

May 5, 2021

The Work Session of Lansdale Borough Council was held on Wednesday, May 5, 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, Melissa Gemelli
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
Asst WWTP Super – Greg Rapp

Residents

None

Agenda Item #4 – Committee Reports

Administration and Finance Committee – Councilman Angelichio

1. Reviewed the financial reports; revenue is up 22% and expenditures are down 6%. A lot of this is based on results due to COVID.
2. Discussed delinquent electric accounts and there are 800 that are past due for a total of about \$134,000. The question is when we want to return late fees, penalties and shut offs? Customer Service staff will begin to call customers May 20 to let them know their overdue balance. They will also share that customers can set up payment plans and let them know that they can get assistance from Your Way Home. A set timeframe is needed for customers to pay their past due balances. For example, if someone has a balance and they are paying their current bill plus some money toward their past due balance, we would not charge late fees or penalties unless they are not making the effort to pay past due balances or current bill.
3. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
 - Assessment Appeal for 200 S. Line Street (Silk Factory) for \$10,678.70 back to the borough.
 - Assessment Appeal for 304-306 Madison Street for \$3,602.26 back to the borough.
 - Assessment Appeal for 840-884 W. Main Street for \$3466.39 back to the borough.

4. There was some public comment about electric bills and landlords being responsible for their renter's bills if they skip out of town without paying their balance. Should the landlords be responsible for their tenant's bill?

Code Enforcement Committee – Councilman DiGregorio

1. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
 - Conditional Use to convert commercial space into four apartments at the Equus Madison at Lansdale apartments. Additional parking will be provided by Equus.
 - Quick claim deed, indemnification for the paper street Swinton Street for the development of 512 Green Street.
2. The Planning Commission recommends an update of the borough sign ordinance. More to come on this topic at future meetings.
3. In April 115 permit applications were received and 100 permits were issued.
4. The Zoning Hearing Board will hear from an applicant about converting 501 N. Cannon Avenue to apartments. They are requesting relief on a few items. More to come on that project.

Councilman Angelichio – He would like more detail about the conversion of commercial space to apartments. He feels that we have been more than accommodating on this project over the years.

Councilman DiGregorio – It has not been profitable to have retail space in this current economy because of the pandemic.

President Burnell – Will more parking be required?

Councilman DiGregorio – Yes, they will develop an undeveloped area for additional parking.

Vice President Fuller – Are they still pursuing retail clients for the front area?

Councilman DiGregorio – Yes.

Mr. Van Dame – The new apartments would face the dog park so the store fronts facing the plaza will stay retail.

Mayor Herbert – When they come in in two weeks they will talk about parking?

Mr. Van Dame – All questions can and will be answered by the applicant as part of the hearing.

Economic Development Committee – Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton

1. The committee reviewed a Façade Improvement Grant application for the property located at 213 N. Broad Street.
2. Continued discussions on how to move forward with our contract with Eric Goldstein, who was contracted prior to COVID to help set up a strategy for businesses and development in the Borough. Our discussion this month focused on if it's a better use of Eric's expertise to look at short-term strategy or a long-term plan for business development.

Electric Committee – Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton

1. Electric Car Charging Stations total usage is \$3,785.18 / 22 months online = \$172 per month. With 9,000 electric accounts in the Borough, \$0.52 per month per electric account was charged on average since the chargers went online.
2. The committee will be following the lead of the Admin & Finance committee as to when and how we will restart electric service late penalties and disconnections. We will hear more in June of 2021 at the work session.
3. The committee reviewed the design and products to revamp the holiday décor throughout the Borough. Mr. Krauss will be placing the final order at the end of May with

a delivery in time for the 2021 Holiday season. The capital budget for the project is \$35,000.00.

4. Blue Sky Power update - Technical review is going very well. We have received most of the data requested and began exploring at least five different directions for advancing the clean energy strategy for Lansdale. For sizing, we have spent a lot of time on load profiles and usage by the Borough and its residents. We had a call with NextEra and Mainspring to discuss potential linear generator technology and NextEra's interest in advancing clean energy generation in Lansdale taking into account the current agreement. We provided them technical data. They are reviewing the data and our potential solutions and will update us shortly.
 - Legal and Regulatory: Reviewed and summarized all of Lansdale's agreements regarding electric purchase and interconnection. Lansdale received a list of missing items or additional information and Mr. Krauss provided most of what was requested. BlueSky reviewed Commonwealth statutes and regulations regarding production of electricity and summarized applicable provisions in a document to ensure compliance with various technical and financial solutions. Next, we will be exploring the places where we can work to optimize the current agreements to maximize benefit for Lansdale.
 - Financial: Now that the technical and legal aspects of Lansdale's Electric system are coming in clearer for BlueSky, we are next shifting our focus to the financial aspects of the Energy Action Plan. Currently, we are looking at rate data and then will model in various project finance structures. We are also taking the data from the various supply agreements and checking for opportunities for savings.
 - We are also preparing a proposal and initial thoughts on creation of a Lansdale energy efficiency rebate and incentive program.
5. Department Operations –
 - PPL inter connection relay project for solar panels is in the final design review at PPL.
 - Decorative lighting has been completed along the section of the Liberty Bell Trail alongside Borough Hall T Railroad Ave.
 - Electric Department Fleet branding complete
 - Lansdale Luxor Development circuit relocation
 - Heater replacement in the office and garage is happening now.
6. Briefly discussed the current budget.

Vice President Fuller – She did look at the holiday decorations in Dropbox and they look good.

Councilman Breish – What is the overall value that the electric car chargers brings to the community? Could this be punted to the EDC to find out the value?

Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton – The Madison Street chargers have the highest usage, but apartment residents are using it to charge their cars and then leaving them overnight. We discussed having fast chargers installed in the Freight House parking lot when that project is done.

Councilman Angelichio – The contractor that was used for tree trimming left a mess in the neighborhood near his house. Plus, they were working past 8:00 pm.

Mr. Krauss – This is the first time we used this contractor and he will follow up with them. They are one of the few tree trimmers that are qualified to trim near power lines. He will also make sure they stop at 5:00 pm and clean up all the wood.

Library Committee – Vice President Fuller

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1. Reviewed the budget. Grant award payments are coming in and insurance dividends were paid in April.
2. Summer reading program this year is, "Reading Colors Your World". Participants can participate through Beanstack app. The program is separated into age groups – preschool, elementary, teen and adult. The program starts June 21 and runs through August 13.
3. The Story Walk in Stony Creek Park was installed. The book is Over the Meadow.
4. Discussed the Beer Garden for Founders Day. A Board of Trustees meeting will be held June 16 to approve to application for the special occasion permit for the library fundraiser to sell beer.
5. The Clean and Green event will be scheduled for September 25. Currently looking for a vendor to take TVs to be recycled.
6. The Cloud Library is up and running and has an expansive amount of materials for online borrowing.

Parks and Recreation Committee – Vice President Fuller

1. The North Penn Mosque requested to use 5th Street field for Ramadan services. The committee approved the request with conditions about PA systems, parking and insurance requirements.
2. Zumba classes in the White's Road parking lot have started and are going well. Motown Line Dancing has been delayed due to weather.
3. Various maintenance activities continue to move forward in the parks and pools.
4. The White's Road playground should be completed by May 17.
5. A ribbon cutting was held for the reopening of the Liberty Bell Trail in Stony Creek Park.
6. A new parks laborer was hired to replace a retiree position.
7. NPWA is working on the bottle filling stations. They have to add meters to the stations for regulatory purposes, not for billing.
8. The Parks Committee will tour the parks with Mr. Lukens and Mr. Ernst to discuss upcoming capital projects.
9. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:
 - Resolution for a grant application to DCED to pave the Stony Creek parking lot. We will have a 15% match and we could possibly use the rain garden as a match from the other grant we applied for.
 - Change Order #2 for the Liberty Bell Trail in Stony Creek for unsuitable soils, time delays and increase in costs.
 - Increase the schedule of fees and charges for swim lessons. Need to have smaller classes so more classes are needed and have to pay more staff costs.

Councilman Angelichio – Is there a benefit to not paving Stony Creek parking lot because of stormwater runoff?

Vice President Fuller – The stone is so compact there already that the lot is an impervious surface. Older and ADA residents have a difficult time getting through the stone parking lot.

Mr. Lukens – The weekly maintenance on that parking lot is a lot of work. The rain garden will factor into the impervious surface as well.

Councilwoman Hawkins Charlton – Could we add the locations of the bottle filling stations to the website so people know where to find them?

Public Safety Committee – Councilwoman Currie Teoh

1. Motions to appear before Council at the next business meeting:

- Approve Stove and Tap special event to close N. Wood Street for beginning of summer bash on May 22.
 - Prepare and advertise an ordinance to move three 15-minute parking spaces from the east end of Madison Street to the west end and move three 2-hour spaces to replace the ones moved.
 - Approve the special events application for Founders Day on August 28.
2. The chief advised the committee of the formation of the North Penn HUB Program, a multi-disciplined approach to community service where various stakeholders come together at a monthly meeting to address specific cases which police are responding to find better solutions and end the need for police response. The North Penn Hub is a program in the Lansdale Police Department's Community Services Unit and overseen by Officer David Pelzer.
 3. Several complaints from a resident of Columbia Avenue regarding on-street parking at the intersection of South Wood Street and Vine Street. A lengthy discussion ensued after which the chief advised he would meet with the resident and report back to the committee in June on his recommendations.
 4. A resident requested that a speed study be done on N. Line Street due to many accidents that seem to happen on that stretch between Main and Seventh Streets.

Public Works Committee – Councilman Breish

1. 2020 Mill & Overlay Program – Harris Blacktopping is scheduled to mill and pave Pennbrook Avenue during the week of May 17 which will complete this project.
2. Columbia Avenue Roadway Rehabilitation – Joao & Bradley was scheduled to start this project on April 26 but were finishing up their contract with NPWA. The new start date is May 24.
3. Laurel Lane Storm Sewer Project – Work is scheduled to begin on this project mid-June.
4. CDBG North Richardson Avenue Rehabilitation Project – The application for this project has been submitted to the County. It will take several months for the review process and award of grant funding.
5. A storm sewer pipe on Ridge Street between Oak Drive and the dead end has failed and a very large sinkhole has developed in the cart way of Ridge Street. We will need to have a contractor repair this condition immediately as it is a present danger to the health and safety of Borough residents who live in this area. We do not have to get three quotes for this work because it falls under "emergency repair". The Borough received a quote from KBC Construction in the amount of \$42,230.00. RVE has reviewed this quote and recommends awarding this work to KBC Construction for immediate repair. The Borough Solicitor recommended Council passing a motion for a resolution to move forward with the "emergency repair" on Ridge Street. The committee recommended to put forth a motion to adopt a resolution retroactively approving this work at the May 19 business meeting. The Borough will be looking into implementing a storm sewer inspection program going forward.
6. Hometown Hero banners are currently being hung throughout the Borough.
7. RVE is going to apply for grant funding in the amount of \$422,703.00 for streambank stabilization at Lansdale Cemetery on behalf of the Borough. The grant funding is through the Flood Mitigation Program from the Commonwealth Financing Authority.
8. WWTP
 - Fire Alarm & Security System Upgrade - We are nearing the end of this project. The Fire and Security System has been functioning well with a few minor problems. The Fireworks computer was moved to the WWTP so the Police Department will only see the fire and security alarms and not the system trouble

alarms that come through. To answer the concerns raised at the last meeting about the change orders on the Fire and Security Project, these changes were made at our request for ease of use for the Police Department and the WWTP. The total of the Change Orders was an additional \$5,312.20. This is only 1.4 percent of the original contract cost of \$376,500.

- White's Road Park Streambank Stabilization - The contractor is scheduled to start the punch list work on the streambanks on Wednesday May 5 or later this week.
- Pennbrook Avenue Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation -The manhole lining on Pennbrook Avenue has been completed. The contractor has started work on lining the manholes on Hancock Street and should finish this week.
- In the process of receiving proposals for the purchase and replacement of two of the pumps at Pennbrook Pump Station. These are the two smaller constant speed pumps. The new pumps will be dry pit submersibles like the ones we installed in White's Road in 2016. This style of pump eliminates the long shafts connecting the motor and pump, between the top and the bottom floors, reducing vibrations.

Agenda Item #5 – Announcements

Councilwoman Currie Teoh – The Farmers' Market begins on Saturday, May 15.

Agenda Item #6 – Public Comment

None

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02pm