

JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION
February 1, 2024
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Greg Strubinger with the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for the armed forces, first responders, and their families.

Roll Call of Members

Police Chief Schatz	Joanne Klitsch	Sydney Wernett
Borough Manager Sterner	Mike Yeastedt	Connor Rodgers-absent
Borough Secretary Klotz	Tom Chapman	Gregory Strubinger
Solicitor Nanovic-absent	Ted LaRizzio	Street Sup. Schoch
Mayor Cinicola	Engineer Clint Davis	

Announcements

The Borough is accepting letters of interest for the International Property Maintenance Board, term ending December 31, 2027. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

The Borough is accepting letters of interest for two (2) vacancies on the Shade Tree Committee, terms ending December 31, 2028 and December 31, 2025. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

There is a vacancy on the Planning Commission, term ending on December 31, 2027. This seat was held by a prior Council member. Secretary Klotz explained Planning Commission would prefer this seat be filled by another member of Borough Council. Greg Strubinger explained there has always been Borough Council representation on Planning Commission; usually two (2) out of the seven (7) seats. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

Pick Up the Poconos Spring Event will be taking place on Saturday, April 20th from 9:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

Pertinent information for residents can be found and received through the Borough's All-Call, website, and Facebook page. Residents can sign up for the All-Calls through the Borough's website.

The Borough was awarded \$250,000.00 from the DCED Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Grant for the Memorial Park Phase III Project.

The Borough's Downtown Vehicular and Pedestrian Safety Projects and the Lion's Club Asa Packer Mansion Electrical Upgrades Project have both moved on to the next round for the America 250 PA Infrastructure Grant.

There will be an informational meeting on EV Charging Station Opportunities on February 29th at 6:30 p.m. It is tentatively scheduled in the High School's LGI room, pending school district approval. This meeting is open to everyone in Carbon County.

Public Comment

Ron Sheehan – He discussed the Lion's Club 29th Annual Halloween Parade. He explained the first 11 years, the parade has started on South Street and went up the hill. It has since been reversed to go downhill, starting at the High School and ending on Third Street, with the slight detour onto North Street to avoid going down Fisher's Hill. The Lion's Club is requesting the parade be held on the last Saturday in October in the afternoon. Police Chief Schatz asked if the parade route could be changed due to traffic congestion on North Street from Fall Foliage weekends.

Pam Moore – She is the food pantry coordinator and thanked Borough Council for the use of Memorial Hall. Starting in March, every second Saturday, the new food pantry location will be at the old Ned's building. Traffic should come down 7th Street and onto Fern Street.

Public Hearing

NONE

SALDO-Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

NONE

Action

The following items were reviewed:

Anastasia Susko Memorial Scholarship request-2024 Jim Thorpe B.A.R 9/14 – This will be the first time this run will be held if approved. The race would be done in three phases; a warm-up phase where people would walk up Broadway, up Hill Road, and come back down the Switchback and Packer Hill Road. The second phase will be a bike ride up and back on the D&L Trail for 30 miles. The third phase will be a run from the Gorge to the County lot. It is expected to take a total of three hours to complete. Police Services would be needed and roads would need to be closed. Manager Sterner had concerns about the warm-up portion of the race. She explained the Borough already is in litigation for other trip and falls with the sidewalks in the downtown area.

Wildland's Conservancy – Kristie Fach, a representative from the Wildland's Conservancy, gave a summary of the dam removal on Silk Mill Run. Phase I, the Borough received \$265,000.00 worth of grant funding from DCNR and DEP. The Wildlands, on behalf of the Borough, will apply for two (2) additional grants for Phase II from Fish & Wildlife and DEP for the construction portion of this project. Wildland's expects the construction cost to be around \$315,000.00. If both grants are awarded, construction is expected to take place in 2025. No Resolution is needed for either grant, just a property owner agreement. Wildland's will continue to monitor the area after the project is completed.

High Street Wall Project-approval to bid – Clint Davis was there to explain the project. The current wall is failing and falling down. The wall would have a nail drilled into the existing wall at a 45-degree angle until bedrock is hit. A rebar will be installed and grouted. After that, a wire mesh will go over the existing wall, then additional grout. Greg Strubinger asked if Clint was involved in the 2017 project. He explained he was not, but this project is similar to the one from 2017. Mike Yeastedt asked about needing the additional soil for the project. Clint Davis explained that would be up to the contractor who would be awarded the project. Manager Sterner said she thought the whole point of using the soil was to keep costs down. Clint Davis said that it can be implemented in the plans. Mike Yeastedt asked about the block form/liner being an alternate. Clint Davis said if the budget allows for it, it will be added. Greg Strubinger asked what the timeline was for the project. Clint Davis said it should start at the end of April and be finished by the end of September. The bid will be awarded at the April meeting.

Council Meeting Minutes from January 2, 2024

Council Meeting Minutes from January 4, 2024

Council Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2024

Expenditures from all Funds as presented

Treasurer's Report – This was not available for Borough Council as it's too early in the month for this to have been completed. The report will be available for the regular Council meeting.

Ordinance 2024-01 Vehicle & Traffic Amendment: No Parking Portion of Reservoir Road – This Ordinance would limit parking to one side of Reservoir Road.

Resolution 2024-04 Records Distribution – There are various records needing to be destroyed or thrown out ranging in dates from the 1970's through 2016. There are appraisals for the Asa Packer Mansion that were questioned if they should be kept indefinitely.

Resolution 2024-05 Municipal Emergency Operations Plan & Promulgation – This needs to be updated every two (2) years to at least update the Officials and Contact list.

Resolution 2024-06 Readdressing – This would be adding an address to the County parking lot. Once approved, the address will be 1 County Lot Road.

2024 Chemical Bids-authorization to advertise for bids – Both the Water and Sewer Supervisors determined the amount of chemicals needed to get them through the year. Bid specs have been drafted.

Police Department Resignation – The current Police Secretary/Meter Maid submitted her resignation to be effective February 13th. She requested that her remaining PTO be paid out, as has been done for others in the past.

DCED Blight Grant-extension letter – This will be the Borough's second time extension request for this grant. The request would be until June of 2025. The request is being made to assist the other side of 204 Center Avenue's property owner to get the funds secured that are needed in order to put up a structurally safe wall once the blighted house is taken down.

Barry Isett Authorization for Services-204 Center Avenue Structural Reassessment – This reassessment would update the one that was completed in 2018.

Administration Copy Machine – Both the Police Department and Administrative office have been budgeted for this year to get new copy machines/printers. The current one in the Administrative office was purchased outright and can be sold on Municibid. The quote for a new one is \$8,029.81.

Memorial Hall Renovation Project-Bracy Change Order #1 -- The is for the difference in cost for the skylights from the original bid for the new Public Works Building.

Jim Thorpe Little League Parade April 20th – The Little League requested Police service to escort the parade. The parade will use the same route as last year and start at 11:00 a.m.

Account #1590 Sewer Credit Request – The property owner had a burst pipe that the water was running from for two weeks while they were away from the house. The 52,000 gallons water never entered into the sewer system for treatment.

New Utility Liens to File (12)

Utility Account Rate Changes (5)

Utility Uncollectables Report (1) – The property was sold at judicial sale.

Exoneration Request

The report was submitted for review.

Committees

Filming Requirements within the Borough – Secretary Klotz explained that currently the Borough does not any sort of permit requirement or fee for media filming in the Borough. More and more media requests come in to the Borough Administrative staff asking if there is a film permit requirement. As more and more people see the Borough on the T.V. and various media outlets, it will continue to bring in more

tourists. HGTV was filming for an episode of House Hunters in January. Borough Council requested the Solicitor investigate further.

Fell Township letter: Experimental Reclamation Technique for Abandoned Mine Lands – This township recently had an experimental reclamation technique for an abandoned mine in their municipality. DEP issued a permit to Pioneer Aggregates and its subsidiary Earth Revival to backfill the abandoned mine. The experiment was determined to be a failure. The township is currently in litigation and wanted to let other municipalities that have abandoned mines within their boundaries about the failed experiment. They also were requesting monetary help to help offset their court costs. Borough Council requested the administrative staff find out where there are abandoned mines within the Borough.

Administration

Carbon County Council of Governments Representative – This seat was previously held by Jay Miller. He is no longer able to be the Borough's representative and has resigned from this role.

Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)

Sewer Employment

Supervisor Rate – Sewer Supervisor #2 hourly rate would increase to \$33.01 effective March 1, 2024.

New Employee – Interviews have been scheduled for February 5th.

On-Lot Septic Management Program Inspection Checklist – The current checklist the Borough has in place that was reviewed and recommended by the SEO could potentially cost residents an additional \$600.00+ on top of what they're paying to pump out their systems. Borough Council would like to look into changing the form and use a form that is similar to what other municipalities and haulers use.

Borough's Negotiation Team for Teamster's Agreement – In the past, it has always been a three-member group: the Borough Solicitor, the Borough Manager, and the Public Service Manager. Since the Borough currently does not have a Public Service Manager, this spot needs to be filled. Greg Strubinger suggested having Mike Yeastedt as the third member because he is chair of Public Service.

Water & Sewer Tapping Fee – Borough Council voted at the January meeting to increase the Water and Sewer Tapping Fees based on the study that was conducted by Keystone Alliance Consulting and Entech Engineering. The Utilities Secretary was able to get responses back from neighboring municipalities on their current tapping fees. They are not nearly as high in price as the Borough's. Mike Yeastedt suggested lowering both tapping fees to \$7,500.00. Jake Arner came up from the audience and explained that Mike's Yeastedt's suggestion is currently in line with someone who would be getting a well dug and hooked up to a house for water.

Municipal Waste Compliance Program – This program just started being enforced in the downtown area this week. Twelve property owners were contacted by telephone for violations. Prior to this, two letters were sent out to property owners and businesses in the downtown area explaining the Ordinance and the importance of complying to it. Borough Council would need to decide if they would like the program implemented throughout the entire Borough. Mike Yeastedt said the main problems are along Broadway and West Broadway. The businesses and restaurants have overflowing garbage cans and garbage bags on the ground.

PMVB Community Impact Grant-Downtown Lights Refurbishment – The grant application process is different this year than in years past. This grant used to be awarded twice a year. It has now been changed to one time a year and there is a cap of \$40,000.00. The grant requires a 50% match. The Borough would apply for refurbishment of the Victorian Lights in the Downtown area. There has been money budgeted for this project.

Allied SCADA Amendment – Borough Council previously authorized a Water Plant upgrade to the computerized system. Allied was at the Water Plant last week and advised adjustments needed to be made to the original scope of work. The amendment would be an additional \$5,375.00.

2024 Road Projects

Road Paving Bids – The Street Supervisor and Mike Yeastedt met to determine what roads should be paved this year. Street Supervisor Mike Schoch recommends paving West 5th Street (starting at Spring Alley), Maple Street, West 6th Street, Cypress Street, and Snyder Street (ending at West 10th Street). Greg Strubinger asked if signage could be put up due to the roads changing from one to the other.

Stormwater Management Budgeted Projects – School Alley and West 10th Street are the projects. There was some money budgeted for these projects, but not enough to cover the entire projects. The Borough was not awarded grant funding that were applied for. There is additional funds in Capital Projects or the budgeted money can be moved to a different project. The Public Service committee will meet to discuss further.

Street Sweeping – The quote came in today from Affordable Sweepers. They charge an hourly rate. The Street Supervisor will continue to get additional quotes. It was suggested to look at the roads for sealing after the street sweeping is completed.

Police

PennDOT 35 MPH speed limit authorized on Coal Street – The original request to PennDOT was to lower the speed limit to 25 MPH. PennDOT conducted a study and concluded that the speed could be lowered to 35 MPH. The Streets Department put up the new 35 MPH sign today.

Police Pension Borough Council Seat – This Board requires a Borough Council member seat and a Borough Resident seat. The Borough Council seat was held by Bob Schaninger and the Resident seat was held by Michael Rivkin. Both are no longer part of Borough Council. Borough Council asked for someone from the administrative staff to contact both Michael and Bob to see which one would like to hold the Resident seat and they suggested someone from the Police committee be appointed to this seat.

Events

New Traffic Patterns – Police Chief Schatz had a meeting with the Borough's Internal Events Committee (which he is part of) to work on a solution for the problems created by tourism with traffic and parking. They have suggested having the Vehicle & Traffic Ordinance changed to have traffic be one way on Center Avenue and South Avenue during weekends from May through December.

Kiosks: Change in time and price – The Borough's Internal Events Committee suggested having the rates fluctuate depending on the day of the week. The County currently does this. Currently, this is set by Ordinance. Borough Council would like to ask the Solicitor if fees can be set by the Fee Schedule Resolution, rather than amending the Ordinance. Currently, the time limit is set to five (5) hours parking maximum. This should be looked into shortening Mondays through Thursdays and extending Fridays through Sundays and holidays.

Resident Parking – The Borough's Internal Events Committee suggested having Residential Only Parking during the weekends and holidays. Residents would get stickers for their cars indicating they are residents. This would ensure parking for residents who don't have any off-street parking. Signs would be put up indicating this. This would only take place during the busy tourist times (May through December).

Buildings/Parks

DCNR C2P2 Grant-Memorial Park Phase III – The Borough was awarded a \$250,000.00 grant from DCED. Additional funds will be needed to complete the project. Borough Council needs to determine how much of a match towards the DCNR grant that is being applied for.

Lions/JTB Agreement-Asa Packer Mansion Caretaker – Borough Council voted at the December 2023 to extend the agreement between the Borough and the Lion's Club allowing the Lion's Club to continue Managing the Asa Packer Mansion Operations conditioned upon open communication and working on an updated agreement. Borough Council would like to see the agreement updated, as some verbiage is

outdated. The Buildings and Grounds Committee would like to set up a meeting with the Lion's Club. The dates suggested to meet are February 12th or 28th at 4:30 p.m. Greg Strub

Asa Packer Mansion HVAC-two-unit heating replacement – Both units were replaced and control panels were added.

Mansion Correspondence – This item will be discussed during executive session.

Memorial Bench Program – A draft of the program was distributed to Borough Council. Manager Sterner asked that they review it for any questions they may have or any recommendations.

Spillman Farmer Invoice 8121.22.1.01 Public Works Building USDA Submission Support – This was for providing assistance and support for the submission requirements for the USDA loan for the New Public Works Garage Project. The cost is \$4,972.50.

Spillman Farmer Invoice 8122.22.1.01 Memorial Hall Renovation USDA Submission Support – This was for providing assistance and support for the submission requirements for the USDA loan for the Memorial Hall Renovation project. The cost is \$3,813.75.

Emergency Services

Mauch Chunk Fireman's Relief Association Borough Council seat – This seat is currently vacant and would need to be filled by a member of the Emergency Services Committee.

Special Fire Department Account Appointment – This seat is currently vacant and would need to be filled by the Chair of the Emergency Services Committee.

Old Business

NONE

Executive Session

NONE

Adjourn

MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Joanne Klitsch to **adjourn the meeting**. There were no comments. Motion carries 6-0. The meeting ended at 10:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Borough Secretary