

January 6, 2020

The regular meeting of Lehighon Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday, January 6, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 7 PM by Pres. Grant Hunsicker. Members in attendance were: Councilors Lisa Perry, Darryl Arner, Joe Flickinger, Autumn Abelovsky, Ryan Saunders and Jr. Councilor Grant Schaeffer. Absent: William Rodweller.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Guest Speaker – Jerry McAward – Request for Support for the Francis E. Walter Dam Reservoir Study

Jerry passed out a sample resolution and fact sheet on his request. The Army Corp is in a new partnership with the Delaware River Basin and New York City's DEP. They are funding a yearlong feasibility study that will examine different parameters. The argument is for the water supply. What Jerry handed out is information on the recreation side of the argument. The 3 likely outcomes will not, in his opinion, benefit downstream recreation. He thinks they will most likely be the following: building a much larger dam costing hundreds of millions of dollars, a new control tower used to determine when to draw down water and lastly and most talked about, New York City may make a bid to buy 15% of the capacity of the Francis Walter Dam there by controlling it.

Jerry said the flow management plan that currently exists with the Army Corp of Engineers has been used for the past 16 years and will be in direct opposition with the plan as it exists if New York City is awarded the 15% bid. Jerry and others like him are against any change. New York City, in their defense Jerry stated, has a 100 year forward look on water supply.

Jerry went on to say that allowing this to happen will affect not only the water supply for Pennsylvania but the downstream recreation that the borough is now part of. The proposed changes will affect the local economy to some degree as his business utilizes many of the businesses in the borough's downtown. He is hoping the borough will approve the resolution.

Councilor Saunders/Arner made the motions to approve the resolution pending the solicitor's approval and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

## HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

Mr. Roy Christman, 6495 Pohopoco Drive wanted to address council on gerrymandering. He said the voters are supposed to pick their legislators. In gerrymandering, the legislators pick their voters. He said we can stop it. Pennsylvania is one of the worst states for gerrymandering. He believes Ohio and North Carolina are worse but we are in the top 5 states.

There is a group called Fair Districts Pennsylvania of which he is a member of and is representing tonight. He said they are going around to boroughs and townships asking them to pass a resolution opposing gerrymandering. So far, in Carbon County, the County have all passed a resolution. East Penn turned him down stating they did not think they were affected by gerrymandering. Mr. Christman thinks everyone is and the resolution is only asking for a nonpartisan commission to draw the lines. He feels this is the best year to do this because the Democrats control the Governor seat, the Republicans control the legislature and nobody knows how it will play out.

Curtis Keefer of 218 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street wanted to address council about the safety of people. He said it sounds like he is complaining but he really isn't. He went on to say that when he moved here, he thought these people have it together where snow removal is concerned but it seems like it has deteriorated tremendously. The snow storm we had around Thanksgiving he saw nothing done. The other thing is, a few years ago there was a large snowfall. The plows came up 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and would turn around from his side of the street and come back down. The gentleman across the street insists on taking all the snow from his side of the street and moving it across the street to in front of Mr. Keefer's house. It wouldn't be so bad if this person wasn't throwing it in a fire hydrant zone. Mr. Keefer called the police. They spoke to the neighbor and left after a minute or two. The plow goes by and makes a 4-foot path in by the hydrant and comes back and this person stands in the middle of the street until the plow changed direction and put the snow in the middle of the street. The plow had to come back down again and dumped more snow into the fire hydrant zone. Mr. Keefer and another neighbor try to keep the hydrant open as much as possible but the guy across the street is a hazard. Mr. Keefer wanted to know if something could be done.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of December 2, Special Meetings of November 26, December 5 and 19, 2019

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

## NEW BUSINESS

Motion to adopt Resolution R2-2020 setting police pension contribution

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

Motion to adopt Resolution R3-2020 updating the fee schedule for FY2020

Nicole said the new changes are for the labor rates coming in to 2020, under the property rentals the rental fee for when admission or registration fees are charged as requested by the Recreation Director.

Motion to adopt Resolution R4-2020 establishing a current rate purchased power cost for the Purchased Power Cost Adjustment

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

Motion to hire Ashley Wojton as a seasonal employee for Winter Youth Program

Councilors Pery/abelovsky made the motions to hire and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

Motion to award the bid for the Library Expansion Project to R.C. Construction Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$391,121.80 based on the recommendation of Keystone Consulting Engineering, Inc. and the Library Board

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

Discussion on bid and alternate (if needed) for the Beaver Run 12,470 Circuit Upgrade Project to Henkels & McCoy in the amount of \$608,000 based on the recommendation of Utility Engineers

Nicole said she had provided council with the letter from Utility Engineers, the bids and the borough has begun purchasing materials. Nicole said this does not need to be acted on this month but in February.

Lonny said the hospital was in the alternate. They are not sure if they can tug the existing primary lines through the conduits. He is not sure how old the stuff is out there and it will affect the nursing home as well.

Consideration on the appointment of Ryan Saunders to the Shade Tree Committee

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

Consideration on the appointment William Rodweller to the Parks & Recreation Board

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

Motion to approve Final Payment Application #6 in the amount of \$26,059 for the Upper Park Project

Nicole said this is the final payment and we have an agreement from Kobalt that they will come back in the spring to reseed and rehay.

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

Motion to approve amendment to the Civil Service Rules & Regulations – adding definition of Full Time Officer

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

Update on Substation Transformer Replacement Project

Nicole said this is a follow up on the cost of the replacement from Utility Engineers. Lonny said getting a crane in is impossible so he thinks they are looking at using a helicopter and loading/unloading them on a rail. Nicole asked if the borough built around it and Lonny said yes and so did PPL. They are 42 years old and have out lived their lives.

Unfinished Business

None.

Officials Reports

Borough Manager

Nicole told council the month has been crazy and her written report will follow throughout the month but she has kept everyone in the loop and hopes to have it to them by week's end.

Borough Engineer

Absent due to Mahoning Township's reorganization meeting.

Police

Nothing.

Mayor

Mayor Ritter said he had something for executive session.

Fire Chief

Chief Mriss said he is asking all the residents of the borough to adopt a hydrant as Mr. Keefer has done. With the winter weather upon us it is a big help to the fire department and Public Works.

President of Council

Nothing.

Solicitor

Late due to attending another reorganization meeting. No report this evening.

Treasurer

Nothing.

Light & Power Superintendent

They will begin taking down the Christmas decorations tomorrow.

Public Works Supervisor

They will be chipping up the Christmas trees on Monday.

Recreation Director

Nothing.

## Committee Reports – December

Finance and Administration – Lisa Perry, Chair; Joe Flickinger, Co-Chair – nothing.

Economic Development, Buildings and Codes – Joe Flickinger, Chair; William Rodweller, Co-Chair – nothing.

Police, Fire and Safety – Ryan Saunders, Chair; Autumn Abelovsky, Co-Chair – nothing.

Light & Power Committee – Autumn Abelovsky, Chair; Lisa Perry, Co-Chair – Nicole said the Water Authority had asked for assistance completing their leak detection project which council approved months ago. The remaining detection units of about 20 would require about 2 days but they are outside the borough on PPL poles. Utility Engineers recommended against it and Lonny doesn't think the borough wants to assume the risk as there are a lot of regulations with PPL poles. Nicole said the Water Authority has a Plan "B". Council recommended the Water Authority use their Plan "B".

Sewer Committee – William Rodweller, Chair; Darryl Arner, Co-Chair – nothing.

Streets, Public Works & Recreation – Darryl Arner, Chair; Ryan Saunders, Co-Chair – nothing.

Canal Commission – Ryan said there will be no meetings until March.

Library Board – Autumn said the extension was granted and on another note the dog park is no longer being pursued by the Girl Scout.

Parks & Recreation Board – nothing.

School Board – 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 Saunders/Abelovsky 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 Saunders/Perry made the motions to go into executive session at 7:53 and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

## Motion to go back into Regular Session

Councilors Saunders/Flickinger made the motion to go back in at 8:47 and all were in favor with no questions or objections.

## Action on Items from Executive Session

Councilors Perry/Flickinger made the motions to approve Karen Reichard's request for carry an additional 4 hours vacation with the encouragement to use the time in the future and all were in favor with no questions.

## Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Councilors Perry/Saunders made the motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 PM and all were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Brenda L. Kreitz  
Borough Secretary