

June 12, 2023

The regular meeting of Lehighon Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday, June 12, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7 PM by President Grant Hunsicker. Members in attendance were: Lisa Perry, Autumn Abelovsky, Ryan Saunders and Rebecca Worthy and Donnie Rehrig.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Hearing – Rental Registration/Inspection Ordinance

The borough manager said the purpose of this hearing is for public comment. Council's comments from last meeting have been addressed. There is one thing still needing to be changed referring to the inspection being done every 3 years. It should be changed to yearly.

Councilors Abelovsky/Saunders made the motions to advertise the ordinance and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Guest Speaker: Kristin Ellis – Time to Talk Therapy – Presentation of Communication Board Idea for Grove Park and Baer Memorial Swimming Pool

Ms. Ellis wants to promote communication in the community for children with disabilities to communicate better. This will also provide public awareness.

She feels the Grove is centrally located and a good place for the boards and a collapsible board for the pool. The cost is about \$800 from a big company for the pool and \$1,800 for the Grove. She has spoken to a smaller print company who can make the boards for the Grove would be around \$500. She will fundraise, parents of her clients have volunteered by making donations to this project, she will solicit businesses for sponsorship, etc.

Councilors Saunders/Rehrig made the motions to allow the project provided Public Works approve the locations of the boards and Ms. Ellis takes full responsibility for maintaining, replacing the boards as necessary and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Bambi Elsasser, Lehighon Main Street Manager – Updates on the Lehighon Downtown Partnership

Not present.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of May 1, 2023

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 Trevin Green's resignation letter

Councilors Saunders/Rehrig made the motions to ratify the acceptance of his letter and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

### Motion to ratify Executive Session held May 25, 2023 for Personnel

Councilors Saunders/Rehrig made the motions to ratify the executive session for personnel and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Motion to adopt Resolution 16-2023 amending the Fee Schedule to include Horse Drawn Carriage fees

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

### Motion to appoint Caleb Carpenter to the Shade Tree Commission

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

### Consideration on moving forward with the EV Charging Station grants

The borough manager had the estimates from the engineer for the project costs to be. Lonny can do the installations ourselves. They would have to do a training at most. Eco G approached him. They are doing the project with the school district and Eco G is interested in partnering with the borough to put in EV charging stations by sharing the cost and revenue. He will continue to have talks with them if council approves. There will be costs for the software that goes with it, cloud plan, pay at the pump. To have that support is what is driving up the cost. We have the grants and they must be used this year. They are rebate grants so we would have to pay for the chargers and install them to get the grant money back. Vanessa projected \$36,000 in costs per site but that included someone else installing the chargers. If Eco G was to come on board there may not be any cost to the borough for the installation, however, Eco would also share in the revenue generated.

Councilor Saunders asked if Lonny is sure he can supply the power for these stations and was told yes by Steve.

Councilor Abelovsky asked what we have spent so far in engineering fees on this and Steve said he will email her the number. The solicitor asked if there are projected revenue reports on ones currently in use to see what we would recoup by having them. Nahi was asked to provide revenue figure to council.

Councilor Rehrig said with not having money budgeted for this he would like to see an itemized list of costs associated with installing these. Nahi said the deadline for these grants is October 1, 2023.

Councilors Rehrig/Perry made the motions to table this until more information is available and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

### Consideration on request to close Borough Hall December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> for the holidays (vacation time will be used for those days)

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

Approval of request for Blocker's Collision Center to hold a Car Show Saturday, August 5 from 11am until 3pm

Councilors Saunders/Worthy made the motions to approve the request and closing North 7<sup>th</sup> Street off at Coal Street and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Consideration on drafting an ordinance pertaining to council members meeting attendance

Councilor Abelovsky said other municipalities are doing this. The solicitor said there is a cap of \$2,500 per year. Autumn asked if it could be worded that if you miss 3 consecutive meetings you forfeit your stipend. She is not trying to get council a raise she just wants people to be held accountable by doing the job they signed up for and attending the meetings, if nothing else.

Consideration on amending the Sewer Ordinance to Redefine and Regulate Connections to the Public Sewer System

The borough secretary said she put this on the agenda as she is getting a lot of calls from realtors saying they can't find the exact wording in the ordinance requiring splitting sewer lines at the sale of a property. The solicitor said the current sewer ordinance does provide that you have to have separate lines. However, there are a number of houses in the borough that have common lines and can we do the same as the water ordinance with sewer.

Brenda said this has been the practice. We are not charging them a tapping fee, if there is already a clean out, we charge them nothing, if there is no lateral then we charge for Public Works to install a lateral and connection to the main which is usually only a couple hundred dollars. This way each house is separate. The solicitor said Brenda forgot to add the cost of the plumber.

Councilor Rehrig said his sewer line goes out to the alley. He would have to have 180 feet of pipe to split his. The solicitor said that is true and the realtor said it is hard to get a plumber these days and it could delay the sale of the house. The solicitor said part of the reason to separate the water lines so you can shut off the water to a nonpaying resident.

The borough manager said today's building code does not allow for shared lines. The benefit to separating the sewer line is that if sewage is backing up into your basement but the pipe is on the neighbor's side the odds of them helping to fix the problem is slim to none because they are not having the issue. Separating the lines makes for good neighbors.

Approval of additional list of Baer Memorial Pool employees for 2023 season

Councilors Abelovsky/Rehrig made the motions to approve the additional list and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Discussion on changing the speed limit to 25mph on Sgt. Stanley Hoffman Boulevard

Councilor Abelovsky said this is part of the traffic calming project so it makes sense to lower the speed limit as part of the project. Councilor Perry said the police chief has to do a study first to get the ball rolling. Councilor Saunders said it is 25 mph getting on and off the bypass so it makes sense to make it all 25mph.

### Consideration on the repair of Otis Elevator at the Annex at a cost of \$7,200

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

### Discussion on setting up LERTA District

The borough manager said he was approached by Lehighon Ford to set this up with their property being part of it. The borough would need to adopt the ordinance but the school district and County would need to go along with it also.

The manager of Lehighon Ford said the building has come in over budget and without this LERTA District the project probably will not happen. He has spoken to the school district and they said they will go along with it. He would appreciate it if council would be on board with this and expedite the process is possible because he also has to make the Ford deadline.

We would need to first identify a district and then do the ordinance. They will continue to pay what they are currently paying in taxes with a 10% increase of the difference of the new value over 10 years and then they will pay the full newly assessed value of the building.

Council is encouraged by this and willing to move forward.

### Discussion on Street Sweeper repairs

The borough manager said he was provided an estimate to replace the entire back end of the street sweeper for \$36,672.12. It will need to be put out to bid but needs to know if council is interested. Councilor Saunders asked what we will gain in lifespan with the replacement. Steve said about 5 years provided the cab holds up. A new sweeper is around \$279,000.

Kris asked for permission to take the 2 steer tires off the Ford and put them on the sweeper and buy 2 new steer tires for the truck.

Councilor Abelovsky asked if we paid the \$35,000 for the new backend of the machine will the machine last at least five years. If it would we could allocate ½ mill of tax, approximately \$44,000 for the Public Works Equipment Fund we would have the money budgeted for a new machine in 5 years.

Kris said it would cost close to \$1,000/\$2,000 a day to have someone to come in and do the streets. Steve suggested USRDA might have decent loan rates and could possibly provide some grant money for a new one.

Councilor Saunders told Kris not to come to him for a new sewer vac. Kris was told to pick his evil. Kris replied that it is not him it is the borough. Ryan said he is just saying that he doesn't want to hear next year that the sewer vac doesn't work. Ryan felt that fixing the street sweeper at a lower cost and buying a few more years made more sense and then look at a sewer vac making the most with what we have. The borough manager said he could have the mechanic look over the front end of the truck to see what shape he feels it is in. He will call Martin Sweeping to see the cost of them coming in to do some sweeping.

Autumn said we need to use this experience as a learning experience and look to budget equipment and upkeep in a better way for Public Works.

### Discussion of Dunbar Beach Agreement

The solicitor said this was to happen a few years ago and never did. Bruce had a problem closing the survey. The borough manager said Bruce did give him a flash drive but he can't open it. We are required to do a subdivision plan and submit it to the County and Mahoning Twp. Steve is looking for approval to give Vanessa and draw up the subdivision to continue on with the project.

Councilor Perry said she is against it due to our finances. Autumn and Ryan agreed that it isn't a good idea.

### Discussion on Trash contract

The borough manager said he has been working on bid specs with the solicitor and is looking to get it out for bid and hold a pre bid meeting. Councilor Abelovsky would like to see the current and draft contract.

### Discussion on Alley and Road resurfacing N. Centre Alley between Ochre and Caron Street, Cypress St between 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>

These projects will fall in line with the budgeted amount for the year.

### Approval for Remington Vernick to prepare bid specs for Recreation Center roof replacement

The manager said he has a meeting tomorrow morning on this. Typically, the borough puts together the bid specs.

### Motion to award bid for Utility Poles to Brown Wook Preserving Company for \$25,977.87

This was the only bid received.

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

### Motion to approve the Police Civil Service Eligibility List

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

### Officials Reports

#### President of Council

Nothing.

#### Borough Manager

Steve said council has received his weekly reports and if there are any questions to please let him know.

### Borough Engineer – Active Projects and Task Report

Nahi said the Leighton Ford Land Development was given conditional approval in May. The grant application for I&I should be announced soon.

### Treasurer

Approval of additional bills

### Solicitor

He had an item for executive session.

### Mayor

He had an item for executive session.

## Police

Chief Sparich thanked council for approving the civil service list and the commission for getting the list together so quickly.

## Fire Chief

Chief Mriss said there are 2 grants out right now and due June 30<sup>th</sup>. He would like permission to apply for them on behalf of the borough. One is a Training Facilities grant and they are trying to find out if a roof simulator would be eligible. The other is the Municipal Fire Departments grant and they are asking for guidance for that as well and are waiting to see what they say.

## Light & Power Superintendent

Absent.

## Public Works Supervisor

Kris had nothing.

## 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 – Autumn said Home Comfort Solutions will be having a ribbon cutting June 14<sup>th</sup> and we welcome them.

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 – absent.

Streets, Public Works & Recreation – Ryan Saunders, Chair; Donnie Rehrig, Co-

Chair – nothing.

Library Board – Rebecca had nothing.

Parks & Recreation Board – Autumn said the story walk was installed in the Upper & Lower Parks. There are 4 story board for borough use. The Music in the park will begin next month on July 8<sup>th</sup> in the amphitheater.

Canal Commission – Ryan had nothing.

## Acceptance of Officials Reports

Councilors Saunders/Rehrig 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, additional bills totaling \$78,606.50

Councilors Rehrig/Perry made the motions to accept the accounts payable plus additional bills and all were in favor.

## Motion to go into Executive Session for Personnel

Councilors Perry/Saunders made the motions to go into Executive Session at 8:52 pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

## Motion to go back into Regular Session

Councilors Saunders/Worthy made the motions to go back into Regular Session at 9:28pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Action on items from Executive Session

Motion to amend the agenda to hire police officers

Councilors Abelovsky/Perry to amend the agenda to hire police officers and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Councilor Saunders/Rehrig made the motions to allow the police chief to hire 3 police officers and all were in favor with no questions objections.

Motion to amend the agenda for personnel

Councilors Abelovsky/Perry made the motions to amend the agenda for personnel and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Councilors Perry/Abelovsky made the motions to let go of our Borough Manager and all were not in favor. Roll call: No – President Hunsicker; yes – Councilors Abelovsky, Rehrig, Perry, Saunders and Worthy. Motion carried.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Perry/Rehrig made the motions to adjourn the meeting at 9:33pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections. Meeting adjourned.

Brenda L. Kreitz  
Borough Secretary