

**Lansford Borough Council
Special Meeting
October 24, 2018**

A special meeting of Lansford Borough Council was held 7:00 p.m. October 24, 2018 at borough hall, 1 W. Ridge Street, Lansford, for general purposes and to make an appointment to fill the vacant borough council seat due to the resignation of Matthew Walsh on October 10, 2018.

The meeting was called to order by President Jared Soto and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Rollcall was taken by secretary treasurer Jill Seigendall with the following council members present: John Turcmanovich, Joseph Butrie, Jared Soto, Bob Silver, Marie Ondrus, Irma Leibensperger, Mayor James Romankow and Solicitor Michael Greek. About ten residents were in the audience as well as reporter Chris Reber of the Times News Newspaper.

Appointment to vacant council seat

President Soto read four letters of interest in the seat, received from residents Martin Ditsky, Robert Benek, Bruce Markovich and Charlie Knipper.

President Soto explained that nominations will be held as it was in the past mayor's appointment last February. Nominations will be made, followed by a second. After nominations are closed the names will be voted on in order of nomination.

Irma Leibensperger nominated Martin Ditsky. There was no second to the motion. Motion failed.

John Turcmanovich nominated Bruce Markovich. The motion was second by Marie Ondrus.

Joe Butrie nominated Charlie Knipper. The motion was second by Irma Leibensperger.

Nominations were closed by President Soto and roll call vote was taken to approve the motion to appoint Bruce Markovich to fill the vacant seat on borough council.

John Turcmanovich, yes;

Joseph Butrie said he would not vote. He abstained from voting stating it was a conflict of interest because Bruce is a friend but would not disclose the nature of his interest as a public record. Attorney Greek explained that it is an elected official's responsibility to vote however it is a council person's decision; no one can make him vote. Mr. Butrie filled out an Abstention Memorandum stating his reason for abstaining was "conflict of interest."

Jared Soto, yes; Bob Silver, yes; Marie Ondrus, yes; Irma Leibensperger, no;

Motion passed, 4 yes, 1 no, 1 abstention.

Bruce Markovich was welcomed to join council.

Resolution 2018-10 council appointment

Jared Soto read Resolution 2018-10 appointing Bruce Markovich to fill the unexpired seat of Matthew Walsh (left vacant due to the resignation at the October 10, 2018 meeting) until the term expires in January 2020.

A motion was made by Bob Silver, second by Jared Soto, to approve Resolution 2018-10 appointing Bruce Markovich to fill the unexpired term of councilman Matthew Walsh until January 2020. All were in favor, motion passed.

Unfinished Business

A Motion was made by Bob Silver to allow borough workers to work at the Veterans Day Parade, November 11, 2018, second by Joe Butrie. All were in favor, motion passed. Mr. Silvers said the workers would donate their time to work at the event in honor of the veterans who served our country.

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New Business

Personnel Job Change-Jared Soto explained the internal personnel matter involving the switching of work roles for public work's employees Marion Marconi and Greg Dailey. Greg Daily was moved to the position of leader at the collective bargaining agreement leader rate \$21.00 and Mario Marconi was moved to the position of laborer/driver but kept at the leader pay rate. A grievance from Mario Marconi has been received.

HOME Program – Jared Soto explained that the borough received a call from Dennis Mackey, Grant Manager at Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), regarding a lost file from the 2003 HOME Program and the possibility that the borough will need to refund \$18,618.30 to DCED. Some History:

In reviewing the files, between 1998 and 2007, Lansford Borough conducted a housing rehabilitation program where low interest loans and grants were given to qualifying low income residents for home rehabilitation projects. The HOME Program assisted about 40 homeowners. Mortgage liens were placed on each participating property as projects were completed. If the resident resided in the home for 5 years after the rehabilitation project, the loan portion was forgiven.

On November 24 & 25, 2015 Joseph Desimone of KPMG Monitoring Team, working for DCED, performed an audit of Lansford's HOME Program files. During this audit five project files were chosen to be reviewed. One of the five files requested, Robert & Laura Sabol, 215 E. Patterson Street, could not be found. The Sabol project cost was \$18,618.30. The borough archives were searched at this time but the file could not be found. All borough files were moved at the end of 2011 from the borough office at 26 W. Patterson Street to the current borough office at 1 W. Ridge Street and it was assumed the file was lost during this transition.

In October 2018 both Jared Soto and Jill Seigendall searched the archives (which resulted in finding lost minute books for 2002-2008) but did not find the Sabol file.

Public Courtesy:

Tommy Vadyak, 334 W. Abbott Street, asked about the personnel changes in public works department. He said the streets are a disaster and street sweeping was done incorrectly. The new light poles on some corners on Patterson Street do not leave enough room to allow handicap residents access; there is not enough room for a wheelchair to pass. He complained about the police department not citing residents for repairing their vehicles along the street and he wants the three strikes law enforced.

Martin Ditsky, 330 ½ E. Abbott Street, agreed with Tommy Vadyak. He complained about a camper and a boat parked on the street. He is concerned that two of the public work's employees do not live in the borough and thinks a time clock is needed because they come to work late.

Michelle Bartek, 333 E. Abbott Street and owner of 511 E. Ridge Street, was disturbed about the bullet proof vest policy discussed at the October meeting and thinks the borough should pay for all officers' bullet proof vests. She wants all of council to work together. She later asked for the names of those serving on council when the HOME Program was conducted.

Marie Ondrus, 36 Coal Street, agrees with Michele. She feels council is not working together. If council would work together they could get things done.

Rose Mary Cannon, 242 W. Ridge Street, agrees we need to work together. She said elected officials should be commended for their service but feels some candidates running for elections have personal

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agendas. She said it is upsetting, adding that people should serve on council for the betterment of the town and work together.

Oath of Office

Bruce Markovich was sworn in as councilman by Attorney Greek and the Oath of Office and Affidavit of Residency was signed.

Executive Session:

At 7:32 p.m. Jared Soto called the group into executive session to discuss personnel issues, specifically code enforcement LVIS and the public work's employees. The group came out of executive session at 7:45 p.m.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made by Joseph Butrie, second by Bruce Markovich and everyone disbursed at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Seigendall
Secretary Treasurer