

The regular Monthly meeting of Lansford Borough Council was held 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan 11, 2017 at the borough hall, 1 W. Ridge Street. The meeting was opened by President Martin Ditsky who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken by Secretary Treasurer Jill Seigendall. Council members attending were President Martin Ditsky, Vice President Rose Mary Cannon, Joseph Butrie, Jared Soto and Mayor James Romankow. Absent were Councilmen Colin Jones, Matthew Walsh, John Turcmanovich and Solicitor Michael Greek. In the audience was reporter Mirna Gedhill from the Times News Newspaper and resident Mary Soberick.

Public Courtesy

Joseph Butrie, 443 E. Ridge Street, voiced concern about the enforcement of the sidewalk shoveling ordinance and suggested the ordinance be rescinded if it is not being enforced.

Approval of Minutes

The meeting minutes for December 14, 2016 were considered for approval. **Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to approve the December 14th, 2016 minutes. Jared Soto seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting minutes for December 19, 2016 were considered for approval. **Jared Soto made a motion to approve the December 19, 2016 minutes. Rose Mary Cannon seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Correspondence

Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to reappoint Jill Seigendall as the borough's delegate and Mary Soberick as the alternate delegate to the Carbon County Tax Collection Committee. The motion was second by Jared Soto, all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Martin Ditsky reported that he was in contact with Tim Groller, Teamsters 773 union representative, and a contract extension between Lansford Borough and the Teamsters Local #773 was made on December 28, 2016, extending the expired Teamsters Contract (expired 12/31/16) while the new contract is under negotiations. There was no mention of an exact time extension to settle the contract. **A motion was made by Jared Soto to accept the contract extension and Joe Butrie second the motion. All were in favor except Rose Mary Cannon who explained that she was not in attendance at the last council meeting when the Teamster's contract was discussed. Motion passed.**

Council considered the sale of repository properties at the following addresses: 218 & 220 W. Patterson Street, 600 E. Front Street and 21 ½ Center Street. **Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to approve the sale of all four properties. The motion was second by Joe Butrie, all were in favor and the motion passed.**

A letter was received from Fresenius Medical Care, 1215 E Broad Street, Tamaqua, requesting early snow removal for its patients in Lansford (3 hemodialysis patients). The same request was made last year and it was denied. **Joe Butrie made a motion to deny this request, Rose Mary Cannon second the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

A letter was received by Attorney Greek from David Barger of Corkery & Almonti Attorneys. Their client Frank Longo asked whether the borough would consider renting or leasing the vacant lot owned by the borough at 201 W. Bertsch Street (A.K.A. the community garden). Council discussed readvertising the lot for sale or auction but no action was taken. **Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to deny creating a lease agreement on this property. Martin Ditsky seconds the motion and all were in favor. Motion passed.**

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Municipal Administration – Rose Mary Cannon read the December meeting report. Highlights included reports of Tamaqua Transfer's employees throwing cinders on the street and sounding the truck horn at 5:00 a.m. It was reported that Assistant Secretary/Treasurer Wendy Butrie's probation period has ended, and discussion of office improvements to make the office safer. Rose Mary Cannon suggested council invite the owner of Tamaqua Transfer to the next council meeting.

Public Safety – no meeting was held in December

Fire Department – Responded 14 times; 7 in-town calls, 4 calls to Summit Hill and one each to Coaldale, Nesquehoning and Jim Thorpe. Five training sessions were held.

Ambulance – The December report included 45 incidents in Lansford. The average response time from the time of dispatch was 9.09 minutes. It was noted that in 2016 the ambulance responded to 619 incidents with an average response time of 8.58 minutes.

Mayors Report – The monthly total received by the police dept. in Dec was \$2,403.05.

Police Report –In December there were 8 criminal arrests; 8 traffic citations, 17 non-traffic citations; 22 meter tickets; 13 parking tickets; 11 Quality of Life tickets.

Park & Recreation – The report was read by Rose Mary Cannon. The pool feasibility study is expected to be completed in March, playgrounds need to be cleaned, mulch will be ordered and the possibility of adding a basketball court behind Kasmer’s basketball court was discussed.

Public Works - no written report was available.

Code Enforcement - The written report for December is on file.

Planning & Zoning – No meeting was held in December

Tax Collectors Report – Borough taxes collected in December totaled \$38,445.41. Total collected for 2016 is \$904,162.48.

Treasurer’s Report – Bills to be approved totaled \$45,902.46. Balance of all account as of December 30, 2016:

Bank Accounts

End of month balances December 2016

FUND/Saving & Checking		Account Title	End of Nov	End of Dec
General Fund	32	General Acct	\$259,049.68	\$214,742.94
Sanitation Fund	22	Sanitation Fund	\$77,176.94	\$58,699.28
Sanitation Fund	83	Investors Money Mkt Acct	\$51,468.62	\$51,477.34
Sewer Transm	98	Sewer Transm(reserve)	\$163,964.50	\$163,992.28
General Fund	85	Escrow for 22 W(E) Kline	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
General Fund	42	Escrow for 20 E Kline	\$2,180.00	\$2,180.00
Lansford Pool A	05	Lansford Pool Account	\$1,329.62	\$1,329.65
Hi Way/Liq Fuels	86	Treasurers Sp HiWay	\$85,178.77	\$46,790.03
General Fund	85	DCED Grant/Fire Co	\$0.00	\$0.00
Sewer Transm	37	Sewage Transmission	\$94,047.12	\$73,261.59
Sewer Transm	02	Loan Proceeds acct	\$202,567.85	\$202,577.84
LST	72	Local Service Tax/EIT	\$33,487.92	\$34,083.80
Sanitation Fund	36	Sani Fund Money Mkt	\$12,155.48	\$12,155.68
Fire Tax Fund	83	Fire	\$40,662.51	\$36,312.51
Park & Rec Fund	91	Recreation	\$62,353.64	\$62,578.40
Street Light Fund	09	Street Lights	\$17,105.84	\$12,782.24
Total			\$1,105,728.49	\$975,963.58

Motion to pay the bills totaling \$45,902.46 was made by Jared Soto, second by Rose Mary Cannon, all were in favor, motion passed.

Solicitor’s Report – None

Rose Mary Cannon spoke about a newspaper article in the 1/11/17 edition of the Times News Newspaper about Patrick McLaine & Robert Kearns of Municipal Energy Matters (MEM), the firm that bilked Lansford out of \$306,100.00 (and other municipalities). MEM entered into an agreement to maintain the borough street lights but instead absconded with the funds. The article states the two men appealed a six-month jail sentence for a similar scam involving Bethlehem Township and received seven years’ probation. The borough currently pays about \$28,000.00 a year on a 20 year loan.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Appointment of Code Officials –Council considered the appointment of Lehigh Valley Inspection Services, LVIS, as Borough Zoning, UCC, and code compliance officer, however, in the absence of Michael Greek to review the contract proposed by LVIS, the appointment was tabled.

Appointment of Zoning Officer – Tabled.

Appointment of Right To Know Officer – **A motion was made by Rose Mary Cannon to appoint Jill Seigendall as the borough’s Right to Know Officer. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky, all were in favor, motion passed.**

The 2017 council meeting schedule was reviewed, meetings to be held on the second Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the borough hall, 1 W. Ridge Street. **Joe Butrie made a motion to approve the schedule, a second to the motion was made by Rose Mary Cannon, all were in favor, motion passed.**

The following Board vacancy appointments were made:

Zoning Hearing Board – has 1 expired seat of Donna Valent who sent a letter to be reappointed. **A motion was made by Joe Butrie to reappoint Donna Valent to her expired seat, motion was second by Martin Ditsky, all were in favor, motion passed.**

Coaldale Lansford Summit Hill Sewer Authority - 2 expired seats of Robert Lakata & Joe Gallagher who both sent letters to be reappointed - **Joe Butrie made a motion to reappoint Robert Lakata, motion was second by Rose Mary Cannon, all were in motion, motion passed. Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to reappoint Joseph Gallagher, motion was second by Joe Butrie, all were in favor, motion passed.**

Recreation Commission - 2 expired seats, Mary Jo Eidle & Shawn Clark, Mary Jo sent a letter for reappointment. **Rose Mary Cannon made a motion for the reappointment of Mary Jo Eidle, motion was second by Joseph Butrie, all were in favor, motion passed.**

Civil Service Commission – 1 vacant seat due to resignation of Kevin Collevicchio and 3 alternates are allowed. A letter of interest was received from Steven Foster. **Joseph Butrie made a motion to appoint Steven Foster. Jared Soto seconds the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.**

Planning Commission – There has been 1 vacant seat for the past year. Martin Ditsky volunteered to serve on the board however he is already serving on the Police Pension Board. Mary Soberick said she is interested in the appointment and plans to send a letter of interest. The topic was tabled.

Vacancy Board – There has been 1 vacant seat for over 5 years. There were no volunteers at this time.

Police Pension Board - Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to advertise for Police Pension Board, second by Jared, Motion passed.

Carbon County probation workers – Jared Soto spoke to C.C. Juvenile Probation Officer Joe Greco about the volunteer workers going on private property to make quality of life improvements (removing weeds and rubbish.) Supervision would be provided by the C.C. Probation office, the workers may not use advanced power tools and the county would provide equipment for basic maintenance. Joe needs advance notice to make arrangements for his workers. The State will provide liability insurance for these workers. The borough still needs procedures for adult probation workers and community service workers.

NEW BUSINESS

The Tax Collectors compensation rate for borough tax was discussed by council. The current rate of compensation is 4% of receipts during the discount period and 5% during the rest of the collection year. **Joe Butrie made a motion to reduce the compensation rate to 3 % overall. The motion was second by Martin Ditsky, on roll call vote, Joe Butrie, Martin Ditsky and James Romankow voted yes. Rose Mary Cannon and Jared Soto vote “no”. The motion passed. Rose Mary Cannon made a motion to have solicitor Greek advertise the reduced rate as Ordinance 2017-01, the motion was second Martin Ditsky, all were in favor. Motion passed.**

The current Garbage and Recycling contract with Tamaqua Transfer will expire on April 10, 2017. In the absence of Attorney Greek, the topic was tabled until the next meeting. Secretary Jill Seigendall will forward the current contract, past bidding documents to attorney Greek to for presentation at the February 8, 2017 meeting.

President Ditsky called a short recess followed by an executive session to discuss personnel and property at 7:45 p.m.

Back on the record at 7:55 p.m. Joseph Butrie made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Motion was second by James Romankow, and all were in favor. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Seigendall
Secretary/Treasurer