

Langhorne Borough Work Session

April 24, 2025

A Langhorne Borough Work Session was held at Council Chambers on Thursday, April 24, 2025. President Culleton called the session to order at 6:59 p.m. and invited those in attendance to pledge allegiance to the Flag.

IN ATTENDANCE: President Culleton; Vice President Kathleen Horwatt; Councilpersons Scott Haldeman, Anthony Marfia, Bob Cumming, and Adam Zielinski; Solicitor Barbara Kirk; Manager Mary Zimmerman; Clerk Gabe Tenaglia

ABSENT: Councilperson Tim Harris

ANNOUNCEMENTS: President Culleton informed Council that Councilperson Harris will be absent due to illness.

President Culleton received an email from Carol Deaver offering to donate a 42x26 framed print to the Borough. It is signed by the artist and features several Langhorne buildings. Ms. Deaver had suggested that it would look nice in Borough Hall. Council agreed and discussed where to hang the print.

President Culleton announced that the Arbor Day Celebration has been moved up to Friday, April 25th at 5:00 p.m. due to inclement weather. This was the preference of former Shade Tree Commission Chair and current member Chris Blaydon, who is being honored at the event. A red maple has been planted in recognition of Mr. Blaydon. The celebration will be on the south side closest to Flowers Avenue at the Mayors' Playground.

Vice President Horwatt announced that the Langhorne Rotary Club's biggest fundraiser is next Friday night.

RESOLUTIONS 2025-19 & 2025-20: Manager Zimmerman and President Culleton put this item on the agenda because they believed there was some urgency to join the Delaware Valley Health Trust to secure healthcare benefits for the Manager and Clerk. There was confusion about whether to have two resolutions, each listing one employee, or a single resolution listing the Borough. Manager Zimmerman spoke with a representative from the Trust, who said that there is no urgency to get it signed before May. President Culleton suggested putting this on the May agenda. After discussion, Council agreed to table the resolutions.

MOTION: On motion of Councilperson Zielinski, seconded by Councilperson Marfia, Council voted 6-0 to table the resolution to participate in the Delaware Valley Health Trust until the May Council Meeting.

SHREDDING OF PROPERTY FILE RECORDS: Clerk Tenaglia said that it was determined last year that, because the Borough has PDF/A copies of the files that were digitized by Scantek, the Borough is not required to keep paper copies. The office has three digital copies of the files: one on the Laserfiche platform and two on the computer—one for office use and one that is a backup. Solicitor Kirk said that the copies are kept in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipal Records Act. She explained that in order to dispose of the paper documents, Council must adopt a resolution affirming that the Borough intends to follow the Municipal Records Act and one authorizing the destruction of the files, both of

which she has drafted. Clerk Tenaglia stated that two copies of the files are required to be in PDF/A format for long-term archiving. Councilperson Cumming expressed concern that the files could be changed, and Clerk Tenaglia said that the Laserfiche copy cannot be edited in any way. President Culleton asked if the Borough can continue to put files on Laserfiche; Clerk Tenaglia said that Laserfiche allows the Borough to upload directly to their platform. There was discussion of the Borough's files more generally, and Clerk Tenaglia mentioned that the Borough has many property records in the basement that were not digitized. Solicitor Kirk said that if the Borough approves disposal of the paper copies of the digitized files, the Borough is obligated to scan and save their other files in accordance with the Municipal Records Act. Councilperson Cumming said that the office should go through the paper files in the basement. Vice President Horwatt said that she requested the paper copy of her property files while they were being digitized and was told by the previous manager that she needed to submit a Right-to-Know request. Solicitor Kirk said that the general rule is that if you are requesting copies of records on a personal basis, you need to submit a Right-to-Know request. She suggested that Clerk Tenaglia ask the archivist they spoke with from the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission for further clarification. In the meantime, the Councilmembers can submit Right-to-Know requests. President Culleton asked if, once Council passes the resolution to dispose of the files and the resolution to follow the Municipal Records Act, the Borough is then obligated to preserve any new records in accordance with the Municipal Records Act, and any old records must be digitized or destroyed. Solicitor Kirk confirmed this and said that any files that the Borough wishes to disposed of must be specifically noted in a resolution to be passed by Council. Clerk Tenaglia said that in this case, the office would have to go through the old basement files. Solicitor Kirk suggested hiring an intern to take inventory of the basement boxes. Council discussed this idea further.

PROPOSED RENTAL REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION ORDINANCE: President Culleton said that the ordinance before Council today is solely for rental registrations. Vice President Horwatt directed Council's attention to Section 4, Residential Rental Certificate, subsection c. She asked Solicitor Kirk to explain what is meant by "Owner-occupied dwelling units with non-owner occupants." Solicitor Kirk explained that if the owner occupies one building and another person, not the owner but related to them, occupies another building on the same lot, they are not considered regulated rental units for the purposes of the ordinance. President Culleton said that theoretically the owner could charge rent to their relative but not register the property as a rental. Solicitor Kirk explained that Section 4 was a part of the original proposed ordinance covering registration and inspection, because it was anticipated that people would register their rental unit and receive a certificate in order to move forward with inspection. She said that the Borough has to decide whether they will issue certificates for registering rental units. Council decided to remove subsection e of Section 4 regarding the issuance and termination of residential rental certificates and discussed violations and penalties. Councilperson Haldeman objected to the Borough getting involved in the relationship between tenant and landlord and said that if the Borough proceeds with the ordinance, units owned by the Borough should not be exempt as stated in Section 4, subsection c, line vii. Solicitor Kirk explained that this section is there because there is certain housing that falls under the Federal Fair Housing Act. After discussion Council agreed to change the line to make it clear it does not refer to property owned by the Borough. Council also agreed that registration certificates should be valid for three years. Councilperson Haldeman expressed concern about the workload for the office, and Solicitor Kirk said that the reason the Borough is undertaking this ordinance is to aid responders to emergency situations. Manager Zimmerman said she was told by Fire Chief Frank Farry that there are items and health issues that first responders need to be aware of. President Culleton said that the ordinance is not for fixing issues between landlords and tenants, but for ensuring that code violations get corrected prior to units being occupied. Councilperson Haldeman pointed out Section 3, subsection d, line x referring to the identification of pets, and

questioned why this information would be important to first responders. Manager Zimmerman said that pets can pose a risk to firefighters, and if they are registered then firefighters will know to look for them in case of an emergency. Council felt this would not help in the moment and elected to remove the line referencing pets. Councilperson Haldeman also questioned why plans of the rental units are required, and Solicitor Kirk said that Chief Farry requested this be included in the ordinance. Manager Zimmerman said that plans of units get logged digitally and can be referenced when firefighters are responding to a call at the property to determine valuable information like points of egress. Councilperson Haldeman said that having plans would be worthwhile if the firefighters can access them. Council then spent some time discussing a campaign to make residents aware of rental registrations, and Solicitor Kirk suggested establishing that rental units must be registered within thirty days of their creation. Councilperson Haldeman said that the word “regulated” should be removed from the ordinance wherever it appears. Solicitor Kirk offered to replace “regulated” with “registered.” Council requested that she prepare another draft of the ordinance for discussion in May.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON MIDDLETOWN PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

PROJECTS: President Culleton read Planning Commission’s recommendation that, in light of the recently approved overlay and submitted land development application in Middletown Township that borders the Borough, Borough Council request involvement in Middletown’s land development process. Vice President Horwatt said that this land development will create more traffic on Cherry Street and Flowers Avenue. Solicitor Kirk said that if there is a specific project being proposed, the Borough can have a representative be part of the proceedings. President Culleton explained that Woods Services applied for an overlay from Middletown, and Vice President Horwatt said that the overlay spans multiple Woods parcels from Pine Street to Maple Avenue. President Culleton said that it borders the Borough’s Professional Services district. Manager Zimmerman said that PC is encouraging the Borough to have someone talk with Middletown and possibly Woods Services before any work begins to see if they could find solutions for redirecting traffic from the Borough. Solicitor Kirk suggested that Manager Zimmerman reach out to the manager of Middletown to request a meeting. President Culleton asked if Woods Services should be a part of the discussion; Solicitor Kirk said that is not necessary because there is no formal application. After further discussion, Council directed Manager Zimmerman to meet with Manager Stephanie Teoli Kuhls or Assistant Manager Nick Valla of Middletown to see if they are open to a sit-down with other parties from the Borough.

TRAFFIC STUDY ISSUES: President Culleton summarized PennDOT’s Virtual Public Meeting on the RC3 Project on the 23rd. There were many questions about the impact of removing the service roads. People also voiced concerns about the necessity of the Cloverleaf and the possibility of Gillam and Highland Avenue becoming major thoroughfares. Council discussed projected traffic increases in the Borough as a result of the RC3 Project before addressing PennDOT’s proposed mitigations on Green and Pine Street. The Borough sent their approval of PennDOT’s revised crosswalk proposal for Green Street. PennDOT will not provide crosswalk signs or yield bars. Vice President Horwatt had suggested that the striping of the crosswalk be diagonal, but PennDOT has stated that they will install the crosswalks as they are currently striped. In response to the Borough’s request, PennDOT also confirmed that they will not be restriping the crosswalks on the Bellevue side of the Maple and Bellevue intersection. Regarding the mitigations on Pine Street, President Culleton said that they will be discussed at the Ad Hoc Traffic Study Committee meeting on May 8th. The Borough requested a diagram with bulb-outs in place of the medians which were previously proposed, which PennDOT has provided. They are proposing to put the bulb-outs on the south side of Flowers Avenue because the north side is too narrow. Vice President Horwatt said she prefers the bulb-out plan. Then there was discussion of advertising the May 8th Ad Hoc Traffic Study Committee meeting. President Culleton said that representatives from the First Baptist

Church and Bethlehem AME Church and Engineer George DiPersio should be invited. Vice President Horwatt also suggested inviting Penndel-Middletown Emergency Squad Director Andrew Schifferli, Fire Chief Farry, and Mayor Taylor. There was also talk of inviting Woods Services and residents on Flowers Avenue. Manager Zimmerman suggested putting signs around the Borough notifying residents of the meeting. Then Councilperson Cumming said that people on Flowers Avenue want speed bumps to slow traffic and suggested instead that the Borough install speed tables as a longer-term solution. Council discussed this possibility further and President Culleton said that the speed cushions will address their concerns in the short-term.

MAYORS' PLAYGROUND SIGNAGE: Vice President Horwatt said that Ordinance 2013-02 prohibits tobacco use on designated public properties, the Mayors' Playground and Heritage Farm. She has been looking into Young Lungs at Play signage for the playground and suggested adding "no vaping" to Borough signage. Solicitor Kirk said that smoking was banned by ordinance, not vaping, and someone could challenge prohibitions on vaping. She recommended that the Borough modify Ordinance 2013-02 to include vaping. Councilperson Haldeman said that the Borough should put up "no vaping" signage and avoid the time and expense of advertising an amendment to the ordinance. There was discussion of the health effects of vaping and wording of the signage, and Vice President Horwatt said the Borough should check if any other parks would like to be included as designated properties. Solicitor Kirk noted that the ordinance states that the Borough can designate by resolution other public places where smoking is prohibited. Council decided to have Solicitor Kirk draft an amendment to Ordinance 2013-02.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION: Vice President Horwatt asked about the status of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that need to be obligated by April 30th. Clerk Tenaglia said that all ARPA fund expenditures have been submitted. Of the \$165,900.24 in ARPA funding allocated to the Borough, \$165,869.22 was obligated. \$31.02 was not accounted for.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Council entered into Executive Session at 9:02 p.m. to discuss legal matters. They returned to public session at 9:27 p.m.

MOTION: On motion of Councilperson Haldeman, seconded by Councilperson Marfia, Council voted 4-0 to issue a cease and desist order to the Bucks Learning Cooperative at 315 West Maple Avenue for constructing a non-residential accessory classroom building without approval from the Zoning Hearing Board. President Culleton and Councilperson Cumming abstained due to conflict of interest.

ADJOURNMENT: On motion of Councilperson Cumming, seconded by Councilperson Haldeman, Council voted 6-0 to adjourn at 9:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Zimmerman, Borough Manager / Secretary

Next Work Session: May 29, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.