JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
December 30, 2024
END OF YEAR MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Strubinger with the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for the armed forces, first responders, and their families, and to President Jimmy Carter, who recently passed away, and his family.

Roll Call of Members

Police Chief Schatz-absent	Mayor Cinicola-absent	Mike Yeastedt
Borough Manager Sterner	Connor Rodgers	Ted LaRizzio
Borough Secretary Klotz	Tom Chapman-absent	Sydney Wernett
Solicitor Nanovic	Joanne Klitsch	Greg 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 Zoning Hearing Board (Alternate seat). This is a three-year term that expires December 31, 2027. Anyone interested in this seat should 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

NONE

Action

MOTION by Joanne Klitsch, second by Connor Rodgers to **adjourn the meeting into Executive Session for Personnel and Litigation.** There were no comments. Motion carries 6-0. The meeting paused at 6:33 p.m.

MOTION by Sydney Wernett, second by Connor Rodgers to **resume the meeting.** There were no comments. Motion carries 6-0. The meeting resumed at 7:49 p.m.

MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Connor Rodgers to **approve Expenditures from all Funds as presented.** There were no comments. Motion carries 6-0.

MOTION by Connor Rodgers, second by Sydney Wernett to **adopt the 2025 Budgets conditioned upon grant funding being utilized for those expenditures for barricades and traffic control, the administrative staff pay rates not to be included and to address the pay rates at the January meeting, and include the Tax Levy Resolution.** Greg Strubinger explained there is no proposed increase to the General Fund. He thanked all those who helped in preparing the General Fund to keep it from increasing. He explained there will be no increase to the garbage rates, as the contract with Tamaqua Transfer was finalized at the beginning of the year and the increase was made then. There will be a 5% increase in water and sewer billing, as they both tie in together with the treatment process. The average water billing increase will go from $60.40 per month to $63.42 per month. The average sewer billing will

increase will go from $43.46 to $45.53 per month. Between the two, there will be an average increase of $5.19 per month. These increases help keep the plants operating and keeps them Borough owned, rather than privatized. In the Water Fund, there is a debt service of $2.8 million. The loan is through Pennvest and was used for improvements to the Water System. As part of the agreement, rate increases would be utilized to help pay off the loan and for continuing capital improvements. The loan matures in 2036. In the Sewer Fund, there is a debt service of $5 million. The Borough upgraded it's Sewer Plant a few years ago and received $5 million in grant funding and $5 million in loans. Like the Pennvest loan for the Water Fund, the agreement would be to raise rates to help pay off the loan and for the continuation of capital improvements. Greg Strubinger went on to explain within the General Fund, there are expenditures for barricades and traffic control, that are normally covered by grant funding. These expenses should not burden the residents. If grant funding does not cover these items, they should not be paid for with tax dollars. There was a roll call vote:

Joanne Klitsch – yes
Connor Rodgers – yes
Mike Yeastedt – yes
Sydney Wernett – yes
Ted LaRizzio – yes
Greg Strubinger – yes

Motion carries 6-0.

MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Connor Rodgers to **approve Resolution 2024-26 Tax Levy.** This Resolution declares there will be no tax increase to the General Fund in 2025. Motion carries 6-0.

MOTION by Connor Rodgers, second by Ted LaRizzio to **approve the wage portion only of the Teamster's contract pending final review.** There were no comments. Motion carries 6-0.

MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Joanne Klitsch to **approve Resolution 2024-25 Fee Schedule for 2025 conditioned upon reducing the water tap-on fee to $6,000.00.** Connor Rodgers explained he thought it was discussed at the beginning of the year that there would be no changes to the water tap-on fee, but it's been raised from $6,000.00 to $6,250.00. Manager Sterner asked Mike Yeastedt his opinion on the increase to the water tap-on fee. He said he remembered the discussion earlier in the year to keep the water tap-on fees the same for a few years. Motion carries 6-0.

MOTION by Connor Rodgers, second by Sydney Wernett to **appeal the decision by Judge Matika regarding the High Street Steps.** There were no comments. Motion carries 5-1, with Mike Yeastedt opposed.

MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Connor Rodgers to **authorize the Solicitor to send a proposal regarding the Sargent case.** There were no comments. Motion carries 6-0.

Greg Strubinger then explained to Solicitor Nanovic the Administrative Committee has been reviewing documents to draft a Street Performer Ordinance and asked what would the next steps be. Solicitor Nanovic explained that the committee could send the information over to him whenever it's ready.

Trish Spillman, who arrived late to the meeting, asked about the status of the High Street Steps. She asked if the appeal stays as is, will the steps stay closed. She then asked Borough Council to park on High Street and then walk either up or down the road to get to Broadway. She explained it's dangerous, especially walking down the road, and urged Borough Council to work on getting the steps opened. Greg Strubinger explained it's Borough Council's job to ensure everyone's safety.

Adjourn

MOTION by Sydney Wernett, second by Mike Yeastedt to **adjourn the meeting.** There were no comments. Motion carries 6-0. The meeting ended at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Borough Secretary