

Lansdowne Borough Council

BUSINESS MEETING

May 6, 2020

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

The Lansdowne Borough Council Business Meeting was held remotely via teleconference on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, 7:00 p.m. in Borough hall. Members present: President Hover, Ms. Byrne, Ms. English, Mr. Holt, Ms. James, Mr. Schleigh and Ms. Taylor. Also present: Mayor Campuzano, Chief Donegan, Borough Manager Totaro, Borough Solicitor Scott, Borough Secretary Henry and Borough Engineer Matson.

President Hover opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Mayor Campuzano.

All Borough Council meetings will be conducted remotely via teleconference call/video until further notice.

Agenda: Ms. Byrne moved to approve the agenda. Ms. English seconded. Vote: unanimous.

Minutes: Ms. English moved to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2020 business meeting of Borough Council. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.

Reports:

Solicitor's Report: Mr. Scott had no formal report.

Borough Manager's Report: Mr. Totaro provided financial updates on previously discussed items. Regarding the CARES Act, there is similar guidance provided for some items that were not budgeted but are eligible resulting from the measures taken with respect to the Corona virus involving medical and community information. The minimum threshold is \$3,300 to make an application. One key aspect is that the Act would not support any lost revenue.

Mr. Totaro reported that the bulk of the Earned Income Tax ("EIT") was received in the first quarter in the amount of \$60,000. The yearly budget calls for \$300,000. Numbers are still preliminary but unlikely to reach the same quantity in the second quarter.

Police Chief's Report – Chief Donegan reported there were no changes to report since the last Council business meeting. One new item is that central booking will now take place at the Court House in Media instead of Borough Hall due to COVID 19 closures. The Chief noted that prisoners will be processed by County employees and housed overnight if necessary in the Court House with a video arraignment the next day. Chief Donegan also mentioned that the District Court Administrator is working at the office every day to handle the backlog of paper work. Once District Court reopens, efforts will be made to video conference the preliminary hearings.

Fire Company Report – No report.**Mayor's Report** – Mayor Campuzano reported as follows:

1. During last week's storm a large limb of the Sycamore Tree to the left of the support was damaged. Further inspection showed internal rot. The Mayor asked when was the last time the tree had been inspected by an arborist and if the rot presented a problem. Mr. Totaro indicated that Bartlett Tree Services worked on the tree last year. A similar problem arose higher up in the big nodules that hold rainwater and thereby creates the rot. Mr. Totaro will follow up with the appropriate personnel.
2. The Mayor wants the flags on the poles in borough green put up as soon as possible, given that there will be no Memorial Day Parade this year and the borough should show its support of veterans. The Mayor also urged residents to fly flags in the same support.
3. There is a lot of trash in Sycamore Park. The Mayor would like this and other borough parks cleaned and patrolled. In addition, there will be no town wide cleanup this year and residents are urged to pick up trash while out and about the borough.
4. Received a thank you from a resident for the new street sweeper that is doing a "terrific job".
5. The Mayor asked Mr. Totaro when the crosswalk at Wildman Arms Apartments will be painted. Mr. Totaro indicated it had been scheduled for before June of this year and he will follow up.
6. The Mayor recently spoke with Jennifer Hoff, School Board Director, about the elimination of graduation ceremonies this year. The Mayor offered to hang a banner in borough green to congratulate the senior students.
7. The Mayor congratulated the Lansdowne Theater for receiving a \$100,000 grant. They are currently in talks for construction loans and have secured a contractor for the job.
8. The Sycamore Award presentation will be postponed until later in the year.

President's Report: President Hover echoed the Mayor's thoughts about the Lansdowne Theater while recognizing the shared circumstances being faced in Lansdowne during the COVID 19 virus.

President Hover commented that the Director for the Senior Center Community Services sent a thank you letter for the borough's recent \$2,300 donation. The Center has served over 110 Lansdowne residents since 2019.

President Hover indicated that the current state of emergency has lasted 54 days. He wants to extend communications with residents regarding the burdens and challenges facing us. The Governor's recent relaxing of some of the safety measures still provided protocols and standards that have to be met to insure safety. School closures, the stay at home order and group size limits will still be enforced. President Hover noted that with the coming warmer weather, people will go out but should still adhere to the safety protocols so that life can return to normal sooner rather than later. The borough basketball and tennis courts will be closed until further notice from the County. Parks will be open but safe distancing should be practiced. Currently, there is no information from the County about when Delaware County will be moving into a different stage for reopening. The previous date of May 25 was inaccurate and the borough and County web sites can provide more accurate information. Going forward, Borough Council members need to work as a team to discuss any virus concerns or fears with composure and to counter false information.

Mr. Holt questioned where to obtain more accurate mail in ballot information after encountering some confusing wording of the questions for mail in versus absentee voting. Ms. Byrne noted she saw the same information but clicked "no" throughout the form to get the ballot, making sure to check the "mail in" option and not "absentee".

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Farmers Market Agreement** – President Hover commented he had lengthy discussions with the Economic Development Committee and the LEDC regarding plans to open the market to provide some semblance of normalcy. One topic of concern was whether patrons will follow safety measures and how to insure the proper social distancing guidelines. Mr. Scott indicated that having a health officer present to give citations is an option but not required. Also, this officer is not trained to remove a troublesome person and police should be called. Mr. Totaro added that the Farmers Market agreement stipulates use of only the lower lot and the geography and social distancing issues need to be modified. Mr. Scott will prepare an addendum for vote at the next council meeting. Ms. Byrne commented that the plan is to keep people six feet apart using markings on the asphalt and allowing no more than 150 in at a time. Only one person is allowed in front of a vendor at one time and vendors will be spaced out as well. Ms. Byrne also noted that masks will be provided by the LEDC at the market. Ms. Taylor commented that her prior safety concerns had been addressed in this regard but felt that having a health officer or borough employee to monitor safety protocol would place more responsibility on the borough. Ms. Byrne agreed and did not want a health officer put in danger if having to deal with unruly people.

Chief Donegan questioned if a person would be considered “unruly” if refusing to wear a mask. He indicated there had been recent bad press and video involving altercations with unmasked individuals provoking the police. Ms. Byrne noted that the LEDC will be issuing a list of changes that says masks should be worn. Mr. Holt felt the issue should be resolved first and if the mask rule applies to only the Farmers Market or other areas. Mr. Scott noted that if the LEDC is planning to open the Market on May 23, it should be conditioned upon the new footprint and requirements for social distancing that the addendum to the Market agreement will stipulate.

Council members were in agreement that finances will be reviewed to determine what can be given to the LEDC in the future once sounder financial footing for the borough can be realized. President Hover recognized the LEDC is a major partner and was sorry about the needed changes at the present time.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **SEPTA Lease Waiver** – Mr. Totaro commented that in 2005 the original lease was drawn up and thinks there are several versions of it now. The borough’s current lease generates \$280 a quarter for the 20 parking spots in the Highland Avenue lot. The lease transaction would self-reduce since the revenue is based on sales of monthly passes and Septa is asking for a waiver or suspension of the lease. Mr. Totaro has not been able to make contract with Septa but felt it was unnecessary since they were not selling any monthly passes at present. Mr. Scott added that Septa wants their agreement countersigned and it should be approved by Borough Council. This current lease would push out the lease, suspend what they pay now and would later pay when the virus crisis is over. Mr. Holt commented he was 100% in agreement with Septa but felt it would set a bad precedent in general. Borough Council conceded to waive the lease.

2. **Election Locations** – President Hover noted he had spoken with Jayne Young about working with the County to organize the upcoming election polling places that are being changed due to the current virus crisis. Use of the 20th Century Club ballroom by the 3rd and 4th precincts was discussed with the Library and Fire Company being considered as possible sites. President Hover also spoke with the emergency team with concerns about using borough buildings and maximum social distancing. He felt the library was not a good idea given the space limitations. Mayor Campuzano added that separate entrance and exit points were necessary for all borough buildings. Ms. English commented that state law deemed libraries are to be closed during the pandemic. Mr. Scott noted that libraries are an essential

business and can be open for voting but not lending purposes. Ms. Byrne asked if any measures are in place for crowd control and waiting voters. President Hover commented that Jayne Young will be sending out instructions to the election judges regarding safety protocol and safety gear for poll workers.

3. **Census Communication – local faith groups**. Ms. Byrne presented a letter compiled by Carol Carpenter and Christine Buxbaum to community local churches to help patrons participate in the local census. The original plan was to speak with the congregations and visit churches but the new goal is to have pastors hold those conversations, or virtual services, or use lawn signs. This request is for a lawn sign in front of a church to communicate with patrons about participating in the census. Ms. Buxbaum is also translating this into French for the Haitian Church and into Spanish for another bordering church. The Census subcommittee had separate conversations with other churches in this regard and Mr. Scott had no objections to the correspondence being sent to all parties in interest.

Additional Items:

4. **Outreach Effort** – President Hover mentioned that last week an event was held in Springfield, PA to help those currently out of work and needing food due to the virus crisis. He has broached the topic of helping with the Fire Company and emergency team, both of whom agreed to stage an event. Non-perishable food items will be collected at the Highland Avenue parking lot for distribution on May 16, 10:00 a.m. to Noon. Both Mayor Young and Fire Chief Young volunteered their trucks to transport the food. Ms. Taylor offered to volunteer as well.

5. **William Penn Banner** – Mayor Campuzano commented that the Lansdowne Democrats have agreed to pay for a banner to be flown at Borough Green, at a cost of \$75.00, to show support for the graduating class of Penn Wood High School whose ceremony has been cancelled. The Mayor felt it appropriate to have it in place from May 16 to June 15.

Public Comment – Ms. English moved to Suspend Roberts Rules of Order. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.

Visitors: Mr. Totaro verified as conference host that no public was in the room.

Ms. English moved to Reinstate Roberts Rules of Order. Mr. Holt seconded. Vote: unanimous.

Action Items:

1. Ms. James moved to authorize payment of bills for period. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
2. Ms. James moved to ratify partial layoffs of employees. Ms. English seconded. Vote: unanimous.
3. Ms. English moved to authorize bidding for rehabilitation construction of Reservoir Park project. Ms. Taylor seconded. Vote: unanimous.
4. Mr. Hover moved to enter into agreement with the LEDC for 2020 calendar year. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
5. Ms. James moved to suspend lease with SEPTA for regional parking spaces in Highland Avenue parking lot. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
6. Ms. English moved to enter into agreement **with ? regarding** Reservoir Park project. Ms. Taylor seconded. Vote: unanimous.
7. Ms. James moved to ratify **agreement with SEI ?** re: employment reductions associated with COVID 19. Ms. English seconded. Vote: unanimous.

8. Mr. Hover moved to install banner on Borough Green recognizing William Penn High School graduates from May 16 to June 15, 2020. Mr. Holt seconded. Vote: unanimous.

Executive Session – Ms. English moved to adjourn to executive session to discuss personnel and real estate *issues*. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous. *The meeting adjourned to executive session at 8:27 p.m.*

Public Session – No motions were made upon reconvening to public session

Borough Engineer Matson commented that he will be contacting Mr. Totaro before the end of June reporting of MS4 matters.

Adjourn – Mr. Holt moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous. The public meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Ann Henry
Borough Secretary