

April 4, 2022

The regular meeting of Lehighon Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday, April 4, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 7 PM by President Grant Hunsicker. Members in attendance were: Councilors Lisa Perry, Autumn Abelovsky, Ryan Saunders, Donnie Rehrig and Joe Flickinger.

Officials in attendance were: Borough Manager Nicole Beckett, Borough Secretary Brenda Kreitz, Solicitor James Nanovic, Mayor Clark Ritter, Police Chief Brian Biechy, Fire Chief Patrick Mriss, Borough Engineer Bruce Steigerwalt, L&P Superintendent Lonny Armbruster and Public Works Supervisor Kris Kunkle. Absent: Councilor Darryl Arner and Recreation Director Tom Evans.

Pledge of Allegiance

Guest Speaker: Bambi Elasser – Lehighon Main Street Manager – Updates on the Lehighon Downtown Partnership

Bambi said they received the collection box for the Trex Challenge and is located on the side porch of the chamber office. The Wine on the River Event is off to a great start with a lot of tickets already sold. They are getting ready for the Farmer's Market and are looking to grow this throughout the season. The 2nd Saturday Event that will be held April 9th is an Easter egg Scavenger Hunt. The owner of Rumor's Hair Salon has given permission to put a Welcome sign on their pole at the beginning of Sgt. Stanley Hoffman Blvd. The design committee are looking for people to adopt a wine barrel to plant and care for a barrel full of flowers for the summer.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

Brenda Neff of 279 Bankway was told they might be able to purchase a small parcel of land behind their home like R. J. Walker did. They would like to buy the land so they have somewhere to park their vehicles during snow emergencies and street sweeping. They will maintain it and never build on it due to sewer and gas lines there or not.

Nicole said there was an agreement for a land swap when we did the turn behind Red Castle.

Jerry McAward introduced Kerri DiDario. She is looking to hold an event June 18th for a memorial ride. Kerri she is the Executive Director of the Eastern PA Down syndrome Center in Trexlertown. This event is in honor of Sandro who helped organize this event in 2019 but passed away before the event could be held due to COVID. This event is an all-ability event. Kerri provided council with some insight to the event at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of March 7 and Special Meeting of March 22, 2022

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Continued discussion on establishing an ordinance to regulate and require a bulk refuse permit

Council was provided several examples of ordinances to give them an idea of how other municipalities handle this issue. Councilor Abelovsky liked the one from Wilson Borough the most. She would add that the dumpster would need to be removed immediately due to a snow emergency or other road related emergency. Councilor Rehrig agreed with Autumn. Councilor Perry liked how Lansford tiered their cost per size of dumpster. Autumn then asked who should handle the permits? Donnie said the police chief has been doing it and has no issue with them continuing. Autumn was ok with that provided the chief check with Kris to be sure there are no road projects or street sweeping scheduled prior to issuing the permit. Autumn liked part of one ordinance that required to be covered also. The mayor said council might want to consider when dumpsters are considered full.

Council decided to have the solicitor draft the ordinance using Wilson Borough's ordinance as the template to draft our ordinance.

Consideration on the 2022 Alley Paving Program and future planning

Councilor Flickinger asked Nicole if she did the budget review, he requested but she did not but there will be special meetings coming up and will have it for one of those. Public Works provided the 5 worst alleys in their opinion for a total of \$20,350. It does not include Division Alley with an estimated cost of \$14,000. Council will need to prioritize what gets done this year with the \$14,000 we have budgeted.

Joe made everyone aware that he even though he is a stickler for sticking to the budget he did ask for a budget review to see if the extra \$6,500 to \$7,000 could be pulled from somewhere to complete all 5 alleys. Kris said his department could complete the 5 the listed this year. Nicole asked about Division Alley and Joe said that would be scheduled for next year.

Councilor Abelovsky drove the alleys today to see them for herself. East Alley and Poplar Alley were the most expensive on the list but in her opinion the least troublesome. She thinks Center, Keystone and Mahoning Alleys were the worst from what she drove.

Kris said the ones on his list that have had pothole issues from years past and all are based on complaints received in borough hall. Nicole will provide details of budget at an upcoming meeting.

Follow up on request from Special Olympics to memorialize the Bocce courts for Lisa Cooper

Nicole said that we did confirm with Mr. Millen that Special Olympics did the project and told him he was welcome to attend tonight's meeting but that was where things were left. Councilors Abelovsky and Rehrig were concerned where the sign and tree will go due to where the backstop now is for the baseball field. Councilor Perry said she would be ok letting it up to Tom working with Mr. Millen on the layout and having the final say. The rest of council agreed to have Tom follow up with Special Olympics.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to approve Resolution R17-2022 Police Record Destruction List

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

Motion to approve Resolution R18-2022 Borough Record Destruction List

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

Motion to accept Keith Schnell's resignation from the Police Civil Service Commission

Councilors Arner/Saunders made the motions to approve the resignation with a letter of appreciation being sent and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Consideration on letter of interest from Mark Nied to fill vacancy on Police Civil Service Commission

Councilors Abelovsky/Flickinger made the motions to appoint Mr. Nied to the commission and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Consideration on letter of interest from Duane Dellecker to fill vacancy on Police Civil Service Commission

Councilors Abelovsky/Saunders made the motions to appoint Mr. Dellecker to the commission and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Consideration on request from Tim Snyder of TNT Auto Repairs LLC to hold a Friday Night Car Cruise May 6th and a Car Show June 18th

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

Consideration on request from Lehighton Water Authority to draft an ordinance requiring shared water lines be separated at the curb before the sale of a property

Councilors Saunders/Abelovsky made the motions to approve request and asked the solicitor to draft the ordinance and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to advertise the retired ladder truck on Municibid upon delivery of new equipment

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

Motion to advertise Truck #9 - Ford F250 on Municibid

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

Motion to discard Police Car #4 - 2008 Ford Expedition

Councilors Rehrig/Flickinger made the motions to discard/scrap and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Consideration on permission for the Lehigh Fire Department to attend the FDIC International Convention with the new ladder truck from April 25th through April 30th

Councilors Flickinger/Rehrig made the motions to approve attending the convention and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Consideration on the approval of the Lehigh Partnership proposal to have horse drawn carriage rides on May 21st, July 23rd and during Rocktoberfest (10/8-10/9)

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

Consideration on the approval of the Lehigh Downtown Partnership's Fireworks Display on Monday, July 4th pending the completion of Police Services Agreement

Councilors Arner/Saunders made the motions to approve the event pending completion of Police Services Agreement and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Consideration on the approval of the Memorial Mile Walk proposed on May 22, 2022 from 9-11am

No traffic control was requested.

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

Motion to approve the Blanski Energy Management Inc. proposal in the amount of \$14,987 for preventative maintenance program for the Annex HVAC equipment

Tom said this has been done in the past and cost \$8,000 more but we took out a heat pump to make it cheaper. Tom is happy with this company.

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

Motion to approve the Hi-Tech Security Alarms proposal in the amount of \$8,488 for additional cameras at the Grove with assistance from Light & Power

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

Motion to approve Keystone Consulting Engineers Invoice in the amount of \$2,509.50 for the engineering services for the demolition of 209 North 1st Street

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

Motion to approve Payment Request #2 in the amount of \$90,098.01 for Blight Remediation Demolition Project

Councilors Arner/Abelovsky made the motions to approve the payment request and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Consideration on the approval of the Verizon Easement Agreement

Solicitor Nanovic said this has gone back and forth several times with changes but is now in good shape to be signed.

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

Discussion on Crossing Guard Vacancies and Future Planning

Councilor Abelovsky said Palmerton recently made the decision to place the responsibility on the school district rather than through the municipality. She said we have trouble through the years filling vacancies and covering spots.

Chief Biechy said the problem is not having the corners covered it is that no one is applying for the positions or fill vacancies as they come about. Councilor Abelovsky is not comfortable telling families where the safe places are to cross and then no one is there to cross them. Councilor Saunders said he does not feel we have the staffing to continue to fill that need and be 100% responsible to fill that need. If placed in the hands of the school district they might be able to come up with a better back up plan as when teachers call off. Councilor Abelovsky said she feels that we are just unable to do the best job at this time and wants the kids to be safe and feel the school district might have better resources to fill the vacancies. Moving crossing guards around to cover the more dangerous intersections was also discussed.

Autumn asked Nicole if she looked into the wording of the contract or agreement with the school district. Nicole said no one at the police department, solicitor's office or borough hall can find a copy of it. She did provide council with a copy of a 2007 resolution accepting responsibility of the crossing guards. We will be checking with the school district to see if they have a copy. Discussion with the school district will need to happen in the

Council asked to have this brought back in May.

Motion to advertise the Summit Avenue Property for Municipal Sale of Real Estate

Councilors Saunders/Flickinger made the motions to advertise and all were in favor with no question or objections.

Motion to approve Resolution R19-2022 establishing the current base purchased power cost for the PPAC

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

Motion to advertise Substation Transformer #2 for bid per the time table and recommendations of Utility Engineers

Lonny informed council that the estimated lead time for Virginia Transformer Company is now 50-60 weeks. He would like to find a way to get on the build list because of being a year out. Lonny would like to replace the 2nd transformer in Spring or Fall. We want to get it in during the off-peak season because of the limited ability of our powerline to carry what we have to carry.

Councilor Rehrig asked if money must be put down to get on the list and Lonny said yes; probably about 25% down. Nicole said she spoke to Utility Engineers regarding the bidding timeline. They recommended bidding sometime round July or August. The payments

will depend the timing. We will need to do a cashflow and capital outlay schedule as we did not plan to do 2 payments in 2022. The scope of work will be the same but site improvements will need to be made on the land we acquired. There will be costs associated with that and just the state of the world we live in will increase the cost of the 2nd transformer by about 20%. Nicole told council they were able to make a motion to proceed based on the time table from Utility Engineers and pending a budget review to assure the money is there.

Councilors Rehrig/Saunders made the motions to advertise per Nicole's recommendation and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Requested Addendum to the agenda

Councilor Flickinger asked to amend the agenda to allow for the redesignation of the front of the apparatus bay in former Fire Station #2/current police station for the usage of the fire department.

Councilors Flickinger/Rehrig made the motions to amend the agenda and all were in favor with no questions or objection.

Councilors Flickinger/Rehrig made the motions to approve the request. Councilor Perry had questions. She asked when the new ladder truck will be in the fire department's possession. Chief Mriss said this Friday and they need a place to store the old truck until it is sold. Lisa asked how many cruisers are stored in the front bay and Chief Biechy said 4. We always had to keep Car #5 outside because we don't have enough room to keep all of our equipment inside. Autumn asked if they utilize it for anything else. Brian said we do car seat checks and Trick or Treat. Autumn asked about large types of evidence being stored there and Brian said not yet as they are trying to get started on some type of accreditation for the department. Joe said if that is the case the police could use the back half of the bay for that.

All were not in favor. Roll call: Councilors Perry, Abelovsky and Saunders – no; Councilors Arner, Flickinger, Rehrig and Hunsicker – yes. Motion carried.

Officials Reports

President of Council

Nothing.

Borough Manager

Nicole will provide her report at a later date. The COVID Task Force items can be closed out. The Windstream phone service has been an issue. Both Borough Hall and L&P have been down for 7 days. We are changing companies. Nicole had reached out to the Halloween Parade Committee in October 2021 and January 2022 and finally received a response from them today. They are requesting to hold the parade on October 15th. Nicole had said in her email that council had requested to meet with the committee and no approvals will be granted until that occurs. We can schedule that but needs to know who wants to meet with them. Ryan said he will schedule a meeting with the parade committee and a police officer.

Borough Engineer

Nothing.

Solicitor

Nothing.

Treasurer

Approval of additional bills totaling \$62,919.20 and \$200,000 transfer if needed

Mayor

Nothing.

Police

Nothing.

Fire Chief

Chief Mriss said the ladder truck should be picked up this Friday.

Light & Power Superintendent

Lonny said he received the new transformer. Last week was spent putting it in its new home. Virginia Transformer completed their testing of the unit and gave the go ahead to energize the unit. He commended the employees for their extra effort and stayed till about sunset. The new transformer was fired up on Wednesday and left it go until this morning and it is now on line. Hopefully there will be no issues.

Public Works Supervisor

Kris said he is sending the borough mechanic along to KME to familiarize himself with the new truck. They have been diligently working at the caboose site. They are still waiting for a module for the street sweeper and preventing them from sweeping any streets.

Kris wanted to see if Tom and he could discuss parking in the Annex lot in the winter to plow or salt. Tom said to paint the one side behind the building and council suggested painting it a fire zone.

Recreation Director

Nothing.

Committee Reports –

Finance and Administration – Lisa Perry, Chair; Joe Flickinger, 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 – meetings continue to move forward with some of the issues in the department and the contract.

Light & Power Committee – Joe Flickinger, 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 – Joe – nothing.

Parks & Recreation Board – Autumn was contacted by someone who is looking for some land to spruce up within the borough and she suggested Skyline. Grant suggested the 1st and Carbon Street lot. Autumn said it might become a child related project. We are

working on music in the park again. She asked Tom if the Annex is available for rain dates. Tom said no due to Headstart using the auditorium for meetings. Councilor Perry suggested the Rec Center. Tom said the Lehighon Band could try it.

Canal Commission – Ryan – nothing.

Acceptance of Officials Reports

Councilors Saunders/Flickinger 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 Arner/Saunders made the motions to accept the accounts payable, additional bills and the transfer if needed and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to go into Executive Session for Police, Administration and Real Estate

Councilors Flickinger/Perry made the motions to go into executive session at 8:16pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to go back into Regular Session

Councilors Saunders/Rehrig made the motion to go back in at 9:11pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Action on Items from Executive Session

Motion to advertise for part time patrol officers

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

Consideration on proposal for professional services from Safe City Solutions

Councilors Perry/Abelovsky made the motions to table this item until the April 13th meeting and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to approve the Intercounty Investigations & Solutions, Inc. proposal in the amount of \$3,095 for Chief of police Applicant Background Investigation

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

Action on the Lehighon Borough Police Department Grievance received on March 30, 2022

No action taken. This item will be returned to an upcoming agenda

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Saunders/Flickinger made the motions to adjourn the meeting at 9:15pm and all were in favor with no questions or objections. Meeting adjourned.

Brenda L. Kreitz
Borough Secretary