JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION
August 1, 2024
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:36 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
Borough Manager Sterner
Borough Secretary Klotz
Solicitor Nanovic-absent
Mayor Cinicola
Joanne Klitsch
Mike Yeastedt
Tom Chapman-absent
Ted LaRizzio
Sydney Wernett
Connor Rodgers
Gregory Strubinger

Announcements

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. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

There is a vacancy on the Zoning Hearing Board. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

A reminder for residents: 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.

Public Comment

Steve Ambrose- He asked for an update on 204 Center Avenue. He said the last update residents received was at the July 11th meeting. He requested Borough Council provide an update every month for residents. Greg Strubinger said the Borough received a $100,000.00 grant for blight and enforcement on the property has been ongoing for at least 10 years. He asked about the Switchback Trail being blocked by fencing where the new Public Service Garage is being built and if anything was going to be done to open it or a detour around the fencing. Mike Yeastedt explained this is due because of an old water pipe under the ground in that area that still has water in it and needs to be drained.

Trish Spillman- She asked if the house at 204 Center Avenue will come down before December 31st. Greg Strubinger said he was unsure and that it would be dependent upon the upcoming hearing in September or October. This will give the Borough the authorization to take down the house. She asked about the DCED funding, 10% Engineering fees, and if the Borough plans on using the entire $100,000.00. Manger Sterner explained it is possible to spend that and more. The 10% Engineering fees are on the total grant. This was a joint grant with Palmerton and Lehighton. The Engineering money has already been spent. Trish asked how much the Borough saved for Engineering costs. Manager Sterner explained $15,000.00 was saved for this. Trish asked if the house will come down right away once the judgement is made at the hearing. Manager Sterner explained the judge may not make a determination right away and the Borough is in the process of getting an updated quote from the Engineer to determine any extra fees. Greg Strubinger explained the Borough has already spent $7,500.00 to clean out the house. Trish asked what does it mean to be cited and how often was it done. Greg Strubinger explained the property was cited for disrepair. The water and sewer were turned off and the house was condemned. He explained he wasn't sure how often the enforcement took place. Manager Sterner explained every time the property sold or changed owners, the enforcement process starts over again like it's day one.

Public Hearing

Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance- The current draft will be up for public discussion at the Public Hearing during the August 8, 2024 Borough Council meeting.

SALDO-Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

Banning Subdivision Final Plans dated August 25, 2022 (revised July 12, 2024)- All of the conditions have been met as per the letter dated August 11, 2023 to the Banning's. County Planning Commission requested Borough Council make a formal motion at their meeting approving the final plans with no conditions. Jim Thorpe Planning Commission reviewed the plans and recommended Borough Council approve them as well.

Action

The following items were reviewed:

Kubishin Request-School Supply Donation- Amy Kubishin attended the meeting to discuss with Borough Council a school supply donation drive. She explained other surrounding communities currently do this and distribute the supplies to students in need. She said she hopes to see this supply drive continue to get bigger and better in the future. The Diligent Fire Company has already donated $250.00 towards the school supply drive. The have been a few other smaller donations as well. The plan is to distribute the supplies the week before school starts at the Diligent Fire Company. Greg Strubinger and Connor Rodgers thanked Amy for organizing the school supply drive.

Memorial Park Project-Construction Bids Received – Bryan Smith from Barry Isett attended the meeting to discuss the three (3) bids that were received. LB/DB Construction submitted the lowest base bid at $396,285.00. There are nine (9) additional alternates that can be included. Alternate 1 through 3 include reinstallation of certain equipment. Alternate 4 is for additional lighting. Alternate 5 is for additional ADA walkways. Alternates 6 through 8 would deduct some items from the original project specs. Alternate 9 is for ADA parking mill overlay. There is currently $432,561.00 in funding for this project. This funding would cover the cost of the Base Bid and Alternates 1, 5, and 9. Bryan suggested that DCNR be contacted to match additional funding already in place to be able to selected all of the add on Alternates. This project will not affect the Festival of Trees held in the park.

Council Meeting Minutes from July 11, 2024

Expenditures from All Funds as Presented

Treasurer's Report

Resolution 2024-16 Fee Schedule – Updates include raising the daily fee for a parking spot from $10.00 to $20.00 and updating the Sewage Enforcement Officer fees.

Resolution 2024-17 Addressing to Comply with Carbon County 911 Public Safety System – The new address is for the garage that is next to the Stabin Museum. It was discovered that it did not have an official address when the property owner requested water service to the garage.

Resolution 2024-18 2024 Community Development Block Grant – The Resolution is a new requirement by the state in order to apply for CBDG funding.

2023 CDBG Cooperative Agreement – This is an agreement between the Borough and the County, as the County is the administrator through DCED of the funding. This is annual grant funding for community development projects to primarily benefit low to moderate income residents.

LSA Monroe Grant-Electronic Message Boards & Speed Notification Signs purchase approval $66,629.46- The Borough was awarded this grant in 2023 for two (2) additional electronic message boards and five (5) speed notification signs.

Police Vehicle Lease Purchase – The Police Department will be getting a 2024 Chevy Tahoe delivered by the end of the month, dependent upon the finalization of the lease agreement. Police Chief Schatz explained this is to replace the 2013 Explorer. The Explorer will be used as a spare vehicle.

Cyber Insurance Policy – Two quotes were received. One from HISCOX, who the Borough was using, and one from Houston Casualty. Houston Casualty came in lower. Due to the policy end date of July 31st, the Administrative Committee approved the Houston Casualty policy. This will need to be ratified at next week's meeting. Manager Sterner explained the cyber market is finally calming down.

2024 Computer Purchases – Money was budgeted this year for a new computer for the Administrative Assistant, three (3) desk top units for the Police Department, new printers for the Administrative Assistant and Utility Secretary, and four (4) battery backups.

NEPA Contracted Professional Services Renewal $6,750.00 – NEPA Business Technologies is the Borough's current IT company. This renewal includes 50 hours of contracted professional services. This was budgeted for.

Environmental Service Corp-Sludge Removal $5,200.00 ratify – 40,000 gallons of liquid sludge was removed over the period of four (4) days. Because this needed to be done prior to the August meeting, the Sewer Committee approved the removal. The Sewer Supervisor is looking into the possibility of bidding this out in the future.

Municibids Bids Received-Water Truck – The 2012 Ford F-450 Water Department truck is still up for bid on the Municibid website. Bidding ends on Monday.

Facilities Projects
Public Works Building

Bracy Payment Application #6 $106,829.64 – This Payment Application is for work completed and materials purchased from June 20th through July 20th.

KC Mechanical Payment Application #2 $9,036.83 – This Payment Application is for work completed and materials purchased from June 20th through July 20th.

United Inspection Services Invoice #25391 $1,260.00 – This invoice is for testing completed on July 24th, 25th, and 26th.

Requisition #7-Partial Payment for Work Completed 6/20/24-7/20/24 $117,126.47 – This includes Bracy Payment Application #6, KC Mechanical Payment Application #2, and United Inspection Services Invoice #25391.

Zurawa Invoice 1110-03 $2,507.50 – This is for site visits, administrative work, and meetings during the month of June done by Projects Manager Kevin Zurawa.

Zurawa Invoice 1110-04 $4,930.00 – This is for site visits, administrative work, and meetings during the month of July done by Projects Manager Kevin Zurawa.

Bracy Change Order #4 $0.00 – This change order was already approved last month, but was rewritten to be a no cost, adding additional days extension.

Reading Mechanical Change Order #2 $6,011.46 increase – This is for the cost to install a propane water heater due to revised plan drawings. Manager Sterner explained there are a few concerns that need to be answered and addressed before action can be taken on this change order.

An additional Change Order that came in late will need to be added to next week's agenda. It will be Bracy Change Order #7 for installing metal liner panel around posts or over the posts. Manager Sterner gave Borough Council an updated Contingency paper of the Public Works Garage Project. Ted LaRizzio asked why there is a 10% markup on the Change Orders. Manager Sterner explained it's standard and how contractors make their money. Greg Strubinger asked what was budgeted for the Public Works Garage Project. Manager Sterner explained the first page is budgeted funds and the second page is excess funds that haven't been utilized to date. The excess funds is currently being used for items not covered in the contract, such as the Project Manager.

Memorial Hall

Bognet Payment Application #6 $21,320.25 – This Payment Application is for work completed and materials purchased from June 20th through July 20th.

GR Noto Payment Application #6 $15,356.25 – This Payment Application is for work completed and materials purchased from June 20th through July 20th.

JBM Mechanical Payment Application #5 $65,085.81 – This Payment Application is for work completed and materials purchased from June 20th through July 20th.

Requisition #7-Partial Payment for Work Completed 6/20/24-7/20/24 $101,762.31 – This includes Bognet Payment Application #6, GR Noto Payment Application #6, and JBM Mechanical Payment Application #5.

Zurawa Invoice 1111-02 $2,337.50 – This is for site visits, administrative work, and meetings during the month of June done by Projects Manager Kevin Zurawa.

Zurawa Invoice 1111-03 $2,890.00 – This is for site visits, administrative work, and meetings during the month of July done by Projects Manager Kevin Zurawa.

Well Isolation Distance Exemption approval – This is for a property in the Borough with a malfunctioning septic system. A raised sand mound is needed and the only place to place it is less than 100 feet from the well. The Sewage Enforcement Officer has approved the exemption and requires Borough Council approval before getting DEP approval. If this doesn't get approved, the property would be condemned.

Zoning Hearing Board Seat – Larry Cinicola submitted a letter of interest for Andrew Robert's recently vacated regular seat. He currently holds an alternate seat.

Account #1789-Request to Waive Late Fees – The property owners mailed their payment in from their full-time residence (not in the Borough) and it was returned by the post office with a yellow sticker saying it was undeliverable. The property owners removed the yellow sticker and resent the payment. It was received by the Borough office after the due date. The property owner has never had a late payment to date.

Account #2853-Sewer Credit Request $303.17 – The property owner's hot water heater broke and the water that leaked from it never made it into the sewer system.

Account #1300-Sewer Credit Request $62.17 – The property owner's hose burst and the water that leaked from the hose never made it into the sewer system.

Account#6815-Sewer Credit Request $56.96 – The property owner's dog chewed the hose and the water that leaked from the hose never made it into the sewer system.

Utility Rate Change Report (1)

Exoneration Request

NONE

Committees

Memorial Hall New Phone System – Secretary Klotz explained she's hopeful Borough Council had enough time to review and digest all of the phone system quotes and are ready to make a determination. There was no Work Session Meeting in July to discuss, hence it being on the Work Session Agenda tonight. Greg Strubinger asked how soon should action be taken. Secretary Klotz explained the sooner the better. This way the office staff and Police Department can get used to the new system before moving over to Memorial Hall. Greg Strubinger asked what company the Borough is leaning towards. It was explained Guyette was what was discussed before. At previous Borough Council meetings, there were representatives from Guyette, PenTeleData, and NEPA Business Technologies to speak about their phone systems their companies offer.

America 250PA Funding Application – Manager Sterner reported that none of the grant applications would be funded. This was not funded by the Federal government. The Borough had submitted applications for the Downtown Project and Electrical upgrades to the Asa Packer Mansion. Manager Sterner explained she will update Borough Council if any funding should come into fruition from America 250.

American Flag Donation Program – Greg Strubinger explained the Borough would like to look into accepting donations to purchase additional flags in the areas that used to have American flags. The Streets Supervisor counted the remaining poles in the Borough. There are 40 empty poles that would need flag posts. Some donations have already been received by residents. Council is asking for financial donations from residents so the same posts and flags can be ordered by the Borough's distributor. Greg Strubinger said with the 250th birthday of America coming up, it would be good to have this program in place and add additional flags within the Borough.

Asa Packer Mansion Financial & Inventory Audit Quotes – Manager Sterner explained to Borough Council there are additional Mansion items needed to be discussed during executive session. Mike Yeastedt asked what the price was for the Inventory Appraisal. Manager Sterner said it is on the third page of the packet. Mike Yeastedt asked if it was the proposal is from the same company the Borough normally uses. Manager Sterner explained this is the same company the Borough uses. Mike Yeastedt asked how often the inventory audit/appraisal is completed and when was the last time it was done. Manager Sterner explained it's normally completed every four (4) years and the last time it was completed was when Ava left in 2023. Greg Strubinger asked if the appraisers make recommendations if any of the items need

additional care and specialized cleaning. Manager Sterner explained the appraisers only determine the value of the items. Greg Strubinger explained some of the items need to be behind glass to preserve them and it should be determined which items. Ted LaRizzio asked if the Borough was looking to do this because of the separation from the Lion's Club. Manager Sterner explained that it was. Secretary Klotz explained the inventory audit/appraisal was completed last year because of the separation from the Mansion by Ava and the other guides. Mike Yeastedt said the cost for both audits would be more than $17,000.00. Manager Sterner explained the quotes were gathered at the request of Borough Council. Connor Rodgers agreed both audits should be performed. Joanne Klitsch asked where the money was coming from in order to complete these audits. Mike Yeastedt said in the past 75 years the Lion's Club had been overseeing operations, the Borough never audited them. Greg Strubinger asked if this would be paid for through Mansion funds. Secretary Klotz explained there is over $149,000.00 in the Mansion account. This includes the CD's that were recently cashed out by the Lion's Club and operating money they already turned over to the Borough. Any remaining money the Lion's Club has in their Mansion Operating Account would be used to pay any remaining bills. Once those bills have been paid, the Lion's Club would turn the remaining money over to the Borough.

Planning Commission Letter of Interest – Ted LaRizzio submitted a letter of interest. Secretary Klotz asked Borough Council not to make a decision at next week's meeting as Planning Commission will be interviewing Jennifer Murphy, who also submitted a letter of interest, at their upcoming meeting.

D&L JT Welcome Signage – Secretary Klotz explained that she and Mike Yeastedt have an upcoming Zoom meeting with Alice from D&L to discuss funding options for the remaining directional signage around the Borough. The potential funding would also require a match. Connor Rodgers said he remembers this being discussed a few months back, but it did not require a match. Secretary Klotz explained this was the T-Mobile Grant and it does not require a match. The thought with that grant was to wrap all of the welcome and directional signage with vinyl throughout the Borough. Manager Sterner asked what the grant could be used for. Secretary Klotz explained it could be used for various community projects. Manager Sterner said the T-Mobile Grant would be a good funding source for the audio and projector system at Memorial Hall.

Administration
Occupational Tax Exoneration Form – The updated form no longer requires the resident requesting the exoneration to get the form notarized. Trish Spillman, who is the Borough's Tax Collector, requested this change. Solicitor Nanovic reviewed the request and confirmed the form did not need to be notarized.

Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)
High Street Fencing – Manager Sterner explained the Streets Supervisor obtained three quotes. Mike Yeastedt said the Borough should consider looking into gates if going through all of this trouble. Manager Sterner explained the quotes look like it's for permanent fencing. Of the three quotes, one looks like it includes one gate, one looks like it includes two gates, and the last looks like it includes no gates. Borough Council requested an update to the quotes to include two gates and sketches.

Police
County Opioid Settlement Fund grant funding-National Night Out – Police Chief Schatz explained National Night Out would be going back to being held in Memorial Park due to the Playground Project not taking place. The Police Department received $1,100.00 in donations. After paying for the DJ and a few other items, the remaining money was used for prizes for the kids. There will be food trucks again at this year's event.

Police Employment – Police Chief Schatz explained two candidates took the Civil Service test and only one candidate showed up to take the physical test. This individual passed both tests. If Borough Council approves hiring of this new officer, the start date would be August 25th. He thanked the Civil Service Commission for everything they do to help get qualified people on board with the Borough's Police Department. The Commission is still waiting for the 501c3 to be approved for County shared consortium testing.

Buildings/Parks
Kemmerer Park Pavilion Project – The roof and floor of the Pavilion Project have been completed.

Emergency Services
NIMS update – Ted LaRizzio has completed his required NIMS courses. Unfortunately, due to Tom Chapman being absent, no update can be provided for him.

Old Business

The Borough is looking into painting Slow on the roads that were just recently paved from this year's Pacing Project.

Connor Rodgers explained the Police Committee will be addressing the High Street Road Directional Signage and the Administrative Committee will be addressing the Street Performers & Filming Requirements within the coming months.

Executive Session

NONE

Adjourn

MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Connor Rodgers to **adjourn the meeting.** There were no comments. Motion carries 6-0. The meeting ended at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Borough Secretary