

Lansdowne Borough Council

BUSINESS MEETING

August 5, 2020

APPROVED MINUTES

The Lansdowne Borough Council Business Meeting was held remotely via teleconference on Wednesday, August 5, 2020, 7:00 p.m. Members present: President Hover, Ms. Byrne, Ms. English, Ms. James, Mr. Holt and Ms. Taylor. Excused: Mr. Schleigh (vacation). Also present: Mayor Campuzano, Borough Solicitor Scott, Borough Manager Totaro, Borough Secretary Henry, Borough Engineer Matson and Police Chief Donegan.

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

The Mayor asked for a moment of silence in memory of State Representative Nicholas Micozzie, who passed away last week. A resolution honoring him will be read during this meeting. The Mayor commented that “Lansdowne lost a true friend and supporter”.

The Mayor also asked for a moment of silence in memory of two Lansdowne Fire Company volunteers: (1) Robert Wentzel, who joined the volunteer group at age 16 and whose family has been the backbone of the Lansdowne Fire Company volunteers for many years; and (2) Robert Cope, a longtime member of the Fire company who dedicated many years of service to Lansdowne and the Fire Company.

All Borough Council meetings are being held virtually until further notice.

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

Reports:

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

Borough Manager’s Report: Mr. Totaro provided updates on last night’s major storm as follows:

1. There was flooding at many intersections and has now subsided, leaving moderate damage in Hoffman Park. Some of the damage is beyond the borough’s ability to remedy and is not covered by insurance. However, if the County damage reported is extensive enough, the borough will apply for funding to remediate some of that work involving the fencing and a section of the Gateway Slope trail.
2. The storm water and sanitary sewers held up pretty well during the storm. The lines have been cleared and the street sweeper was used for two days. There is grant money available if needed through FEMA and PEMA.
3. Some electricity outages were reported.
4. Ms. English noted there appeared to be some undermining of the basketball court in Hoffman Park and asked if the borough engineer could inspect it. Mr. Totaro indicated that all of Hoffman Park is in a flood plain and undermining happened in several places. Precautionary safety cones are in place and a contractor will be out to review all damages. No engineer is necessary.

5. Ms. Taylor asked if any funds could be used to restore storm damaged items since a state of emergency has been declared due to Covid-19. Mr. Totaro commented that all counties become the unit of measure and gross damage reports will be submitted for estimates. The aggregate threshold is \$2 million. Ms. Taylor asked how a resident would notify the borough of any personal damage and does an insurance company report become part of the county report. Mr. Totaro was unclear on this answer but noted residents with private insurance are liable for any storm damage. Solicitor Scott concurred, adding that the borough can recover its own overtime costs and expenses when there is a declaration of emergency that qualifies but it is not the distributor to privately insured property owners.
6. The sanitation schedule ran as normal and all routes were completed but some areas did not comply with recycling.

Police Chief's Report – Chief Donegan reported police responded to several storm related issues: downed trees, flooded roads, power outages and traffic congestion. One officer was trapped for several hours in his vehicle due to live downed wires but he was not harmed. Chief Donegan commented that the police, Fire Company, fire police and sanitation crew did an excellent job working together to prevent further damage and problems. Chief Donegan added that the department is looking into de-escalation training. He has contacted some local organization who will come out to do the training. East Lansdowne might also host the training for a few nights in conjunction with Lansdowne. More information will be available at next week's Public Safety Committee meeting.

Ms. Taylor asked if there were any contingency plans for handling increased traffic on Lansdowne Avenue generated by Darby Borough's Main Street flooding issues. Chief Donegan commented that Lansdowne Avenue is a state road and if used, detour routes are posted for the side roads. However, due to the severity of the flooding yesterday, all areas were flooded with no access routes.

Borough Engineer's Report – Mr. Matson reported on two updates:

1. He attended the Zoning Hearing Board meeting regarding Lansdowne Theater concerns and advocated for the borough concerns. On July 23, 2020, the Zoning Hearing Board granted the necessary relief and accepted the terms and conditions of the borough. A land development plan has been submitted and reviewed and will go to the Planning Commission for next week's meeting.
2. He has drafted a letter for Mr. Totaro's review regarding what Lansdowne is advocating for related to Delcora's sale to Aqua under Act 35 plan. Mr. Scott expanded on the process, indicating that Lansdowne has not had a lot of land developments in the past several years. When an additional footprint is made for a commercial building, they are required to submit land development plans to the borough and County Planning Commissions, who will make recommendations to Borough Council and reviewed if they comply with subdivision ordinance. This needs to be done within 90 days of applying for the subdivision ordinance.

Fire Company Report – No report provided.

Mayor's Report – The Mayor reported on several items as follows:

1. He spoke to Fire Chief Russell on storm related matters; Chief Russell reported that all was going well.

2. Drive through and walk up Covid-19 testing for residents will be held in the Highland Avenue parking lot as follows:

August 11	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
August 12	Noon to 5:30 p.m.
August 13	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The testing is for all residents age 12 and over. A nasal swab and PCR test kit will be used. The testing is free of charge for residents without health insurance. There will be no out of pocket costs or co-pay for residents with private insurance. Results will take about 5-7 business days. Priority testing will be given to essential first responders, health care employees, grocery workers, etc. and those over age 65. All residents should wear masks.

3. The Mayor thanked the police, fire and sanitation personnel for all their hard work yesterday during the storm. Hoffman Park was moderately damaged and Penn Dot will clear out the limbs from Darby Creek at Baltimore and Scottsdale Road.

4. No news has yet been received on a shredding event. The Mayor spoke to East Lansdowne Mayor Dukes, who would like to participate again. The Mayor will also reach out to the DA's office for funding help and electronic recycling will be offered as well. The plan is to hold the event in October and further information will be posted on the borough web site.

President's Report: President Hover thanked the Mayor for his part in leading rebuilding efforts in Hoffman Park after Hurricane Floyd many years ago that helped mitigate last night's storm damage. President Hover echoed the Mayor's thanks to the police, fire and highway sanitation personnel as well as the EMS squad and volunteers.

Events held:

July 26 – Liberia Independence Day. President Hover thanked attendees Ms. James, Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon, Dr. Monica Taylor, Mayor Campuzano, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Byrne and the two Lansdowne residents who first brought this day to Borough Council's attention.

July 29 – Public Safety Forum – It was a successful event attended by numerous residents. Minutes will be available on the webs site after approval by Borough Council. President Hover thanked all who participated in the event giving special thanks to Mayor Campuzano. Ms. Taylor, Ms. Byrne, Mr. Holt, Mr. Scott, Chief Donegan and Mr. Totaro. President Hover felt that residents now understood the process better through this forum and hoped to hold another one in the fall.

The Public Safety Committee will discuss the questions raised at the forum regarding police body cams and the new Technology Committee. President Hover indicated there should also be an explicit "duty to intervene" policy for discussion as well. Mr. Schleigh is working on an ordinance dealing with public health and concerns in the schools and the borough's responsibility for appointing a health officer.

August 10 – Ecuador Day in Lansdowne.

President Hover reminded residents to fill out the census. Ms. Byrne commented on the importance of this, as the results affect infrastructure, how much funding is received from the Federal government, how much representation the borough has in the Federal Government, school funding, how many hospitals we have for funding and also includes redistricting outcomes. Funding is decreased by \$2,000 per person for every non-responding resident. Ms. Byrne noted that the census can be completed by mail, phone or

online and takes less than 10 minutes to fill out. It is also in 59 languages and help will be provided for those needing it. Enumerators will be out at the end of the month to help complete the census. President Hover encouraged residents to send a letter of interest if wanting to take part in any aspect of Lansdowne's governance.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Resolution of DELCORA Act 537 Plan Update: Mr. Holt deferred to Borough Engineer Kevin Matson to explain the Act and how the borough should move forward. Mr. Matson indicated the resolution was taken out of a draft document published July 1, 2020 called The Act 537 Plan for Delcora. That Plan comes up with one central action: Delcora wants Aqua to buy it and is asking affected towns to adopt a resolution agreeing with the sale idea. The Process of Plan will give towns an opportunity to comment and send in questions about the effect on rate payers and how this would affect the health of the region's environment if the operations are not handled properly. Mr. Matson felt the resolution was a "bit unfair" regarding the timeline given for responses. He gave his professional opinion: "it is premature to adopt this Resolution because of the lack of due diligence in warranting the sale and not enough homework was done to justify a sole source for buying Delcora". He felt it should either be tabled for additional comments, flatly adopted and move forward or not adopt it at the present time. Mr. Holt recommended not adopting the resolution and to move forward with very direct questioning by the Borough Engineer, Borough Manager and Borough Council. There was a consensus among Borough Council to take Mr. Holt's suggestion. Mr. Holt noted that Lansdowne's Plan 537 is fairly stable and will remain so regardless of whether or not the sale goes through, so there is no rush to adopt it.

Ms. Byrne asked why a motion for sale was necessary since the borough was not orchestrating the sale. Mr. Scott commented that a motion is not required to approve the sale but it provides an opportunity to review the agreement for merit. Mr. Matson added that it would be very difficult to coordinate 49 municipalities to vote in favor without any questions or comments. There is no jurisdictional mandate to get a specific number of municipalities to agree, so it will not affect the DEP's decision if the vote is not unanimous.

Ms. Taylor asked the DEP's purpose and Delcora's classification. Mr. Matson noted that the Department of Environmental Protections ("DEP") is a federal regulatory agency that also has involvement at the national level and with the Department of Justice due to enforcement issues in their consent orders and long term capital plans. Delcora is an independent municipal authority created by Delaware County in 1975. It is not a profit generating entity but wants to be sold as a for profit organization that is answerable to shareholders.

2. Stewart Avenue drop off – President Hover recused himself from the discussion (his son attends the Lansdowne Friends School) and turned the discussion over to Ms. Byrne. Ms. Byrne noted that the Community Relations Committee has looked at speeding issues on Stewart Avenue near Friends School. Chief Donegan recommended making the traffic one way going west on a permanent basis (away from Lansdowne, going toward Owen). This will allow consistency for residents on that street to park in the same direction and make it easier for parents to drop off the students. Ms. English thought the original plan was from Owen up, not from Lansdowne down and questioned the traffic congestion if 15 cars or so are dropping off. Chief Donegan noted that the congestion issue would happen regardless of the direction but cars will now be parked on the West Stewart Avenue side of Simpson Gardens along the curb, allowing more safety for students exiting on the passenger side. Friends School wanted the traffic going toward Owen Avenue and West Stewart is not a state road that would need approval. Ms. English noted that the fire company representatives were absent during the discussions with the Public Safety Committee and on fire calls they follow Stewart to Owen to avoid Lansdowne Avenue traffic. She asked

if anyone notified the fire company before reaching this decision. Mayor Campuzano “understands their concerns” but supports Chief Donegan’s decision as the best possible solution to help stop the speeding issues along Stewart Avenue and provide more safety to children. Ms. Byrne added that Covid 19 testing for each incoming student will be handled by a parent or teacher’s aide and not at curbside. Staggered drop off times will also be considered to help ease any traffic congestion. President Hover asked if the ordinance needs to be altered or can the original one be changed. Mr. Scott indicated a motion to advertise was necessary and he will have it ready for the next Borough Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **State Representative Nicholas Micozzie** – President Hover read the Resolution in full honoring Representative Micozzie and his many years of service to the community. It will be made into a plaque and presented to the Micozzie family with the Mayor’s signature. President Hover added that the Historic Lansdowne Theater Corporation and many other institutions in Lansdowne had greatly benefited from Rep. Micozzie’s work.
2. **Technology Committee** - President Hover has been in consultations with Mr. Holt about chairing this new Committee and asked Mr. Schleigh to take over as Chair of the Infrastructure Committee. Mr. Holt’s new committee will be looking at processes and developing necessary changes and upgrades to technology to insure that Lansdowne has the resources and infrastructure to accommodate an ever changing world regarding Wi-Fi, body cams for police and certain types of surveillance equipment. The Mayor thanked Mr. Holt for his service on the Infrastructure Committee, noting that the new sanitation changes were a testament to his hard work.
3. **Body Cameras** – President Hover commented this issue came up repeatedly during the public safety forum resident questions. Ms. Taylor commented that creating the Technology Committee is great timing and these cameras will be a great asset for the public safety of residents and officers. Chief Donegan is looking into quotes for the equipment and will provide them at the next Public Safety Committee meeting.
4. **Junior Council Person** – President Hover indicated that efforts continue to procure a Junior Council person and a resolution will soon be ready for advertising.
5. **PA #811** – Mr. Holt explained this is “Awareness of Trenching” month and all PA fire houses are being asked to join PA 811 and display “Call 811 before your dig” on their marques on National 811 Day (August 11). Ms. Taylor asked the background for 811. Mr. Holt commented it is a one call system where you should call 811 before digging or trenching on a property to avoid hitting an electrical or sewer line. President Hover commented that there will be a resolution declaring August 11, 2020 as National 811 Day in the borough. Ms. Taylor asked if it was the responsibility of the borough or fire house to put out the message. Mr. Scott noted it is the borough’s publicity mechanism to educate people about calling 811 first before digging. There is no cost to advertise. President Hover commented this action item will be in perpetuity next year as a resolution.

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

Visitors:

1. Jennifer Plum – W. Greenwood Ave. Regarding police body cams: has anyone done research to see if they are effective and will it be a big cost. President Hover indicated that research is currently being done in Committee to present costs in terms of initial purchase and continued purchases and whether or not they are needed.

Ms. Byrne moved to reinstate Roberts Rules of Order. Ms. English seconded. Vote: unanimous.

Action Items:

1. Ms. James moved to authorize payment of bills for the period. Ms. English seconded. Vote: unanimous.
2. Ms. James moved to advertise for the issuance of debt to service equipment lease for 2 sanitation vehicles. Ms. Byrne seconded. **Discussion:** Mr. Totaro explained that this is for one fixed rate lease and one adjustable rate lease for two new trash trucks. The adjustable rate lease could be retired at debt if the borough is awarded a recycling grant in the next two to three months. Vote: unanimous.
3. Mr. Holt moved to execute traffic signal maintenance agreement with Signal Services. Ms. English seconded. Vote: unanimous.
4. Mr. Hover moved to establish a Technology Committee of Borough Council. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
5. Mr. Hover moved to adopt Resolution 2020-17 honoring State Representative Nicholas Micozzie. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
6. Mr. Hover moved to adopt Resolution 2020-18 authorizing participation in the Junior Council Person Program. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.
7. Ms. Taylor moved to have traffic change from two way to one way going west on Stewart Avenue toward Owen Avenue. Ms. Byrne seconded. The motion carried with four ayes (Ms. Byrne, Ms. James, Mr. Holt and Ms. Taylor), one nay (Ms. English) and one abstention (Mr. Hover, whose son attends the Friends School).
8. Mr. Holt moved to designate August 11, 2020 as National 811 day in Lansdowne. Ms. English seconded. Vote: unanimous.

Executive Session – Ms. Byrne moved to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:32 p.m. to discuss personnel issues. Mr. Hover seconded. Vote: unanimous.

Public Session: Upon reconvening to Public Session, the following motion was made:

Ms. Taylor moved to enter into a Memo of Understanding with the FOP re: restored leave time for Officer Parker. Ms. Byrne seconded. Vote: unanimous.

Adjourn - Ms. Byrne moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. English seconded. Vote: unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Ann Henry
Borough Secretary