystone Consulting Engineers; Borough Garage Plans. Engineer Eric Snyder handed out the contract documents and bid specifications for a proposed 50' by 120' pole building to be constructed at the Lansford Borough Garage site, 200 W. Water Street. The packet included the shell building, garage doors, man doors, and site improvements. Mr. Snyder explained that utilities will be put in prior to the concrete floors. The plan includes the frame out for a unisex bathroom, breakroom, mechanical room, office area and six equipment bays and a secondary bay in the back. The sewer and floor drains are to be tied into existing sewer lines. There were no questions on site plan. The bid specs are prepared and ready to go to bid on Monday if council chooses to put the project out on bid. Joe Butrie asked about the heating system, stating that radiant heat is more efficient. Snyder said the heating system cost can be adjusted from the low bidder after the contract is awarded.

The borough received a Local Share Account (LSA) Grant earlier in the year for \$160,000.00; the borough originally applied for \$308,000.00. It is estimated by Keystone Engineers that the new building, when completed will cost at least \$300,000.00, an extra \$30,000.00 to \$60,000.00 may be needed. Rose Mary Cannon asked about any plans to finance the difference. There is no plan at this time. Martin Ditsky looked into USDA loans but there are no figures at this time.

The topic was put out for discussion to residents in attendance. Bob Silver conceded that the building is needed but people are entitled to know more about the plan, asking why council is in a hurry to do this tonight and asked if planning and zoning boards need to be consulted before the project is put out on bid. Martin explained there are violations with the boiler at the garage and structural problems in general and the expense of repairs is fueling the need to erect a new building. Joe Genits also conceded the building is in bad shape and said not to install a steam boiler in the new building, to use an oil burner for efficiency. Councilman Turcmanovich asked about sewer pipes and manholes, and whether the moratorium on new sewer hookups would prevent sewer hookup. The group didn't think this would be affected since the current hookup would be transferred to the new building. It is not an additional sewer line. Mary Soberick asked when, if the contract is awarded, construction would start. Eric Snyder said the start date is unknown but the building would be completed within 120 days of the start date. There was discussion about alternate sites for the borough garage.

Joe Butrie made a motion to put the construction of a pole building at the borough garage site out on bid, as specified in the Keystone Consulting Engineers Inc. proposal dated October 16, 2017. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor, motion passed.

Public Courtesy:

Robert Petit-Clair - 220 N. 9th Street, Leighton, owner of 129 W. Ridge Street, is having a sewer problem at this property; an above ground sewer leak was detected. The leak was repaired in July however the problem has resurfaced. He received a violation letter from Sean Corey, code compliance. Mr. Petit-Clair explained that he thinks the sewer line goes down Klocks Hill, and the nearest borough sewer line to connect to is on Dock Street. He cannot afford to repair the sewer line and is looking for assistance and direction on how to proceed. Borough public works supervisor Mario Marconi was in attendance and he said the hookup connection should be on Snyder Ave. Mr. Petit-Clair was asked to get together with Mr. Marconi to verify where his line connects to the borough line.

Bob Silver, 17 E. Ridge Street, had questions for Rose Mary Cannon regarding her attendance at the August 24, 2017 zoning hearing for Joseph Bennett. Rose Mary Cannon said she would not answer as instructed by her attorney. Silver asked whether there are executive sessions for both council and zoning hearing boards? Is there a difference? Was she invited to the zoning hearing board executive session? Was she asked to look up any information for the zoning hearing board? Did she stay in the room for the zoning hearing board executive session? Joseph Butrie, annoyed by the insistence of return to this topic, spoke as a past member and past president of the zoning hearing board, stating that in the past, during executive session, the board convened to the back of the meeting room, behind the partitions, for its executive sessions (while the audience stayed in the meeting hall). Mr.

Silver attempted to interrupt Mr. Butrie and Mr. Butrie raised his voice in response, "Let me finish. I have the floor". Mr. Ditsky banged the gavel and stopped discussion on the topic.

Christine LeClaire, 12 E. Abbott Street, invited council and the public to attend the VALOR event for disadvantage residents to be held at the American Fire Co No. 1, 26 W. Patterson Street, on Oct 22, 2017, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; meals, clothing, boots, toiletries, and hygiene items will be available. All are urged to attend the event.

Chris Reber, reporter at the Time News Newspaper, said that anyone running for office in the November 7, 2017 general election is urged to put their announcement in the Times News. Each candidate is asked to write a 100 word response to the question, "If elected, how will you improve the borough?"

Joe Genits, 232 W. Front Street, said he respects everyone serving the community. He believes issues can be resolved in committee meetings. He said the public is limited in the questions they may ask and wants to know why his suggestions are not carried out by council. He said that councilmen who not attend the meetings should be dismissed. Attorney Greek explained that the criteria for dismissal of an elected official has changed since Mr. Genits was on council. Genits said the suggestions he made to council were never discussed and he put his name on the ballot last spring because feels he is being ignored. He asked Attorney Greek to give him an overview of the Goncalves civil suit. Mr. Genits said the lawsuit is a result of LVIS incompetence and he wants council to hire someone to do code compliance and zoning in house.

Ronald Derr Jr. asked about the one way sign in the 300 block of W. Water Street. The sign can be taken down.

Mary Soto, 335 E Patterson Street, said that she submitted Quality of Life complaints; some were taken care of, and some were not, she asked that the ordinance be tweaked to make property owners cut their grass. She thanked borough workers for cutting grass at the parks.

The meeting minutes for the September 13, 2017 regular meeting were reviewed by council.

A motion was made by Jared Soto to approve the September 13, 2017 minutes as written. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.

Councilman Joseph Butrie left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Correspondence was reviewed from the following:

- **Nanovic Law Office for the Lansford –Coaldale Joint Water Authority**, requesting 30 days advance notification of borough road projects.
- **Carbon County Emergency Services** request for updated Emergency Operations Plan; (Chief Soberick will provide a copy.)
- **Carbon County Tax Claim** –properties scheduled for Judicial Sale, Nov 3, 2017 (List enclosed for council)
- **Notice of Violations from PA Dept of Labor & Industry**; boiler at the Borough Garage; (repairs are being made) 2 individuals have been contacted to make the repairs.
- **Penn DOT** – Letter to Eric Snyder regarding CAD electronic project files for Route 209 repaving Project for borough's inlet project
- **CC Tax Assessment Office** – 2017 Assessment Recap (needed for budgeting). There is a slight increase from last year.

The following correspondence received in September was not copied to conserve paper, copies were available on request:

Portnoff Law Associates - Offer to collect delinquent accounts (we currently use Powell Rogers & Speaks)

Unique Paving Materials Corp. - breakfast seminar invitation, 10/26/17, Top of the 80's, Hazleton.

Ford Motor Co. - 2017 Police Inceptor – notification of possible defect (copy given to police dept.)

MRM - "certification of participation" in Worker's Compensation Pooled Trust for 2017-18.

PA State Office of Open Records - Final Determination in Bob Silver's appeal of the borough's response to his Right to Know Request for site plans for the proposed borough garage.

Committee Reports:

Municipal Administration – No report, the October 4, 2017 meeting was cancelled.

Public Safety – The September 25, 2017 meeting report was submitted earlier by Matthew Walsh (not in attendance). The report notes discussion about the new Tasers purchased for the police department, fuel oil trucks blocking sidewalks at 329 W. Bertsch Street, the crosswalk being filed for Route 209 between Turkey Hill & the mini mall (midblock of the unit block W. Patterson Street).

Fire Department – In the American Fire Co. September report, the company responded to 14 calls; 8 in Lansford, 6 in Summit Hill

Ambulance – In the Lehighon Ambulance September report, the ambulance responded to 52 calls, dispatch time to time on scene was 8.67 minutes.

Mayor's Report – The September report totaled \$1,753.17. Year to date total is \$24,465.84.

Police Report – The September arrest report shows 6 criminal arrests, 19 traffic citations, 14 non-traffic citations, 11 parking tickets and 12 Quality of Life tickets.

At 8:10 p.m. James Romankow left the meeting and returned at 8:12 p.m. He was updated on the police discussion taking place between resident Michelle Bodine, 304 W. Patterson Street, remarked about the lack of police coverage. Mayor Romankow said some days there is one officer on duty.

Parks & Recreation – The October 4, 2017 meeting was cancelled. A resident near the park complained about the East End Park being unkempt this summer. Rose Mary Cannon suggested two summer workers be hired next summer to help with parks.

Public Works – Sept 25, 2017 meeting was cancelled, no quorum.

Community Development / Planning/Zoning – The September 25, 2017 meeting report were enclosed. The group discussed improper storage of oil at 32 W Bertsch St, 218 W Snyder Ave Sewer issue, found three unregistered rentals, recommended changing the dumpster ordinance; change the length of permit from 90 days to 30 days and include language to address containers on wheel, trailers and pods.

Carbon County Council of Governments (COG) – Used equipment auction was held Sept. 30, 2017. 2003 Ford Police cruiser was sold; title has not been transferred yet.

Carbon County Tax Committee – The quarterly meeting was held September 20, 2017.

Tax Collector's Report – The September report is enclosed; borough taxes collected in September total \$5,627.21. Total 2017 current real estate taxes collected to September 30, 2017 is \$846,172.04.

Code Compliance – The September report from Zoning Officer Sean Corey was reviewed. It includes 6 U.C.C. permit issued, 12 Residential Rental Inspections performed as well as 3 re-inspections, 11 property maintenance complaints were investigated and 40 phone calls, 15 e-mails, and 20 visitor meetings were completed.

Treasurer's Report - Bills to be approved total \$27,355.63; General Fund \$18,377.95, Liquid Fuels \$2,544.38, Fund \$2,544.38, Sewer Transmission \$6,313.21, Park & Recreation \$120.09. The Council packet includes: Income Statements, Checking Account balances, and Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual for all funds. Council was asked to review the bills to be paid.

The End of September Bank Balances:

	Account Title	Aug	Sept
7673	General Acct	\$426,679.10	\$361,119.70
7681	Sanitation Fund	\$91,376.56	\$70,341.81
0283	Investors Money Mkt Acct	\$51,546.92	\$51,555.39
1198	Sewer Transmission(reserve acct)	\$164,211.76	\$164,238.75
7772	Escrow for 22 W(E) Kline Ave	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
7780	Escrow for 20 E Kline Ave	\$2,180.11	\$2,180.11
7699	Lansford Pool Account	\$41,331.01	\$41,311.73
7706	Treasurers Special HiWay	\$88,113.48	\$80,950.40
4585	DCED Grant/Fire Co	\$0.00	\$0.00
7714	Sewage Transmission	\$149,656.44	\$127,279.05
5402	Loan Proceeds Acct(reserve acct)	\$202,658.77	\$202,669.10
7722	Local Service Tax/EIT	\$39,030.12	\$39,309.75
7730	Sanitation Fund Money Mkt Acct	\$12,155.76	\$7,730.00
7748	Fire	\$52,565.37	\$41,560.61
7756	Recreation	\$39,057.84	\$38,206.29
7764	Street Lights	\$41,731.49	\$37,086.78
		\$1,405,294.73	\$1,268,539.47
Loans	Paid from Fund	Est Balance	Est Balance
	Sewer Transm#5537	1,169,431.49	1,154,941.82
	General Fund#0132	0.00	0.00
	Street Light Fund#6309	154,859.11	154,859.11
	Liquid Fuels #3886	22,256.35	22,256.35
		1,383,068.52	1,368,578.85

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to pay all bills except for a \$245.50 invoice from Attorney Mousseau and to have Attorney Greek write a letter to Attorney Mousseau explaining why the borough will not pay the invoice; on behalf of a private concern. Attorney Mousseau billed the borough \$245.50 for work performed answering Bob Silver's questions, emails and copying costs, about "the executive session situation" and "meetings with the Time News Newspaper", before a Letter to the Editor appeared in the Time News Newspaper from Bob Silver, Donna Valent and Tim Kurchak, weeks after the zoning hearing decision was issued. John Turcmanovich second the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

In the Treasurer's report 79 Right to Know Requests had been received in 2017, 37 of them from Bob Silver at an estimated cost to the Right to Know Officer's time \$796.50. Invoices substantiating solicitor's fees for Bob Silver's Right to Know Requests cost an additional \$550.00. An estimated cost of the Right to Know Officer's time on all Right to Know Requests for 2017 is estimated at \$1,500.00.

Solicitor's Report (the following were reviewed):

- Assessment appeal hearings – sent to Solicitor in case the borough gets involved after the reassessment is done.
- Sewer line easement letters 358 & 364 W. Abbott Street.
- Decision from Court of Common Pleas regarding the Panther Valley School District vs. CC Tax Claim.
- Civil Action: Goncalves vs. Lansford Borough

Unfinished Business:

Resolution 2017-19 Fee Schedule Update was reviewed by council. Two changes were made, the Zoning Board Hearing fee was raised from \$450.00 to \$600.00 and the copy charge was raised from .25 to .35 cents.

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-19, increasing the copy charge from .25 to .35 and the Zoning Board Hearing Fee from \$450.00 to \$600.00. The motion was second by Jared Soto, all were in favor, motion passed.

Dock Street/Edgemont Bridge guardrails – Council reviewed Keystone Engineers specifications to install guardrails along Dock Street/Edgemont Bridge.

A motion was made by John Turcmanovich to put the installation of guard rails along the Dock Street/Edgemont Bridge out on bid. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor, motion passed.

New Business:

Ordinance 2008-01 - Dumpster Ordinance revisions were reviewed. Rose Mary Cannon made the motion to table the issue.

Front Door Estimates – In October the front double glass doors of the borough hall needed repair and Charles Polete Glass & Aluminum was called to repair the doors. In the past, Smulligan Glass repaired the doors but reported that the parts are no longer available. C. Polete repaired the doors on 10/5/17 and reported that both doors need to be replaced. Two estimates were received. One from C. Polete Glass & Aluminum, dated 10/9/17 for \$3,860.00 and one from Hess Doors & Windows dated 10/11/17 for \$7,551.00. After some discussion the topic was tabled by Rose Mary Cannon.

A Handicap Parking Application for Michele Bodine, 309 E. Patterson Street, was reviewed by Council. The parking spot was recommended for approval by the Handicap Parking Review Committee, Jared Soto, Jill Seigendall and James Romankow.

A motion to approve the Handicap Parking application submitted by Michele Bodine, 309 E. Patterson Street, was made by Jared Soto. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.

At 8:48 p.m. President Ditsky called a short recess followed by an Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations for full time police officers & the expired contract for the Teamsters crossing guards.

Adjournment:

Back on the record at 9:15 p.m. a motion was made to adjourn by Jared Soto, second by Martin Ditsky, all were in favor and the group dispersed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Seigendall
Secretary Treasurer