

Committee Meeting Minutes

December 3rd, 2025

The December 3rd, 2024 Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:00p.m. by President Bruce Markovich at the Lansford Borough Town Hall, 1 West Ridge Street, Lansford, Pennsylvania. The meeting was attended by President Pro Tempore Michele Bartek, Council Man Joseph Butrie, Council Woman Gwyneth Collevchio, President Bruce Markovich, Council Woman Jennifer Staines, and Code and Ordinance Enforcement Officer Shane Monk.

Council Man Jay Doyle, Council Man Jack Soberick, and Mayor Hugh Vrablic were not in attendance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Blueprint Communities

Members of the Blueprint Communities spoke to borough council about what Blueprint Communities is.

Abby Gardena from Blueprint Communities spoke about her experience as a previous council member.

Abby Gardena spoke about how council tries and do the best they can to help the community.

Abby Gardena introduced John Dowling who is the chair of Blueprint Communities and is from Jim Thorpe Bank.

Abby Gardena introduced Justine Truxis who is the Blueprint Communities Coordinator for Pennsylvania downtown.

Justine Truxis spoke about how in April 2024 she was hired to oversee an 18-month program funded by the federal home loan bank of Pittsburgh.

Justine Truxis spoke about how Panther Valley had to apply to be a part of the Blueprint Community.

Justine Truxis spoke about how one of the things the surrounds communities wanted from the program was help with the aging house stock, local ownership rates, high code violations, limited affordable housing, feeling pressure, displacement, recreational, and quality of life opportunities as well as public infrastructure.

Justine Truxis spoke about how Blueprint works one on one with communities.

Justine Truxis spoke about the paper that was provided to council that states an overview of what the Blueprint Community is.

Justine Truxis spoke about how Blueprint Community works with the borough to help create a five-year strategic plan for that relates to community development and improvement.

Justine Truxis spoke about the ways that Blueprint Community can improve the borough.

Justine Truxis spoke about the second paper that was provided to council that shows the step Blueprint uses to help the community.

Justine Truxis spoke about how Blueprint engages with the community to find out what the community needs.

Justine Truxis spoke about how Blueprint is working with the borough especially the end of 2025, towards having funding opportunities lined, and funders that will be a part of the boroughs five-year strategic plan.

Bruce Markovich inquired about how the program can be used after it ends.

Justine Truxis spoke about how in year four, five, and six that the Pennsylvania Downtown Center checks in with the Panther Valley to ensure the five-year strategic plan is still happening as planned.

Justine Truxis spoke about how the people are more likely to invest in projects that show good success.

Justine Truxis spoke about the success that Tamaqua Borough had with Blueprint Communities and continues to have.

Justine Truxis spoke about how Blueprint has 5 urban core communities, 4 urban, and the Panther Valley for regional.

Justine Truxis spoke about how Blueprint Community focuses on the Eastern Part of Pennsylvania.

Justine Truxis spoke about how Panther Valley is the only regional Blueprint Community.

Bruce Markovich inquired about improving the downtown and if that would be a focus on Blueprint or Mainstreet.

Justine Truxis spoke about how Blueprint focuses on community needs.

Bruce Markovich inquired about if it would be in the best interest of the borough to try and revive the downtown or to let apartment buildings be allowed in the downtown.

Justine Truxis inquired about the borough goals and why the borough would not allow the downtown to be revived and also have some apartment buildings.

Justine Truxis spoke about business recruiting and that the borough should be able to have both businesses and apartment buildings in both.

Justine Truxis spoke about the most successful communities, that looking at multiple things and having set goals help make communities successful.

Justine Truxis spoke about ways that the borough could be improved.

Justine Truxis spoke about how the importance of having residents' needs being met so that they can ultimately have a positive effect on the community.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the blight properties in the borough.

Justine Truxis spoke about the amount of time it takes for communities to see the outcome of their plan.

Bruce Markovich spoke about the anchor store that used to be in the borough.

Bruce Markovich inquired about if it would be in the interest in the borough to find another anchor store or a whole group of stores.

Justine Truxis spoke about how the borough should focus on bringing in stores that will provide experiences to help revive the downtown.

Justine Truxis spoke about the importance of foot traffic and events that make people want to come into the borough.

Justine Truxis spoke the importance of a borough having a very strong market driven plan.

Abby Gardena spoke about the federal home loan bank of Pittsburg and that the bank is a bank for banks and not people.

Abby Gardena spoke about how the federal home loan bank of Pittsburg is required to give back to the community and that they provide funding for the Blueprint Community.

Abby Gardena spoke about the importance of all the communities working together.

Abby Gardena spoke about her experience with Blueprint Community and how Blueprint has helped communities.

Abby Gardena spoke about how Blueprint Community has helped the Panther Valley Area.

Abby Gardena spoke about how Blueprint Community finds out what the community needs and the importance of surveys.

Abby Gardena spoke about the importance of implementable plans.

Abby Gardena spoke about the needs that the Blueprint Community has found within the Panther Valley.

Abby Gardena spoke about the grants that Blueprint Community have found and how those grants have been implemented.

John Dowling spoke about how it is important to be aware of the long-term outcome and not get discouraged because of the time it may take to reach plan goals.

Gwyneth Collevchio thanked the Blueprint Community Members for being involved and helping the community.

Bruce Markovich stated that council is trying to do their best and that it will take time to improve the borough.

Public Works-

Joseph Butrie stated he would like for the community to work together.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the No Parking signs that are located within the borough, and that he has instructed borough workers to not plow one-way streets that they do not feel safe plowing because vehicles are not moving from streets with these signs.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the christmas lights that are put up and that the wreaths need to be fixed.

Joseph Butrie spoke about a christmas light angel that was stolen.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the borough workers cleaning off the land for the salt shed.

Joseph Butrie spoke about that tires were ordered for the payloador.

Denise Leibensperger of 164 West Ridge Street inquired about amount of full-time and part-time borough workers.

Joseph Butrie spoke about an inlet that was checked.

Denise Leibensperger inquired about the borough workers hours of operations.

Tommy Vadyak of 334 West Abbott Street spoke about the borough crew taking their lunch breaks.

Joseph Butrie stated all the trucks are ready for the winter and if the turnpike truck is not used then the plow system should be removed and placed on another vehicle.

Tommy Vadyak inquired about the status of the red truck.

Jennifer Staines inquired about if council must vote on public works part-time employees.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the borough workers being given six months for the tanker endorsement certification.

An audience member spoke about the parking lot by the Kitty Clothes Building.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the Kitty Clothes parking lot.

An audience member spoke about the Kitty Clothes parking lot and that it needs to be regulated.

Council and audience members discussed the Kitty Clothes parking lot and what can be done to address residents parking in the lot.

Council agreed that enforcement and signs should be placed in the Kitty Clothes parking lot.

Erin Soberick inquired about the parking lot across from the west end basketball court.

Council and audience members discussed the oversized ordinance and how enforcement should be improved.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the Ashton Park parking lot and the enforcement of the oversized vehicles parked in the parking lot.

Joseph Butrie spoke about vehicles that are parked in no parking zones that state tow away zone.

Bruce Markovich spoke about a bill from Tamaqua Transfer because the garbage truck could not fit through Kline Avenue.

An audience member inquired about if the borough has an impound lot.

Municipal Administration-

Bruce Markovich spoke about the county having all paperwork prepared for the tear down of 316 West Patterson Street and 336 West Bertsch Street and they are going to have that advertised sometime in January.

Bruce Markovich stated that an administrator is needed for QuickBooks and that is going to be added to the agenda due to cloud services costs.

Tommy Vadyak inquired about the letter was sent out to the DCED.

Tommy Vadyak remarked about a Right-To-Know response he received and that he disagrees with it.

Tommy Vadyak spoke a previous council remark about arbitration and that he feels taxpayers money should be recouped.

Denise Leibensperger inquired about if the Secretary/Treasurer is doing QuickBooks.

Jennifer Staines spoke about the need to decrease the amount of ink and paper that is used.

Denise Leibensperger inquired about the audit from the tax office.

Denise Leibensperger inquired about the audit of the past secretary.

Public Safety-

Michele Bartek spoke about the camera that is going to be installed outside the front of the building.

Michele Bartek spoke about police vests and that currently they are on sale with \$100.00 off of each vest and she would like four of them ordered for the police.

Bruce Markovich stated the vest would be paid out of the Covid Fund.

Council and the Chief of Police Kyle Woodward spoke about the police vest and if all the police officers have vests.

Bruce Markovich stated he feels all the officers should have new vests.

Joseph Butrie stated that he feels that the Code enforcement officer should have a body cam.

Council and the audience spoke about ways police officers can be retained.

Denise Leibensperger inquired about the status of the grant Michele Bartek submitted.

Tommy Vadyak spoke about how items were added to the agenda that were not discussed at committee meetings.

Joe Genits of 210 West Front Street spoke about a grant writer and that the grant writer is willing to come and speak to the borough if asked.

Denise Leibensperger spoke about a grant that she sent to Michele Bartek and why the grant was not submitted.

Parks and Recreation-

Gwyneth Collevecchio thanked Joseph Butrie for helping to set up the garbage cans.

Gwyneth Collevecchio thanked Bruce Markovich for helping to set up the trees at Kennedy Park.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the slide at Ashton Park and that a new slide needs to be ordered.

Joseph Butrie inquired about when the new slide is ordered if it should be put up right away or in the springtime.

Tommy Vadyak spoke about how the parks should be improved.

Gwyneth Collevecchio spoke about how she would like to get lamp posts for Kennedy Park.

Council and audience members spoke about the sidewalks in the parks and how they can be improved.

Zoning and Ordinance-

Shane Monk spoke about the little amount of grass complaints, and he has been looking at properties with broken sidewalks.

Shane Monk spoke about how he has been going on rental inspections and that he has just received his IMPC Books to take his IMPC test.

Denise Leibensperger spoke about using Shane Monk to tow vehicles.

Tommy Vadyak inquired if a list is sent to Tamaqua Transfer of properties that should not have garbage picked up.

Tommy Vadyak spoke about how he feels Shane Monk should be full-time.

Jennifer Staines spoke about the rental license process.

Jennifer Staines spoke about if the rental license process should be handled by ARRO Consulting or handled by the Lansford Borough.

Bruce Markovich spoke about how the borough administration can handle the rental license process coming back to the borough.

Bruce Markovich stated that the borough must decide how they would like to proceed with rental inspections if the rental license process is handled by the borough.

Denise Leibensperger inquired if anyone followed up on finding information about who owners which LLC.

Council discussed the rental license process being processed by the borough.

Joseph Genits spoke about how the borough can have Shane Monk do inspections so long as the borough ordinance states he can do the inspections.

Joseph Genits spoke about how the code officer and the police department in the same area.

Joseph Genits offered to provide help to Shane Monk with rental inspections but that he would not be able to go in houses or look at files.

Tommy Vadyak stated that he is worried if rental is the focus of the code officer, then quality of life violations will increase due to the increase in focus on the violations.

Jennifer Staines spoke about the way rental inspections could be handled.

Joe Genits spoke about the importance of a clerical person for the rental license process.

Council spoke about the benefits of having the borough handle the rental license process.

Joe Genits spoke about adding the requirement of fire insurance as part of the approval of rental license process.

Denise Leibensperger inquired about how Steve Foster is on the water board and civil service board.

Jennifer Staines stated she spoke with the borough office about bringing the rental license process back to the borough.

Jennifer Staines spoke about the fee schedule.

Joseph Butrie stated he disagrees with the fee schedule amount for the handicap parking.

Jennifer Staines spoke about removing committee meetings and having instead two borough meetings.

Council discussed the kind of meetings they can have.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the handicap parking fee.

Joseph Butrie spoke about the dumpster ordinance that he feels that no dumpsters should be allowed from November 1st to April 1st.

Bruce Markovich spoke about the cost of per copy the borough currently pays due and that a new copier should be purchased that the borough owns to help reduce the per copy cost.

The meeting was adjourned by Bruce Markovich at 8:14p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ashley McLaughlin

Assistant Secretary/Treasurer