

The March 14, 2018 regular monthly meeting of Lansford Borough Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Jared Soto. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call was taken by Secretary Treasurer Jill Seigendall. Attending were President Jared Soto, Vice President Irma Leibensperger, Marie Ondrus, Mayor James Romankow, Joseph Butrie, Bob Silver, John Turcmanovich, and Matthew Walsh. Absent was Junior Council person Isabella Blasko. Attorney Greek arrived at the beginning of executive session.

Executive Session:

Jared Soto called the group into executive session to discuss the pending police collective bargaining agreement and borough garage property. The group came out of executive session at 6:30 p.m. About eleven residents were in attendance and reporter Chris Reber of the Times News Newspaper.

Public Courtesy:

Mary Soberick, 109 W. Abbott Street, asked Councilman Silver whether there has been any progress in eliminating the sewer transmission fee; the platform he ran on in last year's primary and general election. Mr. Silver answered "no, it can't be accomplished with only one month in office."

Mary Soto, 335 E. Patterson Street, asked whether there was any information from the concrete contractor, Bruce George, or Eric Snyder, Keystone Engineering, regarding the deteriorated sidewalks at the southwest corner of Ridge and Tunnel Streets; installed as part of the Streetscape project in the summer of 2016. Council had nothing new to report. Jared Soto will contact Eric Snyder about the situation.

Don Gildea, 107 W. Killine Ave., asked about a letter he sent to the Pennsylvania Dept. of Transportation. Matthew Walsh read PennDOT's response to Mr. Gildea's letter (the borough received a copy of PennDOT's response) regarding Route 902 inlet cleaning; that PennDOT will continue to clean the inlets to insure that road water drains properly. Mr. Gildea explained the inlet system installed by PennDOT and how the existing manholes are being degraded. He asked council to write a letter to PennDOT asking for repair or replacement of the manhole covers that have worn away.

Patrick Walsh, 242 W Abbott Street, supported Mr. Gildea's comments.

Approval of 2/14/18 Meeting Minutes:

The meeting minutes from February 14, 2018 regular monthly meeting were reviewed. Bob Silver pointed out a correction that needed to be made; there was no second to Joe Butrie's motion to remove the two angled parking spaces at the intersection of Coal and W. Ridge Streets. Additionally, Mr. Silver requested listing the estimated cost of the 2017 Audit to be performed by Hutchinson, Gillihan & Freeh PC as written in the Letter of Engagement (\$10,700.00).

A motion was made by to approve the minutes with the 2 corrections pointed out by Bob Silver. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich All were in favor, motion passed.

Correspondence:

Each council person was given an updated list of current borough officials for review and correction.

Zoning Hearing Board (vacancies in 1 seat and 1 alternate seat) – a letter of interest was received from Rev. Hugh Vrablic. Mr. Vrablic was in the audience.

Joe Butrie made a motion to appoint Mr. Vrablic to the Zoning Hearing Board to fill the four year term ending 12/31/2021. The motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in favor. Motion passed.

CDBG County \$20,000.00 Grant – Notification was received from the Carbon County Commissioners that \$20,000.00 in CDBG Funds, from funding year 2016, have been allocated to the borough for a Public Facilities Grant; ADA handicap accessible doors. Jared Soto set up a meeting with David Bodnar of C.C. Planning & Development to see how these funds can be used because the doors have already been replaced. There is a possibility that the money can be deposited into the general fund (reimbursement for paying \$5,000.00 and \$8,629.80 to Northeast Industrial Services for the siding on 4 E. Ridge Street) or used for another project.

Elk's Lot Status – Under the Demolition Grant and conditions of the **Standard Mitigation Agreement** with the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office, the borough must follow through with plans to fence and

landscape the vacant lot at 6 E. Ridge Street. Ryan Christman of C.C. Planning & Development will meet with Jared Soto to complete the necessary requirements.

175th Anniversary of the incorporation of Carbon County –Borough Council received an invitation from C.C. Commissioners to attend the 175th anniversary of the incorporation of Carbon County on Thursday, March 15, 2018, 2:00 p.m. in Court Room #1.

American Legion Post 123 - Special Event Application – to hold the Carbon County Annual Veteran’s Day Parade in Lansford on November 11, 2018. Christine LeClair and David Pedora of Post 123 as well as Lenny Kovach were in attendance. Post members will organize the event and get the highway closing permit from PennDOT. The borough’s hoses and cones will be needed and borough workers may be needed to help prepare. The proposed parade route will begin at the Panther Valley Stadium Cortright Street Entrance and travel East for seven blocks on E. Bertsch Street to Chestnut Street, turn north onto Chestnut Street for one block to E. Patterson Street, travel west on E. Patterson Street for 1 block to Springgarden Street where it turns north onto Springgarden Street for one block to W. Ridge Street. The route turns west onto E. Ridge Street for two blocks to Coal Street where the parade will disband.

Joseph Butrie made a motion to approve the American Legion Post 123 special event request to host the annual Carbon County Veteran’s Day Parade in Lansford on November 11, 2018. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor, motion passed.

Joseph Butrie made a motion to approve the participation of the Lansford Fire Police and the American Fire Company No. 1 in the Veteran’s Day Parade on November 11, 2018. The Motion was second by Matthew Walsh, all were in favor, motion passed.

Chapter 94 Municipal Waste Load Management Annual Report for 2016 – has been completed and submitted by Keystone Consulting Engineers to CLSH Sewer Authority.

PA Dept. of Transportation – State Route 902 Drainage concerns on the agenda were discussed earlier.

Committee Reports: The committee meetings, regularly scheduled for the first Wednesday in March, March 7th, were changed due to a predicted winter storm. The meetings were postponed to Monday, March 12th.

Parks & Recreation

- March 12th meeting report was read by Jared Soto. Those in attendance discussed purchasing Heffelfinger lot for use as a community garden and dead trees which need to be removed at Kennedy Park.
- **Joseph Butrie made a motion to get estimates for removal of 2 dead trees at Kennedy Park and trimming other marked trees. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in agreement, motion passed.** Jared Soto will mark the trees for removal and trimming.
- Joseph Butrie wants to sell the borough owned property at the top of Tunnel Street, parcel 123A-24H-48, which is currently a basketball court. Attorney Greek explained that to sell the lot, it must be placed out on bid.
Joe Butrie made a motion to advertise the property to be put out on bid. Motion died due to no second. Matt Walsh said we should get the property assessed to get a fair market value.
- The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is taking grant applications for park improvements. The Friend of Lansford Recreation intends to submit an application for \$20,000.00 and asked that a Resolution be adopted to submit as matching funds with the application.
A motion was made by Joseph Butrie to adopt Resolution 2018-03 approving \$20,000.00 matching funds for pool improvements from the Pool Account, through the Friends of Lansford Recreation DCNR grant application. The motion was second by Jared Soto. Resident Patrick Walsh asked whether receiving funding through federal grants requires any obligations by the borough. Jared Soto explained that if granted, the Grant Agreement will make any obligations clear. **All were in favor of the motion. No one was opposed, motion passed.**
- Brian & Nancy from the Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living will do a site survey of the Ashton Hill Playground, 430 W. Patterson Street, on April 20th. The survey will indicate ways to make the

playground accessible for people with disabilities and the data can be used in applying for park & rec grants.

- Jared Soto spoke with Kelly Ann Sonnon, Economic Development Analyst for DCED, regarding the Monroe County LSA \$35,000 grant for pool renovations. The borough has until 2021 to use the funds; however, the borough needs to show continue efforts to raise funds through fundraisers and other grant applications. Mr. Soto will write a letter to Ms. Sonnon explaining the borough's intentions to use the funds.

Public Works – Bob Silver read the March 12th meeting report. The 2014 International Truck needs service, oil is leaking. The red 2008 Ford 350 pickup truck is rusted. Potholes in front of Boyers are reoccurring and it's not clear who should fix them.

- **Labor & Industry** - Bid packages for a new garage pole building have been delivered to the borough office for prospective bidders. Bid opening for the project will be held April 9, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. at borough hall. All of council was urged to attend.
- **St. John's Byzantine Catholic Church** requests a no parking area in the back of the church on Kline Avenue to allow for drop-off of church members using the handicap ramp. Public Works chairman Bob Silver recommends no parking from the ramp to the corner of Kline Avenue and putting up a sign "No Parking Here to Corner". This would eliminate one parking space. The cost of the sign will be paid by St. Johns Church. Joseph Butrie is against removing the one parking spot along this section of the street; a neighbor uses that spot. This would leave a drop off space on Kline Ave. for access to the handicap ramp. Bob explained that if only one spot is labeled "No Parking" it will be hard for a vehicle to pull in and unload passengers to the ramp.
Bob Silver makes a motion to erect the sign "No Parking Here to Corner behind St. Johns Byzantine Catholic Church, along Kline Avenue, to allow easier access to the church handicap ramp. The motion failed for lack of a second. Councilmen Matt Walsh and John Turcmanovich want to look at the area and ask the topic be put on the agenda for the April meeting.
- Mayor Romankow brought up issues about the parking meters in the business district. The topic will be on the April meeting agenda.

Municipal Administration – There was no March 12th meeting due to lack of quorum.

Zoning & Ordinance – March 12th meeting report was read by Jared Soto. There were questions about the records never recovered from former code company Barry Isset and how much money the borough withheld from Barry Isett unpaid invoices. Joseph Butrie asked that Lehigh Valley Inspection Services be contacted to see whether the Zoning/Code Officer Tracey Herman could get more office hours here at a lower cost to the borough.

Public Safety – Chairman John Turcmanovich reported the group discussed the possible purchase of a police SUV or pick-up truck utility vehicle. He has two quotes but needs to work out the options before bringing the results to council.

- Two grievances were filed by officers regarding the interpretation of contractual issues. Abiding by the first step of the police collective bargaining agreement, the grievances were given to chairman of public works, John Turcmanovich. Both have been settled.
- Marie Ondrus, John Turcmanovich & Jill Seigendall attended Incident Command System-402 training on Monday March 5, 2018 to be NIMS(National Incident Management System) compliant.
- **A motion was made by John Turcmanovich to get information about The Employment Alliance of Municipalities (TEAM) program offered by the Pennsylvania State Association of Borough's, which provides counseling and legal advice on labor and employment issues. The motion was second by Joseph Butrie. All were in favor. Motion passed.** John Turcmanovich will contact the association to see what they can do for us.

- **A motion to reactivate the Civil Service Commission was made by John Turcmanovich to have the commission create an officer list not to exceed ten officers. The motion was second by Matthew Walsh. All were in favor, motion passed.**
- **Matthew Walsh made a motion to accept the 3/14/2018 draft of the Police Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the borough and its police department, with an edit in the insurance section, health insurance to be deducted per pay period, not per month as stated in the agreement. The motion was second by John Turcmanovich. All were in favor except Bob Silver and Joseph Butrie. Motion passed 4-2.**

Bob Silver explained he is opposed because of the health care co-pay. Since 2014 the officers have paid the same copay. Healthcare costs increased by 25%, salaries increase by 15%, but the copay remained constant and the new CBA includes the same copay.

Matt Walsh wants to pass the CBA because if it goes to arbitration the copay will be compared to the public works department copay which is lower than the police copay and arbitration could be more costly to the borough.
- Jared Soto had a discussion about bus stops with Amy Craig of the PV School District. The bus stop at the former middle school, in the unit block of E. Bertsch Street next door to the firehouse, has been a problematic when there is a fire call and children are waiting for the bus. There have been complaints about the safety of the middle school building, yard, and maintenance of the sidewalks. Mr. Soto is looking for recommendations for change of the bus stop location from council as well as the public. There was discussion about possible alternative sites.
- Matt Walsh suggested sending a stern letter to PennDOT to erect a flashing light on W. Patterson Street where children cross at W. Patterson & Cortright Streets for the Cortright Street bus stop.

Mayors Report – No report available for February. Mayor Romankow said he will put the report in all of council's mail bins. He asked council to form a panel to have exit interviews for officers if they leave the borough police force. Matt Walsh suggested using a form. No action was taken. The Mayor announced a Dart Tournament on March 31st to benefit the American Fire Co.

Police Report – The February report was read by the Mayor Romankow. There were 15 criminal arrests, 51 traffic citations, 13 non traffic citations, 26 parking/ordinance tickets and 20 Quality of Life Tickets

Fire Department – American Fire Co. No. 1 February report was read by Jared Soto. Eight incidents were reported in the month of February; 2 in Summit Hill, 5 in Lansford and 1 in Coaldale. Two were dwelling fires, one for carbon monoxide, 2 were automatic alarms and 3 required public assistance.

Councilman Butrie reminded everyone that the fire company holds weekly food sale fund raisers on Fridays during Lent.

Mayor Romankow left the meeting.

Ambulance – The Lehighon Ambulance Association responded to 56 calls in Lansford during February with an average response time of 9.48 minutes from time of dispatch to the arrival on scene. The title for the Lansford Ambulance was officially transferred to the Lehighon Ambulance Association. In an e-mail from John Kloss of the Eastern EMS Council, based on the final documents transferred, the Federal Emergency Management Association, FEMA, now considers this matter to be closed.

Code Enforcement – The report from Zoning Officer Tracey Herman was read by Jared Soto. Six Rental Registrations from 2017 were closed. Seven new rentals were found. Eight inspections were performed, Seven notices were sent. Eleven complaints were investigated and three complaint fines were closed.

Carbon County Council of Governments – The Feb. 21st meeting minutes are available upon request. Spring Fling invitation was enclosed; 6:00 p.m. Tuesday May 22, 2018, Stoney Ridge P.A.R.C. Recreation Center, 1770 Fire Line Road, Palmerton.

Carbon County Tax Collection Committee - Lansford Representative Jill Seigendall attended the 2018 reorganization meeting held Feb 21, 2018 at the Lehighon School District Offices, officers were elected for 2018

year. Prior meeting minutes, treasurer’s report, and committees were approved. The quarterly meeting schedule for 2018 is as follows: May 16, Sept. 19 & Nov. 21, at 10:00 a.m. at the Leighton School District Admin Office. Mayor Romankow rejoined the meeting

Treasurers Report - Bills to be approved Total \$56,867.85: breakdown is General Fund \$ 44,535.66; High Way Liquid Fuel \$6,886.35;& Street Light \$5,445.84. Enclosed is the monthly checking account activity for all accounts and Profit/ Loss Budget vs Actual for all funds. Invoices for Residential Rental License were mailed to 558 landlords on March 1, 2018, billing \$27,900.00. Receipts to date are \$12,670.00. The yearly Highway Liquid Fuels allotment \$120,447.30 was received 3/8/18 and deposited. Sewage Transmission Fee invoices were mailed February 15th to 1,888 billing units, billing \$169,920.00. Receipts to date are \$101,159.00. The date for water shut-off for delinquent sewer transmission accounts is May 8,2018. The Street Light fund is low. The current balance is \$6,422.42. and the March payment for PPL streetlights is \$5,445.84. Tax money will not be received until April. Council considered moving funds from another fund to ensure money is available to pay the April PPL bill but no action was taken at this time. A new fire escrow account totaling \$7,333.33 was opened from the fire at 401-405 E. Abbott Street.

A motion was made by Matthew Walsh to pay the bills totaling \$56,867.85. The motion was second by Bob Silver. All were in favor, motion passed.

2018 End of Month Balances 2018

	Account Title	Jan	Feb
7673	General Acct	\$178,889.68	\$159,425.39
7681	Sanitation Fund	\$104,484.18	\$95,917.75
0283	Investors Money Mkt Acct	\$51,591.15	\$51,599.07
1198	Sewer Transmission(reserve acct)	\$164,350.47	\$164,375.69
7772	Escrow for 22 W(E) Kline Ave	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
7780	Escrow for 20 E Kline Ave	\$2,180.11	\$2,180.11
7699	Lansford Pool Account	\$41,325.77	\$41,328.94
7706	Treasurers Special Hi Way	\$27,015.84	\$23,329.23
7714	Sewage Transmission	\$77,761.04	\$102,424.53
5402	Loan Proceeds Acct(reserve acct)	\$202,709.75	\$202,729.41
7722	Local Service Tax/EIT	\$36,813.43	\$39,364.10
7730	Sanitation Fund Money Mkt Acct	\$12,138.28	\$12,139.21
7748	Fire	\$37,447.03	\$36,820.74
7756	Recreation	\$40,139.28	\$40,136.19
7764	Street Lights	\$11,232.63	\$6,422.42
		\$991,078.64	\$981,192.78
Loans	LOANS Paid from Fund	Est Balance	Est Balance
	Sewer Transm#5537 4/21/15	1,096,457.49	1,081,706.68
	Street Light Fund#6309 11/12/09	138,724.11	138,724.11
	Liquid Fuels #3886 10/28/14	22,256.35	22,256.35
	Gen Fund or LST 1/5/17	23,317.48	23,317.48
		1,280,755.43	1,266,004.62

Solicitor Report

Attorney Greek reported on the Barbara Gonclaves suit. She offered to settle the suit for \$2,000.00. The offer was not considered.

Adjournment

There was no further unfinished or new business to discuss and a motion to adjourn was made by Matthew Walsh, second by Joseph Butrie, all were in agreement and the group disbanded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Seigendall

Secretary Treasurer