

BOROUGH OF LEHIGHTON

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July 7, 2025

RE: Lehigh Borough Council Meeting Minutes – June 9, 2025

CALL TO ORDER – 6:30 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation

ROLL CALL

The regular meeting of Lehigh Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday June 9, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Grant Hunsicker. Council Members in attendance were: Autumn Abelovsky, Jordyn Miller, Rebecca Worthy, and Steve Hawk. Members absent were: John Kreitz and Dave Zimmerman. Officials in attendance were: Mayor Ryan Saunders, Borough Manager Dane DeWire, Police Chief Troy Abelovsky, Fire Chief Patrick Mriss, Public Works Superintendent Kris Kunkle, Light & Power Superintendent Barry Fisher, Recreation Director Tom Evans, Borough Engineer Vanessa Nedrick, Solicitor James Nanovic and Borough Secretary Jessica Ahner. Official that was absent: Junior Council Member Alex Sebelin.

GUEST SPEAKER

Kylie Adams-Weiss of Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce presented their inaugural “Carbon Community Festival” on Sunday, August 17, 2025 from 11 AM – 4 PM at Jacob Weiss Park. She requested permission to sell alcohol on premises. SH/RW motioned to allow alcohol to be sold on Borough Property, with safety stipulations, for the Carbon Community Festival Event and 4 were in favor and Autumn Abelovsky opposed. 4-1

Joe Curran spoke about Blocker’s Collision Car Show Event and use of Recreation Center facilities, field and the Road Closures needed. SH/AA motioned to approve Blocker’s Collision Car Show Event on August 9th with a rain date of August 10, 2025, and to close Eighth Street from Iron Street to Alum Street and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

Union Center LLC is looking for parking relief for plans at 381-383 South 3rd Street. Representatives spoke about converting a 4 unit apartment into 5 units. They also are converting a garage into 2 apartments. Council discussed the number of parking spaces available, and the number of EDU's needed. After discussion, it was determined that they are looking at seven units, six parking spaces, and four EDU's. SH/RW motioned to deny the Conditional Use Application and 3 were in favor and Autumn Abelovsky and Jordyn Miller opposed. 3-2

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

none

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Autumn noted in May's minutes that she mentioned Ninth Street from Jamestown Road to Coal Street. RW/SH motioned to approve the Regular Meeting minutes with changes dated May 5, 2025 and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was a public hearing for the Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. Nanovic advertised the Legal Notice. DeWire asked if anyone on Council had any changes or questions to the current zoning change amendments. Council discussed the changes and agreed to advertise Zoning Ordinance 2025-680. JM/SH made motion to advertise the Amendments to Zoning Ordinance 2025-680 and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

DeWire said at the last meeting, Council had discussion about six parking spaces requested to be rented by Ramirez Leighton Properties, the owner at 121 South First Street. Nanovic drafted an agreement for the set rate of \$300 per month for six parking spaces. There was discussion to post these spaces as Private Parking and who will be maintaining the parking spaces. AA/SH motioned to approve the parking lease agreement for 121 South First Street for one year with the caveat that the lessee maintains snow removal for the spaces and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

DeWire discussed the interest we have on the demolished properties on First Street. He stated there are people interested in purchasing and developing these properties. Nanovic said we can look at the liens on them to see how far behind owner is. Then wait until it goes to tax sale and try to purchase it. If no one purchases the property, there is a judicial settlement where liens are extinguished.

DeWire spoke about the Borough Assistant and Treasurer roles. He said that he would like to create a new position of Assistant Borough Manager instead of Assistant Secretary/Treasurer Position. It was brought up in the past that both the Treasurer and Assistant were planning to retire this year. Looking to advertise as an Assistant Borough Manager to entice applicants with more knowledge of finances, public speaking, and administration when the Borough Manager is out of the office. This person would attend meetings when he cannot. Council and the Borough Manager discussed the salary range

and duties of both positions. DeWire said he would sit with the Treasurer and Assistant for their thoughts. RW/SH motioned to advertise Assistant Borough Manager position, salary range of \$55,000 to \$65,000 and Treasurer position at 50,000-\$60,000 pending receipt of letters of intent to retire and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

SH/RW motioned to award \$33,955 of Façade Grant Funding to awards with conditions of delivery of taxes being paid to 233 and to 366 First Street and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

NEW BUSINESS

SH/JM motioned to approve increase in daily pool pass admission for children to \$8.00 and adults to \$12.00 for 2025 and increase the pool passes for 2026 by 20% and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

AA/SH motioned to hire the additional 2025 Season Lifeguards from list recommended by Recreation Director for Baer Memorial Pool with all required certifications as needed and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

SH/RW motioned to increase Senior Center rental rates as of July 1, 2025 to \$1500 and a second increase in 2027 to \$1750 and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

DeWire presented the letter of request from Joseph Transue to have property appraisals done at his expense on First/Carbon and Fourth/Bridge. Autumn questioned Fourth/Bridge, asking if anyone knows if it is a Historical property. There are markers there. SH/AA motioned to approve appraisals at no cost to the Borough for properties at First/Carbon and Fourth/Bridge and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

SH/AA motioned to accept Armin Feldman's extension letter for 431 South 7th Street Lot Line Adjustment and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

Resolution R18-2025 for Setting Hotel and Food stipends rate was not motioned to be adopted at this time. Tabled until a future meeting.

RW/SH motioned to adopt Resolution R19-2025, designating the Sixth and Coal Street Ball Fields and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

DeWire spoke about a new billing software for the utility/billing office. The Billing Office reviewed software used by Palmerton and the Weatherly Borough and approved Weatherly's. Chief mentioned a software we may want to look into for scheduling. SH/AA motioned to accept Diversified Technologies' billing software proposal for \$12,870 and annual recurring cost of \$5,480 and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

DeWire spoke about letters of Interest we received for the EMC position and suggested selecting a review committee for the letters. Assigned were Autumn, Rebecca, Mayor, and Patrick. RW/SH motioned to accept letter of resignation from Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

AA/SH motioned to approve Heart and Lung Benefits to Employee #299 and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

SH/RW motioned to close the office on December 24, 26, and 31 and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

Mayor spoke about the Civil Service Commission's re-organization meeting on Thursday, June 5, 2025. Discussion came up about a sign-on bonus to enhance our hiring opportunity. A \$2000 Patrol Officer sign on bonus was motioned on at the Civil Service meeting. RW/SH motioned to approve a \$2,000 sign-on bonus to Patrol Officers after successfully completing 18 months of employment and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

OFFICIAL'S REPORTS

President of Council – Nothing to report.

Borough Manager – Paper report provided.

Borough Engineer – Paper report provided. Vanessa spoke about I&I abatement project completed with APT. She noted there were a few pipes and man holes that they weren't able to rehabilitate. She has some open planning items and is working on the MS4 report.

Solicitor – Nothing to Report.

Treasurer – Paper Report provided.

Mayor – Reminder to Committee there is a 1st Street parking meeting June 12 at 5pm. Mayor spoke at the Memorial Day Ceremony that had a very good turnout but was embarrassed that nothing was prepared and noted to Council the condition of our flags. These things are usually set up with chairs, new flags, and the park is cleaned up. He would like to thank Councilwoman Autumn Abelovsky for attending and showing support for our heroes.

LDI had their Grand Opening for the Farmer's Market. He walked through lower park and there were trees to be cut back, they were hanging over benches, debris along walkway, and the monument also needs to be weeded. No landscaping has been done.

Police Chief – Paper report provided. Chief reported they have two officers out on injury. There are other officers on the road so we do have some overtime. Chief said they are still within budget. He attended and spoke at the Memorial Day Ceremony. He feels we should be doing more to have our Police Dept stand out and the \$2000 sign on bonus is a start.

Fire Chief – Paper report provided. Chief Mriss said they had a lot of Public Relations at station this month. We did a presentation for about 150 children it was 5 sessions at 30 minutes long. Chief Mriss would like to thank Public Works Department for putting flag lines up and Light & Power for use of the truck. There were eight new sections that are being placed. We are getting new cameras installed on our building.

Light & Power Superintendent – Paper report provided. Fisher reported they would like to do tree trimming between Bridge Street and 443. This section is against the mountain and will require traffic control and highway occupancy permit (HOP). He would like to do work July or August before school starts. Engineer let Fisher know the HOP will take 30 days to receive.

Public Works Superintendent – Paper report provided. Kunkle said they started the paving, cutting grass. We have storm basins that are falling in that we are trying to repair. The street sweeper has begun to be put together and would like to thank the water authority for helping with paving.

Recreation Director – Left early.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Administration – David Zimmerman, Chair; Jordyn Miller. Nothing to Report.

Economic Development, Buildings and Codes – Autumn Abelovsky, Chair; John Kreitz, Co-Chair. Autumn has received complaints and suggested that something be done to Stedman Avenue between Second and Bank Street. DeWire said there was discussion about this before and we had quotes for 40 grand per side, per block of curbing. The road is crowned, we think there may be a high water main there. The Water Authority is aware of the situation. Autumn then spoke about her son's project being done at Baer Memorial. There were processes through DEP, Conservation District, and EPA. All has been approved and concrete pad should be done within the next two weeks and finished by end of July.

Police, Fire and Safety – Jordyn Miller, Chair; Rebecca Worthy, Co-Chair. Mayor spoke about a bench that was taken from First Street. The bench is in our Public Works garage. We need to know what should be done with the bench. The store owner does not want the bench back because it draws negativity to his store. Mayor told Kunkle he is waiting to hear back from other businesses that may allow the bench in front of their business.

Light & Power Committee – Rebecca Worthy, Chair; Steve Hawk, Co-Chair. Nothing to Report.

Sewer Committee – Steve Hawk, Chair; Autumn Abelovsky, Co-Chair. Nothing to Report.

Streets, Public Works & Recreation – John Kreitz, Chair; David Zimmerman, Co-Chair. Kreitz. Nothing to Report.

Library Board – Rebecca Worthy. Nothing to Report.

Parks & Recreation Board – Rebecca Worthy. Worthy reported that the Block Party is Scheduled for July 4th from 2pm to 8pm followed by fireworks at 9:30pm.

Canal Commission – Ryan Saunders. Saunders said repairs to the Ridge have begun and there is a clean-up event this Saturday, June 14th at 9am. He also wanted to thank everyone who donated to the canal.

Council of Governments- Steve Hawk, Delegate; Dave Zimmerman, Alternate. Nothing to report. Did not attend.

Civil Service Commission – Rebecca Worthy – Worthy reported that as stated earlier in meeting the Civil Service Commission met June 5th at 6pm and motioned to present board with \$2000 sign on bonus for new Police Officers.

Junior Councilperson – Alexander Seblin. Not Present.

ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICIAL'S REPORTS

SH/RW motioned to approve bills in the amount of \$559,263.99, and additional bills of \$175,828.10 less \$780.00 for Boyer's Hardware and all were in favor with no objections. 5-0

SH/AA motioned to accept the official's reports as presented and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

ADJOURNMENT

RW/JM motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 5-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Ahner, Borough Secretary