

The Monthly meeting of the Lansford Borough Council for General and Executive purposes was held at the above date and place at 6:30pm. The meeting was called to order by President Martin Ditsky and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. There were 15 residents and 2 Reporters.

### **ROLL CALL**

Secretary Treasurer Mary Fittos took roll call. Those present were Martin Ditsky, Rose Mary Cannon, Matthew Walsh, Mayor James Romankow, Joe Butrie, Jared Soto, John Turcmanovich and Solicitor Michael Greek. Colin Jones was absent.

### **PUBLIC COURTESY**

David Benevy said he would like to throw out the consideration of parking meters regarding the street scape. He said the bid included \$6,240 allocated for new meter posts only, not the meter heads. This would be just on the South side of the street. He believes the money can be spent in better ways. He also believes there are better ways in solving the parking issue. He also said between Coal and Center Street the parking spots are really terrible there and narrow due to the meters. A lot of the meters contribute to the blight in that area. He said there are ways to implement a 2 hour parking limit which would solve the problem. He said there may be more ways of getting more revenue than the way we get it now.

Mr. Romankow said we are not trying to get revenue. Mr. Walsh asked what's the point of having the meters if not for revenue. Ms. Cannon responded by saying they were meant for the flow of traffic but are not to be used as a money making source.

Mr. Romankow said at the time when they were installed, Lansford had more stores and were very busy. He said he is all for improving Lansford and if removing the meters is going to help it could be considered.

He said we are moving forward with the Palace project and the street scape and taking steps in the right direction and we need to keep that momentum going.

Ms. Cannon said the street scape will be discussed at the next meeting.

Jesse Hiles, He said he has been living in Lansford for 28 years and is now receiving two Sewer Transmission fee bills. Mrs. Fittos said in creating the bills we had discovered there were a lot of people not registered so that's why Mr. Hiles received two bills. Mrs. Fittos asked what bill he received in the past and he said one for \$90. Mrs. Fittos said he received a residential bill but not a commercial, he now receiving both as we did not know he lived upstairs from his place of business. Mr. Hiles found it hard to believe that no one knew he lived there for 28 years. Mrs. Fittos said this billing was outsourced at one time by Optimal and when we took over the billing we found errors. Mr. Hiles was questioning why two bills and Mrs. Fittos said its part of the ordinance. She said we are still learning about what commercial businesses are here in town. Mr. Hiles said, he only uses one Sewer.

Mr. Walsh recommended that Mr. Hiles attend the next planning/ zoning committee meeting as there is a gentlemen from the public that will have a presentation on the sewage transmission and how he thinks it can be revamped and hopefully save the residents some money. March 30, 2016 is the next committee meeting for Planning/ Zoning.

Mr. Hiles asked what happens if he doesn't pay the bill. Mrs. Fittos said after the 15<sup>th</sup>, a \$9.00 charge will be added to the bill. Ms. Seigendall said if there is an open balance from the previous year, their water will be shut off.

There was some discussion on this. Ms. Cannon explained how the sewer transmission fees came to be as well as how it is being charged to the different entity's such as resident, commercial and Industrial.

Mr. Walsh mentioned that he too needs to pay a sewer transmission fee for a small window space with no access to water.

Shawn Clark, 200 East Bertsch Street, owner of the funeral home and said he received two bills for Sewer Transmission and has 1 sewer line. He said he is ok with receiving the commercial rate but inquiring why he is receiving two bills for one sewer line. Mr. Ditsky asked him to come to the committee meeting on March 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Ditsky explained the history of the sink holes/ sewer collapses and the loan associated with the repair of it.

Mr. Greek explained that the Sewer Authority charges for the treatment of the water through the Sewer Plant, which is why their fees are minimal. They only run the plant. The Borough maintains the lines and this is what the Act 537 is for, to try and eliminate the Sewer Transmission fee. Mr. Greek went on to further explain the logic behind drafting the ordinance.

This discussion went on for another ten minutes.

Jesse Hiles, mentioned that paving was done over twenty years ago which has caused water to flow into his backyard continuously. He mentioned that the engineer at the time of the paving project had it all figured out where the water would run. He said he paid for it for 25 years and doesn't think he should pay for it anymore. Ms. Cannon said the Borough paid for a project to try and correct it. She said the problem is the storm sewer at the bottom of Cortright & Ridge Street as it does not catch the water.

Mr. Butrie said they may have something in the works this year to help alleviate that problem that Mr. Hiles is experiencing. Mr. Butrie said he told council it would help to install 2 storm inlets at Cortright Street and Patterson. Ms. Cannon said not to promise anything we can't do. Mr. Ditsky said we cannot promise

anything as it's up to council and we have projects we have to look at. Mr. Hiles said at his expense he put stone in trying to fix it.

Mary Soto, 335 East Patterson Street, said for the past two years in the spring she has seen a white truck spraying foliage along 209 going into Coaldale. Her concern is will they continue to keep spraying and what are they spraying. She is concerned it could be a health effect. She asked if council was aware of anyone spraying the Boroughs foliage in town. Ms. Cannon said it could be done through the county as they have a spraying program. She said we will have to check on it. Mary Soto also inquired if we can make this Borough a no spray zone. Mr. Ditsky said we will have to get in touch with the County.

John Bowman, 22 Jones street, said he has an independent blog and said he started his own blog because WNEP and all the local media seems to portray all negative coverage in Lansford. He asked why the media seems to have it out in our town more than others.

Mr. Butrie responded and said that was a good question as one time there was a negative story about the American Legion that was on the front page.

Mr. Ditsky said for some reason Lansford gets picked on.

This conversation went on for a few minutes.

Mary Soberick, 109 West Abbott, had a question on the February 5, 2016 minutes and said it indicated there was executive session regarding litigation. She asked in general what the discussion was. She said she is only aware of the litigation between the Borough and Turcmanovich case. She said it was only 9 minutes and they don't indicate that Mr. Turcmanovich excused himself so she was curious what litigation it was. Mr. Greek said it was the MEM case. She also inquired about the street scape advertising for the bids. She said it ran in the paper three times and was very long. She would like to know what that cost and who's paying for it. She asked if the Borough was paying for it or Lansford Alive. Mrs. Fittos said she understands that Keystone handled it and they would pay that cost. Mrs. Fittos said she has not seen the bill yet and not sure if it's incorporated with our cost.

Mrs. Soberick also went on to explain the Ordinance for the Sewer Transmission to Mr. Hiles.

#### **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

- February 10, 2016- Regular Meeting – **Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to approve the minutes. Seconded: Joe Butrie vote. All in favor, motion passes.**
- February 19, 2016 – Special Meeting – **Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to approve the minutes. Seconded: John Turcmanovich vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

#### **STREET SCAPE**

- March 7, 2016- Bid opening – Read by Martin Ditsky and is on file. Lowest bidder was Bruce George Paving in the amount of Base Bid **\$216,836.60**. Base Bid + alternate was **\$284,421.05**.
- Bid Tabulation- Letter from Keystone states a recommendation that the award should go to **Bruce George Paving and excavating.** Mr. Benevy said this bid has a contingency regarding the excavation removal. Ms. Cannon and Mr. Ditsky said they are aware of that. **Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to award Bruce George paving and approve the street scape. Seconded: Martin Ditsky vote. Opposed: Joe Butrie and Matthew Walsh. Motion passes.**

Mr. Ditsky said the meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2016 to meet with Mr. Snyder.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

- LTAP Training- Equipment + Worker Safety- no comments
- Carbon County Planning & Development – Block Grant Program. Ms. Cannon said the application is due in May 6, 2016 if we are going to submit it.
- PennDOT Letter- Project on traffic signals. Contact sheet attached.
- Letter from Law Office of Gretchen Coles Sterns- Conditional Use Permit
- H&K Group, Inc – Breakfast Invitation 3/29/16 @8am
- Webinar- Encouraging Positive Public Involvement – Free
- Webinar- The Heart and Lung Act- Mr. Ditsky said he may sign up for this.
- Webinar- Proper and Legal Supervision of Mun. Police Dept ( Mayor)
- Panther Valley School- Bus Stop change inquiry- Mr. Butrie said he would like to change two bus stops. One is on Ridge / Bertsch St because kids are running across the highway on Patterson where there is no crossing guard to get to Ridge and Bertsch. He is suggesting we put a crossing guard on the highway. The other he would like to change is at the Middle School and put it down by Turkey Hill. Mr. Butrie said people are parking in front of the fire house. Mr. Romankow suggested a letter be sent to the school informing the bus drivers to go where they are scheduled. Mr. Soto also suggested we contact the school or have public safety/ works discuss this further. There was some discussion on this for a few minutes.
- Tax claim Bureau- 119 W. Ridge Street, 524 E. Kline, and 214 E Kline- Mr. Ditsky read the bids. Mr. Greek suggested approving them subject to verification. **Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to approve all three properties, subject to verification. Seconded: Matthew Walsh vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

- Lansford Alive- Cleanup Day- Read by Martin Ditsky. Ms. Cannon asked what we did last year. Mr. Butrie said last year, we did not allow the Borough truck to be used. They gathered all the rubbish and put it down by kiddie clothes and the Borough workers picked up the garbage bags. Mr. Butrie said he would like to do that again this year. **Joe Butrie makes a motion to approve the cleanup and do it the same as last year. Seconded: Rose Mary Cannon vote. All in favor, motion passes.**
- USDA – Rural Loan and Grant Program- Mr. Ditsky reviewed it briefly.
- Water Authority Minutes- January 2016- Mr. Ditsky read on page 2 that there was a .50cent increase to all employees.
- PMHIC- Regional Info- Jill would like to attend 4/6 In Allentown regarding health care reform. **Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to approve. Seconded: Matthew Walsh vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Municipal Administration- Ms. Cannon said she wouldn't read the whole report as its on file. She did mention that the deed that was located and referenced at the last meeting is for 27.1 acres and it was transferred to us in 1988. She said this property at one time was used for landfill and dumping, but has not been used in recent years. The property presently used by the Borough to dispose of clean fill does not appear to be owned by the Borough. She said we were given permission by LC&N to use the land. She said with that being said, she doesn't feel we can give permission for a commercial property to be dumped in that area. She said it's not our land. She said we should address this with Mr. Bennett and inform him the property is not ours. She suggested that maybe he contact BET industries since they own it. Mr. Walsh asked if there was any progress on getting a survey and stakes in the ground. Ms. Cannon said she doesn't believe it's a piece of land that can be used right now. She said it was closed by DEP. Mr. Ditsky said the land winds around the back and very close to PV school district. **Ms. Cannon makes the motion to rescind the original motion allowing Mr. Bennett to dump clean fill on the Borough's land and contact Mr. Bennett to inform him of the situation. Seconded: John Turcmanovich vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

Ms. Cannon said she would also like to give the breakdown on the expenses of the snowstorm we had, total cost to date is \$23,756.47. The breakdown is: \$13,504.50 for Radocha. \$2,004.73, Lehigh Asphalt antiskid, Street Dept overtime \$7,247.24. She said we don't have the hours from the police department, but thinks was overtime from them. Mr. Romankow said no. Mr. Turcmanovich asked if we applied to the state for reimbursement. Mrs. Fittos said yes, but Carbon County did not meet the threshold.

Ms. Cannon said, lastly her committee discussed the cosmetic work that needed to be done at the tax collector's office and the committee agreed to go with the paint from Joe Hnat to get the work started. She said it was \$300 plus. She said tonight we will deal with the carpeting.

- Public Safety- Read by John Turcmanovich. Report is on file. **Matthew Walsh makes a motion that we allow the current fire chiefs and assistant fire chiefs including the Officer in Charge to get their No Parking signs back in front of their houses. Seconded: Joe Butrie vote. All in favor, motion passes.** Mr. Romankow said the main reason they removed the parking space was because the spouses were using the spot. Mr. Romankow said we have to make it so the spouses do not use them. Mr. Walsh said we are giving them the opportunity to have their spots back and if they choose to do the wrong thing with it that's on them. Mr. Walsh said maybe the sign should also indicate "No Parking Public Officials only". Mr. Ditsky asked how many spots are requested: John Turcmanovich said 2 assistant fire chiefs, 1 Fire Chief and one for the OIC. Mr. Turcmanovich mentioned that the civil service testing would be done on March 12<sup>th</sup> by civil service. Mr. Romankow said he would like to hire two Full- Time Officers. Mrs. Fittos said we only budgeted for 1 more to replace Officer Tanner. Mr. Greek said council has to decide because civil service has to be notified as they need to certify a list based on the number of applicants the Borough wants to hire. He said if council is looking to hire more than 1, civil service has to have a larger list and to let the civil service know in writing so there is a proper paper trail. There were other topics mentioned and discussion went on for another ten minutes.
- Fire Department- read by John Turcmanovich
- Ambulance Report- Read by Martin Ditsky
- Mayors Report- Read by James Romankow
- Police Report- Read by James Romankow. Mr. Ditsky mentioned that the Police Dept needs a new phone line.
- Parks & Recreation- Ms. Cannon said she was waiting on getting a proposal from Wade for the pool so attached is the estimate and a list of studies he would like to do. The cost for all the studies is **\$8,000** which includes the feasibility study as well. Ms. Cannon said there is money in an RIRA account, roughly around \$15,000 that can be used for the pool. She said we can see if we can get a Grant which has a submission date of April 18<sup>th</sup>. She said Wade Associates also did the work on the Leighton Pool. Ms. Cannon would like to make a recommendation to go forward with this. **Motion made by Ms. Cannon to move forward with Wade Associates. Seconded: Jared Soto vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

**Ms. Cannon makes the motion to use the RIRA account to pay for Wade Associates. Seconded: Matthew Walsh vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

Mr. Ditsky said Ms. Cannon requested a change in committees as follows: Parks & Recreation we will appoint Joseph Butrie to that committee and appointing Colin Jones to Municipal Administration.

- Public Works- Read by Martin Ditsky. A sink hole was discussed as well as an accident with the Borough Garage. It was also mentioned to start looking at a new vehicle for public Works Dept to replace the Turnpike Truck.
- Community Development/ Planning Zoning- No Meeting
- Code Enforcement- February
- Treasurers Report, bills to be Approved, Income Report, P/L Budget vs Actual. Mrs. Fittos mentioned that April 1<sup>st</sup> we should receive the Liquid Fuels Allocation roughly between the amount of \$106,000 or \$109,000. She also said if council decides to do a paving project the cost would be paid for out of liquid fuels. Mrs. Fittos also reviewed the March and April Projection. Mrs. Fittos spoke with the Tax Collector and he is anticipating a deposit for April 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Walsh asked if the Tax Collector spoke about this being an average April, he understands he just started. He asked if anyone will be affected by the Tax collector not being there during the day. Mrs. Fittos couldn't answer that. Mrs. Fittos also mentioned that she understands the Mayor wants to hire two full time officers, but she recommends not to. We have a Chief budgeted and Sergeant and four full time officers. There are several expenses that will be depleting the account like the tax anticipation note that needs to be paid back in the amount of \$125,000. She said council can do what they want; she is just putting it out there.

Mrs. Soberick inquired about the motion that was made to transfer up to \$65,000; she asked if any of that was used. Mrs. Fittos said no, we did not need it yet. **Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to approve the bills as money becomes available. Seconded: John Turcmanovich vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

- Tax Collectors Report- No Report
- Carbon County Tax Collection Committee- Appointment of Delegate needed. Jill Seigendall volunteered if no one is interested. **Matthew Walsh makes the motion to appoint Jill Seigendall as the delegate. Seconded: Rose Mary Cannon vote. All in favor, motion passes.** Mr. Ditsky said he has a feeling this will come back to bite him, but no offense should be taken.
- Solicitors Report- S.A.L.D.O draft and revised, MEM case, Resolution 2016-03 for recording of minutes, Resolution 2016-04 in honor of George Brimmer. Mr. Greek said the SALDO was created by the County back in 1984. Mr. Greek suggested that council adopt a brand new one, but will take him some time to create it. Mr. Greek also said the judge gave him 60 days to proceed in the MEM case. Mr. Greek read Resolution 2016-03. **Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to adopt resolution 2016-03. Seconded: Matthew Walsh vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

**Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to do a resolution honoring George Brimmer as she asked Mr. Greek to put it together before the meeting. Seconded: Jared Soto vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

Ms. Cannon read resolution 2016-04. **Joe Butrie makes the motion to adopt Resolution 2016-04. Seconded: John Turcmanovich vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

All committee reports are on file.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- Letter from Lansford Alive was tabled. Mr. Soto explained that item #3 regarding the cherry trees there would be maintenance on keeping up with the trees. He said cherries would fall on the ground and people would be stepping on them. He said if Lansford Alive moves forward with the project they would not like to see any more trees. Ms. Cannon suggested that Lansford Alive attend the Parks and Recreation committee to sit down and discuss the projects. They also spoke about the walkway. Mary Soto said they are looking at putting in an ornamental Cherry Tree which would grow 30-40 feet. She said there is a cherry tree already in Kennedy Park. She said it wouldn't cause a problem with berries on the ground. Mr. Walsh said some trees need to cross pollinate, is that something that should be looked into. Ms. Cannon said she would like a more definitive answer. Discussion took place for a few minutes. **Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion that we approve the event that will be held Saturday, July 9, 2016 and the PV ethnic Day and will need a special event form and meeting with them. Seconded: Jared Soto vote. All in favor, motion passes.**
- Responsible Recycling was tabled. Ms. Cannon said we did it last year at the end of summer and was paid for out of sanitation since it is recycling. She said it's up to council but it does meet a need. She said we are finding TV's all over the road. There was some discussion on this for a few minutes. **Joe Butrie makes the motion to table.**
- SR 209 Email- Does Borough want signal pre-emption- Ms. Cannon said the fire company doesn't have them but are going to bring it up. She said Tamaqua has them. Ms. Cannon said it will be beneficial. Mr. Butrie said he knows Lehighton has them and they do save lives. He said you have to put the cost aside sometimes as it's more important to save lives. She said the expense would be to install them in the police cars. Ms. Cannon said three cars would need them. **Matthew Walsh makes the motion to move forward with the emitters. Seconded: Joe Butrie vote. All in favor, motion passes.**
- Mike Kafkalas survey results for retaining wall- Wall belongs to Borough- Ms. Cannon said the engineer will have to look at it. She hopes we won't have to replace the whole wall as it will be very costly. Ms. Cannon suggested having the engineer look at the wall the same day at the meeting on Friday the 18<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Fittos suggested having a motion for the engineer to look at the

wall. Mr. Ditsky asked our solicitor. Mr. Greek said if you're requesting him to do something which will require payment; he suggests a motion be made. **Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to have the engineer look at the retaining wall. Seconded: Martin Ditsky vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- Materials bid to be advertised. Contract ends May 2016- **Joe Butrie makes the motion we advertise the bid. Seconded: Matthew Walsh vote, all in favor, motion passes.**
- Create a resolution for Snow removal, written procedures needed. Mr. Ditsky said we need a procedure for snow emergency as we have a resolution already. **Ms. Cannon makes the motion that the public works committee sits down and draft something. Seconded: Joe Butrie vote. All in favor, motion passes.**
- Tax Office- New Carpet Estimates: Carpet Craft \$750, Red Line Flooring \$1,110, Jim Thorpe Flooring \$694/ with and without padding (2) quotes. **Matthew Walsh makes the motion to go with Jim Thorpe flooring for the cheapest bid with no padding \$694.00. Seconded: Joe Butrie vote. Opposed: Martin Ditsky, motion passes.**

James Romankow asked if someone can look into a License plate reader.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Council entered into executive session at 8:35pm to discuss personnel matters and litigation and exited at 9:30pm

John Turcmanovich left at 8:40pm.

**Rose Mary Cannon makes the motion to make Colton Black aware that having his CDL License he will receive an increase when removing snow or operating any equipment that requires a CDL license. Discussion: Mr. Ditsky said the Street Sweeper and Vactor require a CDL, but wasn't sure if he wants Mr. Black operating them. Seconded: Joe Butrie vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

**Jared Soto makes the motion to hire Andrew Daly as a part time police officer for Lansford Borough. Seconded: Rose Mary Cannon vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Joe Butrie makes the motion to adjourn at 9:03pm. Second: Rose Mary Cannon vote. All in favor, motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Mary Fittos*

Secretary/Treasurer