

LANSFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regular Monthly Meeting
January 9, 2019 6:00 p.m. 1 W. Ridge Street

The January monthly meeting of Lansford Borough Council was held 6:00 p.m. January 9, 2019 at borough hall, 1 W. Ridge Street, Lansford, PA.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call was taken by secretary treasurer Jill Seigendall. Council persons attending were: President Jared Soto, Joseph Butrie, Marie Ondrus, Irma Leibensperger, Bob Silver, John Turcmanovich, Bruce Markovich, Mayor James Romankow, and Attorney Michael Greek.

Executive Session - Jared Soto called the group into executive session to discuss personnel and possible property sale.

At 6:30 p.m. the group came out of executive session. About eleven people were in the audience as well as Ron Gower of the Time News Newspaper and camera man for TV Channel 13.

Public Courtesy:

Council person Marie Ondrus made a Motion for borough council to reorganize. Joseph Butrie was opposed to the idea stating that reorganization is mandatory every two years. The motion was second by Irma Leibensperger. On roll call vote: Bruce Markovich, no; John Turcmanovich, no; Joseph Butrie, no; Jared Soto, no; Bob Silver, yes; Marie Ondrus, yes; Irma Leibensperger, yes. No-4, Yes-3, Motion failed.

Jennifer Kocela, 35 W. Kline Ave, is concerned about the mistreatment of animals. She is starting a "PAWS (Precious Animals Worth Saving) for Lansford" group to find a solution to help abandon and mistreated dogs and feral cats in the borough. She spoke to Tom Connors of the Carbon County (CC) Animal Shelter and she distributed a brochure about the nonprofit group being formed.

Jennifer Staines, 353 W. Abbott Street, spoke about the importance of neutering and spaying cats. She asked that new ordinances be adopted concerning dogs, cats and exotic animals.

Rose Mary Cannon, 342 W. Ridge Street, had statistics about police officer fatalities and reminded everyone that today is National Law Enforcement Day sponsored by the National Alliance of Law Enforcement Support.

Minutes Approved:

- November 14, 2018 Regular Monthly Meeting
Irma Leibensperger asked that the November 14, 2018 minutes be tabled because council just received them today.
- December 10, 2018 Special Budget Meeting
A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to approve the December 10, 2018 minutes as written. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, Motion passed.
- December 12, 2018 Regular Monthly Meeting
A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to approve the December 12, 2018 meeting minutes as written. The motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in favor except Marie Ondrus and Joseph Butrie who were opposed. 5 yes, 2 no, Motion passed.

- December 27, 2018 Special Budget Meeting
A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to approve the December 27, 2018 meeting minutes as written. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, Motion passed.

Correspondence:

LCSH Sewer Authority – invitation to a meeting on January 17, 2019 6:30 p.m. at Hilltop Community Center, Summit Hill, to discuss the status of the 537 Plan and its meeting with DEP that was held in Wilkes-Barre on Dec. 3, 2018. Jared Soto will attend.

CC Tax Claim Bureau – received bids on the repository properties listed below asking borough council to approve or disapprove of the following sales in writing:

- 122A2-24-N21; 116 W. Ridge Street

A Motion was made by Bob Silver to approve the repository sale of parcel 122A2-24-N21 from J H Weaver & Co., LLC to Byrd Properties, LLC for \$1,200.00. The motion was second by Irma Leibensperger. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- 122A1-25-B22; 204 W. Snyder Avenue

A Motion was made by Bob Silver to approve the repository sale of parcel 122A1-25-B22 from Lansford AMVETS Home Association, Inc. to Byrd Properties, LLC for \$801.00. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- 122A1-25-C17; 208-210 W. Ridge Street

A Motion was made by Bob Silver to approve the repository sale of parcel 122A1-25-C17 from Lansford AMVETS Home Association, Inc. to Byrd Properties, LLC for \$801.00. The motion was second by Irma Leibensperger. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- 122A1-25-B24; 201-203 W. Ridge Street

A Motion was made by Bob Silver to approve the repository sale of parcel 122A1-25-B24 from Lansford AMVETS Home Association, Inc. to Rent 570, LLC for \$2,600.00. The motion was second by Irma Leibensperger. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- 122A4-22-H16; 630 E. Bertsch Street

A Motion was made by Bob Silver to approve the repository sale of parcel 122A4-22-H16 from Carbon Judicial 2014 Trust to Demetri M. Nash for \$1,000.00. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor except for Joseph Butrie who was opposed to the sale. 6 yes, 1 no, Motion passed.

St John's Byzantine Catholic Church – Requests approval from council to post 12" by 14" church service signs at three entrances to town. A zoning permit is not required. Borough Council had no objection to the signs.

COSTARS - Notification was received to renew the borough's Road Salt contract for the period August 2019 through July 2020 before March 230, 2019.

Lehigh Valley Inspection Services – a letter of resignation was received from LVIS owner Paul Jarrett that LVIS will no longer serve as Zoning Officer, Code Enforcement Officer and Uniform Construction Code (UCC) inspector, effective February 4, 2019.

A Motion was made by Joseph Butrie to advertise for the services of an independent contractor to perform all borough Zoning, Code Enforcement and UCC duties. Motion failed due to no second.

A Motion was made by Bob Silver to advertise for Code Enforcement, Zoning and UCC Officials from individuals and firms to work as outside contractors, advertise the positions with "help wanted" advertisements, as provided by Attorney Greek, in three newspapers; Lehighon Times News, Hazleton Standard-Speaker and Pottsville Republican Herald, specifying application deadline of January 31, 2019. The motion was second by Bruce Markovich. All were in favor except Joseph Butrie who was opposed. 6 yes, 1 no, Motion passed.

Correspondence received but not distributed to borough council to conserve paper, copy available on request:

- Request from CC Emergency Management for an updated Municipal Emergency Operations Plan
- Notification from PennDOT that the School Warning Device on State Route 902 for the former Our Lady of the Angels School has been removed
- PennDOT MS 965 Form – Annual Liquid Fuels Projects; Receipts and Expenses for 2018
- Annual Municipal Recycling Report Forms
- Annual Liquid Fuels Tax Refund Claim Forms
- Emergency Services Training Schedules
- PA Dept of Conservation & Natural Resources grant application (for pool); letter of denial
- USDA – information for funding opioid projects in rural communities
- Carbon County quarterly progress report (April 2018- Oct 2018) for a CC municipal waste plan
- CC Tax Collection Committee – request for annual appointment (under Unfinished Business)
- Allied Benefits Group, Lansford Borough Police Pension Nationwide Investments Report, 4th Qtr. 2018
- Beyer Barber – Police Pension Annual Administration Request for Census Data
- Quarterly Unemployment Compensation Report Forms
- DCED 2019 Municipal Tax Information Form due Jan. 15, 2019

Committee Reports meetings were held January 2, 2019:

Parks & Recreation – The meeting report was read by Joseph Butrie. Topics included repaving Kennedy Park pathways, E. Snyder Street basketball court resurfacing, trees to be trimmed at Ashton Park across from the carwash, and information for a dog park.

Public Works – The meeting report was read by Bob Silver. Topics included PennDOT replacement of “No Turn on Red” signs on Patterson Street, making Brimble’s Road one way north due to the nearby collapsing wall, the cost of “Snow Ordinance” metal signs, the repair of the axle on the tar wagon and the possible purchase of a new 10 tone dump truck.

Municipal Administration – The meeting report was read by Jared Soto. Topics included considering the collection services of Portnoff for sanitation delinquents, review of the salary fee schedule, purchase of computer for the borough office, and a review of year end budget figures.

Ordinance, Zoning & Community Development – Jared Soto read the written report and reported on the possible purchase of “iWorQ” Community Development and Public Works Software. The committee recommends the borough purchase the program. Past zoning invoices from Code Company Barry Isett would be considered for payment to get the zoning information from the firm. Animal control ordinances are being considered for presentation to council.

Public Safety – No written report was received. John Turcmanovich reported that all police vehicles are in good condition except for the unmarked car having a problem with the battery draining. An office security camera needs repair. Old rusted speakers on poles at the intersection of Chestnut and Patterson and perhaps at other locations were discussed for possible removal if it is no longer used.

Municipal Report:

Fire Department – The American Fire Co. No. 1 responded to 7 calls in December, 5 in Lansford, 1 in Summit Hill and 1 in Coaldale.

Ambulance – The Leighton Ambulance responded to 39 incidents in Lansford during December. The average response time from the time of dispatch to the time at scene was 8.49 minutes. Joni Gestl will be retiring from her full time position with the Ambulance Association and the new contact person for the borough will be John Reinbold.

Mayors Report – The mayor reported \$795.00 received in December, Total collected for 2018 is \$20,429.94. (The December magistrate’s check was not available as of the meeting.)

Police Report – The December police report showed 294 calls, 15 criminal arrests, 4 traffic citations, 6 non-traffic citations, and 7 parking tickets.

CC Council of Governments (COG) – No December meeting

Tax Collector’s Report – Real Estate Taxes collected in 2018 totaled \$892,289.71.

Code Enforcement – In the Dec. Code/Zoning report Zoning Officer Tracey Herman reported nine renovation and two zoning permits were issued. Ten rental inspections performed, one re-inspection, and six inspection notices were sent. Six property maintenance complaints were investigated and four files were closed.

Treasurer’s Report – Bills to be approved total \$13,160.97; General Fund \$6,889.04, Park & Recreation \$99.88, Hi-Way Liquid Fuels \$1,144.37, Street Light \$5,027.68. Monthly checking account activity was included in the report as well as account balances and projection to next month.

A motion was made by Bob Silver to approve the bills totaling \$13,160.97. The motion was second by Irma Leibensperger. All were in favor, motion passed.

End of month account balances:

End of Month Balances 2018

	Account Title	Nov	Dec
7673	General Acct	\$210,507.70	\$194,655.03
7681	Sanitation Fund	\$134,026.79	\$108,035.12
0283	Investors Money Mkt Acct-Sani	\$51,677.87	\$51,686.65
1198	Sewer Transmission(reserve acct)	\$164,624.55	\$164,652.51
7772	Escrow for 22 E Kline Ave	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
7780	Escrow for 20 E Kline Ave	\$2,180.11	\$2,180.11
4529	Escrow for 401-405 E Abbott St	\$7,333.33	\$7,333.33
7699	Lansford Pool Account	\$41,360.08	\$41,363.59
7706	Treasurers Special HI Way	\$96,407.55	\$61,235.97
7714	Sewage Transmission	\$82,548.95	\$58,814.37
5402	Loan Proceeds Acct(Sewer res acct)	\$152,804.74	\$152,812.28
7722	Local Service Tax	\$41,052.87	\$27,927.67
7730	Sanitation Fund Money Mkt Acct	\$12,148.35	\$12,149.38
7748	Fire	\$40,460.68	\$36,266.93
7756	Recreation	\$63,580.14	\$64,058.35
7764	Street Lights	\$21,852.29	\$18,632.95
CD 8/18	Sewer Transm. CD/12 mo.	\$50,284.63	\$50,376.80
		\$1,175,850.63	\$1,055,181.04
Loans	LOANS Paid from Fund	Est Balance	Est Balance
Sewer Sep	Sewer Transm#5537 4/21/15 Monthly	946,551.70	931,260.91
MEM St Lites	Street Light Fund#6309 May&Nov11/12/09	130,384.11	130,384.11
Loader	Liquid Fuels #3886 10/28/14	0.00	0.00
2017 Police	Gen Fund or LST 1/5/17	13,204.09	13,204.09
2018 Police RAM	Gen Fund or LST 6/1/18	42,073.00	42,073.00
		1,090,139.90	1,074,849.11

Solicitor’s Report – Attorney Greek explained that in the Hiles appeal (in the Hiles vs. Borough civil case) to the CC Court of Common Pleas, post-trial motions were denied by the court. Mr. Hiles next option will be to file to PA Superior Court.

Unfinished Business:

- **Resolution 2019-01** Salary Resolution – to approve .50 raise for 2 office employees as reflected in the 2019 budget. Chairman of Municipal Administration Irma Leibensperger tabled the topic until next month’s meeting.
- **Resolution 2017-19** Borough permit and fee schedule. No action taken. Jared Soto asked for recommendations for changes at the next meeting.
- **2019 appointments to vacant board seats:** No letters of interest were received for the vacant seats.
 - **Zoning Hearing Board** (3 yr. term) – 1 vacant seat (due to the expired term of Robert Gaughan who does not want to be reappointed) and 1 alternate seat to be filled. No appointment was made.

A Motion was made by Joseph Butrie to advertise all vacant seats in the Times News Newspaper, with appointments to be made at the February regular meeting. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, motion passed.

- **Civil Service Commission** – 1 vacant seat due to the expired term of John Turcmanovich. Mr. Turcmanovich volunteered to stay on the commission.

A Motion was made by Bob Silver to appoint John Turcmanovich for another term on the Civil Service Commission. The Motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor except Joseph Butrie and Marie Ondrus who were opposed to the motion. 5 yes, 2 no, Motion passed.

- **Recreation Commission** (5 yr. term) – 1 vacant seats to be filled since 2017. There were no letters of interest for the positions. No appointment made.
- **Vacancy Board** (1 yr. term) – This seat has been unoccupied for years – it is needed should an elected official’s seat become vacant – 1 vacant seat. No letters of interest were received for this position. No appointment made.
- **Police Pension Board** – 1 vacant seat, (vacancy occurred with the resignation of Martin Ditsky at the end of 2017.) It is unclear what qualifications are needed for the appointment. No appointment made.

- **Parking Meters** – Jared Soto distributed a map of the metered commercial district and asked council to make recommendations of which meters to keep and which to remove. Joseph Butrie reminded council that this issue has been discussed for 3 years with no resolution. The current Ordinance 2016-10 establishes “Permit Parking only” on the north side of West Ridge Street between Tunnel and Coal Streets, retaining all parking meters except those in “permit parking only” area. Enforcement of Ordinance 2016-10 never commenced. There are about 180 meters at this time.

A Motion was made by Joseph Butrie to remove the parking meters on the 100 block of West Ridge Street and the unit block of East Ridge Street; keeping working meters in the unit block of West Ridge Street. Motion failed due to no second.

Bob Silver said he would support a similar motion if 5 or 6 meters were kept on the west end of the unit block of East Ridge Street (Tunnel Street end), south side; this provides parking meters for businesses on the east end of the business district.

A Motion was made by Joseph Butrie to eliminate all parking meters except for:

- **meters on the south side of the unit block of W. Ridge Street (between Tunnel & Coal Streets)**
- **meters on the east side of the unit block of Coal Street (between W. Ridge and W. Patterson Streets)**

- meters on the west side of the unit block of Tunnel Street (between W. Ridge and W. Patterson Streets)
- meters on the south side of East Ridge Street between Tunnel Street and the Bo Bo Garden Restaurant, 12 East Ridge Street, about 5 meters.

The Motion was second by Bob Silver. On roll call vote: Bruce Markovich, no; John Turcmanovich, no; Joseph Butrie, yes; Jared Soto, no; Bob Silver, yes; Marie Ondrus, no; Irma Leibensperger, no. 2 yes, 5 no, Motion failed.

- **Barry Isett outstanding invoices** – Jared Soto asked council whether it is interested in paying Barry Isett delinquent borough invoices (2015) in order to obtain Lansford Zoning Records for borough files. There was no interest in doing so.
- **CLEAR Proprietary Investigation Program** – For the police department to do background investigations. Three year contract cost is \$140.00/month or \$1,680.00/year.
A motion was made by Joseph Butrie to purchase the CLEAR LE Plus Proprietary Investigation Program for the Police Department at a cost of \$140.00 per month for three years. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.
- **Code Enforcement Computer Software** - iWORQ and CitizenServe estimates were presented. iWORQ cost is \$4,600.00; \$1,850.00 setup & training fee plus annual fee is \$2,750.00. Discussion was tabled until next month's meeting when code personnel will be changing.

New Business:

- **Brimble's Wall** – Bordering Robert Clewell property, – The borough will apply for County CDBG funds to repair the wall. Jared Soto will forward photos to David Bodnar, CC Planning Office.
- **Senate Resolution 6** - meeting with Fire Chief Joseph Greco, January 14, 2019, 5:30 p.m. at the firehouse; regarding new legislation for fire company volunteers.
- **Tunnel Street Request** – Paul Kokinda made a request of Borough Council; to vacate the southern end of Tunnel Street to the adjoining property owners.
A motion was made by Joseph Butrie to have Attorney Greek prepare the paperwork; ordinance, public hearing and advertisement, for the borough to vacate that (southern extension above Water Street) portion of Tunnel Street to the adjoining property owners. The motion was second by Bruce Markovich. All were in favor, motion passed.

Joseph Butrie made a motion to adjourn the meeting and everyone dispersed at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Seigendall

Secretary Treasurer