

## Special Meeting Minutes

July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024

The July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 Special Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Bruce Markovich at the Lansford Borough Town Hall, 1 West Ridge Street, Lansford, Pennsylvania. The meeting was attended by President Pro Tempore Michele Bartek, Council Man Joesph Butrie, Council Woman Gwyneth Collevchio, Vice President Jay Doyle, President Bruce Markovich, Council Woman Jennifer Staines, and Mayor Hugh Vrablic.

Council Man Jack Soberick and Solicitor Robert Yurchak were Absent.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Bruce Markovich spoke briefly about the executive meeting which was about personnel issues. The executive session meeting was from 5:30p.m. to 6:00p.m.

Bruce Markovich spoke about two presentations that are to occur at the meeting, one from Arro Consulting, and the other from Jennifer Staines and John Zym.

**Public Courtesy-**

Bruce Markovich inquired if the public had any questions. No public comment was made at this time.

**Meeting with ARRO Consulting to Discuss Rental Ordinance-**

Bill McMullen from Arro Consulting spoke about the process that Arro uses for rental properties.

Bill McMullen spoke about the requirements stated in the borough ordinance that are needed for a landlord to be issued a rental license and how the rental licenses are approved once all documentation is sent to Arro Consulting.

Bill McMullen stated that the number of rentals is ever changing.

Bill McMullen spoke about the rental license registration having been due by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024 any rental license registration not submitted by the due date are in violation and will be receiving a violation notice.

Bill McMullen spoke about the inspection cycle and how Arro decided to split the rental inspections to occur between two years, 2024 and 2025, so that 1,000 inspections are not occurring in one year.

Diane Montalbine a landlord in Lansford, spoke about how there are Landlords that do take care of their properties but that certain homeowners not taking responsibility of maintaining their properties is a problem in Lansford.

Floyd Day with FLD and Associates spoke about the rental license registration and how the rental ordinance is written.

Floyd Day also spoke about how he feels that the rental license fee should not have been increased especially since landlords now have to submit documentation that previously they did not have to submit to be issued a rental license.

Joe Genits of 210 West Front Street spoke about how rental licenses were previously issued and that he feels the processing of rentals should go back to being in-house completed by the Lansford Borough with a full-time code official and secretary which would eliminate the need for Arro to handle rentals.

Joe Genits spoke about how he feels the burden of showing proof that all utilities are paid should not be on landlords.

Diane Montalbine spoke about how she had prepaid on her rental fees but due her having never received the rental letters from Arro she is now being charged with two late fees because her rental license registration is past due.

Joe Genits spoke about how Arro stated they cannot do anything about rental enforcement until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024 but that enforcement can occur after the rental license due date which was May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024 due to landlords being in violation of operating a rental property without a rental license.

Bill McMullen stated that enforcement on inspections cannot occur until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Bill McMullen spoke about how Arro is working to resolve rental license issues according to the Lansford Borough Ordinance, and that eight UCC inspectors are going to be needed for rental inspection enforcement.

**PowerPoint presentation from John Zym about Lansford Rentals-requested by Jennifer Staines-**

John Zym of 414 East Patterson Street, spoke briefly about his background and experience as a landlord.

John Zym presented a PowerPoint presentation that included numbers about Lansford's demographics.

John Zym discussed the number of tenant to owner occupied dwellings and the benefits that being a landlord has.

John Zym spoke about the tenant occupied dwellings and the impact they have on the borough.

Joe Genits spoke about the rental ordinance and that most landlords agree with the ordinance because it allows landlords to remove a tenant if complaints are made to the code enforcement officer about the tenant.

John Zym spoke about the rental license application and the difference in the amount of the application costs that Arro and the Lansford borough receive.

Tommy Vadyak of 334 West Abbott stated that a property near his home was condemned in 2023, yet no violations are on file for that property.

John Zym stated that he feels the rental application fee should be increased to reduce the burdens that tenants contribute to the Lansford Borough.

Diane Montalbine stated that she feels the town should do something to enforce outside property investors to maintain properties they purchase.

Joesph Butrie spoke about a current problem the borough is facing with the sinkhole that is on Route 209/West Patterson Street. The property owner is supposed to take care of lateral lines, yet due to the owner not responding. Now the borough is going

to have to cap the line off before PennDOT will decide to fix the hole because the homeowner is not going to fix the lateral line.

Bruce Markovich talked about all the programs that are available for first-time homeowners, and that a large problem is that many people do not want the responsibility that comes with homeownership.

Rosemary Cannon of 242 West Ridge Street spoke about how something needs to be done about properties that are condemned being sold multiple times and nothing is done by the property owners to improve the property.

**Motion to approve the purchase of the JTNB Merchant Remote Deposit Capture from Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank. Allows for scanning and electronic deposit of checks. The cost is a \$25.00 monthly fee.**

Borough Secretary/Treasurer Maria Ahner stated the JTNB Merchant Remote Deposit Capture will eliminate deposit slips, the need for copies of checks, the need to go to the bank, and allow for quicker deposit of checks from residents when the borough receives them.

Motioned by Jay Doyle and seconded by Jennifer Staines.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to accept the resignation letter from Joesph Pavlis from the Lansford Borough Civil Service Commission due to his appointment as a tax collector.**

Motioned by Joesph Butrie and seconded by Michele Bartek.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to appoint Thomas Dahl as a regular member of the Lansford Civil Service Commission.**

Motioned by Jay Doyle and seconded by Michele Bartek.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to advertise letters of interest for three alternate members of the Lansford Civil Service Commission.**

Motioned by Joesph Butrie and seconded by Jennifer Staines.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to adopt a Resolution to apply for \$695,750.00. Under the PA MultiModal Transportation Fund Grant Program to install curbing and paving on Courtright Street from Route 209 to Dock Street, and to pave Dock Street from Route 209 to Courtright Street.**

Motioned by Michele Bartek and seconded by Joesph Butrie.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to hire Brian Kelly and Associates to conduct an audit of the tax office at a cost of \$3,500.**

Motioned by Jennifer Staines and seconded by Joesph Butrie.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to obtain bids to repair the Route 209 SinkHole.**

Bruce Markovich stated that PennDOT is not going to fix the sinkhole on Route 209.

Council discussed the way they are going to fix the sinkhole.

**Motion to approve payment of \$2,979.17 to iWorQ for final payment to close iWorQ software account.**

Motioned by Jay Doyle and seconded by Jennifer Staines.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to purchase a security system for the borough building and police station from Security Service Company in the amount of \$12,711.00.**

Michele Bartek spoke about the three bids that the borough received for with the amounts being \$15,679.00, \$23,625.00, and \$12,711.00. All Camera service companies are based out of Philadelphia. The borough decided to go with the camera service company that provided the lowest bid in the amount of \$12,711.00.

Motioned by Jennifer Staines and seconded by Jay Doyle.

Motion passed unanimously.

Bruce Markovich announced that council is going to move to motion number 13 of the agenda and circle back to motion number 12.

**Motion to up change the current borough checking accounts with Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank from a Standard Account to a Premier Business NOW Account increasing the interest from .10% to 4.50%.**

Motioned by Jennifer Staines and seconded by Joesph Butrie.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to vote on choosing a bank between M&T Bank, Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank, Key Bank, Wachovia, and Community Bank to invest in CD's.**

Council discussed the process that CD's have and which accounts should be invested in CD's.

Michele Bartek spoke about the investment percentages that each bank is offering the borough on investment CD's.

Motion to invest the Railroad Proceeds Account into a CD with Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank with

Motioned by Jay Doyle and seconded by Joesph Butrie.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion to go off the agenda-**

Motioned by Joesph Butrie and seconded by Jay Doyle.

Motion passed unanimously.

Joesph Butrie stated that he would like the council president to send a letter to the school board changing the bus stop located on Jones Street and East Ridge Street to be moved to East Patterson Street and Jones Street. The bus stop needs to be moved due to cars attempting to drive on Jones Street when the school bus is on

that road and the bus has difficulty crossing the Route 209 because there is no crossing guard to help the bus cross the highway.

Motion to change the bus stop from Jones Street and East Ridge Street to be moved to East Patterson Street and Jones Street.

Motioned by Joesph Butrie. No council member seconded the motion.

Motion did not pass.

**Motion to Adjourn-**

Motioned by Joesph Butrie and seconded by Jay Doyle.

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ashley McLaughlin

Assistant Secretary/Treasurer