JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION
November 7, 2024
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:30 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 local fire fighters and veterans in honor of Veteran's 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-absent
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 Zoning Hearing Board. The Alternate seat is a three-year term expiring December 31, 2024. If anyone is interested, please submit a letter of interest.

This coming weekend is the last weekend for the One-Way Directional Traffic Pattern in the Heights.

Recently, tree trimming notices were sent out to residents. Mike Yeastedt explained the idea behind the letters is to protect the Borough's trucks from damage from low hanging tree branches. The height of the branches needs to be a minimum of thirteen feet high. Greg Strubinger explained there is also PP&L tree trimming taking place throughout the Borough.

Leaf Collection will take place from October 30th through November 18th. Please call the Borough office when leaves are ready to be picked up.

The first Budget meeting took place last night. The remaining Budget Work Session Meetings are scheduled for November 13th and 20th, as needed. The meetings will take place at the Jim Thorpe Area High School in the LGI Room starting at 6:30 p.m.

The 5th Annual Give-a-Gobbler is currently taking place through November 20th. Police Chief Schatz explained non-perishable items are being collected at the Borough office and encouraged residents to participate. All donations help the Valor House.

The Festival of Trees tree lighting ceremony will be held on December 3rd at 5:30 p.m. in Memorial Park. Additional information can be found on the Borough's website and Facebook page. The cost for a tree is $45.00.

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.

Public Comment

Steve Ambrose – He thanked the Police Department and Police Chief Schatz for all their hard work making things run smoothly during Fall Foliage Weekends. He asked for additional information from Borough Council about the High Street Steps. He thinks the chain link fence looks ugly and doesn't fit the historical look of the downtown area. Greg Strubinger explained about a slip and fall that took place on the steps and the Borough was named in the lawsuit from it. There was a survey completed to determine ownership. The steps are on an adjoining property and the owner of that property fenced off the steps while the lawsuit happened. The court determined the Borough as the owners of the steps. He explained the Borough can't give a definitive answer as to when they will be opened again due to still being in litigation. The steps being the condition they are in are a liability to the Borough.

Lila Degessa – She spoke about the convenience of the High Street steps as a student catching the bus. It takes longer to get off of High Street and on to the bus stop on Broadway without the steps. It's also safer taking the steps versus walking down the road.

Jill Williams – She made an informal request to Borough Council to make the High Street Steps a priority. She asked Council to look into grants to repair the steps and to get historical looking gates and fencing for them.

Cathy McGarvey – She thanked the Police Department for a smooth Fall Foliage. She also spoke about the High Street Steps. She explained parking along Broadway and West Broadway is limited and residents use the parking on High Street as an overflow. Using the steps made it easier for residents living along Broadway and West Broadway to get back to their houses. She said the fence closing the steps is ugly and Borough Council needs to make the steps a priority.

Trish Spillman – She spoke about the High Street Steps and asked Borough Council to get with Tom Loughery to transfer the portion of the parcel the steps are on to the Borough.

Kyle Robins – He spoke about the steps and asked Borough Council to work with the community to come up with a solution for them.

Jane Owens – She spoke about the importance of the High Street Steps and said no other local municipality went bankrupt for liability. She requested more parking enforcement and to use those funds to fix the steps.

Violet Degessa – She asked if the steps will stay the way they are if there is no money to fix and maintain them.

Heidi Mann – She said she believes the High Street Steps are an important part of town. She asked for the steps to be opened back up and to put up "Use at Your Own Risk" signs.

Ann Yeastedt – She spoke about the High Street Steps on behalf of her parents, who still live on High Street. They have many memories of the steps. She explained her parents are older and don't have much time left and requested the steps be opened back up.

James Dougher – He thanked Borough Council for their support and the Police Department for their hard work during Fall Foliage Weekends. He explained the remaining Welcome Signs have been refurbished as part of the PMVB Grant and have been put back up. He discussed Olde Time Christmas and the downtown tree lighting will take place on December 6th at 6:00 p.m. Mike Yeastedt asked James if JTTA plans on applying for additional grant funding next year for the remaining directional signage throughout the Borough. James explained JTTA was planning on looking into new trash cans for the downtown area, but could include the signage if needed. He gave some statistics of the number of people who entered the visitor's center during the month of October. There was a total of 77,292 visitors this October versus 72,000 last October. The year-to-date total is 317,427, which is up from the 2023 year to date total of 290,361 visitors.

Public Hearing

NONE

SALDO-Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

NONE

Action

The following items were reviewed:

Council Meeting Minutes from October 3, 2024

Council Meeting Minutes from October 10, 2024

Expenditures from All Funds as Presented – Manager Sterner explained she was at the awards ceremony for Police Chief Schatz and did not have a chance to review the report.

Treasurer's Report

Resolution 2024-24 – 2024 Auditor Appointment – This resolution is to appoint Buckno & Lisicky as the Borough's Auditor. Two single audit will be needed due to the Facilities Projects.

Pennvest Funding Center Avenue Water Main Project $4,250,000.00 Updated – Letter of Responsibility – Borough Council previously approved a letter. Since Entech Engineering has started working on this project, the amount needed to be updated.

Facilities Projects
Public Works Building

Reading Payment Application #4 $19,080.00 – This is for work completed and supplies purchased from September 20, 2024 through October 20, 2024.

KC Mechanical Payment Application #3 $37,842.30 – This is for work completed and supplies purchased from September 20, 2024 through October 20, 2024.

Bracy Payment Application #10 $377,406.00 – This is for work completed and supplied purchased from September 20, 2024 through October 20, 2024.

Barry Isett Invoice #0190347 $1,500.00 – This is for Waterline and Utility Pole Location services provided.

Spillman Farmer Invoice #8121.22.19 $9,660.08 – This is for Professional Services from August 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024.

United Inspection Services Invoice #25584 $12,417.89 – This is for multiple testings that took place during the month of October.

Requisition #11 $457,769.59-Partial Payment for Work Completed – This Requisition includes Reading Payment Application #4, KC Mechanical Payment Application #3, Bracy Payment Application #10, Barry Isett Invoice #0190347, Spillman Farmer Invoice #8121.22.19, and United Inspection Services Invoice #25584.

Bracy Change Order #9 (USDA #7) $9,013.40 increase (additional rebar) – This is due to the change from a metal building to a pole building. This needs approval from Bracy's owner before it can be approved by Borough Council.

Bracy Change Order #10 (USDA #8) $7,824.30 increase (structural design change) – This is due to the change from a metal building to a pole building. This needs approval from Bracy's owner before it can be approved by Borough Council.

Memorial Hall

JBM Mechanical Payment Application #8 $32,130.00 – This is for work completed and supplies purchased from September 20, 2024 through October 20, 2024.

GR Noto Payment Application #9 $120,797.76 – This is for work completed and supplies purchased from September 20, 2024 through October 20, 2024.

Bognet Payment Application #9R $302,308.35 – This is for work completed and supplies purchased from September 20, 2024 through October 20, 2024.

Reading Mechanical Payment Application #6 $100,458.90 – This is for work completed and supplies purchased from September 20, 2024 through October 20, 2024.

Spillman Farmer Architects Invoice #8122.22.21 $1,718.40 – This is for Professional Services that included work from the Civil Engineering Consultant from August 23, 2024 through September 30, 2024.

Spillman Farmer Architects Invoice #8122.22.22 $8,128.76 – This is for Professional Services of the architect from August 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024.

United Inspection Services Invoice #25583 $430.00 – This is for testing completed on October 7th.

Requisition #10 $565,566.41-Partial Payment for Work Completed – This Requisition includes JBM Mechanical Payment Application #8, GR Noto Payment Application #9, Bognet Payment Application #9R, Reading Mechanical Payment Application #6, Spillman Farmer Architects Invoice #8122.22.21, Spillman Farmer Architects Invoice #8122.22.22, and United Inspection Services Invoice #25583.

Bognet Change Order #13 $20,323.40 increase (ribbon windows)-ratify – The Buildings & Grounds Committee already approved this change order for a change in the windows on the lower level. This is a design change so the windows fit into each of the offices.

Bognet Change Order #14 $12,631.63 decrease (toilet partitions)-ratify – The Buildings & Grounds Committee already approved this change order for a change of toilet partitions. The original partitions in the plans were "high end" partitions and weren't needed for the use of the building. A different type will be used that are cheaper in price.

Bognet Change Order #15 $1,819.73 increase (women's bathroom mirror)-ratify – The Buildings & Grounds committee already approved this change order for a new mirror in the women's bathroom. The original plans include the mirror that was included in the old bathroom and it's not in good shape.

Asa Packer Mansion Roof Project-Kunsman Payment Application #3 $46,292.72 – This is for work completed and materials purchased from October 1, 2024 through October 31, 2024.

Memorial Park Picnic Tables $13,068.53 – Borough Council received updated quotes from the ones they were originally provided. There are two different styles of benches Borough Council can choose from; recycled legs or steel legs. These benches will replace the ones that are under the large pavilion. They have a 50-year warranty. Mike Yeastedt said currently, there are 21 6-foot tables in the large pavilion and 6 8-foot tables. Manager Sterner said there is enough money to pay for all the tables need this year.

Padilla Handicap Parking Sign Application – Chief Schatz reviewed the application prior to the meeting. He said all the paperwork is proper. Greg Strubinger asked if the applicant is aware that getting a handicap sign does not guarantee the spot is always available. Chief Schatz explained that is detailed on the application. There were some concerns about the application that needed some clarification. The applicant checked they would be the driver, but does not have a driver's license.

Hiller RFA-Informational Trail Marker on Switchback Trail – Secretary Klotz explained Bud Hiller was unable to make the meeting and would send Bonnie Hoffman in his place. When she spoke with Bonnie on the phone to confirm her attendance, Bonnie said she would not be attending and the church will be withdrawing their building permit application over concerns of liability.

Account #3850 Payment Plan

Utility Rate Change Report (1)

Utility Uncollectables Report (1) – The property sold at judicial sale. The Borough received most of the funds from the sale. The remaining funds unable to be collected is listed in this report.

Exoneration Request

Monthly Report (5) – The report was submitted for review.

Committees

Administration

2023 LSA Statewide Grant Not Funded-Memorial Park Phase III – Phase I & II have been fully funded. The administrative staff will look into seeking grant funding through DCED or DCNR for Phase III.

Peddling & Soliciting Ordinance-Musicians and Street Entertainers – The Administrative Committee met to discuss creating an amendment to the Peddling & Soliciting Ordinance to include a section with Musicians and Street Entertainers. Manager Sterner explained Borough Council was sent the Ordinance portions the Administrative Committee would like included, along with notes from herself and Secretary Klotz. Manager Sterner asked Borough Council to review the notes from the Committee, herself, and Secretary Klotz and add anything additional they see fit. Once satisfied, Borough Council can ask the Solicitor to draft and advertise an amendment. This will be tabled until January for the Committee to rereview. Ted LaRizzio then asked if this included any type of noise regulations. Manager Sterner explained the Noise Ordinance is only for licensed establishments. Chief Schatz explained how the Noise Ordinance works in regards to complaints. Manager Sterner asked Chief Schatz if something could be included or have a provision for noise complaints.

Manager Sterner explained it was missed adding the Carbon County Open Space Program. Borough Council was provided with a packet that contains every property the Borough owns. The Open Space Program consists of selling easements to the County for Open Space. Greg Strubinger asked if retention ponds could be built on these easements. Manager Sterner said she would ask a representative from the County.

Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)
Tire & Electronics Recycling Results – There was a total of 312 tires, 102 T.V.'s, and 101 miscellaneous electronic items. Greg Strubinger said eventually the electronics recycling collection would take place at the Memorial Hall parking lot once construction is completed.

Flagstaff Road Illegal Dumping – Connor Rodgers had requested this item be placed on the agenda, but unfortunately was not at the meeting to discuss. Greg Strubinger said from Spring to Fall, there were over 100 tires dumped on Flagstaff Mountain again. Cameras are being looked into to deter people from illegally dumping tires.

Municibid Listing Approval-1997 Craftsman Mower & Hotsy Pressure Washer

Police
Municibid Listing Approval-2024 Chevy Tahoe Rear Seats – Police Chief Schatz said the back seats that came with the Tahoe have been removed and replaced with tub seats.

Buildings/Parks
Memorial Park Project-swings – The current set of swings in the park, the base is concreted into the ground. In order to move it, it will need to be cut. It would need to be determined if the ends can be welded back on or if the entire structure can be moved in one piece. Manager Sterner said Borough Council had pledged $14,500.00 as a match for the 2023 LSA Grant the Borough was not funded; these funds can be put towards new swings. Manager Sterner added there are a few trees in the way of the designed path and would need to be removed.

Asa Packer Mansion
Logo Contest – Secretary Klotz explained there were numerous entries and the Committee picked the top six. Borough Council reviewed those entries and agreed they liked student entry #2.

Emergency Services
NIMS Update – Tom Chapman said he started his NIMS training.

Finance
NONE

Old Business
NONE

Executive Session
NONE

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 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Borough Secretary