JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION
August 7, 2025
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:33 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, and the two Police Officers who were shot earlier that day.

Roll Call of Members

Police Chief Schatz
Borough Manager Sterner
Borough Secretary Klotz
Solicitor Nanovic-absent
Mayor Cinicola
Joanne Klitsch
Mike Yeastedt
Tom Chapman
Ted LaRizzio
Sydney Wernett-absent
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 International Property Maintenance Board, term ending December 31, 2029. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

There is a vacancy on the Zoning Hearing Board. The Alternate seat is a three-year term expiring December 31, 2027. 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; just click on the Civic Ready button on the homepage to sign up.

Mayor's Report

NONE

Public Comment

Josh Finsel – He provided Borough Council with a handout of the Fire Department statistics. He highlighted the top responders to call from the Dillies. He felt Vince Yaich Jr. would be a good Fire Chief. Mike Yeastedt interjected and explained the members of Onoko are not allowed to respond to mutual aid, so the numbers are skewed on the handout.

Donna Donati – She discussed the need for a fire siren. She explained that residents on the East Side have no way of knowing if there is a fire, or an emergency, or a disaster. Greg Strubinger explained the old siren had stopped working many years ago. It was determined by the Fire Department the siren was not needed because of updated technology, such as pagers. She then discussed the need for a curfew. She explained the kids are out of school on Summer Break and there are some kids who are out at 11:30 p.m. and are trying to break into houses. The Police were called to handle the incident. Greg Strubinger explained she did the right thing by calling the Police. Chief Schatz explained the Borough does have a curfew in place and the Police Department is doing the best they can enforcing it.

Gail Solomon – She provided Borough Council with a handout that gave the background of Vince Yaich Jr. and Charles Sgrillo, who are interested in the vacant Fire Chief position. She felt Vince would be better qualified for Fire Chief. She asked Borough Council not to remove the Borough resident requirement to be Fire Chief. Greg Strubinger explained this is a personnel matter and normally would not allow for this discussion, but due to the peculiarity of the situation, he allowed it. He explained he didn't think it was fair to publicly criticize Charles when volunteers are hard to come by and prior to him submitting his interest in the Fire Chief position, no one else had expressed interest. Mike Yeastedt explained when the Chief

resigned, it was asked for each station make their recommendation for Chief. Onoko was the only station that submitted a recommendation; Diligent did not. He explained the EMS Committee discussed adding an additional Deputy Chief, which would be given to Vince and have Charles be the Chief and oversee the managerial duties. Charles would work alongside Vince until he would be ready to take over as Chief. He explained there is no recruitment program, retention program, Safety Officer, or post fire reviews for the Fire Department and the two stations don't train together. He explained there is more to the story than what is currently being told. Greg Strubinger explained in 2017, the two Fire Stations became the Municipal Fire Department with the intention of working together.

Ed Gula – He complimented Chief Schatz and the rest of the Police Department for a great National Night Out. He asked if the Paving Project was completed. Mike Yeastedt explained the Liquid Fuels portion is complete, with some minor repair work on Race Street. There is patching that needs to be completed throughout the Borough. Ed said the residents are complaining about the paving on the 400 block of Center Street. Mike Yeastedt explained there was reasonings behind only paving down the middle of the traveled roadway. In order to pave curb to curb, residents would need to repair their sidewalks and ADA accessible curbing would need to be installed. The water main also needs to be replaced in the future. Ed said the water main won't be installed for at least six or seven years. Mike Yeastedt explained most of the funding to pave the Borough owned streets comes from Liquid Fuels and the Borough is only issued so much money a year. Ed said Council should look at the process more for paving and budget more funds towards it. Connor Rodgers asked what the process the Borough has in selecting which roads take top priority for paving. Mike Yeastedt explained the Streets Department starts their review immediately after the current year's paving project and keeps checking off of the list after each road is paved. Connor Rodgers agreed with Ed and said multiple blocks in a row should be paved, not done in sections.

Public Hearing

Liquor License Transfer – There will be a Public Hearing at next week's regular meeting in regards to a liquor license being from Lehighton Borough to a 29 Broadway.

SALDO (Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance)

NONE

Action

The following items were reviewed:

Council Meeting Minutes from July 10, 2025

Expenditures from all Funds as presented – Manager Sterner explained this would be conditioned upon Barker & Barker completing the paving repairs that are needed.

Treasurer's Report

CDBG

Resolution 2025-13 2025 CDBG Grant – This Resolution allows the County to administer the Community Development Block Grant on behalf of the Borough. This is an annual item for the grant application process.

FY2025 General Application – The Borough will be requesting funding for the West Side Water Treatment Plant Equipment upgrades.

2024 Cooperation Agreement – Manager Sterner explained the agreement lags behind by about a year.

Resolution 2025-14 Liquor License Transfer – The owner of the Social Bird, 29 Broadway, is requesting approval of a liquor license transfer from Lehighton. There will be a Public Hearing at next week's regular meeting.

Resolution 2025-15 Third Party Inspections – This Resolution updates the allowable third-party inspectors. Advanced Code Consultants has been added and Blue Mountain Inspection Services was removed from the previous Resolution.

Alternate Health Inspections & Code Enforcement-Keystone Consulting Engineers – Due to be short-handed with one of the Parking & Code Enforcement Officers being out and the other position still vacant, the Borough needed temporary help with Health Inspections and Code Enforcement.

Water Treatment Plant-HACH Equipment Warranties & Maintenance Agreement – This is ratifying an approval for the three-year agreement for the various equipment purchased with CDBG funding.

Waste Water Treatment Plant Purchase Order-$10,706.00 for spare submersible mixer – Secretary Klotz explained the Sewer Department used the last spare submersible mixer. She explained the treatment plant needs to have spare parts on hand in order to properly operate.

Facilities Project
Public Works Building

Larry McCullion & Son's Certificate of Substantial Completion – This officially declares their portion of the project sufficiently completed.

Larry McCullion & Son's Payment Application #10-$16,042.50 – This is for work completed and materials purchased through May 31, 2025.

KC Mechanical Certificate of Substantial Completion – This officially declares their portion of the project sufficiently completed.

KC Mechanical Payment Application #10-$31,500.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased through June 20, 2025.

Reading Mechanical Payment Application #10-$69,300.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased through July 19, 2025.

Bracy Payment Application #19-$182,293.70 – This for work completed and materials purchased through July 31, 2025.

Requisition #20-Partial Payment for Work Completed $299,136.20 – This includes Larry McCullion & Son's Payment Application #10, KC Mechanical Payment Application #10, Reading Mechanical Payment Application #10, and Bracy Payment Application #19.

United Inspection Services Invoice #25957 $3,150.00 – This for testing that was completed in July 2025.

Zurawa Invoice #1110-14-$4,080.00 – This is for administrative work, site visits, and meetings during June 2025.

Zurawa Invoice #1110-15-$4,760.00 – This is for administrative work, site visits, and meetings during July 2025.

Larry McCullion & Son's Change Order #13 (USDA #10) $700.00 decrease-electrical work bid on but not installed

Memorial Hall

Bognet Certificate of Substantial Completion – This officially declares their portion of the project sufficiently completed.

GR Noto Certificate of Substantial Completion – Secretary Klotz explained this was not included in with Borough Council's packet. Greg Strubinger asked if there is a move in date yet. Manager Sterner explained the last item needed to obtain a certificate of occupancy is the BMS system. The hope is to be in the hall by September.

Reading Mechanical Certificate of Substantial Completion – This officially declares their portion of the project sufficiently completed.

Bognet Change Order #25-$2,732.41 for siding patches – This is for patching around three exhaust ducts. This work should have been completed by JBM Mechanical. This will be withheld from JBM Mechanical's retainage.

Bognet Change Order #26-$2,387.31 for removal of abandoned vent stack – This work should have been completed by JBM Mechanical. This will be withheld from JBM Mechanical's retainage.

Bognet Change Order #27-$5,590.21 increase for interior and exterior door changes – Secretary Klotz explained she is waiting on additional information from Spillman Farmer Architects on this change order.

Zurawa Invoice #1111-13-$2,167.50 – This is for administrative work, site visits, and meetings during June 2025.

Zurawa Invoice #1111-14-$2,465.00 – This is for administrative work, site visits, and meetings during July 2025.

Memorial Park Project – The poured surfaces, sensory maze, and swings have been completed. The contractor has not submitted an updated schedule. Greg Strubinger asked what the status was for Phase III of the project. Manger Sterner explained the Borough will be applying for the LSA Statewide Grant for additional funding.
Phase I

LB Construction Payment Application #7-$10,431.00 – This for work completed and materials purchased through July 18, 2025.

Phase II

LB Construction Payment Application #7-$12,042.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased through July 18, 2025.

Barry Isett & Associates Invoice #202320-$3,588.80 – This is for administrative work, site visits, and coordinating with the Borough on the contractor's schedule and reasons for delay of the project.

Center Avenue Water Main Project
Entech Engineering Invoice #0097335-$6,865.45 – This is for professional services from May 31, 2025 through June 27, 2025.

High Street Wall Project
Axis Stabilization Change Order #4-$27,767.00 – This is for vegetation work from July 1, 2025 through July 31, 2025. They are working on finalizing paving in this section. Originally Barker & Barker were to complete the paving, but they have since declined. The remaining money will be used towards repointing. The Borough will be applying for the Multimodal Grant again for another phase of the wall.

Trick or Treat-Thursday, October 30th from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. – Mayor Cinicola explained he listened to the resident's feedback on previous years Trick or Treat nights. Wednesday nights are garbage nights and the time change is due to parents not getting home from work for the start. There is no rain date.

Olde Time Christmas – Manager Sterner explained James Dougher will be at next week's meeting to answer any questions Borough Council may have. There are no changes from last year's event.

Gasker RFA-Veteran's Dinner – Greg Strubinger explained that one of the focuses in the park renovations was to give back to the veterans. The hope is to make the dinner an annual event at Memorial Hall. The kitchen is in the process of being fixed. Manager Sterner explained Dave Gasker may want to have a backup plan as none of the equipment currently keeps hot temperatures. It's in the process of getting fixed. Greg Strubinger requested this dinner be considered a Borough event as it is organized b volunteers. There were questions from residents asking if the hall will be available for weddings, for voting, and the food pantry.

Exoneration Request

Monthly Report (1) – This report was submitted for review.

Committees

Administration

PMVB-attending August 14th meeting

Abdalla RFA-attending August 14th meeting – Mr. Abdalla was not happy with Borough Council's decision last month. They denied his request to move a handicap parking space so he may install a driveway on his property along West Broadway. There are site distance concerns for a state highway occupancy permit.

Cyber Insurance Policy – Secretary Klotz explained the annual premium decreased by $5.00 from last year.

Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)

Municipal Waste Vacant Unit Options – Manager Sterner explained this is an update from many months ago. This was researched to see if other surrounding municipalities have Ordinances or previsions for waiving garbage fees for vacant properties. The Borough would spend a large amount of money monitoring and verifying vacant properties. This had been on old business. Borough Council will need to determine how they would like to address the matter.

Water Tank Appropriations Submittal-Not Selected – The Borough had made it through the first round of consideration, but did not make it through the second round of consideration.

Roberts-57 High Street Water/Sewer Fees – Andrew Roberts will attend next weeks meeting to discuss further.

Garcia RFA-Water Meter – Manager Sterner explained the property owner purchases blighted properties and flips them. He bought this property from the woman who owns 204 Center Avenue. The previous owner took all of the copper wire and piping, as well as the water meter. He will now need to replace all of that. The owner is requesting assistance for Borough Council to waive the fee for a new water meter. Greg Strubinger explained he is afraid if Council approves this request, it will set a precedence. Connor Rodgers agreed. Mike Yeastedt asked if the owner would like a payment plan. Tom Chapman agreed with Greg Strubinger and Connor Rodgers.

WTP Doors & Canopy Project – This is a budgeted item and is recommended to accept the lowest bid.

Streets Department F550 – Manager Sterner explained the truck finally went to the body shop. She was unsure if a Resolution would be needed. Depending on the financing, that will determine if it is on next week's agenda.

Police

Vehicle & Traffic Ordinance-draft proposed amendments for one-way streets, stop signs, and 15-minute parking space – Manager Sterner explained after Council's full review, it would go to action to authorize advertising for consideration. Mike Yeastedt asked if this amendment eliminates the stop signs on 5th Street, but adds them to Lehigh Street at that intersection. Chief Schatz explained the stop signs on 5th Street would stay and the stops signs will be added to Lehigh Street.

Catholic Churches of JT RFA – 20-minute parking space – Father Minner requested this for the parishioners as it is busy in the area and it will make it easier for them to stop at the church.

Connor Rodgers explained he wanted to provide an update on the Request for Action from last month about removing the no parking signs from the odd side of the 400 block of North Street. He is meeting with Chief Schatz tomorrow to review the area and look into curb painting in the future.

Police Department Ordinance-Update Staff Positions – This update includes the new corporal position, change from Patrolman to Patrol Officer, and to include the Detective position as it was never included before.

Gavornick RFA-Curfew – Mr. Gavornick is requesting curfew be implemented again.

JTPD Personnel-Parking & Code Enforcement – There is nothing for the August agenda, but looking to have a candidate for the September meeting.

Buildings/Parks

Pest Control – Secretary Klotz explained she reached out to three different companies for quotes for pest control at the new Public Works Garage and Memorial Hall and only received back two. Ehrlich is the lowest bidder. It is recommended to at least have pest control for Memorial Hall if Council intends on utilizing the kitchen there. Tom Chapman explained it is good practice to have pest control.

Memorial Hall Weekly Cleaning Proposals – Manager Sterner explained four different cleaning companies came and looked at the space in Memorial Hall and only received quotes from three of them. It is recommended to go with the low bid. Tom Chapman noted there was a big discrepancy in pricing between all three. Manager Sterner explained each company quoted in different manners; one quoted by the square footage and another quoted by the number of hours it would take to clean the hall. These quotes do not include cleaning the kitchen area.

Kemmerer Park Lease Agreement Addendum – Manager Sterner explained the only item changing is the addendum extending the time of the lease. Greg Strubinger explained the responsibility of the Borough has expanded at the park over the years. He would like to see what funds have been expended over the last five to ten years to determine what funds need to be budgeted for in the next two years.

Asa Packer Mansion

Main Street Matters Grant-Electrical Work and HVAC – Secretary Klotz explained the Borough was only awarded $100,000.00 through the 2024 LSA Monroe Grant. That is not enough to fund the project. The electrical work is an eligible project for the Main Street Matters Grant. Two of associates from Barry Isett will be walking the Mansion tomorrow to ensure the cost estimate of $165,000.00 is accurate. A resolution for the grant will be included on next weeks agenda and the grant application is due at the end of the month.

Rack Cards-Photographer – PMVB will have a photographer take updated photos of the inside of the Mansion for the rack cards that Borough Council approved earlier this year. The Borough will get the rights to the pictures. The Borough could utilize the photos for postcards to sell in the gift shop. The current 5-pack of postcards is a good seller as the public is not allowed to take photos inside of the mansion during their tour.

501c3 Update – The Committee will be having a Teams meeting with Robb Consulting on starting up a 501c3 for the Mansion.

Behrens RFA-wedding photos on grounds – The request is to allow wedding photos be taken on the grounds on Saturday, August 23rd.

Mansion Personnel – The Committee interviewed candidates for the Tour Guide position and are recommending three people.

Emergency Services
Gavornick RFA-Fire Siren – Mr. Gavornick is requesting the Borough apply for grant funding through the County or State for a new fire siren on the East Side of town.

JTFD Personnel-Chief – The committee needs to further discuss this and meet with the captains.

Planning Commission
Kanick Minor Subdivision Plans dated 4.2.25 (revised 6.17.25) – Planning Commission reviewed the revised Kanick Minor Subdivision plans at their July meeting. They will not make any recommendations to Borough Council until County Planning has had a chance to review the revised plans and make note any corrections needing to be made per the SALDO ordinance.

Old Business

Executive Session

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 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Assistant Borough Manager/Secretary