

Langhorne Borough Council Meeting
February 12, 2025

A Langhorne Borough Council Meeting was held at Council Chambers on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. President Culleton called the session to order at 7:00 p.m. and invited those in attendance to pledge allegiance to the Flag.

IN ATTENDANCE: President Nancy Culleton; Vice President Kathy Horwatt; Councilpersons Scott Haldeman, Adam Zielinski, Anthony Marfia, and Bob Cumming; Treasurer Ellyn Schoen; Interim Manager Mary Zimmerman; Clerk Gabe Tenaglia

Councilperson Cumming arrived at 7:25 p.m.

ABSENT: Mayor Joe Taylor; Councilperson Tim Harris

AGENDA REVIEW: President Culleton announced that Councilperson Cumming is attending the Middletown Zoning Hearing Board Meeting on Erin Development's application for variances to build townhouses in Middletown. She also said that there will be no Executive Session tonight, and item #7 on the consent agenda, the resolutions regarding unit citations for the West Richardson Avenue fire first responders, will be moved to the Work Session, as Fire Chief Frank Farry and the Borough office are still working on the resolutions.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Interim Manager Zimmerman announced that Middletown's commendation event on February 18th is postponed due to Anna Payne's passing. It has not yet been rescheduled. President Culleton announced that the Jesse Soby American Legion Post has invited Council to be guests at the Memorial Day Parade on May 26th. Don Minnick, 149 West Richardson Avenue, spoke on behalf of the Jesse Soby Post about the parade. He also said that the Soby Post submitted a permit for their Breakfast with the Easter Bunny event, which will be April 13th. Then Vice President Horwatt presented a list of all Langhorne Council for the Arts events for the year.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Tim Damiani, 313 North Bellevue Avenue, expressed concern about excessive speeding on Winchester onto Bellevue. He said that both of his vehicles were damaged by a speeding driver last Monday. He suggested flipping the speed signs on Bellevue to face toward oncoming motorists, placing speed humps on Bellevue, and having a stop sign at the Winchester and Bellevue intersection. There was more discussion of the traffic conditions of Winchester and Bellevue, and President Culleton suggested some of the measures discussed could be including on the list of traffic calming mitigations to present to PennDOT.

CONSENT AGENDA: Councilperson Haldeman asked to take the Treasurer's Report off of the consent agenda, and President Culleton said it will be moved under the budget committee discussion. She then read off the remaining items on the consent agenda: minutes from the January 8th Council Meeting and January 30th Work Session, payment of the bills, event permits for the Hulmeville Soccer Club at the Mayors' Playground (March 1 – June 15); Easter Egg Hunt (April 12/rain date April 19); Memorial Day Parade (May 26); LBBA Concerts In The Park (May 28 - Aug 27); LBBA Car Show (June 14); Pet Fair (Aug 23, rain date Sept 13), sign & banner permits for the Pet Fair, Breakfast with the Easter Bunny, and Memorial Day Parade, and appointment of Gina Pardovich and Bonnie Miles to the Environmental Advisory Council for four-year terms ending in 2028.

MOTION: On motion of Councilperson Haldeman, seconded by Vice President Horwatt, Council voted 5-0 to approve the consent agenda.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief Godzieba said that the tasers purchased with grant funds from the Redevelopment Authority (RDA) have been delivered. One of the officers will provide training on how to use them. All 2025 RDA grant items for the police have been ordered; the speed cushion units have arrived and are next to the garage behind Borough Hall. They will be installed in the spring when the weather improves. There is one set to be installed on Flowers Avenue as discussed, and two other sets to be installed in locations to be determined. The equipment for the intersection camera upgrades has been shipped and the installer will be in touch to possibly come out next week. The police received their thermal imaging camera, but it was not the correct model so they sent it back and the correct model will be sent to the office. Chief Godzieba said that he is also working on getting license plate recognition cameras for Pine and Maple to help track stolen vehicles. There was a brief discussion of the auxiliary police ordinance; President Culleton noted that the auxiliary police unit has the same powers as a police officer while on duty, and asked if that includes making arrests. Chief Godzieba said that it is state law that gives them that power, but it is never used because there are always police officers around when the auxiliary unit is deployed.

MOTION: On motion of Vice President Horwatt, seconded by Councilperson Zielinski, Council voted 5-0 to advertise ORDINANCE NO. 2025-02: ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF LANGHORNE, BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA TO PROVIDE FOR AN AUXILIARY POLICE UNIT AND RELATED REGULATIONS, ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND SUCH OTHER NECESSARY REGULATIONS.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Resource Protection and Stormwater Management Amendment Ordinance: The Environmental Advisory Committee discussed the Resource Protection and Stormwater Management Amendment Ordinance at their meeting on the 27th of January. An EAC member suggested an add-on to the ordinance to revise Appendix I to allow for tree preservation and planting as another option for homeowners to partially credit their stormwater design. Engineer George DiPersio presented a draft of this amendment to EAC at their continuation meeting on February 3rd and there were no objections. It was not formally incorporated in the draft ordinance, but it could easily be added if the Borough voted to advertise the ordinance. Vice President Horwatt supported adding the tree planting option. There was discussion of how the ordinance would be codified, and Solicitor Kirk said that if the ordinance is approved for advertisement with the tree planting option, she would add it and sent the final version to Interim Manager Zimmerman. Councilperson Cumming arrived in time to participate in the vote.

MOTION: On motion of Vice President Horwatt, seconded by Councilperson Zielinski, Council voted 6-0 to advertise AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF LANGHORNE, BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING THE LANGHORNE BOROUGH RESOURCE PROTECTION AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE, AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE with the tree planting and preservation option added to Appendix I.

Erin Development Middletown Zoning Hearing Board Application: Councilperson Cumming arrived from the Middletown Zoning Hearing Board Meeting and gave a brief update on the status of the Erin Development application. The ZHB voted 3-2 to deny all of Erin Development's variance requests.

MS4 Sediment Reduction Project: CKS is seeking authorization to prepare a preliminary design and

associated sediment reduction calculations for consideration by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Mr. DiPersio said that it could take six to eight weeks to put together a preliminary design. CKS estimates having a response from the DEP by the April or May Council Meeting. The application deadline for the PA DCED Watershed Restoration & Protection Program (WRPP) grant that CKS recommends using for the MS4 project is May 31st. Councilperson Haldeman asked about options 3 and 5 for sediment reduction. Mr. DiPersio explained that option 3 addresses the rapid drainage from the basin behind the Methodist Church, which prevents the basin from capturing sediment, and option 5 revegetates and regrades the drainage swale at the Langhorne Swim Club. CKS has to conduct a survey to determine where the Methodist Church property meets the Swim Club property and get a better understanding of the stakeholders in the project in order to get the required consent letters from the owners. He also suggested that the Borough pursues grant funding of around \$200,000 so they can fund the work even with a partial award. The WRPP grant requires a 15% match, but Borough could apply for an RDA grant in the fall to offset the costs. Councilperson Haldeman said that he would like to see the cost of the preliminary design work before voting on it. Mr. DiPersio said that it was around \$28,000 for design for the whole project, including the preliminary work. Vice President Horwatt noted that the EAC recommended that they cover some of the cost with the \$53,980 in 2022 recycling funds the Borough will receive. Treasurer Schoen said that the Borough received the funds already.

MOTION: On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Vice President Horwatt, Council voted 5-1 to authorize CKS to begin preliminary design work needed for the MS4 sediment reduction project, with specific focus on design options 3 and 5 as described in the prior preliminary report, plus field survey including stakeout of property corners at Langhorne Swim Club Driveway and rear of United Methodist Church parcels. President Culleton, Vice President Horwatt, and Councilpersons Cumming, Marfia and Zielinski voted in favor; Councilperson Haldeman voted against.

Watershed Restoration & Protection Program Grant Application: Councilperson Haldeman asked if Clerk Tenaglia could complete the WRPP grant application, as Council had discussed getting him more involved in the grant writing process. Vice President Horwatt said that the grant is difficult because of the state requirements. Mr. DiPersio offered to have a Zoom meeting with Clerk Tenaglia and Interim Manager Zimmerman to determine where the Borough's assistance could cut down on the time CKS is spending on the grant application process. He said that CKS will need the Borough's assistance with the letters of support, and to provide evidence showing the Borough can cover the match. The latter can be provided by the auditor or creditor.

MOTION: On motion of Councilperson Marfia, seconded by Councilperson Cumming, Council voted 6-0 to authorize CKS to apply for the PA DCED Watershed Restoration & Protection Program.

Country Club Lane & North Bellevue Avenue Paving & Sidewalk Project Update: CKS completed their survey of Country Club Lane and North Bellevue Avenue this week, and they will be finalizing the plans and specifications for bidding. They expect to put the project out to bid in March and will work with Interim Manager Zimmerman regarding advertisement. In looking at some early design of the sidewalk and crosswalk across Bellevue to the southeast corner of Country Club Lane, CKS had anticipated three ADA compliant ramps at the intersection, but now they believe only two will be feasible.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION: Vice President Horwatt said that the office should notify Armour & Sons that the 7-11 crosswalk and rapid flashing beacons should be added to their annual inspection of all traffic signals. Then she spoke about what was needed for the Mayors' Playground community building.

Solicitor Kirk said that CKS needs to prepare the necessary legal descriptions to verify that the descriptions in the existing deeds to the two parcels on the Mayor's Playground are accurate so she can prepare a deed to consolidate them. Mr. DiPersio said that CKS had been directed to hold off on this because the PA Statewide Local Share Account grant the Borough had applied for hadn't been awarded, but they can move forward if Council would like. Councilperson Haldeman said that CKS should write up a legal description for the playground regardless of whether the grant is received or not. Council agreed to authorize CKS to do this work.

Vice President Horwatt announced that the PA DEP will come to meet with the Borough on March 5th to verify that they meet the requirements for sediment reduction for the MS4 project. Mr. DiPersio said that Mary Stover of CKS will be in attendance.

PLANNING COMMISSION:

Erin Development Middletown Zoning Hearing Board Application (continued): Planning Commission Chair Paul Schneider spoke about the results of the Middletown Zoning Hearing Board Meeting. Councilperson Cumming said that the Borough and Langhorne Open Space have party status but Mr. Schneider advised that if Erin Development were to appeal the ZHB decision, LOSI's party status may no longer be valid. Councilperson Cumming said that the ZHB's written decision will be sent to all parties involved, including the Borough. Solicitor Kirk said that the Borough would get notice if Erin Development submitted an appeal, and the Borough's lawyer in this matter, Keith Bidlingmaier, could file a petition to intervene on the Borough's behalf.

Zoning Map Ordinance: Solicitor Kirk said that she will prepare the advertisement and the notices to the property owners. The matter will be determined at Council's April 9th meeting because there must be at least 45 days' notice before the hearing and the March meeting is too close.

MOTION: On motion of Councilperson Marfia, seconded by Councilperson Cumming, Council voted 6-0 to advertise AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF LANGHORNE, BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING AN UPDATED ZONING MAP FOR THE BOROUGH TO INCLUDE TND OVERLAY DISTRICT AND TO CLARIFY THE BOUNDARIES OF THE BOROUGH'S HISTORIC DISTRICT, TO REPEAL INCONSISTENT PROVISIONS, AND TO ESTABLISH SEVERABILITY AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission Keystone Grant for Zoning Book Overhaul: President Culleton said that there may be an alternative to the motion listed on the agenda to authorize the Bucks County Planning Commission to pursue grant funding for 25% of the project cost of the Zoning Book overhaul. Back in October, Council authorized BCPC to prepare a grant application to the Municipal Assistance Program (MAP) for grant funding for the same project. The projected total cost of the project is about \$36,000, and the MAP grant would cover 50% and require a 50% match of \$18,000. Earlier today, Mr. Schneider, Interim Manager Zimmerman, and President Culleton had a call with BCPC to discuss applying for the PHMC Keystone grant and it was determined that submitting a grant application was not necessary. Instead, they suggested raising the total cost of the Zoning Book overhaul by \$4,000, which would allow the Borough to fine-tune the Historic Ordinance as they are removing it from the Zoning Ordinance and do a separate historic map. Mr. Schneider said that the additional \$4,000 could be added to the MAP grant application, bringing the total to \$40,000. After further discussion, Solicitor Kirk suggested withdrawing the current MAP grant application, having PC and BCPC discuss raising the requested amount to \$40,000, and approving a Resolution to authorize BCPC to submit a MAP grant application for the new amount. Council withdrew the PHMC Keystone grant application motion.

Solicitor Kirk said that the Resolution to increase the MAP grant amount has to be approved at the February Work Session. Council gave their support to raise the amount and Mr. Schneider said that he will confer with PC and BCPC.

Curb & Sidewalk Ordinance: The Curb & Sidewalk Ordinance was approved at the January 8th meeting, but the Planning Commission wanted to specify permitted materials and Shade Tree Commission wanted to change the language of the ordinance to be consistent with what Shade Tree recommends in its own ordinance, namely that vegetation along sidewalks be cleared to a height of six feet, eight inches. Council reviewed the proposed changes and Councilperson Haldeman said the language should be clarified, as the ordinance says that all vegetation adjacent to the sidewalk will be cleared without specifying whether that means the apron or dwelling side. After further discussion, Solicitor Kirk suggested changing the wording to “all vegetation on private property adjacent to sidewalks.” Pat Carr, 240 North Green Street, asked if the area between the curb and the sidewalk is considered private property. Councilperson Haldeman said that it is in the right-of-way but is still private property. Solicitor Kirk said the wording of the ordinance can be refined. Mr. Schneider asked how this will be implemented and President Culleton said it would be in an ordinance to amend the Curb & Sidewalk ordinance. Solicitor Kirk suggested that someone look in the property maintenance code to see if there is any specific language as to how to handle vegetation and clear a walkway.

SOLID WASTE CONTRACT: Vice President Horwatt asked Solicitor Kirk what she had determined regarding whether Leck Waste Services not collecting yard waste separately from regular trash in December, January, February, and March violates their existing contract. Solicitor Kirk said that while she has not conducted a full review, Leck is not in violation of their contract because they are limited to yards that are open when it comes to yard waste disposal, and if no yards are open, they have to throw it in with the trash. Vice President Horwatt said that Council must be ready to advertise the solid waste contract by August because their contract with Leck ends this year. Solicitor Kirk recommended that time be taken to review the existing contract to find anything Council would like to change.

PENNDOT VIRTUAL PUBLIC OFFICIALS MEETING: The PennDOT Virtual Public Officials Meeting is on February 27th, and all Councilmembers are invited. Interim Manager Zimmerman will attend as well. The meeting is by invitation only. President Culleton asked if Joe Fiocco or another traffic engineer should attend, and if there is anyone else they would like to be involved. Councilperson Haldeman said that there is nothing to be gained from inviting Mr. Fiocco since PennDOT disagrees with SAFE Engineering’s studies. President Culleton said that she feels a traffic engineer listening in would be helpful and suggested using Pennoni. After further discussion, Council decided that it was not necessary to have a traffic engineer present, but they will request an invitation for a representative of the Planning Commission. Mr. Schneider spoke in support of having Mr. Fiocco at least audit the meeting. Councilperson Haldeman objected, saying that it would imply a lack of trust to PennDOT. President Culleton said that Council should go into the meeting in good faith. Vice President Horwatt then withdrew the motion to invite the traffic engineer. Then President Culleton said that she, Vice President Horwatt, Councilperson Cumming, and Interim Manager Zimmerman met on Monday to come up with an initial list of mitigations to present to PennDOT and read the list to Council. Councilperson Haldeman asked if they discussed the lights; President Culleton said that PennDOT told the Borough that if they did not receive the Automated Red Light Enforcement grant for their traffic signals, they would help upgrade them. Mr. Schneider asked if there was any talk of stop signs at North Bellevue Avenue and President Culleton said she will add that to the list. She also said this would be a good opportunity to ask for a stop sign at Winchester again. Interim Manager Zimmerman suggested having covered bus stops.

FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION ORDINANCE REVISIONS: President Culleton asked how the Borough would proceed with rental registrations as recommended by Consultant Paul Leonard once the draft Residential Registration Ordinance prepared by Solicitor Kirk is passed. Vice President Horwatt said people will want to know what the inspections are looking for. She said that the checklist Mr. Leonard provided, which was taken from Middletown, is a good resource. Councilperson Haldeman suggested giving people free smoke detectors as needed as an incentive to get people to register. President Culleton noted that Mr. Leonard had expressed concern that having an inspection once every two years as outlined in the ordinance would not be feasible, and Solicitor Kirk said the Borough can edit the ordinance to make the inspection timeframe more flexible and give people time to complete the registration process. Treasurer Schoen asked how the Borough can get people to fill out registration applications; Interim Manager Zimmerman suggested using direct mailers. There was discussion of how to find addresses. Then Council discussed what the registration form might look like and Vice President Horwatt suggested copying Middletown's and adding information about who is exempt. After further discussion, President Culleton said that Council would continue the topic to the next Work Session.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: Councilperson Haldeman said that he has not been able to match the account balances. He said that there were seven checks he could not find. Treasurer Schoen said that she sent him a list of bank reconciliations for all accounts. He said that he needs that list and the balances of the accounts the checks are going into to cross-reference them. He felt that this should be made easier to understand and asked that a system to cross-reference be established by next month. After further discussion, President Culleton proposed that the budget committee meet to discuss this further.

MOTION: On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Zielinski, Council voted 6-0 to approve the Treasurer's Report.

Revised 2025 Budget: Solicitor Kirk said that the revised budget was advertised in the Bucks County Courier Times on January 26th 2025 and February 5th 2025 which confirms the availability of the revised budget for inspection at Borough Hall during office hours.

MOTION: On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Zielinski, Council voted 6-0 to approve the revised 2025 budget.

MANAGER'S REPORT: PennDOT has not yet sent the report for the traffic study on Maple Avenue, but Interim Manager Zimmerman did receive the information contained in the report, which she presented. The study was conducted December 16th through the 23rd for 24-hour cycles. There were 115,000 vehicles tracked and 27 were caught at the highest speeds of 57 miles per hour, recorded off peak times. 8% of the vehicles were 32 miles per hour. The bulk of the vehicles were going at an average of 40 miles per hour. PennDOT has agreed to lower the speed limit to 30 miles per hour. The Borough will be responsible for the speed limit signs, and PennDOT will install them. PennDOT will be out to mark the locations of the signs, and they are prepared to make an additional reduce speed sign at the Beechwood property. Vice President Horwatt suggested revising the ordinance drafted to lower the speed limit on Pine Street now that the Borough has permission to add Maple Avenue. President Culleton said that the traffic advisory committee should discuss the ordinance first.

BOARD, COMMITTEE & COMMISSION REPORTS:

Communications Team: President Culleton raised the question of whether committees and boards should be allowed to use official Borough letterhead for requests for donations. She said that the

question came up when Rec Board asked for Borough letterhead to send out their donation request letters for the Easter Egg Hunt. After some discussion, it was agreed that any letter from a business, committee, or commission of the Borough should be on letterhead, and any letter to be sent out on letterhead should first be reviewed by the office for appropriateness.

Environmental Advisory Committee: Vice President Horwatt said that Bucks County sent out a letter requesting participation in their mosquito habitat reduction and West Nile Virus surveillance and control activities. EAC is recommending that the Borough participate because the Borough could be held responsible if someone gets Lyme disease at the Catawissa or Mayors' Playground if they do not. EAC reviewed Bucks County's larvicide options and is recommending using Natular XRT Briquets, which are little briquets put in waterways that prevent mosquito larvae from developing.

MOTION: On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Marfia, Council voted 6-0 to submit the Bucks County Department of Health Mosquito Disease Control Participation Form and recommend the commonly used larvicide Natular XRT Briquets as our first option.

Heritage Farm/Langhorne Open Space: LOSI President Pat Carr informed Council that the thermostats on the first and second floor of the farmhouse were replaced.

Recreation Board: Councilperson Zielinski announced that Rec Board has come up with a date for the meeting to discuss playground signage. It will be held on Thursday, March 13th at 7:00 p.m. at the playground pavilion. Councilperson Zielinski will work on inviting the parties involved. He also announced that the Easter Egg Hunt flyer is being prepared and said that Rec Board is accepting donations.

Shade Tree Commission: President Culleton announced that the Tree City application was submitted and approved by the regional and state coordinators. Now they just need approval from the Arbor Day Foundation. Arbor Day will be April 26th, and there will be a tree in honor of Chris Blaydon. President Culleton said that it is important for the event to celebrate all Mr. Blaydon has done for the Borough, and suggested interviewing Mr. Blaydon and issuing a press release or writeup to send to the papers. She said she will work with office staff to advertise the event.

Zoning/Building Inspection: Councilperson Marfia said that the zoning reports are getting better, but said that Council should get copies of Zoning Hearing Board applications. He said there have been ZHB hearings that Council did not receive notice of in the past. Council then discussed some of the individual items on the report. There was also discussion of how Council wants to receive the zoning report, and Solicitor Kirk suggested that the zoning officer submit a single report instead of two separate reports.

ADJOURNMENT: On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Zielinski, Council voted 6-0 to adjourn at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Zimmerman, Interim Borough Manager / Secretary

Next Council Meeting: March 12, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.