

The January 13, 2021 Lansford Borough council meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Bruce Markovich and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. An executive session was held until 6:30 p.m.

**Executive Session** – The recent failure of the office computer network on January 6, 2021 was discussed. Chief Jack Soberick and Joseph Lyons of Overwatch, the borough's internet technology company, explained a possible intrusion to the computer network by "ransomware". Also on the agenda was a personnel Hart & Lung issue, personnel COVID-19 sick time policy, PA Public Relations Board Hearing, Water Authority issues, sewer easement status, two applications for part time CDL drivers, Silberline property status, and 1 part time police officer application.

**Joseph Lyons submitted the following regarding the computer issue:**

On or about January 5, 2021 I received a call from Lansford Police Department requesting that I return a phone call to Special Agent XXX(name intentionally omitted) of The United States Secret Service.

Upon Speaking with Agent XXX I learned that a computer in possession of Lansford Borough had been compromised with ransomware software. To confirm this information true the agent was able to supply me with the log in information of the user account including email address as well as the IP address of the compromised machine.

The ask from the agent was to remove the system from the Network and secure the hard drive into evidence so that a clone can be made at the agent office for analysis of origin of the software.

I contact Chief Soberick and asked to gain access to the machine in the borough office. The machine was removed from the network. Hard drives were removed and secured by the Lansford Police Department. On January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Special Agents took custody of the evidence.

Computers were restored in the borough office on January 11, 2021.

**After executive session, roll call at 6:30 p.m.-Council members present:** Martin Ditsky, William Chuma, Bruce Markovich, Bob Silver, Marie Ondrus, Gwyneth Collevecchio, Mayor Michele Bartek and Solicitor Robert Yurchak. Councilman John Turcmanovich was absent.

**Public Courtesy** – Six residents were in the audience.

**Rich Bower**, 5 E. Water Street, is concerned about the proposed no parking ordinance which would eliminate parking in the unit block of E. Water Street. Also voicing objection to the proposed ordinance were **Suitia Alston**, 38 E. Water Street, and **Jennifer Jones**. A couple members of council agreed to meet with the residents at the Water Street site to explore the issues. The fire company, emergency services, garbage collector and residents have complained to the borough office that vehicles cannot turn onto E. Water Street because of how residents are parking.

**Rose Mary Cannon**, 242 W. Ridge Street, asked whether any pool leaks have been detected and if any work has been done at Ashton Park Pool. Bruce Markovich said no leaks have been detected in the skimmers. No repairs have been done yet however repairs are to be made to the concession stand and the restrooms.

**Approval of meeting minutes:** Dec 9, 2020 regular meeting.

**A Motion to approve the December 9, 2020 meeting minutes as written was made by William Chuma, second by Gwyneth Collevecchio. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

**Correspondence:**

**PA-Department of Environmental Protection letter of 12/23/2020** - Silberline re-use of property & the sewer line connection.

**Teamsters Local Union No 773** – Public Works Teamsters contract expires 12/31/21. A committee will be formed at a future meeting to negotiate the details of a new contract.

**Lehigh Engineering, LLC** requested appointment as borough engineer. No appointment was made.

**Sewer odor 300 Block W. Water Street:** Six Residents from the 300 block of W. Water Street submitted a letter 12/21/20 complaining of sewer odor as well as a separate letter dated 1/4/21 from George Fairley 317 W. Water Street. Public Works chairman William Chuma reported the line has been flushed repeatedly the past week and always found wipes blocking the line. The residents have been sent letters to stop flushing wipes however the problem persists. Code enforcement will send violation notices to residents when proof of blocking the line is obtained by using the sewer camera in the line.

**Tom Garrett** – would like to donate a bench in memory of his parents. Park and Recreation chairman Martin Ditsky volunteered to contact Mr. Garrett to work out the details.

**Special Event** - Christine LeClair of the Valor Clinic Foundation would like to hold a coat distribution Feb. 13, 2021 at Ashton Park Parking Lot, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**A Motion was made by Bob Silver, second by William Chuma, to approve the Valor Clinic coat distribution on February 13, 2021, 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at Ashton Park Parking Lot. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

**PV School District** – letter of 1/6/2021 asking whether any bus stop changes are requested for 2021-22 school year. There was discussion about changing the bus stop across from the entrance onto Andrewsville Street/ at Knepper's Lane. The borough owned steps on the Andrewsville Street side of Route 209 are deteriorating; no decisions made at this time.

**PennDOT** – letter of 12/30/2021, highway safety data collection will be conducted on streets in the borough January 2021 through April 2021.

**PA Labor Relations Board** – police hearing date changed from Dec 18, 2020 to May 28, 2021.

**Correspondence not copied, available on request.**

- **Tommy Vadyak** – 1/3/2021 e-mail distributed in borough mailboxes
- **Bob Silver** – Request for revocation of a Zoning Permit, emailed to council
- **Bob Silver** – appealing Right to Know regarding issuance of zoning permit
- **Police Pension** - Girard Benefits 4th quarterly report, October 2020-Dec 2020
- **Tamaqua Transfer** - Municipal Waste Tonnage 2020; 2,441 Tons, Recycling 1/1/2020 to 4/30/2020 31.97 Tons

**Committee Reports from 1/5/2021 meeting.**

Written minutes for the meetings are unavailable due to computer network issues 1/5/2021.

**Zoning & Ordinance** – Bob Silver, Chairman, asked that the IWORQ's software be used by code enforcement.

**Public Works** – William Chuma, Chairman, reported on snow plowing after the recent storm and said the price of a new truck will go up 5%.

**Municipal Administration** - Bruce Markovich, Chairman, submitted a written report which is on file.

**Park & Recreation** – Martin Ditsky, Chairman

**A Motion was made by Bob Silver, second by William Chuma, to have four evergreen trees at Kennedy Park removed by Matt Dunn who offered to remove them for free. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

**Public Safety** – John Turcmanovich, Chairman, no report, absent tonight.

**Municipal Reports for December:**

**American Fire Co No 1** – Responded to fourteen calls: 10 in Lansford, 2 in Summit Hill, 4 in Coaldale and 2 in Tamaqua.

**Leighton Ambulance** – Responded to 64 incidents with an average response time of 7.7 minutes from time of dispatch to arrival on scene.

**Mayor’s Report** – Police receipts for the month of December total \$1,189.54. Breakdown: Magistrate \$394.54, Miscellaneous \$45.00, Parking Violations \$600.00, Quality of Life \$150.00. 2020. Year total \$16,024.26.

The Mayor said that computers in the police station are overheating. New computers are requested. She will get estimates for the next meeting.

**Police Report** – Police responded to 292 calls in December. The report is on file.

**CC Council of Governments** - no update, meetings are virtual

**CC Tax Collection Committee** – Letter requesting appointment of 2021 representative.

**A Motion was made by Gwyneth Collevecchio, second by William Chuma, to reappoint Jill Seigendall as the boroughs’ 2021 delegate to the Carbon County Tax Collection Committee. All were in favor except Marie Ondrus who was opposed. Motion passed 5 yes, 1 no.**

**Solicitor’s Report** – sample No parking Ordinance enclosed- adding unit block of W. Water St. as a street with no parking. The topic was tabled until after the meeting with residents at the site.

**Tax Collector’s Report:** December collections deposited in January \$33,227.93 (prior year receipt). Total 2020 taxes collected is \$972,753.18. The 2020 Real Estate Tax Delinquency report totals \$205,646.10.

**A Motion was made by William Chuma, second by Bob Silver, to accept the Tax collector’s December report totaling \$33,227.93 and Delinquency report totaling \$972,753.18. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

**Treasurer’s Report:** Bills to Pay Total \$115,483.91 ; Breakdown: General Fund, \$47,695.80; Sanitation, \$28,390.60; Sewer Transmission, \$20,130.23; Park & Recreation, \$207.74; Hi-Way Liquid Fuels, \$9,539.27; Fire Tax, \$4,826.75; Street Light Fund, \$ 4,693.52.

**A Motion to approve payment of the December bills totaling \$115,483.91 was made by William Chuma, second by Gwyneth Collevecchio. All were in favor except for Marie Ondrus and Bob Silver. Motion passed 4 yes, 2 no.**

End of month Dec	2020		2020	2020
FUND	No.	Account Title	Nov	Dec
General Fund	7673	General Acct	\$530,934.52	\$417,024.57
General Fund	7780	Escrow for 20 E Kline Ave	\$2,180.11	\$0.00
General Fund	7772	Escrow for 22 E Kline Ave	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
General Fund	5725	Escrow for 2 E Ridge St	\$0.00	\$0.00
Sanitation Fund	7681	Sanitation Fund	\$239,805.54	\$187,659.05
Sanitation Fund	0283	Sani-investors’ Money Mkt Acct	\$51,879.69	\$51,886.28
Sanitation Fund	7730	Sanitation Fund Money Mkt Acct	\$12,172.67	\$12,173.70
Sewer Transmission	7714	Sewage Transmission	\$23,289.39	\$58,761.51
Sewer Transmission	1198	Sewer Transmission(res)	\$165,267.48	\$165,288.48
Sewer Transmission	5402	Sewer Loan Proceeds Acct(res)	\$152,991.99	\$152,991.99
Sewer Transmission	1277	Sewer Transm. CD/Aug-12 mo.	\$51,286.80	\$51,297.31
Sewer Transmission		400 E Snyder Sewer Project	\$75,000.00	\$75,000.00
LST	7722	Local Service Tax	\$16,541.14	\$16,826.84

Street Light Fund	7764	Streetlights	\$42,575.23	\$38,800.25
Fire Tax Fund	7748	Fire	\$38,360.58	\$37,821.63
Sp Highway	7706	Treasurers Special Highway	\$89,318.77	\$86,806.24
Park & Rec Fund	7699	Lansford Pool Account	\$41,442.89	\$41,446.40
Park & Rec Fund	7756	Recreation	\$41,279.34	\$36,294.96
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$1,577,326.14</b>	<b>\$1,433,079.21</b>
<b>LOANS</b>		<b>LOANS Paid from Fund</b>		
Tax Anticipation Note		1.99% for 1 yr.	\$0.00	\$100,000.00
Tunnel St/Storm Sep	\$18,689.23 per mo.		\$564,035.35	\$547,368.68
MEM Debacle	20 yrs./\$14,130 biannual May&Nov		\$95,134.11	\$95,134.11
2018 Police RAM		Gen Fund or LST 6/1/18 - 5 yr	\$26,440.53	\$26,440.53
2020 Sewer Loan	5 yr	Sewer Fund \$1,320.47 per month	\$73,813.91	\$72,627.82
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$759,423.90</b>	<b>\$841,571.14</b>

### Unfinished Business

**Lansford Alive Letter from May 2, 2018**, asking permission to plant Cherry Trees (up to 10) in Kennedy Park along Route 209; there was no decision made by council in 2018. Because a grant application has been submitted for evaluations of the borough's parks, no decision was reached by current council.

**Ordinance 2021-01** approving Portnoff Law Offices collection services and rates for sanitation delinquents. **A Motion was made by Bob Silver to adopt Ordinance 2021-01, appointing Portnoff Law Offices as the collector of delinquent sanitation accounts at the established rates. The Motion was second by William Chuma. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

**Appointment of Auditor for 2020 Financial Audit** - Request for a multi-year proposal for audit services. **A Motion was made by Bob Silver, second by Gwyneth Collevchio, to appoint Brian T. Kelly, C.P.A. and Associates to perform the annual Municipal Audit and Financial Report borough audit for three years, 2020, 2021 & 2022 at a cost of \$7,750.00 per year. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

### **Advertise 2021 meeting schedule**

**A Motion was made by Gwyneth Collevchio, second by William Chuma, to advertise the borough monthly meeting schedule, meetings to be held at borough hall on the second Wednesday of each month beginning at 6:00 p.m. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

### Appointments to expired board & commission seats

All seats expired 12/31/2020. Voting to be accomplished by a motion and a second for each seat:

**Lansford-Coaldale Joint Water Authority** – One 5 yr. term - Richard Pogwist term expired.

Letters of interest for Water Authority appointment were received from Richard Pogwist (as well as a recommendation from Am. Fire Co. No.1.) and Tommy Vadyak.

**A Motion was made by Martin Ditsky to appoint Tommy Vadyak to the Water Authority.**

**Motion died with no second.**

**A Motion was made by William Chuma to reappoint Richard Pogwist to the Water Authority. The Motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in favor except for Martin Ditsky and Marie Ondrus who were opposed. Motion passed, 4 yes, 6 no.**

**Planning Commission** – One 4 yr. term – Joseph Butrie term expired.

**A Motion was made by Bob Silver to appoint Rose Mary Cannon to the Planning Commission. The Motion was second by Martin Ditsky. All were in favor except for Marie Ondrus who was opposed. Motion passed, 5 yes, 1 no.**

**Zoning Hearing Board** – One 3 yr. term – Douglas Knauss term expired.  
A Zoning Hearing Board reappointment letter was received from Douglas Knauss.

**A Motion was made by William Chuma to reappoint Douglas Knauss to the Zoning Hearing Board. The Motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

**Vacancy Board** – One yr. Term – James Romankow term expired.

A Vacancy Board reappointment request by email was received from James Romankow.

**A Motion was made by Bob Silver, second by William Chuma, to reappoint James Romankow to the Vacancy Board. All were in favor except Martin Ditsky and Marie Ondrus. Motion passed, 4 yes, 2 no.**

**Civil Service Commission** – One 4 yr. term – Steven Foster term expired.

Councilman Chuma phoned Steven Foster at the meeting for confirmation that Steven Foster would accept reappointment to the Civil Service Commission.

**A Motion was made by William Chuma to reappoint Steven Foster to the Civil Service Commission. The Motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

**TV Franchise Agreement (expired 1/1/2020)**

**A Motion was made by Bob Silver, second by Gwyenth Collevchio, to have Solicitor Yurchak negotiate the TV Franchise Agreement with Blue Ridge Cable, Pencor, at the current 2% rate for a five-year term. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

Council considered the purchase of the existing carpets in police station at a cost of \$152.00 from First Impression Textile Service, owner Michael DeVito, which is going out of business.

**A Motion was made by Bob Silver, second by William Chuma, to purchase the existing carpets in the police station from First Impressions, Michael DeVito, for \$152.00. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

### **New Business**

PA Municipal Retirement System (PAMRS) for office personnel – Council was open to finding out what PAMRS offers.

**A Motion was made by William Chuma, second by Bob Silver, to have Solicitor Yurchak create, revise, or amend an ordinance to increase fines for failure to remove a vehicle during snow or emergency, specifically raise the fine from \$25.00 to \$75.00. All were in favor, Motion passed.**

**USDA Grant/loan** application for public works truck, estimated cost \$75,000.00.

**A Motion was made by William Chuma, second by Bob Silver, to apply for a USDA Loan/Grant for a Truck for the public works department. All were in favor, Motion passed**

Bruce Markovich suggested forming a committee to select a new streetlamp design for the downtown streetscape project. The sidewalk bases currently installed cannot support the streetlamp design previously chosen.

**President Markovich called an executive session at 8:10 p.m. and council went back on the record at 8:23 p.m. A Motion to Adjourn was made by William Chuma, second by Bob Silver at 8:23 p.m. and everyone dispersed.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Jill Seigendall  
Secretary Treasurer**