

February 1, 2023

The Work Session of Lansdale Borough Council was held on Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at Lansdale Municipal Complex, One Vine Street, Lansdale, PA and called to order at 8:36pm by President, Denton Burnell.

ROLL CALL:

- (X) Councilwoman Bollens
- (X) Councilman Breish
- (X) President Burnell
- () Councilman Carroll - vacation
- (X) Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton
- (X) Councilman DiGregorio
- (X) Vice President Fuller
- (X) Councilman Ladley
- (X) Councilwoman Currie Teoh
- (X) Mayor Herbert

Borough Representatives:

Borough Manager, John Ernst
Finance Director, Glenn Dickerson
Police Chief, Mike Trail
Parks & Rec., Courtney Meehan
Electric Dept., Andy Krauss
Public Works, Chris Kunkel
Fire Marshal, Rick Lesniak

Borough Solicitor, not present
Borough Engineer, not present
Library Director, Tom Meyer
IT Dept., Kevin Kissinger
Code Enforcement, Jason Van Dame
WWTP Superintendent, Greg Rapp

Residents

Rafia Razzak – 602 Kenilworth Avenue

Agenda Item #4 – Committee Reports

Administration and Finance Committee – Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton

1. Motions to appear before Council at the next Business Meeting:
 - Recycling contract with FX Browne/Bogia Engineering.
2. Hedwig House came to the meeting and requested a portion of the Borough's ARPA funds for their organization.
3. The Finance Department continues working on the new software installation and all is going well so far.
4. Staff is working on a new invoice system so that the process can become paperless and more streamlined.
5. The committee discussed eliminating electric deposits for residential electric service. This will save on staff time and the majority of other electric providing municipalities do not collect a deposit for these types of accounts.
6. Also talked about making a change to the credit card payment vendor in order to save residents and the Borough money. We were currently paying more fees to Paymentus than we originally thought we would be paying. Paymentus was implemented several years ago and this service is something that we should look into finding another vendor.

Councilman Burnell – Hedwig House is asking for \$83,000 to fund food, a staff person and vehicle for one year.

Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton – They have not asked anyone other than Lansdale and they serve all municipalities within Montgomery County.

VP Fuller – When do they want a decision?

Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton – They said they would be in touch with us.

Councilman Breish – If the service fee was an issue for so long, why has that not been brought up to the company before now and what is our recourse for this error?

Mr. Ernst – This was brought to our attention while switching over to the new finance software. We discovered that when Paymentus was used, the resident paid the transaction fee and the Borough ended up paying more as the resident fee increased. Staff is doing more research to completely understand the process.

President Burnell – The challenge is we don't understand or something changed that we are unaware of.

Mr. Dickerson – While reviewing the Paymentus contract this issue was discovered.

Mayor Herbert – To be clear, they are double charging. Once to the customer and once to us.

Mr. Dickerson – Yes, we are working with Paymentus on this as well.

Councilman Breish – We have to find out how/why we were misled and what the recourse could be.

Code Enforcement Committee – Councilman DiGregorio

1. Discussion about making changes to the business overlay district to expand it. Information is available for Council review in One Drive.
2. Department Activity – Staff is working on the new software change over.
3. At the Planning Commission meeting 874 & 901 Moyers Road details are being worked on for a propane facility. Koehler's Jewelers is looking to expand their business on the adjacent property they own.
4. The Act 537 plan for Towamencin's study for the sewer sale is pending.
Mr. Van Dame – The Planning Commission is reviewing this plan.
5. The Zoning Hearing Board meeting is postponed to March.

Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton – Is the business overlay district discussion about East Main Street?

Mr. Van Dame – East Main Street will be included in the review and further down West Main Street to Valley Forge Road. The Planning Commission is starting the conversation to extend the usage and parking exemptions for some buildings. The proposed revised text and maps are in One Drive.

Councilman Breish – The residents in the Borough who use Towamencin sewer services should they attend the Planning Commission meeting?

Mr. Van Dame – Towamencin send us a bulk bill and we bill the residents.

Councilman Breish – Is there a reasonable way to get notice to them about this?

Mr. Dickerson – We have their addresses and we can notify them.

Economic Development Committee – Councilman Ladley

1. We have a new Vice Chair of the committee and it is Councilwoman Bollens.
2. We are pausing the talks on the subcommittees for now.
3. There are several new business in town.

Electric Committee – Councilwoman Bollens

1. The past few months the committee has been discussing Willow Street Park and the possibility of adding solar panels there. We will continue discussions with Parks and Recreation and Blue Sky about getting an updated proposal.
2. The Electric ordinance needs to be updated to allow for resale of electricity for Electric Vehicles (EV) Chargers on commercial properties. It was suggested that there be separate electric tiers to protect our grid. The electric deposit fee would also be updated in the ordinance.
3. Discussed upgrading the EV Chargers that the Borough owns.
4. Operations update - Utility relocation on the 500 block of North Canon Avenue for new apartments; Freight House lot utility work and LED lighting; 400 Penn Street fitness center service; PMEA training update for 2023; Patriot tree trimming throughout the Northeast section of the Borough; Last phase of homes at Andale/Green; 400amp EV charging service at Borough Hall.
5. Mark Weiss, a long-time lineman retired two weeks ago. The department is looking for a new 1st class lineman.

Library Committee – Councilman Breish

1. International Spring Festival (ISF) Funds Transfer -approval is moving forward - committee has approved to transfer the ISF funds currently being held by the library in the amount of \$58,421.93.
2. Budget Review - everything is on pace as normal for the year with the exception of memberships which is already at 21% of expected revenue for the entire year. This is due to the rate increase with a discount for those who chose to renew membership early.
3. Art After School has been very popular and fills up quickly.
4. The ESL program has been well received. The program currently has eight students with seven different languages. Tom champions and leads the efforts of this group with support from North Penn ESL program.
5. Board restructuring is underway. We will be asking various non-profits if they would be willing to share their board structure & bylaws. If anyone knows of good examples, please connect with Tom or a member of committee. With an option of either have a five member board or seven member board we are in favor of the seven member board option. Two board members within this structure can be appointed by Council. We also believe at this time that it makes sense to keep the Borough Manager as "CEO" of the library. Between the two appointment board seats and CEO oversight, the Borough will continue to have strong oversight of taxpayer dollars in the new board structure. We think within the board structure there should be a chair, vice-chair and secretary. No need for a president as the Borough Manager will be CEO. There was continued discussion regarding exactly "how" we should recruit the initial board members and also how the board will replenish their other 5 seats. Currently the idea is to form a small committee to identify the other five candidates. We hope to have this identified ASAP. Also, Tom is going to look to host a public interest meeting at the library, sometime in February before the next Library committee meeting. The goal of the public interest meeting is to help identify individuals that may be interested in serving on the board. This meeting may be February 21.

Parks and Recreation Committee – Vice President Fuller

1. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
 - Approval for the St. John's Easter Sunrise service on April 9.
2. Staff is currently scheduling the baseball field usage for the upcoming season.

3. The Pysanky class will be held on March 18. The afternoon class is booked but there are still openings for the morning class.
4. Pool memberships have started and are coming in slowly. The Easter Egg Hunt will be held again in White's Road Park on April 2.
5. Public Works was prepping the parking lot at Stony Creek Park. The trees in the parking lot were removed and planted elsewhere in the park system. They are working on a fix for the rain garden too.
6. Grant money can be used for sewer and water lines at White's Road Park for future installments.
7. Staff has scheduled the movie nights and camps for the season.
8. Joanne Grubb and Vince Mahon are doing a great job while Courtney is on leave. We are in the process of getting a new office hire to start in the summer.

Councilman DiGregorio – Are the concerts set up?

VP Fuller – Yes, they start in June and will go through August.

Public Safety Committee – Councilwoman Currie Teoh

1. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
 - Approval of Lansdale Day June 3.
 - Approval of the Fairmount Fire Company's Under the Lights Car Show on June 17
 - The Knights for Life Beer Tasting Festival on June 24.
2. The Fairmount Fire Company attended the meeting and gave their monthly update.
3. A community survey draft is ready and should be sent out soon. An update will be given at the March meeting.
4. Staff is working with the Public Works Department regarding temporary signage for the one way on East Second Street.
5. Three new officers were sworn in earlier this evening.
6. Those in favor of bike lanes and the Partnership TMA were present at the meeting to express their hopes in getting bike lanes added to South Broad Street.

Public Works Committee – Councilman Breish

1. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
 - Change order #1 re: NOVA Chip program.
 - Prepare and advertise bid specifications for the 2023 Mill & Overlay program.
 - Prepare and advertise bid specifications for the 2023 Microsurfacing program.
 - Prepare and advertise Whites Road Pump Station upgrade project.
2. E. Main Streetscape SEPTA Section will be delayed at least a year so they can change the crossing arms.
 - PennDOT wants to pave East Main Street in 2023. We need to delay that so that the sewer work can be completed first.
3. Single hauler or municipal trash is a topic being discussed again. Should an RFP for a consultant be put out; Mr. Kunkel will research to see what that cost would be.
4. Public Works update – the have a new skid steer; did prep work at Stony Creek parking lot; there are 42 special events they are involved in; made a new mobile stage for use during events.
5. WWTP – The UV Disinfection project will start soon. The chemical feed bid will be put out in April and awarded in May.
6. The Partnership TMA attended the meeting to talk bike lanes. Staff is waiting to hear back from the traffic engineer, Pennoni Associates, regarding safely adding bike lanes to South Broad Street.

7. Public comment – someone asked to make it fair for those who have little trash if single hauler were to happen.

President Burnell – the changes to the East Main Streetscape are SEPTA driven.

Mr. Ernst – SEPTA wants to replace the gates along the Doylestown rail line and they moved that project to 2024 instead of 2025. They will completely bear the cost for the gates and we do not want a brand new road dug up to put the new gates in so we have to delay.

President Burnell – Will it complicate the grant award for this project?

Mr. Ernst – We can extend the grant to accommodate SEPTA.

Mayor Herbert – Will we delay our work so as not to have a torn up road for too long?

Mr. Ernst – We will do our sewer line work and PennDOT will delay their paving.

Mayor Herbert – Why can't we delay our work?

Mr. Kunkel – We have a contract to do the work and we don't think we can delay without causing the price to go up, which will happen if we wait another year.

Mayor Herbert – It will look bad with the road ripped up and that is not a good answer.

President Burnell – It will cost the residents more if we delay.

Agenda Item #5 – Announcements

Mayor Herbert – He swore in three new officers this evening.

Chief Trail – They are currently in the field training and in March we will pre-empt a new traffic safety unit to start in April.

VP Fuller – The Library Committee will meet on February 27 and the public session for having a new Board will be on February 21.

Agenda Item #6 – Public Comment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38pm