

Langhorne Borough Council Meeting Minutes January 11, 2023

A Langhorne Borough Council Meeting was held in person in Council Chambers on Wednesday, January 11, 2023. Vice President Mason called the session to order at 7:30 p.m. and invited those in attendance to pledge allegiance to the Flag.

In Attendance: Vice President Rich Mason; Councilpersons Nancy Culleton, Kristen Farry, Kathleen Horwatt, Scott Haldeman, and Tony Marfia; Mayor Joe Taylor; Police Chief John Godzieba; Treasurer Ellyn Schoen; Manager Steve Bradshaw; and, Clerk Mary Zimmerman. Solicitor Anne Porter attended via Zoom.

Absent: President Paul Murdock.

Mayors Report: No report.

Police Chief's Report: Chief John Godzieba reported that the LBBA's Dickens Night was well attended and without incident; that there had been thefts over the last two months at the Exxon station and the 7-11, where thieves unscrewed the back of the game "Games of Skill" and took the money. Within minutes of the 7-11 theft, Penndel's 7-11 suffered a similar theft. "Games of Skill" is in a gray area with the Gaming Committee regarding being taxed.

Announcement & Presentations: Vice President Mason said that Bucks County Association of Boroughs was accepting nominees for Representative of the Year and that he would like to nominate Councilperson Horwatt.

Motion: On motion of Councilperson Culleton, seconded by Councilperson Haldeman, Council voted 5-0-1 to nominate Councilperson Horwatt for the BCAB municipal representative of the year. Councilperson Horwatt abstained.

Public Comment: Carol Deaver, 203 W. Watson Ave., commented that her neighbor's full residential solar installation could be quite loud and that she could hear a low frequency rumble from the converter for about two hours a day. While she appreciated his energy saving intentions, she wanted to discourage this machinery as it was challenging to those at home during the day.

Fire Siren Usage: Councilperson Haldeman commented that he would like to re-raise the 2021 discussion to end the use of the fire siren. While he had heard the arguments for the siren, he thought that with advances in technology it was not needed at this time and he questioned whether there would be any loss of service if the siren were not in use. He believed that most area fire stations no longer used sirens due to public demand, especially as businesses were affected, more people worked from home, and people work during the night and sleep during the day.

Councilperson Marfia stated he had received numerous complaints regarding the noise of the siren.

Councilperson Farry remarked that nothing has changed since the issue was voted on in 2021 and that she thought that the volunteer fire fighters should have been notified prior to any discussion. Further, since there had been no public outcry, there was no reason to re-consider the matter or to ask volunteers to attend another meeting. Further, the siren and the pager comply with the requirement for two ways to notify fire fighters and without a request from the firefighters, why would Council consider a change.

Mayor Taylor suggested that the Council formally invite the firefighters to speak on the matter. Councilperson Haldeman requested a report of the number of times the engine leaves the station house. Councilperson Culleton suggested before formally inviting the firefighters again, we research what notification methods other municipalities are using.

Actions to be taken:

- Research the number of times the fire engine leaves the firehouse.
- Find out what other municipalities are using to notify fire fighters.

Manager’s Report: Manager Bradshaw offered updates on the following topics: the codifying process, to which he received an estimate from General Code, a company affiliated with Co-Stars. The bid package was in Council’s meeting package; the permits pulled by PennDOT for the W. Richardson Ave waste water drainage repair; the updated Langhorne Borough Municipal Directory; Armour & Sons’ work on a “time and material” estimate for replacing the washers on the decorative streetlights. Middletown Township offered to sell Langhorne Borough the black decorative fixture replacement heads for \$350 each; rejoining the Lower Bucks County Chamber of Commerce; and, the lack of response from Keystone Municipal Services regarding code enforcement. Manager Bradshaw remarked that two members of Borough boards and commissions have expired terms and asked about the protocol for reappointment.

Actions to be taken:

- Ask board members whether they wish to be reappointed, after which Council must formally reappoint them or advertise for replacements.
- Work with Manager Teoli-Kulhs of Middletown Township to create a procurer or an agreement regarding the Fire Company’s Workers Compensation Insurance Policy.

Manager Bradshaw requested that the Council work session times be changed to two weeks prior to the Council meetings to allow the office time to be more productive in response to the needs of the Council.

Motion: On motion of Councilperson Culleton, seconded by Councilperson Farry, Council voted unanimously to reschedule the Council work sessions to the last Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm.

Vice President Mason noted that the fee schedule was on the agenda because it was not discussed in December. Council decided it was an opportune time to evaluate the Borough fees and ask Keystone Municipal Services for input. Clerk Zimmerman recommended a comparison of local municipal fees.

Action to be taken:

- Put together a comparison of fee schedules.

Engineer’s Report: No report. Councilperson Horwatt noted that in June CKS merged with Arrow Consulting. She questioned whether a new contract was needed. Vice President Mason responded that the contract would be transferred to the merger entity. Councilperson Horwatt shared the revised bill from various CKS projects: \$1,634.90 for storm water management MS4report; \$9,883 for the Richardson Avenue drainage repair estimate and bid preparation; \$65 for the Borough Hall roof bid; and, \$13,400 for the Toll Brothers project. Councilperson Horwatt asked if there was a copy of the professional services agreement with Toll Brothers. The Solicitor will send a copy of it to Council.

Treasurer’s Report: Treasure Schoen spoke with Mayor Taylor about the Fire Departments Workers Compensation Policy, which is paid for by Middletown Township, Langhorne Manor Borough and

Langhorne Borough. The Langhorne Borough Fire Department would like to transfer their coverage to the policy held in the Borough name's.

Councilperson Culleton asked why the account balance for the Shade Tree Committee hadn't changed since trees were planted last month. Treasurer Schoen, responded that the spreadsheet will be updated.

Motion: On motion of Councilperson Farry, seconded by Councilperson Marfia, Council voted unanimously to approve the Treasurer's Report.

Motion: On motion of Councilperson Marfia, seconded by Councilperson Haldeman, Council voted unanimously to approve payment of the bills.

Environmental Advisory Committee: Vice President Mason reported that EAC's November 21st meeting focused on storm water regulation for small municipalities. The EAC was encouraged to submit a proposal to the DEP with regard to sediment reduction as part of the overlay. The DEP sent out a very detailed questionnaire to encourage small boroughs to work together to achieve economy of scale. The EAC asked Council to let them know if there were any objections to what they proposed before they submitted it.

Recreation Board: Councilperson Horwatt noted the Board was considering holding an Easter egg hunt at the Mayor's Playground in the spring and asked if there were any concerns. Rec Board was looking for sponsorship for the Easter Egg Hunt. The tree from Morris Arboretum was planted. Harvey Spencer will be laying the concrete for the new bench when the weather permits.

Motion: On motion of Councilperson Horwatt, seconded by Councilperson Marfia, Council voted unanimously to approve RDA grant resolutions and accept grant money.

Motion: On motion of Councilperson Haldeman, seconded by Councilperson Culleton, Council voted 5-0-1 to accept the 2023-2024 snow removal bid from L & S Land Construction, LLC. Councilperson Horwatt abstained due to family involvement.

Motion: On motion of Councilperson Horwatt, seconded by Councilperson Culleton, Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes from December 2022 Council Work Session and Council Meeting.

Shade Tree Commission: Councilperson Culleton reported on the January 9 meeting. Chair Chris Blaydon marked the trees in need of trimming on Maple Avenue and was seeking estimates from Transue, Bartlett, and Spencer. In response to her question, Councilperson Culleton was advised that the work would be charged to the General Fund. Councilperson Culleton noted the owner of the dead tree on Watson removed the tree.

Councilperson Culleton reported that on December 27 that she, Chris Blaydon, and Barry Hitchen of the Shade Tree Commission, met Alex Giamatti of Toll Brothers to walk the property for the proposed Toll Project and discuss options for replanting. Toll would be responsible to replant at least 50% of the trees they remove, which could be planted throughout the Borough.

Action to be taken:

- The Borough needs to reinstate its status as a Tree City with the Arbor Day Foundation.

Street Maintenance: Councilperson Haldeman brought up the need to repair the lightning rod and covered lights at the Farm.

HARB: No report.

LOSI: Pat Carr reported that the cable and lightning rod came loose from the mower barn, that a cobra light needed repair and asked whether Armour and Sons could make the repairs when they were fixing other lights in the Borough. LOSI paid to have a path cleared when a large pine tree fell by the foot bridge at Catawissa.

Planning Commission: Paul Schneider reported that their next meeting was January 18th and that they had been working on drafting guiding principles to get the overlay ordinance process on track. Vice President Mason asked to include a sediment reduction plan as part of the overlay which could be included in the Borough's sediment reduction requirements due by 2025. Paul Schneider stated that Tom Comitta was joining the team working on designing the overlay and asked for copies of the professional services contract. Solicitor Porter indicated that his fees would be included in the CKS billings.

Councilperson Haldeman asked if PennDOT included any wetlands in their report on the existing corridor of Route 1, where they propose to put the ramps. Councilperson Horwatt responded that they had not.

Communications Team: No report. Councilperson Culleton asked whether Council members consented to their phone numbers being posted on the website and in the Municipal Directory. There were no objections.

Public Comment: Carol Deaver, 203 W. Watson Ave., said she was in favor of the fire siren.

Councilperson Horwatt referred to a conversation she had with Brian Brockwell, the owner of 118 E. Maple Ave. He was concerned about six police vehicles being parked in his parking lot, especially when the property was fully occupied in the end of 2023. Three are acceptable for the time being but it will be evaluated once his property has additional tenants.

Actions to be taken:

- Sell the blue Durango.
- Repair the grass alongside the building in the spring.

Solicitor's Report: No report.

Adjournment: With no other business, on motion of Councilperson Farry, seconded by Councilperson Culleton, Council voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Bradshaw, Secretary