

The September 13, 2017 meeting of Lansford Borough Council was called to order by President Martin Ditsky at 6:30 p.m. and the group recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call of council persons was done by Secretary Treasurer Jill Seigendall. The following were in attendance: President Martin Ditsky, Vice President Rose Mary Cannon, Jared Soto, John Turcmanovich and Solicitor Michael Greek. Absent were council man Joseph Butrie, Matthew Walsh and Colin Jones. Nine people were in the audience.

Joseph Bennett demolished buildings at 101 W. Bertsch and 100 W. Ridge Street and at the current time both lots are vacant. Attorney Michael J. Garfield, representing Joseph Bennett, attended the meeting to make a request for reserved patient parking spaces along Coal Street between W. Bertsch and W. Patterson Streets. Mr. Bennett plans to build a medical facility at 101 W. Bertsch Street. Attorney Garfield said according to ordinance 97-9 Section 411 on commercial reserved parking, 3 reserved business parking spaces are allowed but Mr. Bennett is asking for 7 parking spaces. Attorney Garfield presented a map of Coal Street, along the proposed medical building, showing six parking spaces (on the west side of Coal Street) and one parking space on W. Patterson Street. Attorney Garfield will put the request in writing as directed in Ordinance 97-9 to apply for the parking spaces. Mayor Romankow questioned handicap parking at the site. The on-lot parking diagram showed a handicap space and also parking spaces to accommodate medical staff and some patient parking. Mr. Ditsky asked Attorney Garfield to remind Mr. Bennett to erect fencing around the two vacant properties for safety purposes and asked that Coal Street be repaved following the medical facility construction project.

**Public Courtesy:**

Chris Ondrus – Thanked council for work done to Edgemont/Dock Street Bridge. He hopes council will look for funding in the future for more improvement at the bridge. Guardrails need to be installed. He questioned the item on the agenda under the solicitors report for an update on the civil case Lansford Borough vs. Barbara Goncalves.

Don Gildea – Asked whether council knows who owns the bridge. The true owner is unknown but the borough maintains it for the residents. Chris Ondrus said that the main coal company building in Edgemont was built in 1873 however the borough was not incorporated until 1876. On several occasions Martin Ditsky and Rose Mary Cannon have tried to contact the coal company but there has not been a determination of the owner.

Rose Mary Cannon asked Chris Ondrus whether the benches, installed as part of the streetscape project along W. Ridge and Tunnel Streets intersection, have been secured. Chris Ondrus said more volunteers are needed. Chris also said the signs ordered for the police department, through the Lansford Alive grant from the Carbon County Economic Development Office, will be put up soon.

James Romankow – Congratulated the Lansford Alive events committee for the music in the park events held Sundays in Kennedy Park over the summer.

Council reviewed the minutes of the **August 9, 2017** regular meeting and **September 6, 2017** special meeting.

**Jared Soto made a motion to approve the minutes of August 9, 2017 as written. Rose Mary Cannon seconds the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.**

**John Turcmanovich made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2017 meeting as written. Rose Mary Cannon seconds the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.**

The following correspondence was reviewed by council:

- **Traveler's BoilerRE** – Risk Control recommendations at borough garage; the new air compressor needs to be secured and a mat needs to be placed under it.
- Lansford Police submitted a letter to council's contract negotiating committee; Jared Soto and Joseph Butrie, (it originally included Martin Ditsky, who has removed himself from the committee) for full time police contract negotiations. Detective Joshua Tom sent the letter within the prescribed time limit which protects the bargaining rights of the officers in the event arbitration is necessary.
- Council reviewed a Real Estate Property Tax Exemption request from Leonard J. Benek, 227 W. Ridge Street, Lansford. A letter dated July 31, 2017 from Mrs. Tracy Wylie-Perry, Veteran's Service Specialist for the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Bldg. 0-47 Fort Indiantown Gap, Annville, PA, recommended Real Estate Tax Exemption.  
**Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to approve Real Estate Tax Exemption for Leonard J. Benek based on his veteran's status and as recommended in correspondence from the PA Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.**
- A decision letter dated August 31, 2017 regarding the **Lansford Zoning Hearing Board** from Attorney Gregory Mousseau to Attorney Michael Garfield, outlining the Order from the August 24, 2017 Zoning Hearing for Joseph Bennett, regarding the building of a medical facility & parking lot.
- Penn DOT letter dated September 2017 - Announcing the estimated 2018 Liquid Fuels allocation \$118,389.73.
- Lansford Alive request to hang a 3' by 5' banner on the borough hall front railing advertising the Fall Craft Festival to be held September 30th in the Lansford business district.  
**Jared Soto made a motion to allow Lansford Alive to display its banner advertising the Fall Festival on the railing at borough building. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.**
- Lansford Alive request for approval of LSA Gaming Grant application for street lighting improvements (at Streetscape project). The topic is on the Agenda to be discussed later.

Correspondence **not** enclosed to conserve paper, copy available on request:

- Invitation to PSAB Fall Leadership conference, Oct 13-15, 2017 at Kalahari Resorts, Pocono Manor.
- EMS Training Schedule
- Carbon County Tax Collection Committee Agenda and minutes of the February 28, 2017 meeting
- Route 209 resurfacing contract award to Popple Construction, contract 83085; preconference meeting 9/19/17 8:30 a.m. 1002 Hamilton St., Allentown, Room 102

### **Committee Reports:**

**Municipal Administration** – Sept. 6, 2017 meeting was cancelled

**Public Safety** – Aug. 28, 2017 meeting was held. The committee would like to apply for a crosswalk on Route 209 (W. Patterson Street) with PennDOT.

**A motion was made by John Turcmanovich to contact PennDOT with the intention of reestablishing the crosswalk between Turkey Hill Market and the Lansford Mini Mall, midblock on the unit block of**

**W. Patterson Street between Tunnel and Coal Streets. The motion was second by Rose Mary Cannon. All were in favor, motion passed.**

**Civil Service Commission** – John Turcmanovich said the results of civil service test resulted in hiring of Jerrod Bulger as a full time policeman and the promotion of Shawn Nunemacher to Sergeant at the September 6<sup>th</sup> Special Council Meeting. The polygraph and background checks for Jarrod Bulger have been completed. Council woman Rose Mary Cannon extended her congratulations to Shawn Nunemacher on his promotion.

**Fire Department** – American Fire Co. #1 August report shows 9 calls for the month of August: 2 in Lansford and 7 in Summit Hill.

**Ambulance** – The Lehighon Ambulance August report showed it responded 55 times to the borough with an 8 minute response time from time of dispatch to the time on scene.

**Mayor's Report** – The August report was read by Mayor Romankow. The monthly total for August is \$2,054.65; magistrate \$1,361.65, miscellaneous reports \$60.00, parking violations \$353.00, Quality of Life \$280.00 the year to date total is \$22,712.67.

**Police Report** – The August report shows 14 Criminal arrests, 13 traffic citations, 18 non traffic citations, 9 parking/ordinance tickets and 27 quality of life tickets.

**Parks & Recreation** – Sept. 6, 2017 meeting was cancelled. Rose Mary Cannon reported LSA pool grant for \$500,000.00 will be applied for by the end of September.

**Public Works** – The Aug. 28, 2017 meeting was held but there is no written report. Martin Ditsky said guardrails are needed at Edgemont/Doc Street Bridge and parking and street line painting is needed. Mayor Romankow reported that some residents are painting their own parking lines.

**Community Development / Planning/Zoning** – The Aug. 28, 2017 meeting was held and a written report was previously submitted by Matthew Walsh. It recommends removing the two year time frame for rental unit inspections and raising the Zoning Hearing Board fee from \$450 to \$600.

**Carbon County Council of Governments (COG)** – Used equipment auction scheduled for Sept 30, 2017. Rose Mary Cannon and Martin Ditsky have tagged some items. The 2009 Ford Crown Victoria Police car will be included in the auction.

**Carbon County Tax Committee** – Next meeting is Wednesday 9/20/17, 10:00 a.m. at the Lehighon Area School District administrative office. Lansford Tax committee representative Jill Seigendall will attend.

**Tax Collectors Report** – The July report was enclosed. Borough taxes collected in August total \$8,720.91. The total current Real Estate taxes collected in 2017 to July 31, 2017 is \$ 831,823.92.

**Code Compliance** – The July Report from Zoning Officer Sean Corey was reviewed.

**Treasurer's Report** - Bills to be approved total \$83,343.98; General Fund \$27,117.08, Liquid Fuels Fund \$12,043.97, Sanitation \$25,335.84, Sewer Transmission \$401.80, Park & Recreation \$703.46, Fire Tax \$12,117.35, Street Light \$5,624.48. Council packet includes: Income Statements, Checking Account balances, and Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual for all funds. Jill Seigendall explained that the credit card application submitted to Elan Credit was not finalized and old paperwork from Elan Credit shows there was a problem cancelling the borough's Elan credit card in the past. Jill requested that the borough apply for a VISA card through Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank to avoid any future problems.

**A motion was made by Jared Soto to apply for the Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank VISA Card instead of the Elan Card. The motion was second by Rose Mary Cannon. All were in favor, motion passed.**

**Solicitor's Report**, Attorney Greek reviewed the following:

- Velitsky & Frycklund letter regarding a slip & fall near the stadium. Attorney Greek spoke to Attorney Velitsky, a letter has been sent to Panther Valley School District, owners of the stadium.

- Sewer line easement letters 358 & 364 W. Abbott Street;
- Panther Valley School District vs. CC Tax Claim - Portnoff law appeal has been made to commonwealth court. The borough not involved.
- Civil Action: Goncalves vs. Lansford Borough; Order of Court scheduling Argument on 9/21/17 at 1:15 pm. Only Attorney Greek needs to attend. Attorney Greek filed a motion to quash subpoena that was received.

Rose Mary Cannon asked Attorney Greek about filing municipal liens on sanitation delinquent accounts (those accounts already sent to collection agency Powell Roger's and Speaks without any results.) Attorney Greek explained that civil citations at the magistrate's office cannot be used. The borough can sue the property owner individually, get a civil judgement against them, and transfer it to Carbon County where the judgement is against all property in the county owned by that individual. Each case needs to be looked at individually to decide the best course of action.

#### **Unfinished Business :**

- The Dock St./Edgemont Bridge/Keystone Consulting Engineers report (Dated August 17, 2017) by Ryan Christman was reviewed by council. It recommends a 1 1/2 inch bituminous overlay be applied to seal the deck, replace missing stones and repoint joints, update guardrails, and continue monitoring and testing structural analysis, post the bridge at 25 tons.
- **Resolution 2017-13** – Approves the borough entering into an agreement with Pennsylvania Power and Light Company (PPL) to convert Street Lights to LED bulbs.  
**Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-13 that approves converting Lansford Street Lights to light emitting diode (LED) bulbs. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.**
- **Lansford Borough Police Pension Plan MMO.** The worksheet for 2018 Minimum Municipal Obligation was presented to Borough Council. Line #9 shows the Minimum Municipal Obligation totaling \$34,685.00.  
**Resolution 2017-14:** Police Pension Plan - continuance of 3.5% contribution rate.  
**A motion was made by Jared Soto to approve Resolution 2017-14 which retains the 3.5% contribution rate for the police pension plan for the year 2018. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.**
- **Resolution 2017-15** seeking approval to submit a Local Share Account (LSA) grant application for funding in the amount of \$500,000.00 for the Lansford Pool.  
**A motion was made by Rose Mary Cannon to approve Resolution 2017-15, LAS grant application for funding in the amount of \$500,000.00 for general construction and renovations of the Lansford Pool at Ashton Park. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.**
- **Resolution 2017-16** Municipal Deposit Resolution authorizing Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank as a borough depository.

**Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-19 designating Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank as a Lansford Borough depository. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.**

- **Resolution 2017-17** Approval of LSA grant application in the amount of \$160,000.00 for site preparation, building and engineering fees in the reconstruction of Dock St/Edgemont Bridge. **A motion was made by Rose Mary Cannon to approve the application for a LSA grant in the amount of \$160,000.00 for site preparation, building and engineering fees to repair the Dock Street/Edgemont Bridge by approving Resolution 2017-17. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor, motion passed.**
- **Resolution 2017-18** Approval of LSA grant application for Street Lighting in the business district. **A motion was made by Jared Soto to approve the application for new street lights in the business district in the amount of \$179,075.00. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor, motion passed.**

Rose Mary Cannon thanked Mary Soto for arranging the planters on Ridge Street and around town this summer.

#### **New Business:**

Council considered revisions to the Dumpster Ordinance 2003-07 to address the use of dumpsters on rollers and pods. Rose Mary Cannon suggested this be sent to the Zoning Ordinance Committee for revision. Jared Soto tabled the issue.

Mayor James Romankow announced that Halloween Trick or Treat Night in the borough will be held on Halloween, Oct 31, 2017, between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Households participating are asked to turn on their porch lights.

Council considered increasing the fee for a Zoning Hearing Board hearing. A hearing currently costs \$450.00.

**Jared Soto made a motion to change the Zoning Board Hearing fee from \$450.00 to \$600.00. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.**

Martin Ditsky, chairman of public works committee, recommended the purchase of a new or used 10 ton dump truck for the public works department. He explained the borough 1991 turnpike truck needs to be replaced or retired. On the Municibid auction site there is a truck with 55,000 miles on it and he is asking council to allow him to bid up to \$50,000.00 (the maximum bid he could make) to purchase the truck by 9/22/17. The truck currently has a bid of \$37,500. Mr. Ditsky also contacted the Kovatch dealership for a quote on a 2018 10 ton dump truck with plow, spreader, and coal chute. He did not have a price, however the last truck purchased by the borough cost \$115,000. Sewer Transmission money could be used. No motion was made and the topic died.

Martin Ditsky called a short recess at 8:15 p.m. followed by an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters and contract negotiations for full time police & crossing guards.

Back on the record at 8:30 p.m.

**Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to hire Eddie Rodriguez as a part time officer pending an interview with Mayor Romankow and Chief Soberick. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor. Motion passed.**

**Adjournment:**

**Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by John Turcmanovich. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor and the group dispersed.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Jill Seigendall*  
Secretary/Treasurer