

## Langhorne Borough Council Meeting

May 12, 2021

A meeting of the Langhorne Borough Council was held at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 12, 2021, as a hybrid Zoom and in person meeting in Council Chambers. President Thomas called the meeting to order and invited those in attendance to join in the Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

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

**Announcements and Presentations:** President Thomas announced that it is National Police Week. She offered a thank you to the Langhorne Borough Police Department and to police everywhere.

**Public Comment:** Beverly Adams of 118 W. Richardson Ave commented that meetings can be difficult to hear when they are on Zoom and suggested to perhaps use a different program in order to hold virtual meetings. She also asked Council about when the Council meeting minutes become available. President Thomas informed her that the minutes must first be written, revised, and then approved by Council at each month's meeting.

David Ravitz of 232 E. Richardson Ave. reported that there has been a car parked on Flowers Ave. that has not moved in a long time and expressed concerns about it leaking fluids. Manager Schoell reported that a letter was sent to address the matter.

Vice President Haldeman asked for an update on the bamboo situation on Watson Ave. Manager Schoell informed him that Code Enforcement has been in touch with the home owner and that the owner is currently gathering estimates to have the bamboo removed.

Mayor Taylor asked why the Borough is not charging the stormwater fee in the same manner that the Borough charges for solid waste. Councilman Mason advised that Council decided to charge each parcel by its primary use so that the Borough can charge each property appropriately to cover the costs of the stormwater management fee.

**Mayor's Report:** Mayor Taylor reported that he along with Chief Godzieba interviewed two candidates to be hired as Police Officers. Mayor Taylor will let the Police Chief discuss this further in his report.

**Chief's Report:** Chief Godzieba reported that the state police put out a release about a burglary that occurred very early one morning at the Dollar General in Langhorne. He also reported that there was a rape investigation in the Borough and both parties have been identified.

Chief Godzieba stated that the police have received a few calls about the use of drones around the Borough. He stated that drones are legal to use in most cases and that they are regulated by federal law, noting that municipalities cannot enact Ordinances or Resolutions to prevent or limit the use of these drones.

Chief Godzieba reported that the National Drug Takeback Day was a success in the Borough, accumulating a total of 42 pounds of unwanted or unused drugs.

Chief Godzieba reported that there are two new candidates to be hired by the Borough Police Department: Frank Arrivello, who has worked as a park ranger for 13 years, and Kevin Burns, who served as a sergeant in the Bristol Township Police Department and has since taken a job as the Director of Safety for Neshaminy School District. Chief Godzieba also advised Council that both candidates were up-to-date with their required certifications.

**Motion:** On motion of Councilwoman Horwatt seconded by Vice President Haldeman, Council voted unanimously to approve the hiring of the two new part time Borough Police Officers.

**Manager's Report:** Manager Schoell reported that the PECO project for the gas main replacement on E. Richardson Ave. is going to take 5 to 8 weeks to complete. Manager Schoell stated that she has been in contact with the company and that they assured that the roadway will be cleared off for the Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 31, 2021. She also reported that PECO would be doing tree trimming work at the Mayors Playground sometime in the near future.

Manager Schoell advised that she attended the Bucks County 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update meeting via Webex on April 8, 2021 and that she completed and submitted the Evaluation of Identified Hazards and Risks Form for Langhorne Borough. The next meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2021.

Manager Schoell reported that she attended the Zoning Hearing Board meeting on May 3, 2021 for a variance request from Rudy Taurino of 317 Station Ave. and Austin Sherlock of 128 W. Maple Ave. in order to request variances asking to exceed the Borough's 800 square foot limit for accessory buildings on their respective properties. The Zoning Hearing Board denied both applicants. I attended the Zoning Hearing Board Meeting on May 3, 2021 for a variance request from Rudy Taurino of 317 Station Avenue asking to exceed the 800 sq. foot limit for accessory structures for a fireplace and pavilion, and to request a variance to have a 5 ft. set back instead of 6 feet. Variance for square footage of fireplace and pavilion were denied. Set back of 5 ft was allowed. Second applicant was for Austin Sherlock of 128 West Maple Avenue requesting a variance to exceed the 800 sq. foot limit for accessory buildings for a garage. The variance was denied.

Manager Schoell stated that JMT Engineering would send her an invitation, which she would then send out to Council members, Mayor Taylor, Chief Godzieba, and Fire Chief Frank Farry regarding a virtual presentation for the US Route 1 project. A public meeting and

presentation will be held at a later date. Manager Schoell also reported that JMT will be flying a drone over the area of Route 1 on Thursday, May 13, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Manager Schoell reported that she received notice from Tech Collect Pros, formerly E-Waste, asking if the Borough would be interested in an electronics recycling and shredding event.

Manager Schoell requested that Council approve an update of the International Property Maintenance code from the 2003 version to the more recent 2015 version.

Vice President Haldeman asked what the difference in the two versions was. Manager Schoell advised him that there were minor changes which would update the wording of the originally approved 2003 version. Solicitor Porter advised that she would try to locate both versions of the International Property Maintenance Code for review. Vice President Haldeman and Councilman Mason both requested the updated information.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

**Motion:** On Motion of Councilwoman Horwatt seconded by Councilman Mason, Council voted unanimously to approve the April 2021 Council Minutes after removal of a sentence from the HARB comments, as revised by the Solicitor.

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

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

**Approval of the Bills:**

**Motion:** On motion of Councilwoman Farry seconded by Vice President Haldeman, Council voted unanimously to approve the payment of the April bills.

**EAC:** Councilman Mason reported that there are currently three EAC members, in addition to Councilwoman Horwatt as Council Liaison. Councilman Mason feels that adding two to three new members would add resources and offer more perspectives during the meetings. The addition of new members would also allow a better chance for a quorum if some members are unable to attend. Councilman Mason advised that there are two Borough residents that are interested in being members, and applications have been sent to them.

Councilman Mason will review the Borough's Recycle Grant Money and do a comparison to other municipalities in order to determine whether the Borough's grant money is higher, lower, or around the same.

Councilman Mason also proposed that a bike path should be placed, connecting the Middletown Country Club to Core Creek Park. Council advised that a proposal had been made before but that Middletown denied the request in the past. President Thomas suggested having a sub-committee with members of the Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation and the EAC to discuss the possibility of a bike path.

Councilwoman Horwatt asked for Council to approve \$300.00 to beautify Borough Hall. She asked Manager Schoell to use the funds to purchase plants and other items for the front of Borough Hall. Manager Schoell said she would check with Treasurer Schoen to see where in the Recycling Grant money is put in the budget.

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

1. Rob Remus            101-103 E. Maple Ave.            Paint exterior and stucco repair. Applicant will submit a rendering of the colors once supplied by Sherwin Williams
2. Beverly Adams      118 W. Richardson Ave.          Replace roof, replace slate sidewalk with concrete, remove oil tank to side of house with wood lattice/fence covering, install pool and hot tub in backyard.
3. Craig Hitchen       225 W. Maple Ave.                  (Tabled) Install solar panels on entire home.

Councilwoman Horwatt mentioned that solar panels are not allowed on the front roof of homes in the Historic District, and she would like HARB to discuss updating this ordinance to allow solar panels on the entire roof if requested.

**Motion:** On motion of Councilwoman Horwatt seconded by Councilwoman Farry, Council voted unanimously to approve both of the other HARB applications. Mr. Hitchens application for solar panels was tabled.

**Farm/LOSI:** None.

**Recreation Board:** Councilwoman Horwatt reported that there was a great turnout of people to move the mulch, reporting that 10 yards have been spread thus far and that 10 more yards of mulch are needed. She also reported that the Rotary Club along with other volunteers cleaned up the Mayors Playground from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., with Brothers Pizza providing food for the volunteers.

Councilwoman Horwatt stated that the Lucille Messina Memorial Tree dedication went well, noting that Mayor Taylor and former Mayor Chris Blaydon made moving speeches during the ceremony. She reported that Jeff Bartlett paid for and his employees planted the tree, and that the Borough is planning to add plants around the tree.

Councilwoman Horwatt stated that the Recreation Board installed a sign at the Mayors Playground stating that the pavilion cannot be reserved. Councilwoman Horwatt also reported that a sign was posted from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society which awarded the Borough first place in recognition of the Mayors Playground. She also stated that the Recreation Board would hold their quarterly meeting on Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. She asked for the meeting information to be posted on the Borough website.

**Shade Tree Commission:** Councilwoman Horwatt reported that every member of the Shade Tree Commission attended the dedication of the Lucille Messina Memorial Tree, and that the Arbor Day event that occurred on the same day went very well.

**Public Comment:** Tyler Murphy of 141 E. Marshall Ave. stated that he was under the impression that there would be info from other municipalities that have had the sirens shut off. President Thomas stated that she thought Mr. Murphy would be providing this information to Council to review.

David Ravitz of 148 E. Maple Ave. asked about the storm drain at the intersection between Route 413 and Maple Ave. that he advised was in need of some repairs months ago. Manager Schoell advised him that it was addressed.

Councilwoman Farry reminded Council that Adam Zielinski was willing to volunteer to help with the technological aspect of future virtual meetings. She will reach out to him to see if he is still available to advise Council on how to upgrade our virtual meetings. She would like a few Council members and the Manager to come to the meeting if she is able to set it up.

Councilwoman Horwatt stated that she spoke with PennDot, who asked if they could clean Maple Avenue and Pine St. in the Borough on May 25th or May 28th. Manager Schoell reported that she contacted Eric Gartenmayer, Superintendent of Public works from Middletown Township and was advised that the rate would be \$52.00 an hour to do the Street sweeping. Road Technician Schoell drove the parade route with the street sweeper, and he feels the cost would be in the area of \$200 to \$250, which includes disposal of the debris.

Vice President Haldeman gave an update on the clock in Borough Hall, stating that the clock was taken apart and cleaned, but that the motor failed. The price to replace the motor is estimated to be from \$200-\$300. Vice President Haldeman was checking prices with other companies.

Manager Schoell reported that Road Technician Schoell has asked to purchase tools necessary to replace signs and other maintenance in the Borough. Manager Schoell has requested that he supply a list of the tools to Council next month for approval.

**Adjournment:** With no other business, on motion of Vice President Haldeman seconded by Councilman Mason, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the May Council meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christine Schoell

Borough Secretary