

Monthly Meeting Minutes

February 12th, 2025

The February 12th, 2025 Monthly Meeting was called to order at 6:32p.m. by President Bruce Markovich at The Lansford Borough Town Hall, 1 West Ridge Street, Lansford, Pennsylvania. The meeting was attended by Council Woman Michele Bartek, Council Man Joseph Butrie, Council Woman Gwyneth Collevecchio, President Bruce Markovich, Council Man Jack Soberick, Council Woman Jennifer Staines, Mayor Hugh Vrablic, and Solicitor Robert Yurchak.

Council Man Jay Doyle was absent.

Pledge of allegiance was recited.

Bruce Markovich spoke about the executive session that discussed personnel issues involving the police department.

Public Courtesy-

Philip Yelito of 409 East Ridge Street spoke about the process he went through when Arro Consulting was handling rental licenses for the borough, that he disagrees with having to pay for an inspection in 2025 when he made a payment in 2024, and no inspection was conducted.

Bob Silver of 17 East Ridge Street spoke about the motion to purchase a \$8,500.00 temporary salt shed and that he feels the purchase is a waste of money considering the shed will not be necessary next year.

Bob Silver inquired about the motion to have Biros Plumbing camera the sewer tunnel and if the cost of \$1,800.00 is going to be per block or for the whole tunnel.

Bob Silver spoke about if lease land from BET will cover a larger portion of land compared to current land usage and if all big vehicles are going to be moved to the land with a signage stating reserved parking.

Bob Silver inquired why only the chief position is being advertised if the budget is set for seven police officers and a police chief.

Christopher Ondrus of 10 Edgemont Road inquired about why Bruce Markovich commented in the paper about receiving money for handicapped doors if the borough is not getting any money for the doors.

Christopher Ondrus spoke about how in 2022 it was stated that the rent for the Silberline property is supposed to pay off the loan for the Borough Garage and he inquired why the area for the salt shed storage area is being done by the borough workers.

Christopher Ondrus inquired about where the Silberline property rent is going.

Christopher Ondrus inquired about why the Zimmerman building property is still for sale three years after it was supposed to be sold immediately.

Christopher Ondrus inquired about the lost tax revenue from the borough properties that are located on Dock Street.

Joe Genits of 210 West Front Street spoke about how he feels that rental ordinance should not be amended until the entire ordinance is reviewed.

Joe Genits spoke about the discrepancies with the rental license application and letters that were sent out to landlords.

Joe Genits spoke about how he feels the code officer should be doing rental inspections.

Joe Genits spoke about how rental invoices need to be sent to landlords.

Rosemary Cannon of 242 West Ridge Street inquired about the advertisement for the civil service commission and who the current members are.

Rosemary Cannon inquired about the motion to draft and set costs for the sale of EDU.

Lenny Kovach of 331 West Ridge Street spoke about EDUs and how the fee amounts are calculated.

Approval of Meeting Minutes-

Motion to approve January 15th, 2025 Monthly Meeting Minutes-

Motioned by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Gwyneth Collevchio.

Motion was favored by Joseph Butrie, Gwyneth Collevchio, Michele Bartek, Bruce Markovich, and Jack Soberick.

Motion was opposed by Jennifer Staines.

Motion passed by majority vote.

Correspondence-

There was no correspondence.

Committee Reports-

Joseph Butrie apologized for not having a public works committee report.

Jennifer Staines spoke about her committee report and her report from the Zoning Committee Meeting at the beginning of February.

Fire Department Report-

Michele Bartek spoke about the Fire Department Report.

The call volume report from the fire department. Total incident time hours were 15.5 for the month. For the year to date, 15.5. Total man hours were 132 for the month and 132 for the year. This is for January. In-house work detail, total hours served were 29. Total man hours were 91. Events and activities were 5. Fundraising, 12 fundraising hours. Total man hours were 70. There were two events.

Response by area, there was 11 for the month. Year to date, there was 11. For Lansford, along in town, was 11. Coaldale, Nesquehoning, Tamaqua, and Jim Thorpe. Training hours, were four sessions. The personnel was 12. Total training hours were 8.5. Total man hours were 93.

Community service was zero. Administrative duties, four people were involved. The administrative hours were 20. Their total man hours were 80.

Jack Soberick spoke about a cover letter from the fire department activity report. The most time-consuming incident was a fire in June 4th, where they had five hours, 70 man hours. Two code referrals during the month, and that was a follow-up. Portable radios that council bought for them or received and placed in the service, the equipment has improved fire ground communications immensely. We appreciate the support. The installation of tablets and ipads in the trucks has come to fruition, these help with monitoring, reporting, mapping, responding out of town, and will eventually be placed in a finder. The fire department is always available for questions and concerns.

Ambulance Report-

Michele Bartek spoke about the Ambulance Report.

Ambulance response, 67 incidents in January of 25. The average response time was 11.9 minutes. 67 responses, eight were non-emergency, 11 were standby, 12 were non-emergency patient services, and there were 47 emergency responses.

Mayor's and Police Report-

Hugh Vrablic spoke the Police Report.

Hugh Vrablic commended the police department for the work they did for the month of January and the great job they are doing. 31 warrants were completed. The call volume went up to 294 calls, there's 31 cases that have been cleared, 29 arrests, 35 traffic contacts, 110 ordinance tickets issued, with 1,850 miles per patrol. Accident reports, fees, and so forth have been collected.

Hugh Vrablic spoke about how the police department has been cracking down on crime and that he hopes the borough can hire a few more part-time and full-time police officers.

Bruce Markovich spoke about that last month someone was saying that a police officer was telling audience members that if they towed vehicles, the officers would be reprimanded by the mayor and chief.

Bruce Markovich clarified that after speaking with the mayor and chief of police, they never stated that officers would be reprimanded for towing vehicles.

Code Report and Zoning Report-

Jennifer Staines spoke the Code Report.

Jennifer Staines spoke with Robert Yurchak in the executive session about Arrow having filed NOVs on the 50 people that did not respond at all. There's another 33 out there, so Shane will follow through with the court on it. Then he will go to court and pull them and refile them. Seventeenth row of complaints, 15 walk-ins unannounced, 16 tickets, 1 property condemned. There are 4 properties made improvements to be up to code.

NOV report. We have one awaiting certified to be delivered before taking any actions. We have two citations to be filed already filed. 3 court hearings scheduled.

Rental Report-

Jennifer Staines spoke the Rental Report.

Jennifer Staines spoke about the rental license process being handled by the borough and that letters have been sent out to all the property owners on the rental process.

Jennifer Staines asked Secretary Ashley Mclaughlin to read the Rental Report.

As of February 12th, 2025, \$2,430.00 has been collected for 2024 late fees. 770 letters were sent to rental property owners. 4 properties have been reported as a rental, owner-occupied, family-occupied, under construction, vacant, et cetera. 29 rental registration applications have been submitted for 2025. Of the 29 rental applications submitted: The current status is one is completed and ready for a license to be issued. 7 have been completed and are going to be scheduled for an inspection. 6 still have to show proof of insurance and 15 are still under review.

Solicitors Report-

Adoption of the police pension ordinance amendment

Police pension ordinance that was agreed to between the FOP and the borough has been codified into an ordinance, sent to the FOP, advertised, and ready for adoption.

Motioned by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Jennifer Staines.

Motion was favored by Joseph Butrie, Jennifer Staines, Michele Bartek, Gwyneth Collevchio, and Bruce Markovich.

Jack Soberick abstained due to conflict of interest.

Motion passed by majority vote.

Discussion on ordinances

- A. Dumpster Ordinance**
- B. Towing Ordinance**
- C. Residential Rental Ordinance Amendment**
- D. Animal Control Ordinance**
- E. Amusement Device Ordinance**

Council discussed having a special meeting with the solicitor to discuss the ordinances.

Motioned to table the dumpster ordinance, towing ordinance, residential rental ordinance amendment, animal control ordinance, amusement device ordinance for a special meeting with the solicitor by Jack Soberick and seconded by Joseph Butrie.

Motion favored by Jack Soberick, Joseph Butrie, Michele Bartek, Gwyneth Collevchio, and Bruce Markovich.

Motion opposed by Jennifer Staines.

Motion passed by majority vote.

Polygraph Policy Discussion

Jack mentioned this last month about doing a polygraph policy. Robert Yurchak found one that was a model policy from the International Police Chiefs Association, and that's what was provided to all of council. The policy would have to be tweaked but is a model policy that the chief police chiefs has done.

Statement from Solicitor in regards to proposed changes to public participation at future council meetings.

Robert Yurchak made a statement before the audience.

Robert Yurchak spoke about the public participation policy and that this policy is not a violation of the Sunshine Act.

Robert Yurchak spoke about how the public participation policy does not restrict residents from speaking at public meetings or restrict the recording of public meetings.

Robert Yurchak spoke about how agencies are allowed to adopt and enforce reasonable meeting rules.

Robert Yurchak spoke about communities that require sign ins, that include name, address, and topic that you are going to be speaking about.

Tax Collector's Report-

From January 1st, 2025 to January 31st, 2025, taxes collected were \$0.00. (Office Closed until April 2025)

Motion to pay the bills-

Motioned by Jennifer Staines and seconded by Michele Bartek.

Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Discussion/Motion to approve the purchase of a camera system for Ashton Park. The cost being \$4,094.00 with a reoccurring fee of \$5.00 a month for Remote Tech Support.

To be paid from Parks and Recreation Budget.

Motion to approve the purchase of a camera system from Security Service Company for Ashton Park.

Motioned by Gwyneth Collevecchio and seconded by Jack Soberick.

Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Motion to approve the purchase of a camera system for Kennedy Park. The cost being \$5,670.00 with a reoccurring fee of \$5.00 a month for Remote Tech Support.

To be paid from Parks and Recreation Budget.

Motion to approve the purchase of a camera system from Security Service Company for Kennedy Park.

Motioned by Gwyneth Collevecchio and seconded by Jack Soberick.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to authorize Attorney Robert Yurchak to pursue the Straight-Talk Lansford Borough for the usage of the Lansford Borough Logo.

Jennifer Staines spoke about the Straight-Talk Lansford Borough using the borough logo and how residents assume that Facebook page is affiliated with the borough when it is not.

Motioned by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Jennifer Staines.

Roll call vote was called.

Motion was favored by Michele Bartek, Joseph Butrie, Bruce Markovich, and Jennifer Staines.

Motion was opposed by Gwyneth Collevecchio.

Jack Soberick abstained due to conflict of interest.

Motion passed by majority vote.

New Business:

Vote to address the condemnation order on properties through the courthouse. - request by Jennifer Staines

Motioned by Jack Soberick and seconded by Joseph Butrie.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to the Handicap Parking Request from Annette White at 127 West Ridge Street Apt 7.

It was noted that the correct address for the Handicap Parking Request is 112 West Ridge Street Apt 7.

Motioned to table by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Jennifer Staines.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motions:

Discussion/Motion to set the salary for the Water Authority Board Members to \$30.00 a month.

Bruce Markovich stated the only ordinance he found was from 1947 and that stated the Water Authority Board members salary is \$30.00 a month.

Motioned to table by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Bruce Markovich.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve sending the 2024 overdue sanitation accounts to Portnoff for collection.

Motioned by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Michele Bartek.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to award garbage contract to Tamaqua Transfer, 3 years without 2 town cleanups \$2,122,313.00. 3 years with two cleanups per year \$2,152,313.00. 5 years without 2 two town cleanups \$3,617,454.00. 5 years with two cleanups per year \$3,673,454.00.

Motion to award garbage contract to Tamaqua Transfer for 5 years with two town cleanups per year, the five-year contract amount for \$3,673,454.00.

Motioned by Jack Soberick and seconded by Michele Bartek.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to reject all bids on the Salt Shed Project due to costs.

Motioned by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Gwyneth Collevecchio.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to purchase a portable Salt Shed at a cost of \$8,500.00.

Motioned to table by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Jack Soberick.

Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Motion to approve of having all borough employees use ADP Timekeeping Plus for borough payroll. The cost to be \$57.00 per payroll. -Request by Munc, Admin.

Motioned by Gwyneth Collevecchio and seconded by Michele Bartek.

Motion favored by Gwyneth Collevecchio, Michele Bartek, Bruce Markovich, Jack Soberick, and Jennifer Staines.

Motion was opposed by Joseph Butrie.

Motion passed by majority vote.

Motion to designate Shane Monk as a full-time employee at a rate of \$25.00 per hour. Salary as follows: 30 hours per week to be spent on the Boroughs Rental License Program to be paid from the fees collected under the program and 10 hours per week to enforce Code Complaints with those hours to be deducted from the Code Enforcement Budget.

Shane Monk's benefits package to be the same as the borough secretaries.

Motioned by Jennfier Staines and seconded by Joseph Butrie.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to have the Borough Secretary at chair meetings and workshop meetings to take notes. -request by Michele Bartek

Motioned by Gwyneth Collevechio and seconded by Michele Bartek.

Motion favored by Gwyneth Collevechio, Michele Bartek, Bruce Markovich, and Joseph Butrie.

Motion opposed by Jack Soberick and Jennifer Staines.

Motion passed by majority vote.

Motion to draft a policy and set costs for the sale of EDU 9 Environmental Discharge Unit) for connection to the sewer system.

Motioned to table by Michele Bartek and seconded by Joseph Butrie.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to award Phase One of the Train Station Project to Mazella Enterprises from Jim Thrope with the following options. Base Bid Package \$69,000.00 Alternate Bid Items. 1A(\$8,000.00) , 1B(\$5,000.00) , 1D (\$2,000.00) , 1E (\$2,000.00) , Alternate Bid (2)(\$5,000.00) is recommended by the engineer. To be paid from grant.

Motion to award bid package of \$69,000.00 with alternate bid 1B (\$5,000.00).

Motioned by Gwyneth Collevechio and seconded by Michele Bartek.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve the lease between BET Enterprises (Coal Company) and the Borough of Lansford for parking area on Dock Street for oversize vehicles at a cost of \$250.00 for 2025.

Motioned by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Jack Soberick.

Motion favored by Joseph Butrie, Jack Soberick, Gwyneth Collevchio, Bruce Markovich, Jennifer Staines.

Motion opposed by Michele Bartek.

Motion passed by majority vote.

Motion to have Biros Plumbing camera the sewer tunnel in the 200 block of West Patterson Street. At an estimated cost of \$1,800.00. -request by Joseph Butrie

Biros to camera sewer tunnel from Springgarden Street to Sharpe Street a total of 4 blocks.

Motion to have Biros Plumbing camera the sewer tunnel of Springgarden Street to Sharpe Street at a cost amount not to exceed \$7,200.00

Motioned by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Michele Bartek.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to have Arro Engineering prepare the bid documents and advertisement for the new electrical system in Ashton Park.-request by Bruce Markovich

Motioned by Michele Bartek and seconded by Gwyneth Collevchio.

Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Motion to advertise for 3 alternate members for the Civil Service Commission-request by Michele Bartek.

Motioned by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Gwyneth Collevchio.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to advertise for the position of Chief of Police with the PA Chiefs Association cost of \$500.00 for 90 Days.-request by Michele Bartek

Motioned by Michele Bartek and seconded by Joseph Butrie.

Motion was favored by Michele Bartek, Joseph Butrie, Gwyneth Collevechio, and Bruce Markovich.

Motion was opposed by Jack Soberick and Jennifer Staines.

Motion passed by majority vote.

Motion to approve to pay Shawn Nunemacher a week's pay for supervisor and management training. -request by Michele Bartek

Motioned by Michele Bartek and seconded by Jennifer Staines.

Motion favored by Michele Bartek, Jennifer Staines, Joseph Butrie, and Jack Soberick.

Motion was opposed by Bruce Markovich and Gwyneth Collevechio.

Motion passed by majority vote.

Motion to adjourn

Motioned by Joseph Butrie and seconded by Jack Soberick.

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned by President Bruce Markovich at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ashley McLaughlin

Secretary