

**Lansdowne Borough Council  
General Meeting**

**January 15, 2020**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

The Lansdowne Borough Council General Meeting was held on Wednesday, January 15, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in Borough Hall.

Mayor Campuzano led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council members present: President Hover, Ms. Byrne, Ms. English, Mr. Holt, Ms. James, Mr. Schleigh, Ms. Taylor. Absent: Fire Company representative. Also present: Mayor Campuzano, Borough Manager Totaro, Borough Secretary Henry, Borough Solicitor Scott and Police Chief Donegan.

The televised meeting will be aired at 7:00 p.m. the following Monday on RCN channel 52, Comcast channel 5 and Verizon channel 44.

**Approval of agenda:** Ms. Byrne moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Holt seconded. Vote: unanimous.

**Approval of Minutes:** December 18, 2019 general meeting minutes were previously approved at the January 6, 2020 Reorganization/Business meeting.

**Announcements and Presentations:** The Mayor presented the 2019 Jingle Judge awards, noting that 12 businesses and 80 residences had been awarded a certificate. Those present at the meeting to receive the certificates included:

Businesses: Most Festive: Peppers Pharmacy. Best use of white lights: Host Family Dentistry.

Residential: Most Creative: 26 E. Essex.

Most Festive: 195 Owen, 46 W. Albermarle, 57 Berkley.

Best Use of Whole House: 52 E. Greenwood, 91 W. Lacrosse, 57 West Plumstead, 250 Crawford, 27 Schappett Terrace, 83 Drexel, 11 Willowbrook.

Best Use of Color Lights: 23 N. Maple, 218 N. Highland.

Best Use of White Light: 26 E. Greenwood, 131 Mansfield, 66 Drexel.

Best Door and/or Window: 83 Fairview, 137 Walsh.

**Treasurer's Report** - Mr. Totaro deferred reading the report until March, 2020 due to the year-end closing of the books occurring in January and February.

**Borough Manager's Report** – Mr. Totaro provided updates as follows:

**Gateway Slope** – finalizing plans and will submit tomorrow to DCNR for approval. Bidding will be advertised in the next month or two and construction will start in mid to late spring.

**Sewers:** Received DEP permit for Marlyn Park work. Submitting the permit for Bryn Mawr sewer this week. Thirty days after receiving this permit, both projects will be collapsed and put out for bid as one project.

**Scottdale Road** – waiting for approval from the conservation district and design is complete.

**Interboro Park entrance** – gathering bids for improving the retaining wall and signage that was made through the grant from PECO Green region awarded in 2019.

**Reservoir Park** – stream bank restoration is still underway and is in design stage.

**Bike facilities** – this is early in the design and engineering stage of this project.

**Lansdowne Crossing** – this is the third submission to PennDot and is 99% complete.

President Hover asked if Keystone Collections Agency could be contacted and information put on the web to indicate they are now the taxing authority for the EIT. Mr. Holt suggested having Keystone attend the Mayor's Forum to address the EIT issue of who has to file a return, noting that some people work in Delaware or Pennsylvania. Ms. Byrne commented that there are some residents who hold two jobs in two different towns, both of whom collect the EIT. These affected residents are not sure if they are being taxed twice and some clarification would be helpful. Mr. Totaro will contact Keystone to gather the information. Mr. Schleigh asked if there was EIT information on the web site posted last year to answer some of these questions. Mr. Totaro concurred there was information available but some of the more current items might not as yet be posted. Ms. Byrne also asked if there could be something in writing about Keystone, noting that some residents had never heard of Keystone and threw out the information as junk mail.

**Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Scott had no formal report.

**Mayor's Report** – The Mayor reported that the Town Forum will be held on February 13, 7-9 p.m. at the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Club. Ms. Byrne will discuss the 2020 Census – how to register and why taking the census is important. President Hover will present information on the Parks and Rec projects and has requested that EIT information be made available at this forum.

The Mayor thanked the LBPA and participating residents on the great success of their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Holiday Lights Parade.

The Mayor has the information to address the Wildman Arms crosswalk situation. He will discuss it at the next Public Safety Committee to bring back approvals to Borough Council. The Mayor also met with PECO, who have been very helpful in how to remedy the situation.

January 20, 2019 – 9-2 p.m. The William Penn School District has invited everyone to participate in the 2020 Martin Luther King Day of Service at the Penn Wood Middle School. Bags of supplies will be made for the mothers' home in Darby and food will be collected for the local food pantry. They are looking for donations such as food, baby formula, t-shirts, etc.

The Mayor congratulated Officer Mike Miller on his promotion to Class C patrol officer. Officer Miller and his K9 partner, Bogi, have been a great addition to the police department.

The Mayor thanked the Police and Fire Departments for collecting and delivering holiday toys to the needy.

**Fire Company Report** – No report was given.

**President's Report** – President Hover thanked the Mayor for the Jingle Judge efforts. President Hover and Mayor Campuzano thanked Mr. Schleigh for his many years of work as the Borough Council President.

President Hover and Mr. Totaro recently attended a meeting with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (“DVRPC”) where the new grant cycle for transportation community development initiatives was discussed. The borough’s vision is connectivity to various other municipalities via bike lanes trails. Mr. Totaro added that the bike plan is Lansdowne’s initiative that creates a neighborhood bike lane and parts of more commuter bike lanes. This grant is an opportunity to expand the scope to include a network for regional commuter lanes.

President Hover was contacted by the Philadelphia Bike Coalition to attend their February 1, 2020 western suburbs trail summit to talk about the trail designs already in place and gives the opportunity to connect with other municipalities working on the trails plan. Both he and Mr. Totaro will present pertinent information at this meeting.

President Hover asked that Committee Chairs set their agenda for the year to discuss objectives and look at Board and Commission liaisons for standard operating procedures to insure all appointments are up to date. Mr. Holt asked how much time is needed to advertise the first meetings of the year. Mr. Scott commented that special meetings need to be advertised a day in advance and before that the newspaper needs the information by noon or 1 p.m. Mr. Totaro will be advertising the entire Committee meeting grid tomorrow. Ms. English requested that the 12/28/2020 Parks and Rec Committee meeting be cancelled.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Public Health and Safety** – Ms. Taylor had no formal report. Chief Donegan mentioned that the Civil Service reorganization meeting will be held on February 3, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. and needs to be advertised. Ms. English added that Mr. Pringle had provided the following information before his departure from the Committee:

- Plans for the Wildman Arms crossing.
- Parking permits – contemplating a change in the ordinance because of problems on Shadeland Avenue.
- The Penn Wood High School has requested a police officer presence from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Grants.
- One way on Berkley – is currently one way during school year but contemplating having it one way all of the time.

**Finance and Administration** – Ms. English reported that no meeting was held this month. Topics being considered for 2020 include what should be in the LEDC contract and if any changes or updates are needed. The Committee will also be working on performance evaluations for 2020.

**Library Liaison Report** – Ms. English noted that 85,244 patrons used the library in 2019. Mr. Holt added this was a huge number for the borough library; given there are 90,000 employees in the Philadelphia entertainment industry.

**Economic Development** – President Hover reported the next Committee meeting will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday in February at 6:00 p.m. As Chair, he will be taking up the issues of economic development in Lansdowne, researching the use and accessibility of public transit, reviewing grants being provided to increase the quality of life and working with the LEDC to continue the growth that Lansdowne has been experiencing.

**Community Relations Committee** - Ms. Byrne reported that a complete count subcommittee for the census will be meeting tomorrow night at 5:30 p.m. in Borough Hall. The borough newsletter is a bit late (due to a slight learning curve) but distribution is expected by the first week in February. The printer problems have been resolved. The next Community Relations Committee meeting will be held on February 4.

Ms. James asked if the outside community meetings need to be advertised or is it just for Lansdowne borough. Mr. Scott noted that if having a quorum, the meeting needs to be advertised and the location stated. Ms. Byrne added that in this regard, the Committee hopes to host a meeting in March at Avianna Restaurant. In an effort to be more visible in the community with more attendance, other meetings will occasionally be held in locations other than Borough Hall. Mr. Holt asked if any electronic versions of the newsletter had been available on the web site in the past and will it continue. Ms. Byrne commented there was a PDF file downloaded on the old web site and she will attempt to do the same thing this year. The Committee has been discussing having an electronic bulletin that goes out more frequently to give monthly updates on Borough Council actions, changes in ordinances, community events, etc. Mr. Totaro noted the current and archived newsletters are now on the new web site. President Hover requested that a newsletter template be made by the Community Relations Committee with an expected newsletter completion date, adding that Borough Council will review it before publishing. President Hover asked if the Mayor would want to be part of a subcommittee in this regard. The Mayor gladly agreed to participate. President Hover commented that moving forward, different areas on the template could be filled in with statements by the Mayor, President, Police Department and each Committee. He would like this two weeks in advance before going to the publisher. Ms. Byrne commented she would do her best but having different articles, different photographs and different events for each edition will take up different space and not look the same when printed. Ms. Byrne also suggested that in lieu of discussing it at Council meetings, she could send out the PDF file in advance for review and any questions or comments could then be addressed at the Council meeting.

**Library Board report:** As her final liaison report, Ms. Byrne added that the library plans to replace the missing changing table in the restroom.

**Arts Board report:** Hosting an Open House on February 6, 2020, 7-9 p.m. at 2020 House to give people a behind the scenes look at what they do, how a show is put on, how the decisions are made as to what artists will appear and potentially recruit for volunteers.

**Environment, Parks and Rec** – No report provided.

**Infrastructure and Public Works** – Mr. Holt reported that the next Infrastructure Committee meeting will be held on January 27 at 6:30 p.m. Topics for discussion will include:

- Proposal for a County wide recycling program. Other municipalities are doing this on their own and there may be some opportunity for savings if engaging at the County level. It would also help with single stream recycling, as there have been problems with contamination of food in this type of recycling.
- Discussions with Mr. Schleigh re: how to find and effectively apply for possible grants to address some of the borough issues. President Hover added that a multi-municipal composting plant could be considered, working with other communities to develop it.

**Communications:** The HLTC is requesting a meeting with Borough Council re: Lansdowne Avenue crosswalk. Mr. Totaro will make the arrangements. President Hover, the Mayor and Ms. Byrne plan to attend.

**Old Business:** No items for Old Business.

**New Business:**

- 1. Environmental Advisory Council (“EAC”) Survey** – The EAC would like to solicit information from the survey to disseminate to Borough Council and the community. Ms. English asked how it would be distributed to residents. Mr. Totaro indicated the LEDC agreement addresses the bulk mailing list and he will start with that. This can also be consolidated with some code enforcement lists. President Hover noted this is part of the EAC’s plan to have a Ready for 100 proposal to allow an Earth Day in April. President Hover added that EAC Chair Carol Martsoff was just named Delaware County Engineer of the Year.
- 2. TCDI Grant Application** – Mr. Totaro commented there is a six week window for submitting the application and he will be contacting other municipalities to see if there is any interest. Lansdowne would probably be the lead municipality in this endeavor. President Hover indicated this is to create a comprehensive Plan for bike facilities and believes there is an appetite for it in other municipalities.
- 3. Balloon Release ordinance** – President Hover commented that about 18 months ago the issue was raised with the Parks and Rec Board about the environmental impact of releasing balloons and Chinese lanterns causing fires. Lansdowne currently has no ordinance prohibiting such activities. Mr. Schleigh commented this appears to be a strict liability type of ordinance and had several questions about the definition of “release”, how to handle a situation if an outside municipality has their balloons coming into Lansdowne, what is the intent of the person releasing balloons and what are the enforcement measures to be followed as indicated in Section 216.21 of the ordinance. Mr. Scott commented that 20 or more balloons are prohibited and this ordinance is meant to affect a more organized type of activity. Mayor Campuzano commented he understood the purpose of the ordinance and the UAA no longer provides balloons. Ms. Byrne added that the ordinance refers to a deliberate, not accidental, release of balloons. Mr. Scott suggested amending the ordinance to include the word “deliberately” in between “shall” and “release” in Section A of 216.20. Mr. Schleigh asked how often violators of any type of municipal ordinance are actually fined up to \$1,000. Mr. Scott commented he had never seen this amount for a first offense of a borough ordinance.
- 4. Borough Engineer** – Mr. Totaro indicated this is the actual proposal that has been put on the Penn bid and advertised and he hopes to have proposals in by January 31, 2020. Mr. Totaro indicated that Exhibit I is something hoping to be considered wherein a group of services could be grouped and fit into a set retainer. Interviews will be conducted the first half of February, 2020.
- 5. Committee Appointments and Reappointments** – President Hover asked that all appointments and re-appointments be up to date and Chairs should ask if there is still interest in serving from the current committee members. President Hover would like to hold a meeting with all Boards and Committees to review Sunshine laws, Codes, etc. Mr. Totaro will reserve the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Club for this meeting.

**Public Comment:** Mr. Holt moved to Suspend Roberts Rules of Order. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.

**Visitors:**

1. Beth Harmer – Pepper’s Pharmacy 197 E. Plumstead. Ms. Harmer indicated that her payroll company had not been taking out the EIT. Betsy Riffert provided her with both a personal and a business letter from Keystone Collections that clarifies the amount to be withdrawn.
2. Terry Santovito – 232 Glentay. Mr. Santovito congratulated Borough Council for retaining Keystone Collections for the EIT. He asked for clarification on whether the EIT was due to a huge shortfall in a Pension plan that would last three years. Mr. Totaro clarified that the municipal portion of the Police Pension Fund each year is funded by the borough to keep it at a certain level required by law. Other entities may contribute in any given year. Years ago there was a shortfall and a mortgage was taken out on the loss. It is coming due now and is about \$270,000 that will last at least 10 years. Mr. Santovito indicated he pays 2/3 less in taxes for his larger Cape May property than he does for his smaller Lansdowne residence. He felt the borough tax situation placed a huge burden on senior citizens and he may have to sell his Lansdowne house soon. He asked if Social Security would be taxed as part of the EIT. Mr. Scott noted the tax is only on earned income from wages and Social Security is not subject to the EIT.
3. Bill Horton – 30 Linden. Mr. Horton asked when the borough calendar will reflect the changes on the web site calendar. Mr. Totaro indicated the changes have been made and all match the calendar items. He asked what defines income for the EIT and whether unemployment compensation is subject to it. Mr. Scott reiterated that it was wages. Mr. Totaro mentioned that if there is a State tax deduction on the unemployment, it is likely that it also applies to borough income.
4. Kat Henry – 23 Runnemede. Ms. Henry is a new resident and expressed concern about her \$10,000 school tax and \$6,000 real estate tax. She agreed with Mr. Santovito’s comments about the quality of the school. She mentioned that no one had been in touch with her about being a census volunteer. Ms. Byrne noted that e-mail is a faster contact method for her rather than by phone and the census meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 5:30 in borough hall. Ms. Henry asked if sanitation information could be made available for her tenants on how to correctly recycle materials. Mr. Holt asked if there were separate bins on the property for each tenant (there are) and indicated that each bin should have had information attached to it and should be read as a separate educational piece. Mr. Holt will follow up with Mr. Totaro to see what educational materials might be available. Ms. Henry asked if there was a borough cleanup day. President Hover suggested she attend a Parks and Rec Committee meeting for additional information on borough events.

**Borough Council Response to Visitors:**

Mayor Campuzano commented that the borough has no control over school taxes and the School Board has been trying to fix the high tax problem for many years. The Mayor also felt that Lansdowne compares very well with other municipalities in the services provided.

Mr. Holt added that the William Penn School District has a list of their Board meetings for interested residents wanting to express any concerns.

Ms. Byrne moved to Resume Roberts Rules of Order. Mr. Holt seconded. Vote: unanimous.

**Action Items:**

1. Ms. English moved to pay the bills for the period. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
2. Ms. English moved to advertise Council Committee schedule of meetings for the calendar year 2020. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
3. Mr. Hover moved to adopt Ordinance 2019-10 amending provisions of the vacant property registry (ProChamps). Ms. English seconded. **Discussion:** The ordinance now requires a bi-annual report for registering foreclosed properties and vacant properties are now required to be registered. Vote: unanimous.
4. Ms. English moved to advertise Balloon Ordinance as amended. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.

**Executive Session** – President Hover announced the general meeting was now closed and the Executive Session would begin. The meeting adjourned to executive session at 8:25 p.m.

**Public Session** – Upon reconvening to public session, the following motion was made:

**Ms. James moved to grant a \$3,000 bonus to Mr. Totaro and a \$3,000 bonus to Chief Donegan. Mr. Hold seconded. Vote: unanimous.**

**Adjourn** –Ms. Byrne moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Holt seconded. Vote: unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Ann Henry  
Borough Secretary