JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION
March 6, 2025
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:38 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
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.

Street Sweeping will be from April 28th through May 9th. Days and locations will be posted on the website closer to the dates.

The 2025 Spring Tire and Electronics Recycling Event will be taking place on June 7th from 7:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Residents are asked to drop off their items no later than 11:15 a.m. as the recycling truck leaves promptly at 11:30 a.m.

The Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs (PSAB) Annual Conference theme is Hometown Heroes. Any residents interested in participating should submit pictures to the Borough office no later than April 25th.

Blue Ridge Fiber Upgrade – BRC sent a letter to the Borough explaining their upcoming plans to rebuild their entire internet service network. This won't start until the end of 2025 or beginning of 2026.

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

Patricia Brunson – She thanked Borough Council for finally taking down the house at 204 Center Avenue. She also explained she is trying to look for grant funding to construct a pedestrian bridge from the Heights to the East Side.

SALDO (Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance)

Dougherty Lot Consolidation – The lot consolidation consists of combing three lots, all owned by the same property owner, and making them into one large lot. Greg Strubinger asked if the entire application

is complete. Secretary Klotz explained everything that is required to be included with the application is there. Planning Commission has recommended Borough Council approve the lot consolidation. Manager Sterner said she will review the newly drafted deed to ensure nothing is missing from it.

Action

The following items were reviewed:

Jim Thorpe Birthday Celebration – James Dougher was in attendance from Jim Thorpe Tourism Agency (JTTA) and Charles Sgriollo from Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). James Dougher explained JTTA was planning on scaling back the Birthday Celebration to that of the 2023 Celebration. The celebration will start at 10:30 a.m. with a presentation of flower, singing of the National Anthem, drum music, hoop dance, smudge ceremony, recitation of the State Declaration by Representative Heffley, and closing remarks from Borough and State Officials. Charles Sgrillo explained the AAU will unveil the new informational kiosks and shield at the track and field statue. After the unveiling, there will be a gathering at the high school for appetizers and short video of Jim Thorpe being inducted into the AAU Middle Atlantic Hall of Fame. After the gathering, representatives from the AAU will take a trolley tour and have dinner at the Inn at Jim Thorpe.

Council Meeting Minutes from February 6, 2025

Council Meeting Minutes from February 13, 2025

Expenditures from all Funds as presented

Treasurer's Report

Resolution 2025-03 Housing Unit Numbering – Manager Sterner explained the house that is situated at the Jim Thorpe Campground is in the process of being sold. It currently shares the same address as the campground and would need to be renumbered.

Resolution 2025-04 Fee Schedule – Changes to the fee schedule include updating the verbiage to the tapping fees section and adding kiosk parking rates, as they were never included previously. Greg Strubinger asked if the wording of the tapping fees section was correct. Manager Sterner explained the exact wording was taken from the Ordinance and discussed the meaning of each fee that is associated with the tapping fees.

PMRS Amendment-increase in municipal contribution to $3.60/hr worked – This amends the original agreement with Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS) as per the new Teamster's contract. This will need to be approved every year and the contribution increase each year through 2029.

Municibid Bids Received – Bids are still being accepting through Tuesday the 11th for various Streets Department items.

Public Service Purchase Order-emergency salt procurement $5,429.42 – Mike Yeastedt explained there was a recent shortage in salt. An order had been placed at the beginning of February and was never sent due to the shortage. The Streets Supervisor was able to find salt from a company in Northampton.

NEPA Professional Services Renewal $7,425.00 – The hours are increasing in the renewal and the dollar amount of the agreement is still within what was budgeted for.

WWTP Hauling & Disposal of Dewatered Sludge Bids-authorization to advertise – The current contract is expiring in June of this year and will need to be bid out.

Facilities Projects
Public Works Building – Manger Sterner explained what's listed are the initial amounts for the payment applications. They will need to be adjusted as the percentages complete are being shown as being further along with the work than the contractors actually are. On next week's agenda, it will include Spillman Farmer Amendment #6.

Bracy Payment Application #14 $178,232.11 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 20, 2025 through February 20, 2025.

KC Mechanical Payment Application #7 $81,419.40 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 20, 2025 through February 20, 2025.

Larry McCullion & Son's Payment Application #8 $91,535.50 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 20, 2025 through February 20, 2025.

Reading Mechanical Payment Application #6 $28,800.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 20, 2025 through February 20, 2025.

Requisition #15-Partial Payment for Work Completed – This includes Bracy Payment Application #14, KC Mechanical Payment Application # 7, Larry McCullion & Son's Payment Application #8, and Reading Mechanical Payment Application #6.

Spillman Farmer Amendment to Professional Services #5 $13,437.14 – This is for additional services from Colliers Engineering for dewatering and earthwork, unsuitable soils, and NPDES permit renewal.

Zurawa Invoice #1110-10 $7,055.00 – This is for site visits, progress meetings, and administrative work completed during the month of February.

Memorial Hall – Manger Sterner explained what's listed are the initial amounts for the payment applications. They will need to be adjusted as the percentages complete are being shown as being further along with the work than the contractors actually are.

Bognet Payment Application #13RR $85,555.10 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 20, 2025 through February 20, 2025.

GR Noto Payment Application #13 $87,298.41 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 20, 2025 through February 20, 2025.

JBM Mechanical Payment Application #11 $14,692.20 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 20, 2025 through February 20, 2025.

Reading Mechanical Payment Application #9 $9,785.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 20, 2025 through February 20, 2025.

Requisition #14-Partial Payment for Work Completed

Zurawa Invoice #1111-09 $4,590.00 – This includes Bognet Payment Application #13RR, GR Noto Payment Application #13, JBM Mechanical Payment Application #11, and Reading Mechanical Payment Application #9.

Reading Mechanical Change Order #4 (USDA #4) $1,297.27 increase-gas valve (ratify) – This Change Order was previously approved by the Buildings and Grounds Committee. This replaces an existing gas valve buried in the pitch pocket above the kitchen roof.

Reading Mechanical Change Order #6 (USDA #5) $5,642.91 increase-drains (ratify) – This Change Order was previously approved by the Buildings and Grounds Committee. The existing drains in the bathrooms cannot be extended to the new floor level. They will be removed and replaced with new extended drains.

Memorial Park Project
Phase I
LB Construction Payment Application #3 $20,470.50 – This is for work completed and materials purchased through February 21, 2025.

Recreation Resource Invoice #24-244-1 $43,605.00 – This is for new playground equipment.

Phase II
LB Construction Payment Application #3 $17,640.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased through February 21, 2025.

Recreation Resource Invoice #24-244 $56,904.00 – This is for new playground equipment and benches.

Recreation Resource Invoice #24-244-1 $7,247.00 – This is for new playground equipment and benches.

Blight Remediation Project
Hadley Construction Payment Application #1 $60,300.00 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from January 6, 2025 through February 22, 2025. Manager Sterner explained there may be Barry Isett invoice included on next week's agenda, but she wasn't entirely sure.

High Street Wall Project
Entech Engineering Invoice #0095163 $3,050.09 – This will be the final invoice for this project. This includes project management, communication with the Borough, Earth Engineering, and Axis Stabilization, contract management, and project closeout documentation.

Silk Mill Run Restoration Project
Wildland's Conservancy Invoice #022825 $7,000.00 – This will be the final invoice for this portion of the project. This is for engineering and permitting.

Lauer WWTP License Issued-Promote to Licensed Plant Operator as per rate set by Teamster's Agreement effective 2/24/25 – Alec Lauer completed all of the requirements needed to be issued his Sewer Plant Operator License. Greg Strubinger congratulated Alec.

Zoning Hearing Board Resignation – Larry Cinicola submitted his resignation from the Zoning Hearing Board effective February 28, 2025, as he will be moving outside of the Borough. This seat's term ends on December 31, 2026.

PSAB Voting Delegate – Borough Council will need to determine a voting delegate and alternate voting delegate. Manager Sterner, Secretary Klotz, and Mike Yeastedt will be attending the PSAB Annual Conference in June.

JT Summer Basketball League – The basketball league is requesting to use the basketball courts in Memorial Park Mondays and Thursdays from June 16, 2025 through August 18, 2025 in the evenings.

Summer Rec Program – Summer Rec will be back in Memorial Park this year. It starts in June and will end in August.

Rogers RFA-use of gold carts for transportation to Asa Packer Mansion – Jason Rogers is bringing a large group to tour the Asa Packer Mansion. He requested being able to utilize golf carts to transport the elderly visitors who would otherwise have a hard time walking up the hill to the Mansion. Chief Schatz explained the golf carts would need to be registered and insured. He explained he would discourage

allowing this request, otherwise a service agreement would need to be drawn up and traffic control put in place. He said he would call Jason Rogers in the morning to find a different solution.

Evans RFA-Asa Packer Mansion digital 3D model – Brian Evans requested to create a virtual tour (property clone) at no cost to the Borough. His request also stated it would not be published for public use and not be used without the Borough's permission. Council discussed wanting additional information due to security concerns, as well as discussing this request with the insurance company and solicitor.

Evans Request-Asa Packer Mansion Tour Guide – Brian Evans submitted a request on behalf of Robert Ewashko. He put in an application last year to become a tour guide at the Asa Packer Mansion and never had an interview. Brian Evans is requesting that Robert Ewashko have an interview. Manager Sterner explained it is policy to keep two years' worth of applications on hand to review in the event of an opening or openings.

Account #0630 Sewer Credit Request $65.76 – The property owner had a ruptured heating pipe during the extreme cold spell at the end of January/beginning of February. The water never made it into the sewer system.

Account #6425 Sewer Credit Request $393.04 – The property owner had two pipes that burst over two different days during the extreme cold spell at the end of January/beginning of February. The water never made it into the sewer system.

Exoneration Request

Monthly Report (1)-The report was submitted for review

Committees

Carbon County Open Space Program-Fall 2025 round – Manager Sterner explained Borough Council should determine if this program is something they seriously would like to look in to. If they do, they would have to determine which property. The grant is a 50/50 match and the Borough can use the value of the property for share, surveys, appraisals, and reimbursables. If Borough Council would like to include a portion of a parcel, it needs to be determined if a subdivision will be required. Manager Sterner said she would inquire with the County and with any other questions Borough Council may think of.

Borough Council & Mayor Compensation – Manager Sterner explained the PA Borough Code was recently updated that increased the compensation Borough Council and Mayor can receive. An Ordinance was drafted in the event Borough Council is interested in increasing the monthly stipends. If Borough Council does increase the compensation, it would not go into effect until the next terms.

Administration

Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)

2025 Street Paving – Mike Yeastedt explained Liquid Fuels funding will be paying for this year's street paving; therefore, all roads must be part of the PennDOT Liquid Fuels map. He and Mike Schoch will be meeting with John Davis from PennDOT to review the roads and draft bid specs. The roads being considered to be paved are Flagstaff, Race Street, Packer Hill, and the 400 block of Center Street. Connor Rodgers asked what section of Flagstaff was being completed and thought the 300 block of Center Street should be considered too. Mike Yeastedt explained it would start from the Ballroom and be about ½ of the road. The rest of the road could be paved next year. The roads being considered this year is all that can be covered under Liquid Fuels funding. He said Packer Hill Road and Flagstaff Road are falling apart and Race Street is sinking due to water going down behind the wall. Greg Strubinger asked if Jake Arner has any trucks going up and down Flagstaff Road to his property. Connor Rodgers explained on PennDOT's website, their traffic count studies show there is more traffic on Center Street than Race Street and rather use the funding for it, use the funding for the 300 block of Center Street.

Center Avenue Water Main Project Financing – Manager Sterner explained she had a meeting with Pennvest and also spoke with the Bond Solicitor. The project can be funded without interim financing.

WWTP Telescopic Valve Repair – There are currently two telescopic valve rails. One of the units has already been corrected. The one that is cracked needs to be taken out by a crane.

Flagstaff Cameras – Chief Schatz explained the quote is for four solar cameras with SD cards. Two of the cameras would be set up at the end of each road and the remaining two would be set up in the areas where there is a large amount of dumping. The cameras will have night vision. Internet connection costs are not included in with the quote. Manager Sterner explained the quote is more than double what was budgeted for. If Council still would like to purchase the cameras, there are additional money in the Capital Reserve Funds. The Borough would also need to get pricing on tree trimming in the area.

Hein 2nd Request-garbage refund – She again requested a three-week refund of her garbage bill. There was no new information submitted from what was submitted last month. It was confirmed Tamaqua Transfer went to her property to collect the trash, but it was not out.

Police

Police Department Corporal – Police Chief Schatz explained he met with Ed Lewis and the tests have been purchased for those who are interested and qualify for the position. Detective Marzen and Officer Kohler will be taking the test. They will get 45 to 90 days to study for the test. He explained the Commission is looking to test them at the end of April. Once tested, the tests are sent in to be graded and results should be back by the beginning of May. Seargent Bokeko will complete the background interviews and then the Civil Service Commission will give their recommendation.

Municibid Listing Approval-2013 Ford Explorer Police Interceptor – Chief Schatz explained this is the oldest vehicle in the fleet and it won't pass inspection. The Public Service department is utilizing it as an extra vehicle until the inspection runs out in May.

Vehicle & Traffic Ordinance Amendment-No Parking and Judge Parking Space – Chief Schatz explained the designated parking spot near the courthouse will no longer be used by the judge. He recommended making it a public spot. He also explained where throughout town, there should be no parking and why. The 200 and 300 blocks of Church Alley, both sides. This section of the road is already extremely tight and emergency vehicles wouldn't be able to get through in the event of a fire. The Liberties Hill, both sides. It's always posted during Fall Foliage Weekends, but really should be posted year-round. A small section of School Alley. Currently, there is no parking on one side. This road is also extremely tight and emergency vehicles wouldn't be able to get through in the event of a fire. At the area of 138 High Street, there is one single spot at the curve in the road. Eliminating this spot would make that area safer. Manager Sterner explained she spoke with the two Parking Enforcement Officers and they had brought up the permit parking stickers. The current Ordinance does not clearly state where the permits are to be placed. The stickers are to be placed on the outside, left hand lower corner, of the rear window. Mike Yeastedt suggested there should be verbiage to remove all expired permits. Chief Schatz explained the permits must be properly affixed and cannot be taped on. He also discussed the email that he sent about purchasing guest passes online and the three different options too choose from.

Buildings/Parks

T-Mobile Grant – The Borough applied for $50,000.00 in funding to help with the purchase of the audiovisual system in Memorial Hall. Unfortunately, the Borough was not awarded this grant.

Asa Packer Mansion

Souvenir/Gift Shop Items & Supplies – Secretary Klotz explained she priced out various items, t-shirts, hoodies, tumblers, mugs, and ornaments, to sell in the new gift shop, as well as the display where the items will be sold from.

Advertising – Secretary Klotz explained to Council was given two possible options for advertising to help promote the Mansion more. The Pocono Mountains Magazine ad would be in place for a full year. The other option that was presented was to place an ad in the annual Homeschoolers Guide. This is a guide for homeschooled families to take their children on various educational trips.

Children's Scavenger Hunt & Prizes – Secretary Klotz shared with Borough Council a Scavenger Hunt, that was created with the help of current tour guides, to help keep the younger visitors more engaged in the tour. At the end of the tour, the younger visitors are then rewarded with a sticker for completing the Scavenger Hunt.

Rack Card Design – Secretary Klotz shared with Council a rack card design she created. She explained, if Borough Council did not like the design, she could reach out to PMVB to help create one. Tom Chapman said he would get one of his employees from the Y to get in contact with Secretary Klotz to help come up with designs for rack cards, as she designed theirs.

Weekend Scheduling to include Fridays – Secretary Klotz recommended having the Mansion open on Fridays in May to help generate more income. She reached out to PMVB for a count of all the visitors that entered the visitor's center. It wouldn't be worthwhile to be open on Fridays in April, but would be in May. James Dougher, who was in the audience, agreed that being open on Fridays in May would be beneficial because of the Film Festival, Mother's Day weekend, and steamer trains.

Emergency Services

2025 Grant Projects
James Dougher spoke on behalf of JTTA to discuss the PMVB grant. JTTA has expressed interest in applying for the PMVB grant for the recently damaged wooden fence along Race Street. JTTA would like to see it replaced with something more aesthetically pleasing. Greg Strubinger asked how much of a match would JTTA put towards the grant. James Dougher explained it would be a 50/50 match - $10,000.00. He explained the length of the fence is the length of Stone Row; sixteen houses' times twenty feet each in length. He explained JTTA would like to try to match the new fence to the wrought iron fence up the street further. Manager Sterner said she would reach out to Axis Stabilization to find out where they obtained the fence from and get a quote. She also explained the insurance company will only pay for the section of the fence that was damaged.

CFA Multimodal
Downtown Vehicular & Pedestrian Safety Project – Manager Sterner explained there is a $100.00 application fee and a match waiver, which is the last year for this. She explained there are two project that can be chosen from, the Downtown Vehicle and Pedestrian Safety Project or street retaining wall repair for either Hill Road or High Street. If Borough Council would be interested in the Safety Project, then some items should be removed from the application. The Railroad has completed some of the work already with the sidewalk. The pedestrian crosswalk should be removed as well due to that being the reasoning in prior years for not receiving the grant funding.

Wall Repair Project – Manager Sterner explained there are two sections of the High Street Wall needing repair and has been awarded grant funding in the past. There is also Hill Road, but it may be way more than can be handled at the present moment.

Manager Sterner explained she spoke with Kate McMahon from NEPA Alliance. She stated there are better grants out there for the Vehicular and Pedestrian Safety Project. The downfall to that is the grants would be federally funded and have extra requirements. Manager Sterner spoke with Traffic Planning and Design; they also will look for other grant funding out there that would fit the Safety Project.

Manager Sterner shared along with the grant information the balance sheets so they can see how much money is in each Capital Reserve Fund. The grant application process is open from March 31st through July 31st.

PA Small Water & Sewer
Front Street, South Street, and South Avenue – Manager Sterner explained the application process is quick and ends at the end of the month. Mike Yeastedt asked if the South Avenue Project was a small project. Manager Sterner explained the estimate came in just under $500,000.00 and included the

Switchback area. The application opened in February and goes through April 30th. The Front Street Project is stormwater system, paving, and curbs. The South Avenue Project is stormwater management in the South Avenue area and extends by the Switchback area. This has been split into two projects. The South Street/Silk Street area. It includes a new waterline and a sewer line could be added. The cap on the project is $500,000.00. The Front Street and South Avenue Projects will exceed that, but the South Street Project won't. Some of the Front Street Project engineering is completed and money was budgeted for the South Avenue Project. Money has been set aside for Front Street, around $225,000.00. Manager Sterner said the Borough might be able to tie in Twinning Park, which could qualify for a DCED grant. She would reach out to the Borough Engineer tomorrow to verify.

Community Development Block Grant (CBDG)
Southeastern Area of Borough-Paving and Memorial Park and Blight – These are Federal Funds and must follow Davis Bacon wage rates. The new area for CBDG is the Southeastern side of the Borough. 2025 was already dedicated for the Water Plant items. In 2026, some of the money has been planned for the generators at the Water Plant. The Water Plant is allowable because a survey was given to various residents. Memorial Park is an option, but would most likely need to have ADA included. Paving is an option, but a survey would need to be given to select residents. Connor Rodgers asked about curb cuts. Manager Sterner said they could be added anywhere. Greg Strubinger asked if the curb cuts could be combined with one of the Borough's paving projects. Manager Sterner believed they could be. The earliest the funds could be used is in 2026.

LSA Monroe
The application fee is $100.00 and there is no match requirement. Including matching funds help to elevate the project. The eligible projects are Asa Packer Mansion Electric, Asa Packer Mansion HVAC, and new ambulance for the Lehighton Ambulance. The Lehighton Ambulance called Manager Sterner and requested the Borough file for the grant on their behalf. They explained they would just be applying for the vehicle, not the equipment that goes with it. Mike Yeastedt said ambulances on average cost $250,000.00. The Lehighton Ambulance provided a list of their current fleet and milage. Manager Sterner explained this is similar to when the Borough applied on behalf of the Little League. The application period has not opened yet.

LSA Statewide
Memorial Park Phase III – The Statewide grant generally receives a greater amount than the Monroe Grant. The Borough has applied for funding for Phase III of the Memorial Park Project, but is short $285,870.00 for the entire project.

PMVB Community Impact Grant – Manager Sterner asked Mike Yeastedt if he has heard any more information on the Asa Packer Mansion Porch Project. She explained she's trying to determine if the Porch Project will be ready in time or to apply for something else. Mike Yeastedt explained it hasn't gotten any further due to focusing on the Memorial Hall and Public Works Garage Project. Tom Chapman explained his company would not be able to complete the work on the 3rd floor of the Mansion until next winter due to the extensivity of the ceilings.

Other Projects
Asa Packer Mansion-Orchestrion and Artwork Preservation/Cleaning – There is a Save America's Treasurers Grant that could help cover the repairs needed to the Orchestrion. There is an Inspire Grant for Small Museums that could help with the artwork preservation and cleaning. Manager Sterner asked Secretary Klotz about the Pennsylvania Historic Commission Grants. Secretary Klotz explained these grants wouldn't qualify for the historic grant because of not being or having a 501c3.

Memorial Park-9th Street Garage – Manager Sterner explained she had been on a call with Barry Isett last week and they had mentioned a type of industrial grant. She explained there are also Brownfields grants.

LV Chamber Grant/Main Street Grant-Memorial Hall Planter Bollards – Manager Sterner explained Greg Strubinger recommended this to help prevent cars from driving through the new windows at Memorial Hall.

America 250 PA – This is projects that improves the community and engages the community. It must be held on July 19th for National Pennsylvania Day. The Borough is eligible or this because of passing a Resolution.

902 Recycling Grant-Leaf Vac Truck – This is an annual grant. Street Supervisor Schoch met with a sales rep who discussed the grant with him. The grant will pay for a leaf vac truck up to $200,000.00. Mike Yeastedt discussed the different attachments that come with the truck. Manager Sterner said the rep would bring a truck up to the Borough to demonstrate.

Old Business

NONE

Executive Session

Adjourn

MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Ted LaRizzio to **adjourn the meeting.** There were no comments. Motion carries 6-0. The meeting ended at 9:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Borough Secretary