

Lansford Borough Council held its monthly meeting on August 8, 2018 at borough hall, 1 W. Ridge Street. The meeting was called to order by President Jared Soto at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call was taken by secretary treasurer Jill Seigendall. Council persons attending were President Soto, Marie Ondrus, Joseph Butrie, and Bob Silver. Borough solicitor Michael Greek arrived at 6:15 p.m. during executive session. Absent were council persons Irma Leibensperger, John Turcmanovich, Matthew Walsh and Mayor James Romankow.

### **Executive Session**

President Soto called the group into executive session at 6:05 p.m. Topics discussed were the Jesse Hiles vs. Lansford Borough litigation, possible property purchases for relocating the borough garage and personnel issues, specifically to review recent job applications.

### **Public Courtesy**

Council came out of executive session at 6:30 p.m. and public courtesy was opened. About eleven people were in the audience.

**Theresa Papay**, 100 W. Abbott Street, attended last month's meeting and voiced her opinion that the school bus stop proposed at the intersection of Coal and Abbott Streets be changed. Jared Soto contacted the school board about changing the bus stop and said the topic will be discussed later in the meeting.

**Gail Yasson**, 20 W. Abbott Street, brought in Pennsylvania School District Bus Stop Regulations for President Soto.

**Frank & Jennifer Staines**, 353 W. Abbott Street, complained about the noise of fireworks, the loud cannon shot at football games, the condition of the track at the Panther Valley Football Field, asking for more police patrols at the field. Mrs. Staines needs to medicate her pets because of the noise. They were told to contact the P.V. School District regarding the condition of the football field.

**Rose Mary Cannon**, 242 W. Ridge Street, attended the committee meetings and said that there were complaints about the borough's code enforcement company, Lehigh Valley Inspection Service (LVIS). She didn't think it was fair that representatives of LVIS were not in attendance to defend the accusations. She congratulated the Friends of Lansford Recreation for working to raise funds to renovate Ashton Hill Park Pool.

### **Approval of 7/11/18 Minutes**

The minutes of the July 11, 2018 meeting were reviewed.

**A motion was made by Joseph Butrie to approve the meeting minutes for July 11, 2018. The motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in favor, motion passed.**

### **Correspondence**

**Hutchinson, Gillahan & Freeh, P.C.** – The Annual Audit and Financial Reporting for the year 2017 is completed, reported to Carbon County and the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), and advertised in the August 7, 2018 edition of the Times News Newspaper. A \$1,100.00 discount was given due to improved financial record keeping. The Auditor's fee was \$9,600.00. The DCED also advised the borough office that they have approved the 2017 Audit. It is on file at the borough office.

**The Seltzer Group** – A letter explaining that forming and maintaining a workplace safety committee can save the borough 5% on its worker's compensation premium.

**CC Tax Claim Bureau** – requests written approval or disapproval of the repository sale of Parcel 122A4-22-G46, 803 E. Patterson Street, formerly owned by Chester & Mary Sytnik. If approved the property will be sold for \$752.00 to Katherine Spence, New Ringgold, PA.

**A motion was made by Bob Silver to approve the repository sale of parcel 122A4-22-G46. The motion was second by Joseph Butrie. All were in favor, motion passed.**

**Jesse Hiles Special Event Request** – at the Sports Zoo – request to hold the annual Zoo Stock at 390 W. Snyder Street, 11:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Labor Day, Monday, 9/3/18.

**A motion was made by Joseph Butrie to approve the Sports Zoo event as long as proof of insurance is submitted before the event. The motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in favor, motion passed.**

Correspondence received but not copied for council to save paper

- - Bankruptcy Notice to Creditors regarding MaryAnn Van Lieu, Chapter 13 plan has been filed, borough is listed as a creditor \$2,387.50.
- - Bankruptcy Notice Form 3015-1, Notice of a hearing to confirm the Ch. 13 Plan, regarding William J. Smith Sr. & Suzanne C. Smith, Ch. 13
- - UNIVEST second quarter investment report for the Police Pension Plan
- - Penna. Dept of Environmental Protection – Letter to Silberline – Lansford Plant- to submit its quarterly groundwater cleanup plan
- - CC Tax Claim Bureau – Requesting municipal claims/liens on the provided list of potential properties for Upset Sale. The form was completed and returned to the tax claim bureau.
- - All funding paperwork has been supplied to New Holland Auto Group and Fulton Bank for the financing for the Police vehicle, 2018 RAM 1500 SSV.

**Committee Reports** - Committee meetings were held August 1, 2018:

**Park & Recreation** – In the report submitted by Jared Soto and read by Joseph Butrie, the group discussed the trees cut by Matt Dunn at Kennedy Park, estimates to repair the park gazebo, purchasing signs of rules to be posted at Kennedy Park, and an outline from Keystone Engineering to locate a basketball court in the area north of the tennis courts at Ashton Hill Park. The engineering report recommends the replacement of a storm water inlet as well as the 84' X 54" court. Bob Silver asked for a plot plan of the project.

**Public Works** – There was no written report however chairman Bob Silver said that the group discussed the inlet replacements, traffic pole installations by Telco, replacement of the 2008 Ford red truck body, and a list of locations that need resurfacing: intersection of Center & W. Bertsch Streets, Powell Street between E. Ridge and E. Patterson Streets, and a stretch of Front Street from Klock's Hill going west. Line painting will begin when the highway project is complete.

**Bob Silver made a motion to have a survey done of parcel 122A-25-M46, a borough owned parcel (basketball court) below the intersection of W. Ridge and Dock Streets with the possible use as a site to build a borough garage. The motion was second by Joseph Butrie. Voting on the motion: Joseph Butrie-yes, Jared Soto-yes Bob Silver-yes, Marie Ondrus-no. 3 yes, 1 no. Motion passed.**

**Joseph Butrie made a motion to secure funding to purchase Panther Valley Lumber property, parcel 122A4-22-G71, at a price of \$400,000.00. A letter was received from Panther Valley Lumber owner Robert Davidovich offering the parcel to the borough at that price. Bob Silver was concerned about the cost of renovations to convert the existing store and pole buildings; heating, electric, plumbing, insulation, etc. The motion failed due to no second.**

**Municipal Administration** – no written report was submitted

**Code Planning and Ordinance** – A report was submitted and reviewed by Jared Soto. During public courtesy there was input about dilapidated properties in the borough and displeasure with the current code enforcement company, LVIS. The group discussed how to administer code enforcement and its priorities throughout the day. A sample Request for Proposals for Code Services was reviewed for possible advertisement at the next council meeting. Also discussed was the possible purchase of code enforcement software and codification of the Lansford Book of Ordinances. Mr. Soto explained that budgeting for the codification costs could be included in the budgets for the next three years.

**Public Safety** – A written report was submitted by Jared Soto. The group recommended that the Farmer's Market (produce stand on Fridays) be moved to the west side of Tunnel Street (between Patterson and Ridge) because it is hidden from view for traffic traveling west on Ridge Street and turning left onto Tunnel Street. The bus stop options were discussed and will be addressed later in this meeting.

**Joseph Butrie made a motion to remove all the parking meters from the business district. The motion failed due to no second.**

Bob Silver spoke as a former businessman in town. He commented on the importance of having parking meters in the business district to keep cars moving. Without meters vehicles will be allowed to be parked permanently. He offered to take an inventory and create a map of the current meters in the business district to be presented at the next meeting.

**Mayors Report** – Police receipts reported from Mayor Romankow for July totals \$3,134.23. Year to date total is \$12,981.57.

**Police Report** – July report shows 12 criminal arrests, 34 traffic citations, 9 parking ordinance tickets and 46 Quality of Life tickets.

**Fire Department** – The American Fire Co. No. 1 July report shows 14 responses; 9 in Lansford, 3 to Summit Hill and 2 to Tamaqua.

**Ambulance** – In the Leighton Ambulance July report, the ambulance responded to 53 incidences in Lansford with an average response time of 8.74 minutes from time of dispatch to arrival on scene.

**Code Enforcement** – In her report to council zoning officer Tracy Herman (LVIS) listed 6 home renovation permits and 2 zoning permits issued. Six Notices for Landlord Registration were sent, 13 rental inspections performed, 16 re-inspections performed and 51 notices for inspections

were mailed. Nine property maintenance complaints were investigated and six complaints were closed. Council was given the address list of 39 houses that are condemned (unfit for human habitation) in the borough and a letter to Albertini Manufacturing, Tyrolean Enterprises, denying its zoning application for manufacturing at 30 E. Ridge Street.

**Carbon County Council of Governments (COG)** – No written report

**Carbon County Tax Collection Committee** – No report, the next meeting is September 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Tax Collector's Report** – Terrance McCall reported the total collected for July; \$81,537.66.

The year to date total \$852,543.31 (This is about \$15,000.00 more than last year at this time.)

**Treasurer's Report** – Total bills to be approved \$57,561.51. Breakdown: General Fund \$20,743.50; Sanitation \$25,335.84; Sewer Transmission \$3,276.01; Park & Recreation \$2,963.11; Hi-Way Liquid Fuels \$254.18; Street Light \$4,988.87. Council was given the list of bills and monthly activity for all checking accounts.

2018	End of Month Balances 2018		
	Account Title	June	July
7673	General Acct	\$573,760.69	\$458,723.15
7681	Sanitation Fund	\$88,594.54	\$120,877.86
0283	Investors Money Mkt Acct	\$51,634.57	\$51,643.34
1198	Sewer Transmission(reserve acct)	\$164,486.60	\$164,514.54
7772	Escrow for 22 E Kline Ave	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
7780	Escrow for 20 E Kline Ave	\$2,180.11	\$2,180.11
4529	Escrow for 401-405 E Abbott St	\$7,333.33	\$7,333.33
7699	Lansford Pool Account	\$41,342.64	\$41,346.26
7706	Treasurers Special HI Way	\$134,754.25	\$134,042.14
7714	Sewage Transmission	\$174,286.90	\$161,191.09
5402	Loan Proceeds Acct(reserve acct)	\$202,760.07	\$202,770.07
7722	Local Service Tax/EIT	\$34,594.92	\$34,812.39
7730	Sanitation Fund Money Mkt Acct	\$12,143.23	\$12,144.29
7748	Fire	\$53,106.25	\$49,277.70
7756	Recreation	\$63,554.95	\$64,463.99
7764	Street Lights	\$43,975.84	\$41,994.48
		<b>\$1,651,508.89</b>	<b>\$1,550,314.74</b>
<b>Loans</b>	<b>Paid from Fund</b>	<b>Est Balance</b>	<b>Est Balance</b>
	Sewer Transm#5537 4/21/15	1,022,191.69	1,007,171.58
	Street Light Fund#6309 11/12/09	138,724.11	138,724.11
	Liquid Fuels #3886 10/28/14	22,256.35	22,256.35
	Gen Fund or LST 1/5/17	36,521.57	36,521.57
	Gen Fund or LST 6/1/18	42,073.00	42,073.00
		<b>1,261,766.72</b>	<b>1,246,746.61</b>

**Joseph Butrie made a motion to approve the payment of the bills as presented. The motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in favor, motion passed.**

**A motion was made by Joseph Butrie to approve the payoff of the 2018 Tax Anticipation Note, \$50,000.00 plus interest to M & T Government Banking. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.**

The July council meeting included a motion to purchase a 12 month CD at Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank at 1.90% interest rate with money from M & T Bank Sewer Transmission account #5402. Once contacted, the 1.90% rate had expired and a new rate of 2.25% was initiated. The same interest rate was being offered at Mauch Chunk Trust.

**A motion was made by Bob Silver to purchase a \$50,000.00 twelve month Certificate of Deposit at Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank at an annual interest rate of 2.25%. The \$50,000.00 will come from M&T Bank Sewer Transmission account #5402. The motion was second by Joseph Butrie. All were in favor, motion passed.**

Council discussed how to proceed on collecting \$95,946.00 of delinquent Sanitation Accounts (presented at the July meeting) that have accumulated since 2015. These delinquent accounts were sent to collection agency Powell, Rogers and Speaks on a quarterly basis but no payments were received. Council agreed to have assistant secretary treasurer (and billing clerk) Wendy Butrie send this list of delinquent account holders to Attorney Michael Greek for another try at collection through a letter threatening litigation to be followed by filing liens or civil suits. All delinquent accounts will continue to be sent to collection agency Powell, Rogers and Speaks on a quarterly basis.

#### **Solicitor's Report –**

- Notices of Sheriff Sale properties: 253 E. Abbott St, 212 W. Bertsch St., 343 W. Kline Ave, 340 W. Kline Ave., 251 W. Patterson St., 308 E. Bertsch St., 340 ½ W. Kline Ave., 805 E. Ridge St.
- Portnoff Law Associates – Petition for Rule to Show Cause hearing (to be sold at sheriff sale clear of all liens), Sept. 20, 2018, 10:00 a.m. C.C. Courthouse Courtroom 2; 8 W. Bertsch Street & 232 E. Abbott Street.
- Mortgage satisfaction piece filed (HOME Program) for 256 E. Kline Ave., Margaret and Nicholas Butrie.
- Attorney Greek will provide an ordinance about fireworks at the next meeting.

#### **Unfinished Business**

**Parking Meters** - The topic of parking meters in the business district was tabled until the September meeting.

**Property Sale** - Auction of Borough Property Parcel 123A-24-H48, a vacant lot; basketball court at the south end of Tunnel Street. The secretary's notes from the auction:

An auction of borough owned property was held Tuesday afternoon, July 31, 2018 at 2:02 p.m. in the Lansford Borough Council Chambers, 1 W. Ridge Street, Lansford, PA.

The Auction was presided over by borough solicitor Michael Greek. In attendance were borough secretary Jill Seigendall and resident Paul J. Kokinda. At their work stations in the same room were borough employee assistant secretary treasurer Wendy Butrie and zoning officer Tracy Herman of LVIS.

Attorney Greek reviewed the legal description of the land and read the Public Notice as published in The Times News Newspaper on July 16, 2018. The Notice describes the property, terms of sale bidding information and general information. The property is a parcel of land indexed to tax parcel 123A-24-H48, located in Deed Book 283, Page 370. The property consists of a vacant lot at the south end of Tunnel Street, Lansford, PA 18232, known as a “basketball court” or the “Abbott AA” property.

Paul Kokinda, 34 E. Abbott Street, Lansford, made an offer of \$2,500.00 for the property. Being no other offers, Attorney Greek accepted the minimum bid and explained the terms of sale to Mr. Kokinda. Final acceptance will be determined at the next borough council meeting 6:00 p.m. August 8, 2018 at borough hall.

At approximately 2:12 p.m. Attorney Greek closed the auction and instructed Mr. Kokinda to make payment of \$1,050.00 to the Borough of Lansford. The cash payment was received and deposited into the General Fund.

**A motion was made by Joseph Butrie, pursuant to the auction, to approve the sale of parcel 123A-24-H48 to Paul Kokinda for \$2,500.00 plus costs as outlined in the public notice. The motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in agreement, motion passed. The closing for the property sale will be held at Attorney Greek’s office.**

**Ordinance 2018-01** - To make Tunnel Street (between W. Ridge Street and Snyder Avenue) one way south for police vehicles only, was offered for consideration. No motion was made for approval.

**Bob Silver made a motion to remove Ordinance 2018-01 from future consideration. The motion was second by Joseph Butrie. All were in favor, motion passed.**

**Resolution 2018-07** - in support of citizens’ concerned with placement of wind turbines in Penn Forest Township, was offered for consideration.

**Joseph Butrie made a motion to revoke Resolution 2018-07 from future consideration. The motion was second by Bob Silver. Marie Ondrus, Joseph Butrie and Bob Silver approved, Jared Soto voted no. The motion passed.**

**Elks Lot** – 6 E. Ridge Street (demolition site) – Estimates are being sought for materials to renovate the site as a pocket park with county CDBG grant funds. Jared met with a landscaper about placing stone on the lot.

**Code Enforcement Request for Proposals** – The sample provided by the solicitor was reviewed at the Code, Zoning & Planning Committee meeting. Bob Silver said he would prefer a proposal written for individuals instead of outside contractors. Joseph Butrie spoke in favor of the current zoning officer Tracy Herman of LVIS. Attorney Greek explained the parameters of the code enforcement appointed position; the liability of hiring an employee vs. an outside contractor. He will provide another advertisement for individuals seeking to provide code enforcement services.

**New Business**

**Bus Stops for Panther Valley School District** – Due to complaints about the Coal & Abbot Street bus stop, Jared Soto contacted the school district and was advised to have a decision to them for any changes by tomorrow, August 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Bob Silver made a motion to approve putting the bus stops back to the same locations they were last year. The former middle school, 15 E. Bertsch Street, would be the primary pickup location with the following stops removed: Abbot & Walnut Streets, 24 W. Bertsch St (former Factory Fitness building), E. Ridge & Springgarden Streets (Laundromat), intersection of Klock’s Hill and W. Ridge Streets. The motion failed due to no second.**

**Bob Silver made a motion to approve putting the bus stops at the intersection of Abbott and Walnut Streets and at the intersection of Klock’s Hill and W. Ridge Street, removing the 24 W. Bertsch Street “Factory” and intersection of E. Ridge and Springgarden “Laundromat” bus stops, replacing these 2 with the former middle school location. The motion was second by Jared Soto. On roll call vote: Joseph Butrie – no, Jared Soto – yes, Bob Silver – yes, Marie Ondrus – yes. Motion passed, 3 yes, 1 no.**

**Bob Silver made a motion to advertise the bus stops once verified with the school district. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All agreed except Joseph Butrie. Motion passed 3 yes votes, 1 no vote.**

**Fire Proof Cabinet** – Bob Silver volunteered to get prices for a fire proof cabinet to hold the Borough Minute Books.

A motion for adjournment was made at 8:00 p.m. by Joseph Butrie, second by Jared Soto, and the group dispersed.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Jill Seigendall*  
Secretary/Treasurer