

February 3, 2021

The Work Session of Lansdale Borough Council was held on Wednesday, February 3, 2021 online via Zoom Meeting and called to order at 8:47pm by President, Denton Burnell.

ROLL CALL:

- (X) Councilman Angelichio
- (X) Councilman Breish
- (X) President Burnell
- (X) Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton
- (X) Councilman DiGregorio
- (X) Vice President Fuller
- (X) Councilman Henning
- (X) Councilwoman Currie Teoh
- (X) Mayor Herbert

Borough Representatives:

Borough Manager, John Ernst
Finance Director, John Crawford
Police Chief, Mike Trail
Parks & Rec., Karl Lukens
Electric Superintendent, Andy Krauss
Public Works, Rick Delong
Fire Marshal, Rick Lesniak

Borough Solicitor, not present
Borough Engineer, not present
Library Director, Tom Meyer
IT/GIS Coordinator, Bryan Poster
Code Enforcement, Jason Van Dame
WWTP Superintendent, Dan Shinskie

Residents

None

Agenda Item #4 – Committee Reports

Administration and Finance Committee – Councilman Angelichio

1. Financial Reports - Last year revenues and expenses were down; the expenses were down more than revenues. The Borough spent less than the prior year on salaries. In the General Fund, the revenues come in under \$200,000 to budget and the expenses come in at \$600,000 under budget. This is even after the transfers. We are higher than the previous year in EIT at \$170,000 over budget which is really good. Apartment licenses are up \$70,000.
2. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
 - Annual renewal of the administration of the Borough's recycling contract with FX Browne.
 - Assessment Appeals for five properties; the largest refund is approximately \$40,000 for 701 Lansdale Avenue.
 - Resolution to continue to support the moratorium of evictions and foreclosures during the pandemic.
3. Discussed the energy consultant that will work with the electric department regarding clean energy. The consultant fee will be paid with the proceeds from the electric purchase power savings. More to come in the electric committee report.

Councilman Henning – Why are we doing the reassessments?

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Councilman Angelichio – The entity doesn't agree with the County's assessment of their property and they want it lowered. This affects the school district and county taxes paid as well and they will have to give a refund in a larger amount since their taxes are larger than the Borough's.

Code Enforcement Committee – Councilman DiGregorio

1. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
 - Approve the annual junkyard license for Mattero's junkyard 316 W. Seventh Street.
 - Resolution to amend the schedule of fees and charges to include the annual fire inspection fees.
2. The department anticipates having online permitting be available March 1 for testing and the goal is to go live the last week of April if the testing period goes well.
3. Payment #1 was requested and paid for work completed on the solar panels of the municipal complex.

Economic Development Committee – Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton

1. No report, the committee did not meet in January.

Electric Committee – Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton

1. Blue Sky Power did a brief presentation for the committee and for Council. Ben Parvey laid out phase 1 of an energy action plan to allow the Borough to create a comprehensive energy roadmap for the future. (presentation attached to end of minutes).
President Burnell – We are only funding the first phase right now.
2. Updates on pole attachments and the joint use agreement with Verizon and Comcast were discussed. We are currently in final negotiations with Verizon on pole ownership and attachment rates and we have begun the process on attachment rates and attachments with Comcast.
3. The committee briefly spoke about an interconnection relay project that is being mandated by Pennsylvania Power & Light (the Borough's transmission supplier) to prevent any Lansdale customer generated from going back onto their grid. These relays would open the 69,000-volt breakers at the main substation, and they are designed to protect PPL's equipment and personnel. The proposal from Remington Vernick Engineers for \$26,000 is to design and implement the protection relays. The electric committee decided to vote to move forward with a condition. The committee will need more information as to why this is needed. Remington and Vernick Engineers, consultants for the Borough on this project, will issue a memo before a vote is taken in two weeks to make sure the committee and council feel comfortable moving forward.

Library Committee – Vice President Fuller

1. The committee reviewed the budget and things are looking good so far.
2. The library will reopen to the public for "Browse and Borrow" on February 8. The fire alarm upgrade should be completed by then.
3. The 2021 International Spring Festival will not happen this year. We will most likely hold the Green and Clean event in July.

Parks and Recreation Committee – Vice President Fuller

1. Cannoneers Baseball Association – Request permission to relocate their batting cage at Memorial Park’s Weaver Field. Committee approved the request.
2. The dedication of the skatepark will take place on Saturday, April 10. The signage for the dedication is in Dropbox.
3. Poll memberships are open for people to sign up for 2021.
4. Concerts and movies in the park have been booked for the season.
5. The Festival of the Arts planning is preliminary at this time. We are waiting to see the status of COVID cases and what, if any, mandates come out over the next few months.
6. Zumba and dance classes will be held in the White’s Road parking lot and hopefully there will be a skatepark camp in August.
7. The maintenance crew is busy with routine park maintenance as well as renovating the White’s Road pool bath house.
8. Construction is being held up in the White’s Road Park playground and the Liberty Bell Trail in Stony Creek because of the snow.
9. Staff is waiting for quotes for the bottle filling stations.
10. The committee will have a tour of the parks this spring to determine what projects should be done for 2021.
11. The 150th Anniversary committee would like to raise money and have a permanent gazebo added to Memorial Park. More details will come on this project.
12. The Friends of the Skatepark came out and removed the snow in the bowl and surfaces as a public service to the skatepark.

Public Safety Committee – Councilwoman Currie Teoh

1. Police hiring – currently working on hiring two new officers to fill two vacancies within the department.
2. Discussed the permit parking for renters in various municipal owned parking lots.
3. Reviewed the police department’s annual report. This will be presented at the business meeting later this month.
4. Chief Trail presented a staffing report to the committee which recommended the hiring of three additional officers in the next few years. A copy was provided to all members of council.
5. The committee decided to table the request for Lansdale Day 2021 and will consider again at the March committee meeting. They want to continue to monitor COVID cases and see what direction the State will be taking in the future.
6. Chief Trail requested the committee look into increasing the snow alert parking fine to \$50 from \$10 for the first offense. \$10 is not enough to charge as more people will leave their car and pay instead of finding a legal space to park.

President Burnell – Are the hiring of two officers in the budget?

Chief Trail – Yes, they are in the 2021 budget.

President Burnell – He supports the increase in the now snow alert parking fine.

Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton – If someone does not pay the fine, does the cost graduate up?

Chief Trail – If a fine is not paid over a period of time then it turns into a citation that is around \$75 and if not paid again then it goes up to \$140.

Councilman Angelichio – He is okay with increasing the initial fine.

Mayor Herbert – He would like to pass this in February if possible.

Councilman Breish – For staffing there are three positions open, but we are filling two because that is what is in the budget.

Councilwoman Currie Teoh – Yes.

Councilman Breish – There is a proposal to add additional officers in the future, but would it be better to move that timeline up to 2021?

Mayor Herbert – It is not that simple. To hire a new officer we have to go through the Civil Service Commission.

Chief Trail – The officers we are hiring soon will afford us a cost savings for now as they are hired at a lesser rate class.

Councilman Breish – Why wait if we are saving money?

Chief Trail – There is a significant cost to hire officers. It is better to wait until the summer to look at the 2022 budget.

Public Works Committee – Councilman Breish

1. WWTP updates:
 - Fire Alarm & Security System Upgrade – The system is up and running. We are meeting with the engineer on Thursday to review all work that was done and develop a punch list.
 - The WWTP is operating on power from the new electrical switchgear that was recently installed as part of the Solar Project. The changeover was made last week.
 - They are looking at replacing the sewer cleaning truck. It is a 1999 truck that has served well but is ready for replacement.
2. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
 - Pennbrook Pump Station New Generator Installation – We received bids on January 22nd and the low bidder was Cedar Electric with a bid of \$292,000.
 - Resolution to allow the Chamber of Commerce to have their banners hung on certain portions of Broad Street and the PCTI route.
3. The bid openings for Laurel Lane and Columbia Avenue will be opened February 24th. They should be awarded in March. The ADA ramps on York Avenue will be add to the Columbia Avenue bid.
4. Snow plowing – 52 miles of road were plowed and it took 50 hours to do all that work. There were complaints about roads not being plowed, but it was discovered that people were shoveling the snow back into the street which made it look like the road wasn't plowed. Madison Street plowing requires further review for future storms. Conversation will continue about plowing alleys during large snow storms.

Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton – Thank you for all the hard work the Public Works crews did during and after the storm.

President Burnell – The Madison Street area was an issue. Any more detail about this area?

Mr. Ernst – That parking area will be plowed by the Parking Authority's contractor. The spots behind the businesses were hard to clear because there were cars parked there. We do not have "no parking during snow alert" signs for those spots.

Appointments Committee – President Burnell

1. Still working on filling the openings for Economic Development Committee, the Planning Commission and the Police Pension Board. He has started working on the Environmental Advisory Commission as well.

Agenda Item #5 – Announcements

Vice President Fuller – The Borough's 150th Anniversary is in 2022 and if people want to get involved please let us know as we have started to plan the celebration.

Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton – On February 11 to celebrate Black History Month there will be a Facebook Live presentation about Dr. Frank Boston through the Library. There will also be a short presentation at the next council meeting.

Councilman Angelichio – The Restore in Chalfont will be holding an electronics recycling event this month.

Councilman Breish – For the entire month of February electronics and appliances can be dropped off. There is no charge, but donations are accepted.

Agenda Item #6 – Public Comment

None

The meeting was adjourned at 10:18pm