

LANSFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regular Monthly Meeting
March 13, 2019 6:00 p.m. 1 W. Ridge Street

The March meeting of Lansford Borough Council was held 6:00 p.m. March 13, 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, John Turcmanovich, and Bruce Markovich. Mayor James Romankow arrived late at 6:15 p.m. Attorney Michael Greek arrived at 6:20 p.m. Bob Silver was absent.

Executive Session - Jared Soto called the group into executive session to discuss a personnel issue, a possible property purchase of the Rarick garage for the public works department and computer security issues with Joseph Lyons.

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

Letter of Resignation – Jared Soto read a letter of resignation (dated March 13, 2019) from Councilman Joseph Butrie, stating he is resigning due to health issues.

A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to accept Mr. Butrie’s resignation. The Motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, Motion passed.

Jared Soto thanked Joseph Butrie for his service and Mr. Butrie left the meeting.

Public Courtesy:

Joseph Pavlis, 45 Springgarden Street, had a concern with parking tickets issued on March 5th after a snowstorm. (The snow storm was early Monday morning March 4, 2019.) He alleges “that the borough did not follow its own ordinance”. He said the south side of the street was not plowed when it was supposed to be. He lives on the North side of the street and the street was bare. He went to work and when he returned there was a ticket on his car. He said plowing was supposed to be done the day after the snowstorm. He asked that there be a public announcement made.

Bobby Dobosh, 383 W. Ridge Street, noted that the date of the American Legion sponsored Easter Egg Hunt Special Event is April 13th, not April 14th as noted on the Agenda and Letter to Council.

Jennifer Staines, 353 W. Abbott Street, said the ASPCA are taking applications for Humane Society Officers. She is looking into legally trapping cats in a vacant house in her neighborhood and wants to check on the health of cats in other abandoned properties. She plans to coordinate with Palmerton Cats organization as well as Bowmanstown and presented information about animal care organizations in our area.

Rose Mary Cannon, 342 W. Ridge Street, gave recognition to Joseph Butrie for the time he devoted to borough council, almost 8 years. She asked council if funds were allotted in the budget for capitol improvements, specifically the borough garage. Jared Soto said no, loans will need to be taken out for any projects. She suggested selling borough property to fund building a borough garage.

Minutes Approved:

- February 13, 2019 Regular Monthly Meeting
A Motion was made by Bruce Markovich to accept the minutes with the following edit regarding the sale of the public work’s 1997 Ford Crown Victoria. The

wording will be changed to include the language “the borough of Lansford makes no representations regarding any warranties or conditions of the vehicle and the vehicle will be sold as is”. The Motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- February 20, 2019 Special Budget Meeting

A Motion was made by Bruce Markovich to approve the February 20, 2019 special meeting minutes as written. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor except Marie Ondrus and Irma Leibensperger, Motion passed: 3 yes, 2 no.

Correspondence:

- 1) Tax Collector Terrance McCall made a request to appoint 4 Deputy Tax Collectors (during any incapacitation of the Tax Collector): Kristie Zimmerman, Colleen McCall, Michael McCall, and Patrick McCall. On roll call vote for each:

A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to appoint Kristie Zimmerman as a Deputy Tax Collector for Lansford Borough. The Motion was second by Bruce Markovich. All were in favor except for Marie Ondrus. Motion passed: 4 yes, 1 no.

A Motion was made by John Turcmanovich to appoint Colleen McCall as a Deputy Tax Collector for Lansford Borough. The Motion was second by Irma Leibensperger. All were in favor, Motion passed.

A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to appoint Michael McCall as a Deputy Tax Collector for Lansford Borough. The Motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, Motion passed.

A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to appoint Patrick McCall as a Deputy Tax Collector for Lansford Borough. The Motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- 2) A request was made from American Legion Post 123 for reserved parking on W. Ridge Street in front of the post. The item was tabled; Jared Soto will meet with the American Legion for more details.
- 3) Special Event Form – Am Legion-Easter Egg Hunt at Ashton Park 4/13/19, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The groups insurance was included.

A Motion was made by John Turcmanovich to approve the Easter Egg Hunt event. The Motion was second by Irma Leibensperger. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- 4) Carbon County Planning & Development – 2019 CDBG Program - asking for pre applications for eligible projects. Deadline is May 3, 2019. Jared Soto said the borough will reapply for the same projects as last year; the Dock Street Bridge and the Clewell Wall.
- 5) Tamaqua Transfer sent a letter dated 2/20/19 to extend the borough’s Solid Waste & Recycling contract another year (Approved at Feb. 13, 2019 meeting).
- 6) Pa. State Assn. of Boroughs (PSAB) – Rental Property Inspection Management Program for municipal officials – classes in Berks, Dauphin and Centre counties. Jared Soto asked for approval to attend.
A Motion was made by Bruce Markovich to approve payment \$135.00 for Jared Soto to attend the Rental Property Inspection Management Program sponsored by PSAB in Berks County on 4/3/19. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, Motion passed.

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

- General Code – Executed Agreement for codification of the Borough’s legislation
- PennDOT – Notice of Payment of Liquid Fuels Funds \$123,300.40 to be received 3/13/2019.

- Easement Agreement between Fred Johnson and John Lazo regarding Zoning Hearing “canopy” constructed at 23-25 W. Ridge Street – from Attorney Robert Frycklund.
- CC COG – Minutes from Jan 22, 2019 meeting are on file

Committee Reports meetings were held March 6, 2019:

Parks & Recreation – The meeting report was read Jared Soto. Discussed were the pool, meeting with the Friends of Lansford Pool Group, contacting Silberline with a community service project, and purchasing benches for Kennedy Park this Spring.

Public Works – The meeting report was read by Jared Soto. There was discussion about snow removal; whether to continue renting Rarick’s garage (the rental agreement end April 30, 2019), and whether to repair Dock Street near the No. 9 Mine.

Municipal Administration – Reviewed by Jared Soto: There was discussion about census procedures, a timeframe for council to receive meeting minutes, and changes to the fee schedule.

Ordinance, Zoning & Community Development – Chairman Jared Soto read the written report. There was discussion about landlord licensing, better coordination between the new code enforcement company and the police department, and concerns about blasting (Mr. Turcmanovich and Chief Soberick met with the Lehigh Anthracite Coal Company and reviewed its procedures).

Public Safety – No written report was received. Chairman John Turcmanovich reported that there was discussion about the blasting and parking issues.

Municipal Reports:

Mayors Report – The mayor reported \$2,968.27 received in February, Total collected for 2019 is \$7,955.43.

Police Report – The February police report shows, 12 criminal arrests, 14 traffic citations, and 8 non-traffic citations.

Fire Department – The American Fire Co. No. 1 responded to 17 calls in February, 13 in Lansford, 1 in Summit Hill and 1 in Coaldale, 1 in Nesquehoning and 1 in Tamaqua.

Ambulance – John Reinbold of The Lehighon Ambulance reported that the company responded to 44 incidents in Lansford during February. The average response time from the time of dispatch to the time at scene was 10.00 minutes.

Code Enforcement – No Report

Carbon County Council of Governments (COG) – Training on the COG Street sweeper will be held March 19th. The public works dept. will attend. Census briefing will be held March 26, 7:00 p.m. at the CC courthouse annex. All were urged to attend. He also had information about Broad Mt Energy

CC Tax Collection Committee – Jill Seigendall attended the annual reorganization meeting on February 27, 2019 at the Lehighon School District Administration building. Officers were elected, legal counsel, insurance agent, bank depository and committees were appointed. The treasury balance at the end of January was \$15,929.41.

Tax Collector’s Report – The CC Tax Assessment Office sent the Assessment Recap Report showing assessments totaling \$32,224,145.00 a loss of \$356,175.00 from the October 2018 report showing assessments totaling \$32,580,320.00.

Treasurer’s Report – Bills to be approved total \$69,890.15; General Fund \$31,943.79, Hi-Way Liquid Fuels \$6,424.26, Street Light \$4,993.38; Sanitation, \$25,410.84; Sewer Transmission, \$1,117.88. Council received the list of bills offered for approval; checking account activity was included in the report as well as account balances and projection to next month.

A motion was made by Bruce Markovich to approve the bills totaling \$69,890.15. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, Motion passed.

End of month account balances:

No.	Account Title	Jan	Feb
7673	General Acct	\$217,574.75	\$175,267.85
7780	Escrow for 20 E Kline Ave	\$2,180.11	\$2,180.11
7772	Escrow for 22 E Kline Ave	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
4529	Escrow for 401-405 E Abbott St	\$7,333.33	\$7,333.33
7681	Sanitation Fund	\$149,371.25	\$141,211.40
0283	Sani-investors' Money Mkt Acct	\$51,695.43	\$51,703.36
7730	Sanitation Fund Money Mkt Acct	\$12,150.41	\$12,151.34
7714	Sewage Transmission	\$78,548.06	\$94,805.43
1198	Sewer Transmission(reserve acct)	\$164,680.48	\$164,705.75
5402	Sewer Loan Proceeds Acct(res acct)	\$152,820.07	\$152,834.89
1277	Sewer Transm. CD/Aug-12 mo.	\$50,472.21	\$50,567.80
7722	Local Service Tax	\$28,252.69	\$29,666.39
7764	Street Lights	\$15,525.77	\$10,875.81
7748	Fire	\$35,969.80	\$35,366.03
7706	Treasurers Special HI Way	\$60,096.76	\$52,203.78
7699	Lansford Pool Account	\$41,367.10	\$41,370.27
7756	Recreation	\$64,467.40	\$64,413.75
		\$1,135,505.62	\$1,089,657.29
Loans	LOANS Paid from Fund	Est Balance	Est Balance
	Tax Anticipation Note	100,000.00	100,000.00
	Sewer Transm Loan \$18,689.23 per mo.	915,909.54	900,512.06
	MEM Street Light Loan bi annual May & Nov	130,384.11	130,384.11
	Police 2017 Expedition	13,204.09	13,204.09
	Police 2018 RAM Truck	42,073.00	42,073.00

The Treasure's Report included the following details:

2/13/19 about \$27,000.00 was billed in February for Residential Rental Licensing; \$11,700.00 has been received to date.

2/25/19 Auditors Brian Kelly and Brad Murray were at the borough office to review files and get information to perform the 2018 Audit of funds and DCED Report.

3/7/19 Project Completion Report for Liquid Fuels funded Project 18-13405-001 (summer road paving) was finalized by Jeffrey Roback PennDOT.

3/8/19 Munibilling will send information about collecting payments via credit cards. Estimated cost is \$35.00 per month and \$5.00 fee if the credit card payment is declined (\$5.00 can be passed to the customer).

3/11/19 - RCT 900 – The Public Utility Report was submitted to the PA Dept. of Revenue.

Solicitor's Report – Attorney Greek reported that in the Hiles appeal (Hiles vs. Borough civil suit) to the PA Superior Court, there will be a scheduling order to file briefs electronically by both parties. It will probably not be argued in court. It could be a few months before it is settled.

Unfinished Business:

- **Code, Zoning & U.C.C. Proposals** were reviewed but no decisions were made; Zoning Officer applications were received from James Dean, Lehigh Engineering and Ann Lutz; Code Enforcement Officer applications from James Dean and Lehigh Engineering; U.C.C. Official applications from Lehigh Engineering and Northeast Inspection Consultants. Barry Isett Inc. offered to come in and talk about the position. There is still a vacancy on the Zoning Hearing Board.
- **A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to have LVIS (Paul Jarrett) perform the final inspection of the Zona Property, 401-405 E. Abbott Street, since the home has been**

demolished, so that the fire escrow money can be considered for payback to the property owner. The motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- **A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to have LVIS contact Charles Trovato regarding his zoning and restoration intentions for his commercial property at 52 W. Ridge Street. The Motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, Motion passed.**
- **Code Enforcement Software** – No decision will be made until the vacancies of Zoning Officer, Code Enforcement Officer and U.C.C. Official are filled.
- **C.C. Planning Office** – Regarding the property redevelopment plan for the former Elks lot, 6 E. Ridge Street, owned by the borough. The county has allocated \$6,370.00 (Non Entitlement CDBG FY2016 Funds) to put fencing around the lot.
- **Zoning Hearing** costs during 2017 & 2018 were reviewed. Council is considering changing the \$600.00 Zoning Hearing Fee on the Fee Schedule Resolution. The current cost is \$600.00.
- **Parking Meters** – Jared Soto recommended changing the angle parking to parallel parking on the south side of East and West Ridge Streets in the blocks between Springgarden and Tunnel Streets and Coal and Center Streets.

A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to amend the borough ordinances to change the parking spaces from angle parking to parallel parking on the south side of East Ridge Street between Springgarden and Tunnel Streets. The Motion was second by Bruce Markovich. All were in favor, Motion passed.

A Motion was made by John Turcmanovich to amend the borough ordinances to change the parking spaces from angle parking to parallel parking on the south side of West Ridge Street between Coal and Center Streets. The Motion was second by Irma Leibensperger. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- **Senate Resolution 6** – To encourage and promote emergency preparedness and volunteerism especially fire fighters. Jared Soto will get prices for signs for the entrance to town to encourage volunteerism.
- **U.S.D.A. Community Facilities Loan Program** – Jared spoke to Tanya St. Claire of the USDA. He will submit ideas to her for projects that would qualify for USDA Loans or Grants.

New Business:

- **St. Luke's Medical Center** Open House was held tonight before the meeting. Many council persons attended and commended St. Luke's for locating in Lansford.
- **Liquid Fuels Allocation** – Jared Soto asked council to offer road improvement projects in 2019.
- **Foothill Farms** – Provided the Farmer's Market last summer and would like to return on Fridays 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. beginning June 7, 2019 through August 30, 2019. Jared will check whether it would be allowed to relocate on Coal Street intersection of W. Ridge Street near the medical center parking lot instead of on Tunnel Street.
- **Upgrades to borough computer equipment** – Joseph Lyons gave a presentation about security services for computer equipment.

A Motion was made by John Turcmanovich to have Joseph Lyons purchase the computer equipment for the necessary upgrades to the police department computer system at an estimated price of \$1,368.00. Mr. Lyons will donate his time for installation of the equipment. The Motion was second by Irma Leibensperger. All were in favor, Motion passed.

- **Part Time Police application.**
John Turcmanovich made a Motion to hire Nicholas Grecco as a part time police officer at the salary schedule rate \$16.00/hour. The Motion was second by Jared Soto. All were in favor, Motion passed.
- **PPL Pole relocation** - Irma Leibensperger and Marie Ondrus met with Donald Yanac about moving a PPL pole located on the south side of Patterson Street at the intersection of Cortright and W. Patterson Streets, alongside the former Kiddie Kloes (Geisinger) building now owned by Muleco. The wire is located too close to the building. The pole will be moved to the North side of W. Patterson Street at the same intersection.
- **Vacant Seat due to resignation.**
A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to advertise for candidates in the Times news newspaper to fill the vacant council seat as a result of Joseph Butrie's resignation. Letters of interest will be accepted until the next meeting on April 10, 2019. The Motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, Motion passed.

Executive Session - Jared Soto asked council to remain for an executive session to discuss public work's employee Mario Marconi's grievance regarding the change of his work role from the leader position to laborer/driver position (but remaining at the leader rate) on October 10, 2018. Marconi is a member of the Teamsters Union and union representative Tim Groller is taking the grievance to the next level.

Back on the record at 8:25 p.m.:

A Motion was made by Irma Leibensperger to have the borough secretary contact The Employment Alliance of Municipalities (TEAM) program for assistance with Mario Marconi's labor issue. The Motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, Motion passed.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by John Turcmanovich and everyone dispersed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Seigendall

Secretary Treasurer