

September 2, 2020

The Work Session of Lansdale Borough Council was held on Wednesday, September 2, 2020 online via Zoom Meeting and called to order at 8:47pm by President, Denton Burnell.

ROLL CALL:

- (X) Councilman Angelichio
- (X) Councilman Breish
- (X) President Burnell
- (X) Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton
- (X) Councilman DiGregorio
- (X) Vice President Fuller
- (X) Councilman Henning
- (X) Councilwoman Currie Teoh
- (X) Mayor Herbert

Borough Representatives:

Borough Manager, John Ernst  
Finance Director, John Ramey  
Police Chief, Mike Trail  
Parks & Rec., Karl Lukens  
Electric Superintendent, not present  
Public Works, Rick DeLong  
Fire Marshal, not present

Borough Solicitor, Patrick Hitchens  
Borough Engineer, not present  
Library Director, Tom Meyer  
IT/GIS Coordinator, Bryan Poster  
Code Enforcement, Jason Van Dame  
WWTP Superintendent, Dan Shinskie

Residents

None

Agenda Item #4 – Committee Reports

**Administration and Finance Committee – Councilman Angelichio**

1. Financial Reports:

- The General Fund revenues are exceeding last year. With last year's adopted tax increase, real estate taxes are up \$160,000. Of the \$84,000 increase, you can imagine other revenues are lagging in comparison to last year, so there is a 1% increase there. Expenses are down \$340,000. A big part of this is the Public Works non-personnel costs being down \$86,000 for the year and their overtime is down \$48,000.
- Discover Lansdale will not be accepting their \$50,000 stipend for 2020 since no events were held this year.

2. Motions to be approved by Council at the next business meeting:

- Prepare and advertise an ordinance to establish the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) for the police union.
- Motion to approve the non-uniform Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO).
- Motion to approve the uniform Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO).
- Motion prepare and advertise to establish an Emergency Electric Block Grant.
  - We have 30, 60, 90 and 120+ on the aging report. Accounts that actually went delinquent after Feb. 2020 total only \$6,182.00 and have made payments. \$7,438 for 90 days or less. \$11,713 for 60 day or less. We are around \$30k. There is overlap in these accounts for someone who is 120-

day delinquent there is also 90 and 60 days that are parts of it. The total # of accounts with no overlap is 138 accounts out of 9,000 and these are only the residential #'s.

**Vice President Fuller** – Will the ordinance stay on the book until we remove? Is it COVID specific or would it include other emergency disasters?

**Councilman Angelichio** – It would only apply if we declared and emergency disaster declaration?

**Mr. Hitchens** – The ordinance as written would exist just for a specific time. The ordinance can be updated though.

**Councilman Angelichio** – If we have the means to do so than in his opinion we should.

**Vice President Fuller** – We will have to be very careful how the money is used and be fair about the process.

**Councilman Angelichio** – Money will not be given directly to the resident. The balance of their bill will be paid internally.

**President Burnell** – We need to look at all angles of this, know who really needs this assistance and find the true scope of all these past due bills.

#### **Code Enforcement Committee – Councilman DiGregorio**

1. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:

- Ordinance to amend Chapter 405 – Downtown Business Overlay District amendments (Public Hearing)
- Ordinance to amend Chapter 405 – Off street parking and loading amendments and additions (Public Hearing)
- Preliminary and Final Land Development for 1000 N. Cannon Avenue (Conditional Use Hearing)
- Prepare and advertise an ordinance for a conditional use hearing for 320 Madison Street.

**President Burnell** – 320 Madison Street is a ground level and the building are zoned for apartments. What is the hearing for?

**Mr. Van Dame** – there are a few steps up that and Mr. Kennedy said that a conditional use would be needed.

2. Permits and new businesses - Due to COVID19 apartment inspection process has been suspended. Units are only inspected in the event there is an issue, or a new apartment needs a license. Department activity continues to be high. The only month there was a slowdown was in April during the pandemic. Mr. Van Dame contributes the continued flow of permits due to the street projects the Borough has been working on, the building of Phase III for Andale Green as well as property owners doing improvements to their existing residences.
3. Online permitting - Online permitting is on hold due to EnerGov has not completed its conversion. Working with staff to make permitting available from our website. Testing will continue and Mr. Ramey is looking for a credit card vendor for online services.
4. Commercial fire and safety inspections - Mr. Richard Lesniak, Emergency Management Coordinator/Fire Marshal, plans to present next month a report detailing his comprehensive list of the Fire & Safety Inspection Program.

#### **Economic Development Committee – Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton**

1. The EDC continues to look at ways to help our business community as we continue out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since we still aren't meeting in person, the committee is not honoring a Business of the Month during our business meeting, so the committee is brainstorming other ways to highlight businesses in town through social media, online postings, etc.
2. Had a brief conversation about short term parking spaces on Main Street, which the committee recommended official conversation start at the Public Safety Committee.
3. Discussed the allocation of our 2020 budget. A majority of our funding is used for Façade Improvement Grants and, in the current business climate, businesses aren't necessarily in the financial position to spend money on these improvements. Discussed and ultimately voted to return the remaining approximate \$18,000 of the EDC budget to the Borough's General Fund to be utilized at Borough Council's discretion. There was a desire to have the funds be used for businesses, but unfortunately there really isn't a way to earmark what the money is to be used for.

#### **Electric Committee – Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton**

1. RFP proposal for renewable energy consultant - The committee decided to have Borough staff do some of the research and start meeting with consultants along with staff to reach out to PMEA to get recommendations in replacement of having Utility engineers draft an RFP proposal.
2. Reviewed the construction schedule for the PV system at both the Electric services building and the wastewater plant, Construction is scheduled to be complete towards the end of December of 2020.
3. SCDA Change Order- This work was to be designed outside of the contract scope but after some research RVE and the Borough feel we will do better on price and workflow if we have BSI the current contractor design and install the PV SCDA system. The Change is within the project allowance. We were quoted \$27,195.00 and we will be moving forward with the work.
4. Verizon update- Borough staff continues to work with Verizon on pole ownership.
5. 2021 Budget- discussed what will be coming forward with the budget particularly the electric transfer.
6. The committee then reviewed some of the current challenges with having scheduled outages for maintenance with folks working/schooling at home. We will continue to work through these issues.

**Councilman Breish** – Is tree work contracted yet for the season?

**Mr. Krauss** – We have been able to do some tree work. He is meeting with a company tomorrow to see what work they could do.

#### **Library Committee – Vice President Fuller**

1. No report – committee did not meet in September.

#### **Parks and Recreation Committee – Vice President Fuller**

1. Although there was no formal request, Mr. Lukens is expecting a request form North Penn School District for use of one of Memorial Park tennis courts for their volleyball program.
2. Events – The Whites Road concerts were lined to enhanced social distancing. The lunchtime concerts at Railroad Plaza will take place this month as well.
3. Whites Road Pool to close September 7. Fourth Street is already closed. Looking at the preliminary numbers for the pools and it is better than anticipated. NPHS would like to

rent Whites Road pool for water polo practice and matches. They will pay all expenses associated with the use.

4. Skatepark – Punch list has been received from RVE. A guide rail was installed by staff off the parking lot to help slow down entrance into the skatepark. The department has one volunteer signed up with Friends of the Skatepark. Volunteers will have masks available for anyone requesting one.
5. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
  - Bid award for the Whites Road playground project. The bid came in \$87,000 higher than the original estimate from 5 years ago. They hope DCNR can help with at least half of the additional costs.
  - The motion for the Liberty Bell Trail Stony Creek portion was tabled. Will put this motion on agenda again since DCNR agreed to give us the \$66,000 over our budget for this project.
  - Payment #5 for work completed on the skatepark by 5<sup>th</sup> Pocket Skateparks.
  - Aeration system by Princeton Hydro in the amount of \$4,565 to replace existing aeration fountain. The expenditure is in the five-year capital plan for 2021; however, since the current aeration fountain is not functioning, he is asking for the expenditure in 2020.
  - Change order #1 to Fifth Pocket Skateparks in the amount of \$10,800 to correct the water issue.

**Councilman DiGregorio** – There is a drainage problem?

**Mr. Lukens** – The skatepark was originally designed by a different engineer. Currently, there is pressure build up under the bowl that is causing the issue. RVE did not re-engineer that part of the project.

**Councilman DiGregorio** – Can we go after whoever is responsible for this mistake?

**Mr. Ernst** – We will talk with RVE and our solicitor about this, but it may be a challenge to place blame on the original engineer.

**President Burnell** – We should at least inquire about this. We have to be careful that pursuing may end up costing more in legal costs than the actual fix of the problem.

**Councilman DiGregorio** – Is there anyway to put different species of fish in the Stony Creek pond to eat the algae?

**Mr. Lukens** – We did contract a company to help clean the pond and keep the algae down.

#### **Public Safety Committee – Councilwoman Currie Teoh**

1. Body Worn Cameras have been ordered and the officers and support staff will be trained on how to use them. They expect to have them rolled out January 1, 2021.
2. Curbside parking - there are currently several “curbside” parking spots on West Main Street which were created under the authority of the borough’s State of Emergency Declaration. The process to keep the “curbside” parking spots after the declaration is rescinded, is to create an ordinance passed by council. Following discussion with a local business, the chief advised he would complete a very informal survey of the businesses on West Main Street to determine how they feel about the continuation of the spots after the declaration has been lifted. This information will be shared with the PS committee in October.
3. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
  - Activation of the Civil Service Commission to prepare a list of eligible candidates to hire a new police officer.

4. **Councilwoman Currie Teoh** presented Motion A and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council extend the approval of the Special Events application submitted by Stove & Tap for the closure and use of a portion of North Wood Street between the hours of 3:00pm to 10:30pm for outdoor dining for every Friday and Saturday night in the months of September, October and November 2020 and include Sunday's of each weekend as a rain date with the conditions that they continue to have the Fire Department Connection be maintained free and clear of any obstructions and with the conditions as previously stated in Council's prior June 3 approval including dining limited to reservations only, compliance with CDC guidelines for safe social practices, and full reimbursement for the costs of safety barriers, as well as, the additional condition that this Special Event approval shall immediately terminate for any of the aforementioned weekends that have not yet occurred if Montgomery County is allowed to increase to 50% indoor dining.

*Motion seconded by Councilman Angelichio and unanimously approved.*

5. 2021 Draft PD Budget- The LPD was working on their 2021 budget and at this time no increase in operational costs outside of salary and benefits is being requested for 2021.  
**Councilman Angelichio** – Cars are not stopping at the crosswalk on Hancock Street at Stony Creek Park. Can the LPD sit there for awhile and watch for those not complying?  
**Chief Trail** – He will have patrol watch the area.  
**Councilman Breish** – We discussed the crosswalk in public safety. He was curious as to what Backyard Beans had to say about the curbside pick-up spaces.  
**Councilwoman Currie Teoh** – Matt was very diplomatic and could see both sides of the pros and cons. For him the spaces are critical for his business but after the pandemic is over, he could continue curbside pickup in the back-parking lot. Matt does tell his staff that the parking spaces outside of his business are not exclusive to Backyard Beans.

#### **Public Works Committee – Councilman Breish**

1. 2020 Microsurfacing Program - Work has been completed on this project. A payment has been made to Marino Corp. in the amount of \$147,023.13. The amount of \$5,698.87 is being held for 2% retainage.
2. 2020 Mill & Overlay Program - Most of the work is completed on this project. Pennbrook Ave. will get milled and paved after the sanitary sewer work is complete.
3. E. Hancock St. Rehabilitation - Work is ongoing with this project. We are anticipating the milling and paving will take place sometime around September 10th. The curb and sidewalk work have been completed. A payment was made to SJM Construction in the amount of \$144,355.76. The amount of \$17,379.02 is being held for 2% retainage.
4. Whites Rd. Pedestrian Crossing - The visual signals along Whites Rd. have been installed. This work took place on August 22, 2020. Road markings were put in around the same period of time. There was some discussion at the last meeting about having audible signals at this pedestrian crossing. At this time, it is not recommended to have the audible signals installed due to the proximity of residential dwellings in the area.
5. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
  - Bid award for Fuel No. 2 to Papco, Inc.
  - Bid award for snow plowing with operators to PK Moyer & Sons.
  - Extend the trash contract with Republic Services for one year. Republic Service chose to exercise their right to do so.

- Prepare and advertise the Pennbrook Pump Station Generator and Transfer Switch Replacement.
6. Fire Alarm & Security System Upgrade - The fire system is 90% complete.
  7. Whites Road Park Streambank Stabilization – We received a proposal from Land Tech Enterprises for replacement of the culvert at an additional cost of \$14,750.00. This replacement is necessary prior to the trail being repaired and would have delayed the trail work while we wait two to three weeks for new pipe to arrive. Trail work will be scheduled to coincide with the pipe replacement for minimal disruption to the park.
  8. Pennbrook Avenue Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation – The contract will be mobilizing to the site next week and will be saw cutting the roadway.  
**Councilman DiGregorio** – Will the grass be reseeded along Norway Drive for the properties along the curb line?  
**Mr. Van Dame** – That work is on the punch list of items to be completed.  
**Councilman DiGregorio** – He received complaints about the microsurfacing that there are tire ruts, etc. and it doesn't look good.

Agenda Item #6 – Public Comment

None

Agenda Item #5 – Announcements

**Councilman DiGregorio** – Lee Mangan passed away this past Sunday. He was Borough Manager when he started on Council and he was very helpful to him settling in and he did a lot for the Borough. He always has the Borough's best interest at heart and truly loved Lansdale Borough.

**Vice President Fuller** – She received a comment from someone who was against the skatepark. They went out to see it in person and they totally have changed their mind about it and thinks it was a great idea to add this to the park system.

**Councilwoman Currie Teoh** – Do not forget to fill out your 2020 Census. There is still time to get it in. It is extremely important to complete this to get the most amount of federal monies as possible.

**Mayor Herbert** – On September 7 the bike journey across America that started here is Lansdale has been completed and Lansdale is now in the Guinness Book of World Records.

*The meeting was adjourned at 10:27pm*