

January 9, 2023

The regular meeting of Lehighton Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday, January 9, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7 PM by President Grant Hunsicker. Members in attendance were: Councilors Darryl Arner, Donnie Rehrig, Lisa Perry, Autumn Abelovsky, Rebecca Worthy, Ryan Saunders.

Officials in attendance were: Borough Manager Steve Travers, Borough Secretary Brenda Kreitz, Solicitor James Nanovic, Borough Engineer Vanessa Nedrick, Police Chief Joe Sparich, Mayor Clark Ritter, Fire Chief Patrick Mriss, Public Works Supervisor Kris Kunkle. Absent: L&P Superintendent Lonny Armbruster and Recreation Director Tom Evans.

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointment of councilor to fill vacancy and swearing into office

President Hunsicker asked both applicants to address council. Councilors Perry/Saunders made the motions to appoint Rebecca Worthy and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Special Meeting of December 19, 2022

Councilors Saunders/Rehrig made the motions to approve the minutes and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Motion to ratify December 29, 2022 Executive Session

Councilors Saunders/Perry made the motions to ratify and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to approve Resolution R1-2023 for PA Small Water Grant

Vanessa said her firm submitted this grant for I&I. They chose 2 drainage areas – # 6 & #3 from the Entech study done a few years ago. These are close to the downtown area with about 80% of the flow being stormwater. The grant has a 50% match requirement. We should hear if we are awarded funding no later than June. The borough will use the ARPA funds as the match.

Councilors Saunders/Abelovsky made the motions to approve the resolution and all were in favor with no objections.

Motion to approve Resolution R2-2023 for Bituminous Materials in Small Quantities

Councilors Perry/Rehrig made the motions to approve the resolution and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to approve Resolution R3-2023 setting Contribution Rate for the Police Pension Fund

Councilors Saunders/Perry made the motions to approve the resolution and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to approve Resolution R4-2023 designation of depositories for FY 2023 and check signatures

Councilors Perry/Abelovsky made the motions to approve the resolution and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to approve Resolution R5-2023 establishing the current base purchased power cost for the PPAC

Councilors Perry/Worthy made the motions to approve the resolution and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to approve updated 2023 Borough EOP and accompanying Resolution R6-2023

Councilors Rehrig/Saunders made the motions to approve the update with the resolution and all were in favor with no question or objections.

Motion to approve Resolution R7-2023 setting the salaries for 2023

Councilors Perry/Worthy made the motions to approve the resolution and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to approve Payment Requests #2 & #3 for Borough Hall Roof Replacement

Councilors Saunders/Perry made the motions to approve the payment requests and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Consideration on Pump Station Maintenance Agreement

The solicitor asked council to table this item until next month. Mahoning Township had changes they wanted made so once that is complete then all municipalities can approve the agreement.

Councilors Saunders/Rehrig made the motions to table this item until February and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to appoint System Design Engineers as Sewage Enforcement Officers

Councilors Perry/Rehrig made the motions to appoint and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Officials Reports

President of Council

Nothing.

Borough Manager

Steve provided his report.

Borough Engineer

Vanessa they are working with Steve and the L&P Department to prepare a Level 2EV Charging Station Rebate Program application for charging stations throughout the borough. PennDOT has a NEVI grant for charging stations as well and we will be looking to see if it is feasible to apply for that grant.

135-139 North First Street had a structural evaluation done to see what the cost would be to demo the building. It was her understanding that we needed to look inside to see if asbestos abatement would be required prior to the demo. Their environmental group gained

access tot the 1st floor and basement. It was found that the ceramic and linoleum tiles both had asbestos in them. There was also a strong smell of heating oil. Access to the sub-basement was not possible but suspect there is a leaking or ruptured tank that would need to be removed also. She will issue a formal report to council on the of the demolition project in the near future.

Vanessa spoke briefly to Solicitor Nanovic about the easement for 94 Lentz Avenue. Ms. Finney explained that she owns the majority of the land where the easement needs to go and has a letter from the neighboring property owner. Ms. Finney will incur the cost of the survey for her property. The easement will be drafted and recorded and then L&P can go out and wrap up the issue for Ms. Finney in the next week or two.

Solicitor

Nothing.

Treasurer

Approval of additional bills totaling \$91,242.81

Councilors Perry/Arner made the motions to approve additional bills and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Mayor

Nothing.

Police

Chief Sparich said the new cruiser was delivered but was sent back for an unknown electrical issue.

Fire Chief

Chief Mriss said he had asked to put the 1984 pickup on Municibid. Since then, the fire police asked if they could have the truck for use around town. They currently use a trailer and their concerns are that their members don't know how to maneuver or pull a trailer. Patrick said it is safe for around town and had passed inspection. If council is ok with this, he will ask to put the fire police utility trailer and a boat trailer on Municibid.

Councilors Perry/Saunders made the motions to put both trailers on Municibid once the new pick up is in and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Patrick said through a generous donation they were able to acquire a command vehicle for the department. There is an opportunity to bid for another one so each chief would have a vehicle. They put a bid in for the second one and will know next Tuesday if they got it or not.

Light & Power Superintendent

Absent.

Public Works Supervisor

Kris requested looking at the Fee Schedule and adjusting the cost for handicap parking as the \$150 we charge now does not cover the cost. Kris said Mahoning Township charges \$200-\$400. Steve will look at all the fees on the schedule and have it for February's meeting.

Kris said he ordered the Ventrac mower through Koch's Lawn Care Service. The mower part won't be in until March or April. The plow, blower, spreader attachments will be here in March.

Recreation Director

Absent.

Committee Reports –

Finance and Administration – Lisa Perry, Chair; Rebecca Worthy, Co-Chair – Nothing.

Economic Development, Buildings and Codes – Autumn Abelovsky, Chair; Darryl Arner, Co-Chair – Nothing.

Police, Fire and Safety – Donnie Rehrig, Chair; Lisa Perry, Co-Chair – Nothing.

Light & Power Committee – Rebecca Worthy, Chair; Ryan Saunders, Co-Chair – Nothing.

Sewer Committee – Darryl Arner, Chair; Autumn Abelovsky, Co-Chair – Nothing.

Streets, Public Works & Recreation – Ryan Saunders, Chair; Donnie Rehrig, Co-Chair – Nothing.

Library Board – Rebecca – Nothing.

Parks & Recreation Board – Autumn – thanked all departments again for a wonderful Christmas in the Park. It was a successful year. The board is in dire need of more members if anyone is interested.

Canal Commission – Ryan – Nothing.

Acceptance of Officials Reports

Councilors Saunders/Arner made the motions to accept the official's reports as presented and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Acceptance of Accounts Payable

Councilors Perry/Arner made the motions to accept the accounts payable and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to go into Executive Session for Personnel

Councilors Rehrig/Abelovsky made the motions to go into executive session at 7:40pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Discussion of Badge L15

Consideration on requests from Employees #63 & #68

Motion to go back into Regular Session

Councilors Perry/Saunders made the motions to go back into regular session at 8pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Action on Items from Executive Session

Approve retirement of Badge #L15 effective December 31, 2022

Councilors Perry/Rehrig made the motions to approve the retirement provided all borough equipment is returned and appropriate paperwork is filed and all were not in favor. Roll Call: no –Councilor Abelovsky; yes – Hunsicker, Rehrig, Perry, Saunders, Arner, Worthy. Motion carried.

Approval of vacation carryover requests from Employees #63 & #68

Councilors Saunders/Rehrig made the motions to approve the vacation carryover requests and requested that each employee be provided with a letter midway through the year asking them to use their time, telling them what time they have left and letting them know

council will not be approving any carryover moving forward and no scheduled sick time will be allowed going forward and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Perry/Saunders made the motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:03pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections. Meeting adjourned.

Brenda L. Kreitz
Borough Secretary