JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION
February 6, 2025
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:31 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 victims and their family members of the recent plane crashes.

Roll Call of Members

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

Announcements

Greg Strubinger explained the meeting had to be moved to the Borough office due to the snowstorm closing the school.

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.

The Borough was awarded a $150,000.00 DEP Growing Greener grant for the Silk Mill Run Dam Removal Project. The Borough partnered with the Wildland's Conservancy and has been working with them since the start of the project.

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

Chief Schatz explained Borough Council should have the 2024 Annual Statistics in their packets.

Greg Strubinger thanked the first responders, Police Department, and Fire Department for responding to the fire on Center Street two weeks ago. He thanked Detective Marzen and Officer Pruitte for rescuing one of the dogs inside. He thanked Lehighton Ambulance and the other municipalities for their mutual aid response. Lastly, he thanked the residents and businesses who stepped up to raise money for the victims of the fire.

Public Comment

Lynn Llewellyn, Jim Pompa, Jimmy Jo Yaich, and Francine Cooper – They discussed the proposed Vehicle & Traffic Amendment. The amendment would change the last free parking block on Broadway and Trapp Alley to paid parking. They are concerned about being able to find places to park, as well as any visitors they may have come to visit them. They asked Borough Council to reconsider this portion of the amendment, offer purchasing guest passes online, and parking passes for business owners along Broadway and West Broadway.

SALDO (Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance)

NONE

Action

The following items were reviewed:

Council Meeting Minutes from January 2, 2025

Council Meeting Minutes from January 9, 2025

Expenditures from all Funds as presented – Manager Sterner explained there is a bill for propane. That is for the new Public Works Garage.

Treasurer's Report – The report was not ready for the meeting.

Ordinance 2025-01 Vehicle & Traffic Amendment: Additional Parking on Broadway, Parking Violation Fines, Vehicle Registrations/Inspections, and Jaywalking – This amendment will include additional paid parking on what was the free block on Broadway, increasing parking violation fines, include being able to ticket for past due vehicle registrations, inspections, and Jaywalking. The amendment has already been advertised.

Downtown Parking Modification Letter – This letter was drafted by Connor Rodgers. The letter is to notify the residents that would be affected by the Vehicle & Traffic Ordinance Amendment.

Resolution 2025-02 PA Municipal Contribution – This resolution must be written and approved each time the Teamster's contract is renewed.

Inn at Jim Thorpe Conditional Use Application extension request – The Inn at Jim Thorpe has clarified they intend to use their proposed parking lot for public use. The application will need to go before Planning Commission again for their review and recommendations to Borough Council. The Inn has requested an extension for their Conditional Use application through May 31, 2025.

82 East 3rd Street-Assignment of Right to Purchase Addendum – The original agreement that was signed last year had timelines for work to be completed at the property. Due to the property needing to be reassessed, the work required in the agreement was not completed. This is an updated agreement now that the County Tax Assessment office reassessed the property.

2025 Chemical Bids-authorization to advertise for bids – These are annual bid specs are for the various chemicals the Water Treatment Plant and Waste Water Treatment Plant use throughout the year. Once advertised, bids will be accepted through March 27th and awarded in April.

Allied Control Services Water Treatment Plant Service Contract $5,343.00 – This is an annual maintenance contract for the SCADA system.

Civic Ready All-Call Renewal $5,040.00 – This is an annual agreement for the Borough's All-Call system. Manager Sterner explained the renewal amount is more than what was budgeted for. The All-Call system is needed to get important information out to residents.

Streets Department F550 Financing – Manager Sterner explained the truck won't be completed until July. Financing the truck cannot be completed until then. This will need to be moved to Old Business on the agenda.

High Street Wall Project
Entech Engineering Invoice #0094048 $285.00 – This is for Professional Services from October 26th through November 29th. It includes project management, on-site meetings, client communication, communication with contractor, and site observations for Phase I.

Entech Engineering Invoice #0094049 $19,648.15 – This is for Professional Services from October 26th through November 29th. It includes project management, client communication, Phase II design, develop Exhibit for Easement Agreement, communicate with property owners, on-site visits, communication with contractor, and review of grant budget.

Entech Engineering Invoice #0094669 $6,834.83 – This is for Professional Services from November 30th through December 27th. It includes project management, Phase II coordination, review of grant budget, communication with contractor, client communication, and project closeout. Manager Sterner explained all three invoices are within the project scope and grant.

Axis Change Order #2 $116,000.00 increase – This is for the extra section of the wall that was repaired due to having additional grant funding left. It had to be submitted as a change order due to not being in the original bid specs.

Axis Stabilization Payment Application #3 $204,375.00 – This will be the final payment application. Final closeout documents have been received.

Facilities Projects
Public Works Building
Larry McCullion & Son's Payment Application #7 $27,000.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from December 20, 2024 through January 20, 2025.

KC Mechanical Payment Application #6 $64,313.17 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from December 20, 2024 through January 20, 2025.

Bracy Payment Application #13 $121,933.50 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from December 20, 2024 through January 20, 2025.

Reading Mechanical Payment Application #5 – Manager Sterner explained she is waiting for a corrected payment application from Reading Mechanical, as the one originally submitted had mistakes on it.

Spillman Farmer Invoice #8121.22.21 $15,402.93 – This is for Professional Services from October 1, 2024 through November 8, 2024. It includes general project administration, client communication, contractor communication, on-site meetings, and virtual meetings.

Spillman Farmer Invoice #8121.22.22 $10,450.00 – This is for Professional Services from December 9, 2024 through January 12, 2025. It includes additional services of the civil engineer, Highway Occupancy Permit, and additional permit for directional drilling.

Requisition #14-Partial Payment for Work Completed – This includes Larry McCullion & Son's Payment Application #7, KC Mechanical Payment Application #6, Bracy Payment Application #13, Reading Mechanical Payment Application #5, Spillman Farmer Invoice #8121.22.21, and Spillman Farmer Invoice #8121.22.22.

United Inspection Services Invoice #25681 $2,329.00 – This is for testing completed during the month of January. All utilized testing and inspection fees allotted in the grant have been used. Any additional testing will be paid for through the Buildings Account.

Zurawa Invoice #1110-09 $6,502.50 – This is for administrative work, site visits and meetings during the month of January.

Spillman Farmer Amendment to Professional Services #4 $9,900.00 – This is for providing domestic water service for the new garage.

Larry McCullion & Son's Change Order #9 (USDA #7)-no cost time extension (ratify) – This was previously approved by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. This is to extend the contract timeline in order to complete the garage construction due to weather delays and waterline repair.

Larry McCullion & Son's Change Order #11 (USDA #8) $5,540.00 credit-well connection – This is a change in the plans for the sourcing of water from a well to the Borough's water main.

KC Mechanical Change Order #2 (USDA #2)-no cost time extension (ratify) – This was previously approved by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. This is to extend the contract timeline in order to complete the garage construction due to weather delays and waterline repair.

Reading Mechanical Change Order #4 (USDA #2)-no cost time extension (ratify) – This was previously approved by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. This is to extend the contract timeline in order to complete the garage construction due to weather delays and waterline repair.

Memorial Hall
GR Noto Payment Application #12 $132,093.01 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from December 20, 2024 through January 20, 2025.

Bognet Payment Application #13 $429,927.25 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from December 20, 2024 through January 20, 2025.

Reading Mechanical Payment Application #8 $37,810.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from November 20, 2024 through January 20, 2025.

Spillman Farmer Invoice #1111-08 $11,450.36 – This is for Professional Services from October 1, 2024 through November 8, 2024. It includes general project administration, client communication, contractor communication, on site meetings, and virtual meetings.

Requisition #13-Partial Payment for Work Completed – This includes GR Noto Payment Application #12, Bognet Payment Application #13, Reading Mechanical Payment Application #13, and Spillman Farmer Invoice #8122.22.23.

Zurawa Invoice #1111-08 $5,100.00 – This is for administrative work, site visits, and meetings during the month of January.

Reading Mechanical Change Order #3 (USDA #3)-no cost time extension (ratify) – This was previously approved by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. This is to extend the contract timeline in order to complete Memorial Hall construction due to asbestos and mold abatement and rock removal below the lower-level slab.

Bognet Change Order #17 (USDA #16) $12,344.04 increase-changes for studs, drywall, and ceiling (ratify) – This was previously approved by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. This is for changes in the plans for studs, drywall, and ceiling.

HUD Funding $1,468,000.00-Pay down Interim Loan – Secretary Klotz explained she submitted all of the required paperwork to draw down all of the HUD funding. To date, the Borough has only received $468,000.00 of the $1,468,000.00. This money is to be used to help pay back the interim loan.

Memorial Park Project
Phase I

LB Construction Payment Application #1 $16,906.50 (ratify) – This was previously approved by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. This is for work completed and materials purchased from December 2024 through January 10, 2025.

LB Construction Payment Application #2 $3,240.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 10, 2025 through February 3, 2025.

DCED Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Time Extension Request to June 30, 2026 – The grant expires in June of this year. The park will be done before then tentatively.

DCED LSA Monroe Time Extension Request to June 30, 2026 – The grant expires in June of this year. The park construction will be completed before then tentatively.

Phase II
LB Construction Payment Application #1 $18,796.50 (ratify) – This was previously approved by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. This is for work completed and materials purchased from December 2024 through January 10, 2025.

LB Construction Change Order #1 $11,000.00 increase (Add Alternate #3-Reinstall Salvageable Playground Equipment) – This was an Add Alternate that was approved in 2024 that needs to be approved as a change order.

LB Construction Change Order #2 $94,000.00 increase (Add Alternate #4-Lighting) – This was an Add Alternate that was approved in 2024 that needs to be approved as a change order.

LB Construction Payment Application #2 $40,230.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 10, 2025 through February 3, 2025.

DCED Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Time Extension Request to June 30, 2026 – The grant expires in June of this year. The park construction will be completed before then tentatively.

Blight Remediation Project
Barry Isett Invoice #0195596 $4,100.56 – This is for professional services from November 3, 2024 through November 30, 2024.

Barry Isett Invoice #0196866 $5,420.00 – This is for professional services from January 1, 2025 through January 31, 2025.

DCED Time Extension Request to June 30, 2026 – The grant expires in June of this year. The demolition will be completed before then tentatively.

Manager Sterner explained the contractor is not ready yet to submit a payment application at this time. Greg Strubinger asked the Borough can file a lien against the property. Manager Sterner explained the Borough could.

Jim Thorpe Little League Parade-April 26th – The route will be the same as last year. The parade will kick off at 11:00 a.m.

Hein RFA-Trash Refund – The property owner is requesting a refund on her trash billing because she claims her garbage was missed three weeks, but the Borough was not notified about it until a few weeks after it happened. Tamaqua Transfer was contacted after the request was submitted, and it was determined the trash was not available to be collected.

Account #9429-Request to waive late fees – The property owner mailed his utility payment on January 11th. The Borough office did not receive the payment until January 16th.

Account #5290-Sewer Credit Request $10.14 – The request was made due to a burst pipe from extremely cold temperatures.

Account #0255-Sewer Credit Request $114.92 – The request was made due to a burst pipe from extremely cold temperatures.

Account #2875-Sewer Credit Request $170.42 – The request was made due to a burst pipe from extremely cold temperatures.

Account #7323-Sewer Credit Request $69.14 – The request was made due to a burst pipe from extremely cold temperatures.

New Utility Liens to File (11)

Exoneration Request

NONE

Committees

General Capital Reserve Fund-authorize PLGIT savings account – There is enough money in the current fund to open a PLGIT account. PLGIT has the best interest rates.

Parking Lot Tax – Manager Sterner explained information went out for Borough Council to review. This was discussed with the County previously. Borough Council will need to decide how they would like to enact the tax. In addition to the tax, a license will be needed in order to operate a parking lot, so there will be a Zoning overlay with this. Mike Yeastedt said the Borough could be opening a can of worms depending on the parking lot. Manager Sterner said she would get the Zoning Officer to start working on a list of all of the parking lots throughout the Borough and their uses.

Britalian's Request-filming promotion – Connor Rodger's requested this item be placed on this month's agenda. This filming company in based in Europe and they pick towns in every state they would like to feature. Greg Strubinger explained due to the amounts of people who already come to visit and the Borough not being able to handle that many people, it would be detrimental to advertise the town any more.

PA Broadband Initiative – Secretary Klotz discussed the Statewide Broadband expansion plan. Pennsylvania is receiving federal funding to expand broadband access to underserved areas. There will be two grant application periods. Once awarded, the expansion project will take approximately four years to complete.

Increase in Borough Official Compensation Maximums – The state recently passed new legislation that increases the set amount of compensation Borough Officials are allowed to receive.

Borough Apparel – Borough Council was provided with various shirt options and three logos to choose from for the Borough Administrative staff and Borough Council to wear. It was determined to purchase navy polo shirts, long or short sleeves, with the Borough Seal logo. A purchase order will be created for Borough Council to approve at next week's meeting.

PSAB Hometown Heros Banner Honor Program – This year's theme for the PSAB Annual Conference is Hometown Heroes. The Association is requesting Boroughs submit pictures of their Hometown Heroes to be displayed during the conference. The deadline to submit to PSAB is May 1st and there is no limit in the number of heroes submitted.

Igoe Recommendations – Manager Sterner explained she received an email from one of the Zoning Hearing Board members, James Igoe. He asked if a few ideas he thought of could be shared with Borough Council. He requested the pictures of the various Board members be posted to the Borough's website so residents can put a face to the name. He also suggested utilizing the Borough's All-Call

System for informing residents of the various Board vacancies. Manager Sterner explained the vacancies are posted on the Borough's website and Facebook page.

Jim Thorpe Birthday Celebration – James Dougher, who was in the audience, explained JTTA does not plan on having a large event this year. The current plan is to have a prayer and smudge ceremony. He said he will have an event request submitted for the March meeting to be approved by Borough Council.

The Outlander Film Production – A film company will be filming for a movie in the Borough this coming weekend overnight. They will be filming at various spots throughout the Borough and will have prop guns. Chief Schatz explained the request was submitted at the end of November and their filming was pushed back by a month.

Administration

Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)
Center Avenue Water Main Project – The Pennvest Funding has been approved. Part of the requirements for funding is the Borough must draft an Ordinance and draft a schedule to be advertised. Greg Strubinger asked if the project was being coordinated with PennDOT. Manager Sterner explained a Highway Occupancy Permit has been applied for, so she believes they would be aware of the project.

Waste Water Treatment Plant NPDES renewal – It was recently found out that DEP may be implementing new requirements in order to renew the NPDES permit. Manager Sterner explained she requested a proposal for Entech to review.

Public Services Employment – This item was discussed during Executive Session.

Municibid Listing Approval-Various Streets Department Items – There are various items the Streets Department no longer uses and would like to sell on Municibid. Included in the list are two antique spring rides from Memorial Park that Borough Council does not want included to be sold.

Silk Mill Run Restoration Project Update – Secretary Klotz explained for the Planning Phase of the project; all DEP permits for the dam removal have been secured. The expected grant closeout of this phase is expected to be completed by the end of March. The Borough secured $165,000.00 from National Fish & Wildlife and $150,000.00 from DEP in grant funding for the construction phase of the project. Construction is anticipated to start in Summer 2026.

CCTI Stormwater Cooperative Projects correspondence – CCTI approved the joint project at their JOC meeting. The school's Solicitor will draft an agreement with the neighboring property that needs work as well.

Police
One Way Traffic Pattern in Heights – Chief Schatz explained he is waiting to hear back from the new local PennDOT Manager to discuss being put permanently in place. He will also fill out a Special Event application for Fall Foliage weekends.

Police Employment
Establishment of Corporal Position – The addition of this position was budgeted for. The purpose of the position is to have additional supervision from 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. and to have a succession plan in place.

Approve Corporal Job Description – The corporal is to assist the Sargeant and to act in the capacity of the Sergeant in the absence of the Sargeant or Chief.

Approve notification to Civil Service Committee to begin process and testing – Chief Schatz explained in order to qualify for the Corporal position, one must be on the Police Department for a minimum of two years. Currently, there are four eligible Officers. The Officers must pass a written and oral exam.

Chief Schatz explained that he, the Sergeant, and Officer Kohler will be attending an events management class in March. They will also be taking an additional events course in June. They will also be taking an ICS 400 course.

Greg Strubinger discussed an article that was in the Times News announcing reopening Glenonoko. He requested that Representative Heffley and Senator Argall be contacted to discuss this further. There would be various items, especially emergency services, that need to be addressed.

Buildings/Parks
Lehigh Canal Recreation Commission Agreement – The multi-municipal agreement dictates how much each municipality contributes to the Commission, plus various other regulations. Mike Yeastedt asked about their budget. Manager Sterner explained they don't have a budget. Each municipality is required to have insurance on their portions of the D&L Trail.

Kemmerer Park Rentals – Manager Sterner explained she has recently been in contact with Jack Sterling to try and set up a meeting with the Kemmerer Park Association. There was a recent inquiry to rent the park for a wedding. The discussion needs to be had with the Association to find out who will handle requests for rentals.

Asa Packer Mansion
Lion's Club Financial Audit – Secretary Klotz explained the financial audit was completed. The audit was from the first six months of 2024. There were no discrepancies.

Water Meter Installation – Secretary Klotz explained there has never been a water meter installed at the Mansion. Installing one would ensure discovering a potential leak sooner.

Authorization to advertise for additional guides – Secretary Klotz explained most of the guides will be returning for the 2025 Operating Season. One will not be returning and another one will be leaving by August to attend college. She explained hiring five guides would make the Mansion fully staffed.

Emergency Services
Fire Department Account-Statement of Investment Policy – Mike Yeastedt explained the only changes to the policy is the effective date, allocation, and fixed income. This is all based on the financial recommendation from DCT.

Ted LaRizzio asked what can the Borough do to have PennDOT fix Center Avenue and the Liberties. He said that it really needs to be addressed. Manager Sterner suggested setting up a meeting with the State Reps and also discuss it with NEPA.

Old Business
NONE

Executive Session

Adjourn
MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Joanne Klitsch to **adjourn the meeting.** There were no comments. Motion carries 5-0. The meeting ended at 9:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Borough Secretary