

## Lansdowne Borough Council

### GENERAL MEETING

June 17, 2020

### APPROVED MINUTES

The Lansdowne Borough Council General Meeting was held remotely via teleconference on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, 7:00 p.m. Members present: Mr. Hover, Ms. Byrne, Ms. English, Mr. Holt, Ms. James, Mr. Schleigh and Ms. Taylor. Also present: Mayor Campuzano, Borough Manager Totaro, Borough Solicitor Scott, Borough Secretary Henry, Borough Engineer Matson and Police Chief Donegan. Absent: Fire Company representative.

President Hover opened and led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

**Minutes:** Ms. English moved to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2020 general meeting of Borough Council. Ms. James seconded. Vote: unanimous.

**Announcements and Presentations:** The Mayor had no announcements or presentations.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Totaro read the Treasurer's Report ended May 31, 2020 as follows:

General Fund: beginning balance - \$793,851; ending balance \$3,785,025.

Sewer Fund: beginning balance - \$1,192,271; ending balance \$1,912,417.

Liquid Fuels Fund: beginning balance - \$789,699; ending balance \$1,062,373.

Non-Uniform Pension Fund: beginning balance - \$3,549,495; ending balance \$3,306,747.

Police Pension Fund: beginning balance - \$10,301,696; ending balance \$9,076,590.

President Hover asked if there had been any discussion regarding recalibrating the deficits in the police pension fund and what future changes may occur. Mr. Totaro indicated it was best to stay the course and leave it to the experts to direct the fund. Ms. Taylor asked if the pension fund relies on the stock market and would the managers or the borough be managing it. Mr. Totaro answered the borough can make suggestions to the managers, who would also manage the changes. Ultimately, the borough could be responsible for the fund and change the assumptions made each in the investments but it would be complicated. Mr. Totaro indicated that the two driving factors in the fund are a 70/30 mix of stocks and bonds and the expected rate of return.

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

**Mayor's Report:** The Mayor reported as follows:

1. The Mayor thanked Dave Bouchet and Boy Scout Troop 63, who will be replacing the flag on borough green on Flag Day.

2. The Mayor asked if the Environment Advisory Committee (“EAC”) could consider holding a shredding event in late summer or early fall. He will also talk to East Lansdowne Mayor Dukes about joining in the event.
3. Was the Codes Department advised of foliage blocking some stop signs. Some of the affected sites include W. Lansdowne and Greenwood, Windermere and Plumstead and Drexel and Owen.
4. Complaints have been received regarding the use of fireworks after 11 p.m. and muffler modified cars and motorcycles and asked if tickets could be given to the offending motorists. Chief Donegan commented the department has responded to a few fireworks complaints but none have been in Lansdowne. He asked residents to pinpoint the area if they see any more. The Chief also mentioned there had not been a lot of complaints about the modified mufflers issue but did say that violators can be ticketed. The police will not go after mini bikes.
5. Do the local businesses have to be certified before re-opening due to Covid-19 and should the borough or Codes Department be monitoring the situation. The Mayor recently had to complete a five hour re-certification program. Mr. Scott noted that some businesses might be subject to it by the State Licensing Board but he was unaware if there was an obligation to monitor training of the businesses.
6. The Mayor thanked Chief Donegan and the police force for taking part in Sunday’s peaceful protest for racial justice. He also thanked President Hover for helping to set up the event with Yeadon borough.

**Council President’s Report:** President Hover commented he appreciated the residents who view the Zoom meetings. President Hover gave updates on recent borough events over the past three weeks that have transformed Lansdowne’s landscape in the state as follows:

1. Some residents may be dealing with bad memories during these difficult circumstances and President Hover wants to formulate positive words for the community. In that regard, he felt it best to adhere to the guiding principles of affirmation contained in Resolution 2020-13. President Hover then read the “Juneteenth” resolution designating it an annual event empowering the black community in economy, education and cultural programming. There has been an outpouring of testimony from those in the borough who have been affected and thoughtful analysis on Borough Council’s part will help with future changes.
2. A letter uniting local officials against racial adversity and injustice was signed by Lansdowne, Upper Darby and Yeadon representatives upholding the Constitution and citizens’ rights.
3. President Hover was joined by Ms. Byrne, Mayor Campuzano, Ms. James and Ms. Taylor as well as Yeadon officials in a peaceful protest advocating for police reforms in light of the recent George Floyd murder. He commended Yeadon resident Tori Monroe for arranging the protest and was grateful to Chief Donegan and his police force for reflecting their professionalism during that time.
4. President Hover also commended the Lansdowne Police Department for their continued commitment to the borough and outreach to different leaders to make sure all is right with the residents.
5. President Hover is optimistic about borough projects moving forward as the state moves from the Yellow to Green phase of reopening. Borough committees will be working to include many different groups. President Hover recently participated in a call with area Mayors, Council Presidents and Senator Bob Casey on how the Federal Government can assist Lansdowne with their re-opening.
6. The LGBTQ flag is now being flown in Lansdowne and will be flown every June hereafter. President Hover noted that we value all residents and join with those who now have protection under the recent Supreme Court ruling regarding employment bias.
7. The Juneteenth Resolution will be further discussed under New Business.

8. President Hover encouraged all to solicit ideas regarding the Lansdowne government and how to reform aspects of it if needed. Residents are encouraged to join the Borough Boards, Commissions and attend Council and Committee meetings.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Public Health and Safety** – Ms. Taylor had no formal report but indicated there will be Covid-19 newsletter items regarding moving from yellow to green phase, appropriate face coverings and how to decrease the spread of germs. President Hover asked what measures have been taken to insure that our police department conduct themselves with integrity and professionalism. Ms. Taylor noted that the standards for Lansdowne’s hiring process are much higher than those required by the state. Chief Donegan added that Lansdowne police are also provided with continued training, especially in de-escalation situations, and any deficiencies are documented early in the process. Corrections are then made to adhere to policy and procedures. The Chief also mentioned there is ongoing interaction with various community groups and religious leaders and mutual aid is provided to other police departments. The annual National Night Out event continues to be a success and the police work well with the Mayor, Borough Council and the community to form the best possible relationships.

Ms. Taylor asked if the Fire Marshall’s request for a new fire detection instrument was ever addressed. It will be discussed under New Business.

**Finance & Administration & Codes** – Ms. James reported her committee met on June 1. Topics of discussion included the following:

- A resident at 80 W. Baltimore is having issues contacting the tax collector and he wants the fines and fees forgiven for late payment of his taxes. The Finance Committee is recommending that this action be taken.
- The projected \$80,000 for income tax receipts has been slightly exceeded.
- Process for how to collect the Earned Income Tax (“EIT”) from those now working from home the past 90 days during the pandemic.
- Available funds for municipalities dealing with Covid-19 are not plentiful but Mr. Totaro continues to look into possible sources.
- Library hours and staff changes.

**Economic Development** – Mr. Hover reported his committee met last Wednesday. Several topics for discussion included:

- Amending the Farmers Market agreement regarding use of barricades.
- LEDC grant tracking.
- How businesses will be affected moving from the yellow into green phase of Covid-19.
- Received grant from Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission for initiatives that combine the vision of Lansdowne to be a connective community.
- Juneteenth Resolution.
- One resident offered to do a borough marketing promotion for \$1,000. Other options will also be solicited.
- Walk Works program combining the walking paths with Yeadon and Lansdowne.
- Mr. Hover congratulated the LEDC for receiving a DCED grant for their Maker Space initiative.

**Environment** – Ms. English reported as follows:

- Trying to get the Parks and Rec Committee on a zoom call to discuss various issues, including the Spotted Lantern Fly.

- The library will be opening on a partial basis (10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.). Staff hours will not change. The air conditioning system has been flushed, furniture has been rearranged to allow for social distancing, online programming continues and curbside pickup of requested books will be available. Before expanding the hours, the Library Board will be discussing how much the library is being used to determine if additional hours are warranted.

Ms. Byrne heard from some residents that events are taking place in Hoffman Park and asked if it is being rented out. Ms. English affirmed that all borough parks are now closed as well as the playgrounds and fields. However, residents are free to take walks in any borough park.

**Community Relations** – Miss Byrne reported her committee met on June 2 to discuss the Covid-19 limits. Ms. Byrne gave updates as follows:

- The LBPA continues to meet regularly via Zoom. They asked if better notice could be sent to them regarding protests taking place. They were advised that this is not generated by the borough but there were links on the borough website that could guide them.
- The LAB is using this hiatus by building their brand and procedures for reopening the 2020 House.
- Flying the LGBTQ flag was discussed.
- The census is ongoing, despite the virus and national unrest. Completion date has been pushed back to July 9. Lansdowne's population dropped 9.9% and this could hurt the amount of aid received. The Committee is trying to promote the census in different areas, particularly the area near Pepper's Pharmacy.

The next scheduled Community Relations Committee meeting is July 6, 6:30 p.m.

**Infrastructure and Public Works** – Mr. Holt commented he was unable to attend the last Infrastructure Committee meeting and asked Mr. Totaro for a report. Updates on the various projects follow:

- The sewer lateral clearing policy will be discussed under New Business.
- In 2-3 weeks the crosswalk painting at Wildman Arms will be completed. Borough Engineer Matson suggested having this done locally due to Penn Dot time constraints.
- Penn Dot was requested to pave sections of Lansdowne/Baltimore Avenues.
- The larger projects such as the Lansdowne Theater and sewer rehabilitation are ready to bid. Mr. Matson commented that he and Mr. Totaro were waiting for the best time to solicit competitive bids due to the backup in construction. President Hover asked if there was a timetable for the Gateway Slope project. Mr. Totaro said "not yet" due to waiting for the best time to solicit the most competitive bids.

### **Communications:**

1. President Hover called on Tori Monroe to speak about last Sunday's peaceful protest. Ms. Monroe, who lives in Yeadon and attends school in Lansdowne, thanked Borough Council and Police Department for participating in the protest. Ms. Monroe presented the demands/requests outlined in her protest speech, reiterating what is necessary for police departments:

- Mandatory bias training, preferably by a person of color.
- Mandatory intervention policy when an officer is committing a crime. If violated, disciplinary action will follow.
- Fully functioning body cams kept on at all times.
- End immunity accountability.

- Eliminate choke holds.
- Establish positive connections with local residents and schools.

President Hover congratulated her on coming out with concerns and motivating people to make changes in community. Lansdowne Committees will be looking at policies in this regard. Mayor Campuzano thanked her for showing courage, belief and determination. Chief Donegan congratulated her for having a successful event and said “our future is in good hands” due to her efforts. Ms. Taylor appreciated her efforts as well and encouraged her and her peers to become as involved as possible in the community. President Hover mentioned there is an opening for a Junior Council member and suggested her peers attend some Council meetings to hear the issues.

2. Letter from First Presbyterian Church of Lansdowne calling for peace and eliminating hiring bias in employment. As Christians, they will not tolerate inhumane treatment and noted that unfortunately, there are now some people who are convinced that resisting policy is a life-saving behavior.
3. Letter from Pastor Deborah Speaks of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church thanking the Mayor, Borough Council and the police and fire departments for providing a safe and diverse community.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Farmers Market barricades** – Mr. Totaro noted this formalizes in writing a past practice of loaning barricades to LEDC for use in the Farmers Market as well as the storage and pickup process during the Farmers Market season.

#### **NEW BUSINESS;**

1. **Sewer lateral clearing policy** – Mr. Totaro commented it was important to know that the lateral leading to the street casing could be near a house or across the street. The line that runs perpendicular to that sewer line lateral is the owner’s responsibility in the event of a blockage. In the past, the borough has done courtesy plunging at the “trap” for sewage backup in homes but an expensive weekend overtime situation is occurring due to more use during Covid-19. It was recommended that Borough Council consider charging for any weekend blockage issues. Mr. Holt commented he had his lateral fixed today and it was not cost prohibitive. Mr. Schleigh suggested this be discussed in Committee and brought back to Council for action. Setting parameters for time and cost per hour or flat fee could be done by changing the fee schedule and a resolution would be necessary. Chief Donegan asked if a flyer could be available to residents indicating who to call first, as typically police are the first contact point.
2. **TCDI grant award** – President Hover noted that a grant was received from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission to develop transportation plans connecting with surrounding communities. Mr. Totaro indicated the next steps should include a meeting, contract signature and developing a Steering Committee to interview planning firms and insure the deliverables are accurate. The specifics would be similar to the Bike Plan and Lansdowne would be the lead to sign a contract.
3. **Food donation – June 20<sup>th</sup>** - Event will be held this Saturday, 9 a.m. to Noon in the Highland Avenue parking lot. County personnel will be there as well as local food banks to help distribute. There was a suggestion to have a borough truck there to help transport the food. Mr. Schleigh asked if there were any restrictions on a commercial driver policy. Mr. Totaro had not yet heard back from anyone in this regard. There was a consensus to use the truck only if insured.

4. **DELCORA Update** – President Hover reported there was a communication about a transfer to the county and asked if there were any updates. Mr. Totaro noted there had been an official devolvement of the prior plan to privatize and sell to Aqua. This June 4 resolution was adopted by County Council. Mr. Scott commented he has been involved in opposing Delcora’s assets. The major concern is what happens to the rates when sold to a new entity. Mr. Matson felt a new owner would be a good steward but rates could change.
5. **Inclusionary Policy** - President Hover commented this stems from concerns and a national discussion of having communities live up to the ideal of including all individuals in its programming. President Hover will form an Ad Hoc Committee with Ms. Taylor, Mr. Holt, Ms. James and himself to review if the borough’s cultural programming truly reflects borough demographics. The Committee would also create a policy allowing boards and commissions to create and market new events. The Mayor commented this initiative was appropriate and long overdue and applauded Mr. Hover and the committee for their insight.
6. **Census Child – Census.** Ms. Byrne indicated that the Subcommittee for Census has developed a flyer for distribution to child care facilities encouraging parents to fill out the census. The most undercounted group are children under the age of five and if the borough census count is inaccurate, state subsidies will be less. There was a consensus to send the flyer out as planned.
7. **Juneteenth Resolution** – President Hover indicated this is a movement to include more celebrations that in the past have been omitted in the borough. Last year Governor Wolf declared June 15 a day of observance and the Resolution was passed by Congress. There is also a national movement to make it a national holiday throughout all states. President Hover called it the “second national day of independence” for emancipated slaves and a remembrance flag should be purchased and flown on the borough green.
8. **Thermal Sensors** - Ms. Taylor commented this is a request from the Fire Marshall for a piece of equipment that assists in detecting fires in walls. Price quoted was \$750. Mr. Totaro commented he would like one more meeting with the Fire Marshall for further research, noting that the Codes Department also had questions. Ms. Byrne added that the Fire Marshall is part of the borough’s budget. Ms. English commented that Mr. Young was supposed to come back with a particular mechanism and a list of requirements for ordering as a government entity but she has not yet heard from him. Ms. Taylor will take the issue back to Mr. Young.
9. **My Brother’s Keeper** – President Hover commented this requires consideration and cooperation among borough and inter-borough municipalities. Ms. Byrne added that this is an organization put in place by The Obama Foundation that is similar to No Place for Hate. A few years ago NPFH shifted their focus to schools and now My Brother’s Keeper helps to keep children safe. In order to join My Brother’s Keeper, the Mayor would have to join and take an oath involving six steps that are very child focused. The steps involve insuring children can read at a certain level, are safe from violent crime and can find employment later. A coalition is formed within 180 days and hosts a local action summit with key stakeholders to assess the community’s needs and priorities and set goals. Afterward, a policy review is conducted to help form recommendations with police and schools.
- President Hove asked if Council was comfortable with forming this coalition of the Mayor and Ms. Byrne who would also be connected with police department policy changes and the William Penn School District. Upper Darby will be joining with their Mayor, Police Chief and school board. Ms. English asked if there would be a problem meeting the time deadlines in the fall given the uncertainty of

the Covid-19 virus projection. After further discussion, there arrived a consensus to take it up in the Public Safety Committee and move forward with outreach to local mayors by Mayor Campuzano and school districts by Ms. Byrne. The initiative would start in January, 2021.

**Visitors Comments:** Ms. James moved to Suspend Roberts Rules of Order to hear public comment. Ms. Taylor seconded. Vote: unanimous.

1. **Michael Schleigh** – resident. Mr. Schleigh asked that he be recognized as a resident To comment. President Hover did so. Mr. Schleigh first commented that he has not engaged in some of the public protests due to having children who “don’t know about social distancing”. He has vocally reinforced his stand while on his private property. Mr. Schleigh added he joined the Lansdowne community 16 years and respects the public covenant to be respectful of others and treat neighbors as such. Recently, that “covenant was broken” when his two family cars were vandalized with tire damage. After multiple times of having the cars checked for safety and replacing two of the damaged tires, his wife’s car was again vandalized a few days later when all four tires were flattened by an ice pick.

Mr. Schleigh noted that “some might think this is not a big deal” but as the owner, he and his family had their safety jeopardized while driving the cars. Mr. Schleigh felt it more likely was a reaction without thought but it cannot continue and he hoped the vandal was not a Lansdowne resident. Some neighbors have pooled together to help purchase new tires. Mr. Schleigh added that he hopes this does not happen to anyone else who speaks out in peaceful ways on private property. President Hover said “Lansdowne condemns acts of violence against neighbors who speak out” and was sorry it happened.

Ms. Byrne moved to Reinstated Roberts Rules of Order. Ms. James seconded. Vote: unanimous.

**Action Items:**

1. Ms. James moved to pay bills for the period. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
2. Ms. English moved to accept the letter of resignation from Carol Martsolf from the EAC. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
3. Mr. Hover moved to appoint Carol Martsolf to the Planning Commission for a term expiring 6/17/2024. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
4. Mr. Hover moved to execute Farmers Market Agreement Amendment#2 regarding barricades. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
5. Mr. Hover moved to adopt Juneteenth Resolution No. 202-13 Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.

**Executive Session-** Mr. Hover moved to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:10 p.m. to discuss a personnel issue. Ms. English seconded. Vote: unanimous.

**Public Session:** No motions were made upon reconvening to Public Session.

**Adjourn:** Ms. Byrne moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Holt. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Ann Henry, Borough Secretary