

**Langhorne Borough Council Meeting**  
**June 9, 2021**

A meeting of the Langhorne Borough Council was held on June 9, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. as a hybrid meeting, both in-person in Council Chambers and virtually via Zoom. President Thomas called the meeting to order and invited everyone in attendance to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present in person were: President Kari Thomas, Vice President Scott Haldeman, Councilmen Richard Mason, Anthony Marfia, and Paul Murdock, Councilwomen Kathleen Horwatt, Police Chief John Godzieba, Borough Manager/Secretary Christine Schoell, and Solicitor Catherine Anne Porter. Present virtually was: Kristen Farry. Absent were: Mayor Joseph Taylor and Treasurer Ellyn Schoen.

**Announcements and Presentations:** President Thomas thanked Judy Sloane of Judy's Corner for repairing the picture frames that hang in Council Chambers. President Thomas commended the Jesse Soby American Legion Post for the successful Memorial Day Parade and its ability to bring the community together. She thanked the Borough Police Department and the Langhorne-Middletown Fire Company for helping to ensure that the parade went smoothly. President Thomas announced that the LBBA will be having the Concerts in the Park.

**Public Comment:** Janet Maher of 212 N. Bellevue Ave. asked Council to consider passing an ordinance to ban fireworks in the Borough. She was advised that the Borough cannot preempt state law and pass an ordinance that is stricter than state law. Chief Godzieba advised that fireworks can only be set off if they are at least 150 feet from all occupied structures and at times that do not violate the noise ordinance.

Jordan Rinehart of 237 E. Richardson Ave. discussed his concerns about the property located at 233 Flowers Ave.; the height of the grass and the disabled vehicle in the backyard and the use of video surveillance on his property. President Thomas assured him that the issues were being addressed.

David Ravitz of 232 E. Richardson Ave. stressed the importance of consistent enforcement of ordinances and asked what had been done in the month since he first reported the disabled vehicle. He reported on the fallen tree trunk, the roped off area with a flagpole and flags and the crates sitting out for five months. Solicitor Porter advised him that a fallen tree in a yard was not in violation of any Borough ordinance, that an abandoned car was, and that temporary items in the yard were not unless it was trash or a health hazard. Councilman Murdock assured him that Notices of Violation had been sent.

Councilman Marfia discussed his concerns about the property located at 213 Station Ave. emitting diesel fumes and having a shed and equipment on or over the property line. Councilman Murdock suggested that Councilman Marfia draft a list of items and the ordinances being violated so Code Enforcement could be sent out.

**Mayor's Report:** None.

**Chief's Report:** Chief Godzieba discussed the RDA Grant used to install traffic cameras which were now operational and the work Kevin Transue donated trimming back tree branches.

Chief Godzieba commended the Borough Officers who worked the Memorial Day Parade, noting that they did more work than usual due to Road Technician Schoell's absence.

**Manager's Report:** Manager Schoell noted that Middletown swept the streets before the Memorial Day Parade and suggested that in the future, instead of contracting with PennDOT, that the Borough work with Middletown instead. Councilwoman Horwatt agreed and also suggested that all Borough streets be cleaned, not just the parade route.

Manager Schoell reported that James Metts was hired as the temporary part-time Public Works employee until Steve Schoell was able to return. Manager Schoell approved the permit from the Langhorne Middletown Fire Company to place a banner on the fence at the Mayors Playground.

Manager Schoell requested that Council adopt a Resolution updating the 2003 Property Maintenance Code to the 2015 version.

**Motion:** On motion of Vice President Haldeman seconded by Councilwoman Horwatt, Council voted unanimously to approve the Resolution updating the 2003 Property Maintenance Code to the 2015 version.

Manager Schoell applied for a SAMS Number and submitted the application to receive funds from the American Rescue Plan Act. The Borough will receive two payments of \$82,688.68 for a total of \$165,377.36. Council will be sent the documentation detailing what the funds can be used for.

Woods Services submitted a Request for Recreational Activities application for their annual Woods 5K Run on May 7, 2022, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Council approved the request provided current insurance information was received and COVID regulations were adhered to.

Manager Schoell looked into replacing the Mayor's and Council's chairs in Council Chambers and estimated the cost to be around \$1,200 to \$1,500.

Manager Schoell reported that Nick Valla of Middletown Township advised her that they were conducting a Fire Service Study and asked if she could come to a meeting on June 17<sup>th</sup> as the Borough representative to discuss fire services in the community. Council members were also welcome to attend.

Reverend Tiffany Malone of the Langhorne Bethlehem A.M.E. Church asked to hold an event on August 21<sup>st</sup> to collect donated book bags and school supplies. The Church is trying to secure at least 50 school bags and asked if the Borough could put a request out for donations. Councilwoman Horwatt stated that her book club did a similar collection and offered to provide Reverend Malone with details. Councilwoman Horwatt and Councilman Murdock asked for Reverend Malone's contact information.

**Engineer's Report:** None.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

**Motion:** On Motion of Councilman Murdock seconded by Councilwoman Horwatt, Council voted 6-0-1 to approve the May 2021 Council Minutes, as revised. Councilman Marfia abstained as he did not attend the meeting.

**Approval of the Treasurer's Report:**

**Motion:** On motion of Councilman Mason seconded by Councilman Marfia, Council voted unanimously to approve the May Treasurer's Report.

**Approval of the Bills:**

**Motion:** On motion of Councilman Marfia seconded by Councilman Murdock, Council voted unanimously to approve the payment of the May bills.

**EAC:** Councilman Mason did not have a report for EAC, but asked that Council look into securing electric vehicle charging stations in the Borough, which could be installed for approx. \$4,000 each. President Thomas stated that he could raise the issue during EAC report or during public comment. Councilman Mason will bring it up when he has more information to present.

**HARB:** HARB recommended the approval of the following applications:

1. Craig Hitchen      225 W. Maple Ave.    Install 43 solar panels on the roof.
2. Paul Schneider    233 N. Bellevue Ave. Install 6' high bronze aluminum fence in the backyard.
3. Wayne Kaplan      325 N. Bellevue Ave. Paint house with Sherwin Williams historic colors.
4. Jean-Marc Dubus   118 S. Bellevue Ave. Install temporary vinyl "2021 Best in Bucks" sign on the side of the building.

HARB noted that the solar panels were acceptable because they were located on parts of the roof not visible from the street. Councilwoman Horwatt would like HARB to review the Solar Ordinance and consider permitting them on Historic homes.

**Motion:** On motion of Councilman Murdock seconded by Vice President Haldeman, Council voted unanimously to approve HARB Applications 2 and 3.

**Motion:** On motion of Councilwoman Horwatt seconded by Vice President Haldeman, Council voted 6-0-1 in favor of HARB Application 4 with an abstention from President Thomas.

**Motion:** On motion of Councilwoman Horwatt seconded by Councilman Mason, Council voted unanimously to approve HARB Application 1.

**Farm/LOSI**: Pat Carr reported on upcoming events at the Farm; the September 25<sup>th</sup> Cub Scout Camp Out, the October 2<sup>nd</sup> Flea Market and the October 9<sup>th</sup> Catawissa Grand Opening.

Pat Carr reported that the Heritage Farm community gardens were sold out and were off to a great start, that the Artists at the Farm event was successful and that the Farm had set up a program giving artists a \$100 discount on their rent if they did repairs to windows and walls.

Pat Carr will discuss with the Solicitor wording for a sign prohibiting the unauthorized use of the fire pit. While Kevin Transue did volunteer work on the Farm riding mowers, due to continuing problems, Mr. Carr was seeking a volunteer mechanic. President Thomas suggested Paul Shanahan, who recently retired from Foster Mower. Due to their age, new riding mowers may be needed. Mr. Carr asked Council to split the cost.

With the lifting of the COVID restrictions, the Farm was taking event rentals for larger groups. Councilwoman Horwatt suggested limiting large scale rentals to only a few times a year. Carol Zetterberg advised that there were already certain ground rules set in place before people rent out the area, such as only off street parking and prohibiting the consumption of alcohol.

Pat Carr was looking for a permanent solution to prevent the significant erosion at the footbridge in Catawissa and that the donor sign was still being worked on. Due to the many donations to the Heritage Farm of Amish-made birdhouses. Mr. Carr asked if LOSI could use their judgment to put them throughout Catawissa since they have proven to be very effective at attracting birds. Council approved LOSI determining locations for bird-houses. Carol Zetterberg has been researching weather resistant benches to place in Catawissa and suggested asking a scout troop to make it a project to install benches in Catawissa. Pat Carr suggested asking their help to weed the park. Councilwoman Horwatt suggested using community service workers.

Councilman Murdock asked if the Catawissa maintenance fund could be used to take care of a fallen tree in the Pollinator Garden and the overgrowth on the circle path. Manager Schoell will use it for the trimming of the front entrance on Maple Ave.

**Planning Commission**: None.

**Recreation Board**: Councilwoman Horwatt reported that the Recreation Board would like to have a custom T-shirt made for the group to identify them when working in the Park. Council saw no problem with using the budget to order the custom-made shirts.

Councilwoman Horwatt witnessed an impromptu soccer clinic and expressed interest in the Rec. Board holding more in the future. Solicitor Porter advised that all adult participants would need background checks and child abuse clearances and suggested it not become a “Borough” event.

Councilwoman Horwatt reported that there was more vandalism of the slides at the Mayors Playground and suggested erecting signs indicating there were security cameras at the Mayors Playground. She also reported that PECO recent work near the park looked terrible.

**Shade Tree Commission:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Solicitor's Report:** Solicitor Porter asked if Council wished to take any action on the two denials issued by the Zoning Hearing Board. Manager Schoell advised that both applicants would have to reduce the square footage of their respective accessory buildings/structures to below 800 square feet if they did not appeal. Council did not wish to take any action.

Councilwoman Horwatt asked to discuss the alternate plans for the US Route 1 Project and reported that PennDOT released an entirely new design plan and that the Borough only had until July 2<sup>nd</sup> to respond. It included a clover leaf interchange between Route 413 and US Route 1, removing the other access lanes for Route 1 in favor of the interchange and increased truck traffic through the Borough. While the plan included PennDOT buying properties to build the interchange, the specific property information was not released. Councilwoman Horwatt suggested that the Borough pass a resolution opposing the alternate plans.

**Motion:** On motion of Councilman Murdock seconded by Councilman Marfia, Council voted unanimously to approve a Resolution opposing PennDOT's US Route 1 Section RC3 project planned clover leaf interchange and authorized President Thomas, Mayor Taylor and Manager Schoell to sign the Resolution and distribute it to PennDOT and other officials.

President Thomas asked Council to discuss a policy for mask wearing at future Council meetings. Vice President Haldeman and Councilwoman Horwatt would not require the wearing of masks. Councilman Murdock and Councilwoman Farry would be more comfortable if people wore masks. Council decided to continue to wear masks for everyone's safety.

Councilwoman Horwatt requested an Executive Session to discuss the Mayor's Playground Lease.

**Executive Session:** Started 9:28  
**Executive Session:** Ended 10:07

**Adjournment:** With no other business, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the June 2021 Council Meeting at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christine Schoell  
Borough Secretary