

**Langhorne Borough Council Meeting**  
**July 10, 2024**

A Langhorne Borough Council Meeting was held at Council Chambers on Wednesday, July 10, 2024. 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 Kathleen Horwatt; Councilpersons Tim Harris, Bob Cumming, Scott Haldeman, Anthony Marfia, and Adam Zielinski; Solicitor David Truelove; Police Chief John Godzieba; Manager Steve Bradshaw; Clerk Gabriel Tenaglia

Court reporter Cindy M. Oliverio was present for the minor subdivision hearing. She left after the hearing, at approximately 7:29 p.m.

**ABSENT:** Mayor Joe Taylor; Treasurer Ellyn Schoen

**AGENDA REVIEW:** President Culleton suggested that the refunding of permit fees to the AME church be moved to beneath the Police Chief's report on today's agenda. Council did not object.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Richard Search, 221 South Bellevue Avenue, complained about the hedge trimming at the Revolutionary War Burial Grounds. Manager Bradshaw said that Transue has been notified and he will meet with them to get it fixed.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** President Culleton announced that the consent agenda consists of the minutes from the June 12<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting, the Treasurer's Report, payment of the bills, and approval for the Cub Scout Pack 19 July 12<sup>th</sup> movie night.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Zielinski, Council voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda.

**POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT:** Chief Godzieba said that he got pricing for the speed cushions for Flowers Avenue. He will put together a report for the next meeting. He also informed Council of a small fire at the Pine Watson Shopping Center caused by fireworks. One of the perpetrators has been charged. Chief Godzieba then addressed the false rumor of an alert of a shooting at the Mayor's Playground on the Langhorne Next Door app. He also clarified the total calls to Bucks and 911 in the police activity report.

**BETHLEHEM AME CHURCH ROOF REPLACEMENT:** There was discussion about which fees should be refunded. The inspection fee of \$150 and the State UCC fee of \$4.50 could not be refunded, so the final amount to be refunded will be \$523.50. There was further discussion of the work and when the refund could be issued. Council concluded that the work will be done by the time the refund check is cut.

**MOTION:** On motion of Vice President Horwatt, seconded by Councilperson Haldeman, Council voted unanimously to refund the permit fees to the AME Church minus the inspection fee and state fee.

**141-151 WEST MAPLE AVENUE LOT LINE CHANGE HEARING:** Jeff Knight, 141 West Maple Avenue, was sworn in by the court reporter, Ms. Oliverio. Mr. Knight explained that he and his wife are seeking a lot line change to expand their property and create a buffer zone. Solicitor Truelove clarified for the record

that the Knights are seeking an expansion of their property at the expense of the property in front, 151 West Maple Avenue, which was previously owned by Mr. Knight's parents and sold to JNMN, LLC. The Knights sent notices to the surrounding property owners along with a letter written by Solicitor Barbara Kirk, as well as a section of the Langhorne Borough code regarding minor subdivisions. The estate of Mr. Knight's mother was represented by Michael Meginniss. Solicitor Truelove received a letter from Mr. Meginniss representing JNMN, LLC, consenting to the lot line change. The Planning Commission, at its April 2024 meeting, recommended approval of the minor subdivision subject to certain conditions. George DiPersio of CKS prepared a review letter. Keystone Municipal Services conducted a review of the property and provided a memo. A letter and survey of the property was submitted by the Knights' engineer, John Richardson of Dumack Engineering. Solicitor Truelove explained the agreement of sale of the property. Then he read aloud Resolution 2024-21, approving the lot line change. Solicitor Truelove said that he will provide Ms. Oliverio with the Resolution so she has the proper verbiage, and then it will be finalized for Council to sign.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Haldeman, seconded by Vice President Horwatt, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution 2024-21: APPROVING THE PRELIMINARY & FINAL MINOR SUBDIVISION/LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 141 & 151 WEST MAPLE AVENUE, S.R. 0213.

**ENGINEER'S REPORT:**

**Bid for Pipe Replacement beneath East Richardson Avenue at Pine Street:** President Culleton announced that Council has received 3 bids for the project. One bid was from G&B Construction for \$22,883. The next was from Passerini & Sons for \$22,285.50. And the third was from T. Schiefer Contractors for \$24,270. CKS recommended using G&B Construction for this particular job, as they will be coming back to the Borough to finish the work on the Route 413 inlet project. They are more familiar with the work and its time-sensitive nature, as PennDOT is already milling and paving the road. President Culleton asked if the Borough would be paying out of Liquid Fuels. Vice President Horwatt recommended continuing to use the RDA grant and use the Capital Projects Fund if the cost exceeds the grant amount. Mr. DiPersio said that Liquid Fuels would not cover all the line items. There was further discussion on who would contact the contractors.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Haldeman, seconded by Councilperson Cumming, Council voted unanimously to accept the bid submitted by G&B Construction for \$22,883.

**Crosswalk/Sidewalk for Country Club Lane & North Bellevue Avenue:** Mr. DiPersio presented a concept plan for the proposed sidewalk and crosswalk. The plan shows 195 linear feet of sidewalk, and CKS recommends having a five-foot-wide sidewalk. Mr. DiPersio directed Council's attention to the frontage of 32 Country Club Lane. He said that the crosswalk requires something at the receiving end. The proposed plan shows a curved stop bar at the corner. Councilperson Haldeman and Vice President Horwatt asked if the crosswalk and sidewalk are necessary. Mr. DiPersio said that part of the reason for having the crosswalk is to show in the grant application that the Borough is maximizing the connectivity of its properties. Council and Mr. DiPersio further discussed possibilities and he explained that the grants are not due until September, so Council can consider and give a final answer next month.

**Flowers Avenue:** Councilperson Marfia had requested that CKS look into potential changes at the intersection of Flowers Avenue and Bellevue Avenue. He said that there are currently no handicap-accessible curbs on either corner. Mr. DiPersio presented three options. Option one would clarify the

north-south connection on the east side with striping and upgrade the corners with curb ramps. Option two would be the same, but create an east-west crosswalk and add a curb ramp to the west side of Bellevue. The third option, which would require a traffic study, would make the intersection a three-way stop. Mr. DiPersio said that the first two options are more feasible. If this work is added into the BCRDA grant, a highway occupancy permit from PennDOT would be required, which could slow the process down.

**Borough Road Program:** Mr. DiPersio explained that the road program is a long-term plan for all the Borough's 23 road segments, enough that a long-term plan for repaving would benefit the Borough. Showing that there is a long-term plan that expands throughout the entire Borough will make the BCRDA grant application for Country Club Lane more attractive. President Culleton asked about how the funding would work if the road program is included with the grant application. Mr. DiPersio gave a cost breakdown. He said that in subsequent years the Borough could be requesting \$250,000 per year to cover the costs of road maintenance. Councilperson Harris asked if the Borough is only updating the streets that they own; Mr. DiPersio said yes. President Culleton asked when Council has to make a decision to add this to the grant application. Mr. DiPersio said that the grant is due in two months. Council gave CKS permission to work on the road program for the grant.

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION:** President Culleton brought up the update of the Stormwater Ordinance. Mr. DiPersio said that a motion is needed this evening, as Council previously passed a motion amending the Stormwater Ordinance, but CKS reviewed the amended Stormwater Ordinance and found a few issues that should be resolved. CKS suggests that Council authorize them to do a review and make a list of items that should be updated, and then Mr. DiPersio will present a full list of their findings at the next Council Meeting. Solicitor Truelove said that Council should first make a motion to amend tonight's agenda to include an item to authorize CKS to perform a review of the Stormwater Management Ordinance.

**MOTION:** On motion of Vice President Horwatt, seconded by Councilperson Harris, Council voted unanimously to amend the agenda to include an item to authorize CKS to perform a review of the Stormwater Management Ordinance.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Zielinski, seconded by Councilperson Marfia, Council voted unanimously to authorize CKS to review the Borough's Stormwater Ordinance and make recommendations for updates.

**PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:** Chair Paul Schneider said that the PC will discuss residential conversions at their meeting this month. President Culleton said that Council decided at their last Work Session to vote on whether to have the PC look into which zoning districts would be appropriate for allowing accessory dwellings in non-principal structures as a special exception, with conditions. Mr. Schneider said that PC can advise on what the conditions will be. Councilperson Marfia said he was against any changes. President Culleton said that the special exceptions would be structured to be few enough that the increase in the Borough's density would be limited. Councilperson Haldeman said that other municipalities have restrictions on what can be done with houses built after a certain date. He suggested that similar restrictions could be adopted by the Borough. President Culleton suggested that the PC consider this.

**MOTION:** On motion of Vice President Horwatt, seconded by Councilperson Harris, Council voted 4-2-1 to request that the Planning Commission examine in which zoning districts a residential conversion in a

non-principal structure could be allowed as a special exception with conditions. President Culleton, Vice President Horwatt, and Councilpersons Zielinski and Harris voted in favor. Councilpersons Cumming and Marfia voted against. Councilperson Haldeman abstained.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Zielinski, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution 2024-22: AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND SUBMISSION OF ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR THE USE OF PLANNING SERVICES BY THE BUCKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION FOR THE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UPDATES TO THE BOROUGH'S ZONING CODE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PLANNING SERVICES AGREEMENT DATED JULY 20, 2022.

**MANAGER'S REPORT:**

- Manager Bradshaw reached out to Transue to correct the hedge at the Revolutionary War Burial Grounds.
- Former mayor Chris Blaydon, 245 West Maple Avenue, asked Manager Bradshaw to put up a new "Welcome to Langhorne" sign. Manager Bradshaw received a quote for \$750. There was further discussion of the sign and Vice President Horwatt suggested ordering two signs and having the Borough Motto, "Where History & Community Meet," written on them.
- Manager Bradshaw said that he has not been able to find the location of the underground power lines for the generator behind Borough Hall. Mr. DiPersio put him in touch with a company that does ground penetrating radar and he got a quote to find the power lines for \$700. After further discussion, Council decided to see if plans showing the power lines could be found before committing to paying \$700 to locate them.

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION:** Councilperson Haldeman asked if there is still talk of the Borough doing fire inspections on residential and rental properties. President Culleton said Solicitor Kirk is working on drafting the Ordinance. Councilperson Haldeman said that Borough Hall should get a fire inspection. President Culleton suggested including Borough buildings in the Ordinance. There was discussion on alternative options for Zoning and Building Inspections.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Communications Team:** The Communications Team still has to discuss the Borough's social media policy.

**Fire Company:** No report.

**Environmental Advisory Committee:** No report.

**HARB:** Alexandra Cordova, 225 North Pine Street, submitted a HARB application to install wooden replacement doors on the front and back of her home. HARB unanimously approved her application. There were also two Repair and Replace In-Kind (RRIK) applications: one for roof repair at the Bethlehem AME Church, 215 South Pine Street, and one for roof replacement at 231 North Bellevue Avenue. Both were approved. Councilperson Marfia said that he requested that HARB Chair Robert Wharton include RRIK applications in the report.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Zielinski, Council voted unanimously to approve the HARB report.

**Heritage Farm/L.O.S.I.:** No report.

**Recreation Board:** Councilperson Zielinski said that they got a lot of community service help. Vice President Horwatt said that the work on the pillar at the Mayor's Playground is done. Councilperson Cumming asked Councilperson Zielinski about the status of the cameras for the playground. Councilperson Zielinski said that he is meeting with Chief Godzieba on Friday.

**Shade Tree Commission:** President Culleton said that Shade Tree Commission looked at the Erin Development application at their meeting on Monday. She also said that Shade Tree would like to do a fall planting, and is requesting that the clerk and Manager make a post on the website inviting anyone interested in having a tree planted in their yard or right-of-way to contact the Manager by August 31<sup>st</sup>.

**JULY WORK SESSION:** President Culleton suggested canceling the July WS since there is no pressing business, with the understanding that one could be reinstated in event of emergency, chaired by Vice President Horwatt.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Marfia, Council voted unanimously to cancel the July 29<sup>th</sup> Work Session.

**MEETING WITH SAFE ENGINEERING AND MIDDLETOWN REGARDING RC3 PLAN:** On July 9<sup>th</sup> President Culleton, Vice President Horwatt, Councilperson Cumming, Manager Bradshaw, and Joe Fiocco of SAFE Engineering met with the Chair of Middletown Supervisors Mike Ksiazek, the Middletown Manager Stephanie Kuhls, and the Assistant Manager Nick Valla to discuss the RC3 project and the Borough's opposition to the Cloverleaf portion. Mr. Fiocco provided a summary of his findings and made the case for renovating and keeping the service roads with limited access, to facilitate traffic flow and allow the roundabouts proposed by SAFE to serve their function. Middletown's main concern is that Middletown residents want the project completed ASAP. They are wary of doing anything that could slow down the process. President Culleton said that the Borough could potentially get support for the roundabout concept from Middletown and Langhorne Manor Borough if it does not delay the project. Vice President Horwatt said that Mr. Fiocco met with PennDOT's number two designer who oversees the RC3 project, who said that it would take less time to design what the Borough wants than what PennDOT wants. Councilperson Cumming suggested writing a thank you letter to Middletown asking for their support. Vice President Horwatt suggested sharing the Borough's materials on the RC3 project with the public and letting people take them to Middletown and the Manor. President Culleton said she would write the letter and send a copy to Langhorne Manor. Manger Bradshaw said he has reached out to the Manor several times and has not heard back. Vice President Horwatt said that the designer Mr. Fiocco spoke with reached out to the Borough two years ago and said that if they want to keep the access roads, PennDOT would want something in return. Vice President Horwatt then told Council that Mr. Fiocco presented a map showing which streets would be impacted by the plan and wants to know if Council wants him to review it. Council then discussed the thank you letter and the service roads.

**ERIN DEVELOPMENT SALDO APPLICATION:** The Borough manager, engineer, and solicitors met with President Culleton and Vice President Horwatt on July 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss the process for reviewing the application. Engineer DiPersio has prepared a review letter which he will send to the developer this week, pointing out zoning issues they will have to address.

**OPEN FIRES ORDINANCE:** Councilperson Haldeman made further amendments to the Open Fires Ordinance based on input he received at the last Work Session. He changed the Qualified Exceptions to

include homeowners on their own property, and added that the fire must be five feet in diameter or less in a recommended fire pit or fireplace. He voiced opposition to the proposed distance requirements, as they would eliminate almost every property owner in the Borough. President Culleton felt the fifty- and hundred-foot distance restrictions applied to recreational campfires would be unfair to people with small properties. There was discussion on whether to include private homeowners in section C and the possibility of adding a clause prohibiting fires that are a nuisance to neighbors. Solicitor Truelove advised against this, as that there is no objective standard of a “nuisance.” Councilperson Harris said that there is no way to enforce it. Councilperson Haldeman said he wants to keep section “c” as-is but without the distance restrictions, and using seasoned wood would make the smoke from fires more manageable. Vice President Horwatt opposed removing the distance restrictions. She suggested waiting to finalize the Fire Marshall’s responsibilities before discussing the Ordinance further.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Haldeman, seconded by Councilperson Cumming, Council voted unanimously to table discussion of the Open Fires Ordinance until the August Council Meeting.

**BUDGET/FINANCE ISSUES:** The Treasurer sent out the 2023 Auditor’s Report. The Borough got a clean audit, but the auditor made suggestions to add an extra layer of scrutiny. One of them was that a Councilmember be appointed to reconcile monthly statements with Borough records. President Culleton suggested changing the name of the Budget Committee to the Finance Committee so they can make recommendations on more than just the Borough’s operating budget. Solicitor Truelove suggested making a Resolution describing the expanded responsibilities of the committee, and President Culleton decided to wait until after the Budget Committee meeting to come back with a proposal. President Culleton also informed Council that Treasurer Schoen is requesting authorization to compose a letter that she can send out to homeowners who have been in arrears for months on their trash bill. Solicitor Kirk had suggested that there be a deadline attached to the letter. Manager Bradshaw said that the deadline is thirty or sixty days. Council decided on thirty days. Solicitor Truelove said that Solicitor Kirk can draft it for Treasurer Schoen.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Marfia, Council voted unanimously to authorize the Solicitor to compose a letter for the Treasurer giving homeowners delinquent on their trash bill sixty days’ notice to pay the bill before a lien is put on their property.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Vice President Horwatt noted that there were several inaccuracies in the zoning officer’s report and asked the Clerk to assist him. Clerk Tenaglia said that he would have the zoning officer send him the zoning report prior to submission. Vice President Horwatt also brought up the issue of political signs. Manager Bradshaw said that he could not find anything prohibiting political signs. Solicitor Truelove said that they are protected by constitutional rights as long as they do not create an obstruction or public safety hazard. Then Council discussed the Sign Ordinance. Solicitor Truelove said that looking into signs in the Borough could be a long-term project. President Culleton expressed interest in learning what is in the Sign Ordinance.

Vice President Horwatt noted three unpaid bills that were submitted in time to write the checks. She said they should be added to approval of the bills. Solicitor Truelove said that the consent agenda should be amended to reflect this. The bills in question are for LS Land Construction for the basin, the mowing, and the pillar. The bill for the basin work is \$150, the mowing is \$780, and the pillar is \$6,600.

**MOTION:** On motion of Councilperson Zielinski, seconded by Councilperson Cumming, Council voted 6-0 to amend the approval of the Treasurer’s Report to add the stipulation that the three aforementioned

checks to LS Land Construction be paid. Vice President Horwatt abstained.

Councilperson Harris asked about code enforcement for sidewalk maintenance, specifically for hedges growing into the sidewalks. Manager Bradshaw asked Councilperson Harris to email him with pictures and he will forward them to the code enforcement officer.

**ADJOURNMENT:** On motion of Vice President Horwatt, seconded by Councilperson Harris, Council voted unanimously to adjourn and enter into executive session at 9:27 p.m. The Executive Session ended at approximately 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Bradshaw, Borough Manager / Secretary

**Next Council Meeting: August 14, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.**