

July 17, 2024

The Business Meeting of Lansdale Borough Council was held on Wednesday, July 17, 2024, at Lansdale Municipal Complex, One Vine Street, Lansdale, PA and called to order at 7:00 pm by President, Mary Fuller.

ROLL CALL:

- (X) Councilwoman Bollens
- (X) Councilman Breish
- (X) Councilman Carroll
- (X) Councilman DiGregorio
- (X) President Fuller
- (X) Councilwoman Oglesby
- (X) Councilwoman Razzak
- (X) Vice President Currie Teoh
- (X) Councilman Yetter
- (X) Mayor Garry Herbert

Borough Representatives:

Borough Manager, John Ernst
Finance Director, Jim Lathrop
Police Chief, Mike Trail
Parks & Rec. Dir., Courtney Fox
Electric Superintendent, Andy Krauss
Public Works Director, Troy Spayd

Borough Solicitor, Patrick Hitchens
Borough Engineer, Chris Fazio
Fire Marshal, Rick Lesniak
IT/GIS Dept., Darwin Zehr
Code Enforcement, Jason Van Dame
WWTP Superintendent, Greg Rapp

Residents:

Alice Ann Rhoads – no fixed address
Linda Rowland – 37 E. Fifth Street
Kenneth Weiland – 50 Woodland Drive
Diane Weiland – 50 Woodland Drive
Kelly Haines – 317 E. Second Street
Ross Harris – 209 S. Line Street
Alex Sickler – 109 N. Towamencin Avenue
Denise Patton – 33 Woodland Drive

Agenda Item #5 – President's Comments

President Fuller – Tonight foreign exchange student, Daniel Garica, is here from Spain to observe how our local government works.

Agenda Item #6 - Petitions

President Fuller – A petition was mailed in to the Borough offices with approximately a dozen names typed on the page. We were only able to verify that three of those names are Borough residents. The content of the petition is as follows:

- OFFICIAL PETITION TO COUNCIL MEMBERS LANSDALE, PA
Lansdale Borough-Montgomery County 1 Vine St
Ste 201
Lansdale, PA 19446-3670

- To Members of the Lansdale City Council:
There is a national movement underway to cut back on quality-of-life policing methods such as making arrests for vandalism, littering, loitering, vagrancy, public intoxication, and other quality of life violations. As a registered voter in Lansdale, I urge you to maintain all quality-of-life policing methods, vigorously defend these methods, support our police in enforcement of quality-of-life violations, and make sure our district attorney is fully behind quality-of-life policing methods. Quality of life policing, as well as pro-active policing methods, have cleaned up and maintained order in many neighborhoods in our city and helped reduce more serious crime nationwide between 1985 and 2015 by over 50%.
Ms. Donna Allego, Jane Reid, Ms. Marian Fraga, Mrs. Mary Reynolds, Leon Gabel, Louise Heckler, Dr. Howard Snyder, Mrs. Lynne Cox, Mr. George Schulcz, Mr. Terrence Fitzpatrick, Robey Lee

Agenda Item #7 – Presentations

1. Proclamation for Eileen Nacarella
Mayor Herbert read a proclamation from the Borough and **Mr. Ernst** read a proclamation from Rep. Steve Malagari to honor Eileen’s retirement after 50 years with the Borough.
President Fuller – Congratulations on your retirement and I commend you on 50 years of service to the Borough and residents.

Agenda Item #8 – Committee Reports

1. **Admin & Finance** – Jim Lathrop
 - Would like to institute fund baclances policies. GFOA suggests 35% of operating expenses; he would recommend 40% balance. Currently there is a 90% fund balance.
 - Looking into a bond issuance for the future. We are currently rated A1 and he wants us to be AA rated for better savings.
2. **Code Enforcement** – Jason Van Dame
 - In the month of June, 97 permits were processed.
 - To date, 300 single family homes have been registered for the single family rental inspection program.
 - A public hearing will be held at the August Business Meeting regarding the Downtown Overlay Business District.
3. **Economic Development Committee** – Jason Van Dame
 - The subcommittees continue to work on defining their priorities. The process has slowed a bit due to it being summer/vacation season.
 - New businesses: New owner of The West Main Consignment Shop, The Pines Hair tudio (Salon), Red Dragon Martial Arts Academy and Grove Wellness Center
4. **Electric Department** – Andy Krauss
 - Congratulations to Eileen on her retirement.
 - Camera installs at both public pools and outlets for food trucks at White’s Road.
 - Crew leadership course hosted by PMEA and Lansdale.
 - Mt. Vernon Unit Substation replacement is ready to be installed.
 - Digital relay and PPL inter-protection project is ongoing .
 - The Metering Department is working to schedule 2,500 meters to be upgraded in October.
 - E. Main street streetscape project is now underway.
5. **Parks and Recreation** – Courtney Fox

- July is Parks and Recreation Month and this Friday, July 19, is Parks and Recreation Professionals Day. The Department has been celebrating unofficially all month long, but this Friday we are having a Disco Party at both pools.
- The Department is busy with camps, programs and, of course, the pools. We are up over 500 pool members from last year, with a total of 2754 this year.
- We received four proposals for the Comprehensive Park Recreation and Open Space Plan. I am in the process of thoroughly reviewing the proposals and hope to have a recommendation in August.
- We had to cancel some concerts due to the heat. We will begin looking to establish a policy regarding this.
- We are working with the Electric and WWTP Departments to complete a few projects within the parks and at the pools, including the restroom project at White's Road Park, tree work, as well as the installation of a security camera at each of the pools.

6. Public Safety – Chief Trail

- We are in the midst of the hiring process right now. We have 14 candidates who will go through the background and interview process.
- Grants Pass decision was handed down and we will start to work on a game plan to help the unhoused. This will be an ongoing discussion.
- We are working on the 2025 budget.

7. Public Works – Troy Spayd

- N. Cannon Drive DCED Multimodal Grant (*on the agenda for approval tonight*) – RVE prepared the Grant application for just over \$1 million. No required match; however, the grant is not expected to cover the entire project. The project scope includes pavement and sidewalk and ADA improvements from 5th Street to 8th Street. This project is designed and shovel ready.
- The construction is completed on the Norway Drive project. There are punchlist items to be finished and trees will be planted in the fall.
- The crews are working on refreshing paint, re-stripping and replacing faded or damaged signs.

WWTP – Greg Rapp

- The final payment for the Ridge Street Pump Station will be on the August agenda.
- Chemical Feed Automation project is in process. They are initiating the equipment to then tie into the SCADA. This will allow us to feed the system in real time instead of using day old numbers.
- The White's Road Pump Station project is almost completed. This was funded through Merck and it appears to be mitigating the smell in that area.
- The restroom project near the new pavilion at White's Road Park is in planning stages, but we have to be careful as there are species of protected bats in that area of the park that need to be worked around with as minimal earth disturbance as possible. We are working with PADEP on permitting for crossing bridge and feedback has been positive.

Library – Mindy Lipsky

- Introduced herself to Council sharing that she came from the Pottstown Library and has been in Lansdale for a month. She is getting to know the patrons and staff. Pop into the library and see her when you can.

Council Questions regarding Committee reports:

Councilman Breish – Regarding the general fund balance reducing by 50%, what is the dollar amount?

Mr. Lathrop – At first glance \$11million is unassigned.

Councilman Yetter – How long would it take to move up our bond rating?

Mr. Lathrop – He expects the rating to be what it is unless we go to Moody's instead of Standard rating.

Councilman Breish – The pool staff is excellent at both pools. He has heard comments about how expensive it is for day passes. Can we look at this cost? Maybe lower in the future.

Ms. Fox – The cost is \$20 for non-resident and \$14 for a resident. She forgot to mention in her report that we will be getting umbrellas for more shade at 4th Street Pool.

Councilman Breish – Can you clarify the winter services agreement. What is the cost for the N. Cannon Ave project that was mentioned?

Mr. Fazio – The grant is for \$1 million and the engineering would be \$100,000. The cost would be 10-15% in addition to the grant.

Mr. Spayd – The dollar amounts would be different depending on when the project would be put out to bid. The agreement is that we snow plow on PennDOT roads and they pay us back for doing the work.

Councilwoman Oglesby – If there is an extreme amount of snow we get more money?

Mr. Spayd -Yes.

Councilman Yetter – Has the process and implementation of the 2500 meters been determined yet?

Mr. Krauss – Not yet, but when it is determined we will put it out on social media and other avenues so people know. We will have to schedule that with the contractor.

Councilman Breish – Is there value in exploring Peak Shaving during these heat waves to save money?

Mr. Krauss – It does not save us money because we never hit the peak. It costs us money to try and hit the peak.

Mayor Herbert – If we can't save money with peak shaving, we should generate more with solar.

Mr. Krauss – Unfortunately, we can't harness it and save it for future use.

Mr. Ernst – Just wanted to mention that Motion D on the agenda was discussed at the June committee meeting and that is why it is on the agenda tonight.

Agenda Item #9 – Residents to be Heard on Any Item

Alice Ann Rhoads no fixed address – she made various comments that did not make sense and her comments couldn't be interpreted.

Linda Rowland of 37 E. Fifth Street – she has been an advocate for the homeless and has been caring for them over the last three years. We need to do something for them. There are 8 to 10 women who live in their car or the parks. She has a non-profit Linda & Friends Helping Hands. Some of these people have jobs but they can't afford a place to live when they only make \$15 an hour because rent is so high and so much money is needed to secure a place. It cost her non-profit \$32,000 to house 11 women in a hotel during the winter as there are no shelters for women in the wintertime. The community needs to step up and help these people.

Kenneth Weiland of Wooland Drive – This is a quality of life issue regarding the homeless. He read the court decision from Grants Pass. There are continuous camps in Memorial Park and Stony Creek Park. No one can use the gazebo at all. Children can't play in the parks anymore. People are also living in cars in the parks. This is a negative quality of life for our residents. Who made the decision not to replace the trees on E. Main Street?

Diane Weiland of 50 Woodland Drive – She is a retired psychiatric nurse so she understands the mental health aspect of some of those who are homeless. She feels uneasy going into the

park with six men living in the gazebo. There is a limit as to what churches can do to help. They need a safe place to go.

Kelly Haines of 317 E. Main Street – She had a disturbing experience in the park so now she only will walk through Memorial Park if she has her concealed weapon with her which she is licensed to carry. She feels they should have a place to go. It is disrespectful for people to be living in Memorial Park and making a mess of it. How can I rent the gazebo if people are living in it?

Chief Trail – We see this as a very difficult challenge. We will remove people from the gazebo if the space has been rented, call the police. We also do ask the unhoused to vacate the park when there are public events happening there.

Mr. Van Dame – The trees were removed because the curbs and sidewalks are being replaced.

Ross Harris of 209 S. Line Street – He wanted to give a shout out to the Electric Department for having very little power outages and if we do, they are so quick to respond. The homeless situation is dangerous for all involved. We all need to think about how we can help and solve this problem. Being homeless is not a criminal act. There is a severe lack of affordable housing in the area. Most of the unhoused are people down on their luck and do not have mental health or drug problems or scammers. He understands why people are upset that they are living in the parks. We need to find a way to address this issue. They want to get back on their feet and have a stable place to live.

Alex Sickler of 109 N. Towamencin Avenue – We have a bunch of abandoned properties and extra money so we can fix the homeless problem.

Denise Patton of 33 Woodland Drive – On the one side of her street it is marked two hour parking. Some of those who live in the apartments on E. Main Street park their cars on Woodland for more than two hours and they park really close to the corner which is a safety hazard. She almost got hit several times trying to turn onto Main Street when a car was trying to turn onto Woodland. Can the two hour parking please be enforced. Also, what happened with the Wells Fargo building?

Mr. Ernst – The building was sold and currently there is a medical lab testing facility in the rear of the building and the owner is looking for a tenant for the front of the building.

Ken Weiland – He supports what Denise said about the parking. They have a parking lot at the apartments.

Linda Rowlan – Is there a law against tents being set up in my backyard?

Mr. Hitchens – You can talk to us about that after the meeting.

Agenda Item #10 – Action Items

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion A and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council approve the Treasurer's Report for the month of June 2024 which shows the expenditures listed on the attachment.

Motion seconded by Councilman Breish and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion B and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council approve the bills \$1,000.00 and over as per the attachment.

Motion seconded by Councilman Breish and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion C and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council approve the following meeting minutes:

Work Session Meeting: June 5, 2024

Business Meeting: June 19, 2024

Motion seconded by Vice President Currie Teoh and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion D and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council authorize the Borough Manager to accept the proposal from IMS Technology Services to upgrade audio and video equipment in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) through the Pennsylvania Costars Purchasing Program in an amount not to exceed \$86,000.

Motion seconded by Vice President Currie Teoh and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion E and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council adopt attached Resolution 24-16 authorizing the Borough Finance Director access to bank, bill paying and other financial related Borough accounts.

Motion seconded by Councilwoman Razzak and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion F and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council adopt attached Resolution 24-17 authorizing, empowering and directing the proper offices of the governing board to appoint a liaison between it and Berkheimer, the duly appointed collector of local taxes for the express purpose of sharing confidential tax information with the district for official purposes.

Motion seconded by Councilman DiGregorio and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion G and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council adopt attached Resolution 24-18 to appoint the required Tax Collection Committee delegates for Lansdale Borough.

Motion seconded by Councilwoman Razzak and unanimously approved.

Councilman Breish presented Motion H and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council adopt Resolution 24-19 to authorize the Borough of Lansdale to enter into a 10-year agreement with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for winter traffic services.

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Motion seconded by Councilman DiGregorio and unanimously approved.

Councilman Breish presented Motion I and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council adopt Resolution 24-20 regarding the Multimodal Transportation Fund Grant Application for the Cannon Avenue Rehabilitation Phase II in the amount of \$1,109,585.00

Motion seconded by Councilman Yetter and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion J and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council reappoint Dominic Frascella to serve a 5-year term on the Lansdale Parking Authority. This term is effective immediately and expires on July 31, 2029.

Motion seconded by Councilwoman Razzak and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion K and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council reappoint Dan Mayland to serve a 6-year term on the Lansdale Civil Service Commission. This term is effective immediately and expires on July 31, 2030.

Motion seconded by Vice President Currie Teoh and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion L and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council reappoint Nick Oropeza to serve a 3-year term on the Police Pension Board of Trustees. This term is effective immediately and expires on July 31, 2027.

Motion seconded by Councilman Breish and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion M and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council reappoint Sean Greene to serve a 3-year term on the Environmental Advisory Commission. This term is effective immediately and expires on July 31, 2027.

Motion seconded by Councilman Breish and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Oglesby presented Motion N and read as follows:

I move that Borough Council appoint James Lathrop to serve a 3-year term on the Police Pension Board of Trustees. This term is effective immediately and expires on July 31, 2027.

Motion seconded by Councilwoman Razzak and unanimously approved.

Agenda Item #11 – Information Items

Mayor's Report: Mayor Herbert

1. On June 22nd I joined many in our community for our Annual Discover Lansdale Beer Festival. Despite the oppressively hot weather, the event went was a huge success with nearly a hundred different types of beer and over 40 breweries in attendance. Thanks

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goes out to all the Discover Lansdale volunteers who dedicated time to making the event successful and to VMSC and LPD for helping to keep the event safe despite the code red heat.

2. On July 9th I joined our Economic Development Consultant Stephen Barth where we toured the borough to discuss vacancies in the borough and how we are actively helping property owners to fill their spaces. I am pleased to share that Stephen's efforts have helped bring in over 60 businesses to our community over the last several years and has helped us to continue to revitalize our business district. We discussed the possibility of a vacancy ordinance and how that may be able to help us continue to achieve our redevelopment and growth goals.
3. Finally, coming up on August 6th the LPD will be celebrating National Night Out where we ask the community to join us in and outside the Police Department to reaffirm and celebrate our commitment to community policing efforts. As you all know, National Night Out is an opportunity for officers and community members to have positive and productive interactions with each other and to help foster stronger community bonds between all of us. I would love to see all of you there!

Solicitor's Report: Patrick Hitchens

1. Communications with Borough staff and related follow-up work regarding land development including conditional use decision (315 W Main and 215 S Broad). – Approximately 2 hours.
2. Communications with Borough staff and follow-up work relating to code and zoning enforcement matters. - Approximately 2.4 hours.
3. Communications with Borough staff and related follow-up work regarding miscellaneous Borough matters including potential ordinance revisions, compliance, contract review, and Borough real estate matters. – Approximately 4.2 hours.

Borough Manager's Report: John Ernst

1. E. Main Street Streetscape - The Electric Department has removed the light poles and fiber optic cable on the S. side of E. Main from Broad to Line Streets in preparation for sidewalk replacement. You may have also noted the removal of the street trees along that stretch of road as well. At this point, there is no plan for the replacement of the trees because the required tree pit dimensions compromise the width of the already narrow sidewalk, and the depth required impacts the existing utilities under the sidewalk. The work that is happening on Main Street at Memorial Park is the storm drain piping being installed. The contractor ran into a pipe elevation discrepancy between the new and existing piping and they are currently working to resolve that issue.
2. National Night Out - As they do every year on the first Tuesday in August, the Lansdale Police Department is hosting "National Night Out" here in the parking lot of Borough Hall, on Tuesday, August 6, from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. If you haven't had a chance to attend one of these events, it's a great opportunity for families to come out and interact with the police and other emergency responders to learn about how these agencies work together to help keep our community safe. There will be free food and drinks, along with games, music, a bounce house, dunk tank, etc.. I hope everyone has a chance to come out and join the police department for this extremely popular event. More info will be shared as we get closer to the date.
3. Mike Trail has been asked to participate and be interviewed as part of a Police Chief's "round table" to be featured on the Pennsylvania Cable Network television station. The event will be filmed sometime next week, and the air date has yet to be determined. For those of here at the dais, we are familiar with the PCN Network as the television station that hosts "Inside Pennsylvania Boroughs" which is a subscription-based cable tv

network that features discussions on community issues. If we learn more information about the specific airing date of the episode, I'll make sure it gets passed along.

Comments for the good of Council:

Vice President Currie Teoh – She and Mayor Herbert will be in the dunk tank at National Night Out.

Mayor Herbert – In regards to the petition in 2023 there were 244 arrestable offenses which is 12.2% down since 2015 and 30% down since 2010.

President Fuller – We are still accepting nominees for the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Meeting adjourned at 9:04pm.