

**December 12, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Ligonier Borough Council was held Thursday, December 12, 2024 at 7pm in the Town Hall with President Matt Smith presiding.

**Members Present:** Matt Smith, Mariah Fisher, Judy Hoffer, Carol Barton, Jordan Frei, Karen Lynn, John Poznick and JR Council Emma Betz.

**Others Present:** Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw, Street Supervisor Ron Ross, Mayor Ormond "Butch" Bellas, Engineer Jason Mash, Solicitor George Welty (sitting in for Solicitor Mark Sorice), and Sgt. Jimmy Friscarella. Absent was Fire Chief Corey Blystone.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*A motion was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Mariah Fisher to approve the minutes of November 14, 2024 as presented. The motion carried with all in favor.*

#### **BILLS PAYABLE**

*A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Carol Barton to approve the Bills Payable. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

*A motion was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Mariah Fisher to approve the Consent Calendar provided. All of Council was in favor.*

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Sandy Podlucky of 227 W Main Street was present inquiring on any update with the purchase of a decibel meter reader by the Borough as discussed at last month's meeting as well as if Council has looked more into the current noise ordinance.

President Matt Smith answered that Chief Mike Matrunic was looking into the decibel meter reader however is not present at the meeting. Matt Smith assured Ms. Podlucky that the noise ordinance concerns is on the agenda to be looked into.

**Sandy Podlucky** referenced a recent event held at the new pavilion and stated that the noise was terrible. Ms. Podlucky asked for help getting the decibels lowered in regards to the current noise ordinance in place.

**Lara Fornell** of 230 W Main was present to continue advocating for the wellbeing of her family to live peacefully in their home. Fornell offered help to Council to aid them in the progress with the noise. Fornell referenced a noise ordinance from Reading PA.

**Jonathan Fornell** presented Council with data from the World Health Organization (WHO) that noise above 65 decibels is considered as noise pollution and highlights it as a major health risk. Fornell further stated that according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommended noise level in the USA considered to prevent significant annoyance and activity interference is around 55 decibels outdoors. Pittsburgh PA has an ordinance for amplified music to be 75 decibels.

Fornell spoke of calling the police December 6<sup>th</sup> to come hear the unbearable base and noise coming from the pavilion while just trying to watch TV in their home. Fornell has an app on his phone that measured the noise level to be approximately 70 decibels. LVPD came to their home and also went to the pavilion and asked them to turn down the base.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

##### **Ligonier Borough Budget 2025:**

President Matt Smith noted that the preliminary 2025 budget has been advertised.

*A motion was made by John Poznick and seconded by Carol Barton to approve the 2025 Budget as advertised. All of Council was in favor.*

**Weeders & Seeder's, update on Blue Star Memorial Park Project (AKA Valley Veterans Park) in Lot A:**

Wilma Light of Weeders & Seeders was present & updated Council on the project.

The update will include:

- Raised beds for planting using Versa-Lok Standard paving stone (the same as the wall by the YMCA).
- All new plantings including Double Red Simplicity Hedge Roses.
- White Simplicity Hedge Roses, Hydrangea Bobo Panicle Hydrangeas
- Clarion Paving Stones on patio area
- Raising one side of the patio area to meet future ADA standards when the parking lot is updated
- Moving electrical outlets to the raised beds
- Hardscaping to be contracted to Country Farms
- If approved, project would start in the spring.

*A motion was made by Karen Lynn and seconded by Jordan Frei to permit the Weeders and Seeders to move forward with their project. The motion carried with all in favor.*

**Update - CDBG Grant for Friendship Park:**

Councilwoman Mariah Fisher explained that the committee applied for the CDBG Grant through Westmoreland County for the restrooms at the playground. When the committee applied for the grant it was also asked to include any sidewalk that would be new in this space. An email was received with the concern that the full length of sidewalk included in the proposal would not get the Borough the grant. It was suggested to instead redo the proposal only including the portion of the sidewalk from parking lot to the restroom or keep the proposal as is and move forward with knowing the Borough would be paying for any portion not covered. Mariah added that we will likely update the grant application.

*A motion was made by Mariah Fisher and seconded by John Poznick to proceed with Mr. Russo to revamp the request and re-submit it for the CDBG grant. The motion carried with all of Council in favor.*

**CORRESPONDENCE**

A letter was received from **Marissa Arcuri, Youth Services Librarian of LV Library requesting permission to host a hot chocolate fundraiser** during this year's **Ligonier Ice Fest** on Saturday, January 25, 2025 from 11am to 3pm. It is requested to set up directly outside the library's front door to raise funds for TAB programs and teen services.

*A motion was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Karen Lynn to approve the request but are asked to shift set up towards the right side of Library or move to their courtyard. The motion carried unanimously.*

Letter received from **Julie Donovan of Fort Ligonier requesting permission to hang two signs** promoting the museum's **winter hours** on their post and rail fence. The signs are 4'x3' and will hang from now until the end of March.

*A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Jordan Frei to approve the request from Fort Ligonier. The motion carried 7-0.*

Email received from **Country Farms Inc.** who is **bidding on Valley Veterans Park Project** in Lot A requesting 10-12 parking spaces for approximately 10 days during project work. Country Farms asks how to proceed and the cost for the spaces.

Councilwoman Mariah Fisher stated that they can come into the office and purchase the \$5 a day meter bags closer to time of project.

Letter received from Kristin Miller Site Director/Education Coordinator @ SAMA requesting approval and support on a project complementing the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. **SAMA asks to host a mural project creating several murals on canvas to be placed throughout the Borough** depicting the history & timeline of historic Ligonier. Fort Ligonier & Compass Inn will periodically offer guided walking tours for guests. The murals can be temporary & removed after the end of the year's celebration. SAMA will work with the Borough on size, & the securing of the murals to the facilities. The project is a work in progress & SAMA asks for initial approval of the project.

*A motion was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Mariah Fisher to approve the preliminary start of the project and ask to keep Borough informed of the progress of the project. All of Council was in favor.*

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **PARKS & RECREATION**

Councilwoman Mariah Fisher wished everyone Happy Holidays.

### **TOWN HALL**

Town Hall Chair Judy Hoffer reported that the first project that the Town Hall Committee wishes to get started on is the elevator project. Total cost for the project is \$137,000 with an additional 60,000 possible as the cylinder may need drilled for the full modernization. Judy Hoffer noted that if the Borough goes with the full modernization we can save \$10,000 on maintenance over a 5-year period by opting for quarterly maintenance as opposed to monthly maintenance.

*A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Carol Barton to proceed with the elevator project with full modernization. All of Council was in favor.*  
*Councilwoman Hoffer closed her report by wishing all a Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year.*

### **PUBLIC WORKS**

Public Works Chair Carol Barton reported that the leaves are all gone and the snow is coming. Public Works retrieved 80 truckloads of leaves. The fuel used for the leaf vac was 111 gallons and gas in the truck used for leaf pick up was 160 gallons. A total of 368 man hours were spent on leaf pick up.

Carol wished all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

Chairman Jordan Frei reported in recognition of the shift in weather Frei suggested posting a notification on savvy regarding safety while driving such as to increase the breaking distance between vehicles as well as putting down cell phones while driving.

### **FINANCE**

Nothing to report.

### **PLANNING / PERSONNEL**

Karen Lynn, Chair of Planning & Personnel reported that the committee is still working on the short-term rental ordinance.

Karen thanked Public Works Crew for a fantastic job recently with the recent snow and ice.

### **SHADE TREE**

Nothing for Shade Tree.

Matt Smith mentioned a **generator that is jointly shared by both the Borough and the Township and owned by Westmoreland County**. It was noted that the Borough has a generator coming for Town Hall and also have one at the Public Works garage, therefore the shared generator is no longer needed by the Borough.

*A motion was made by Matt Smith and seconded by Mariah Fisher to relinquish the Borough's rights to the shared generator owned by Westmoreland County. The motion carried with all in favor.*

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Resolution 2024-02:**

A resolution of the Borough of Ligonier, fixing the tax rate for the year 2025 with no tax increase.

*A motion was made by Mariah Fisher and seconded by Jordan Frei to accept Resolution 2024-02. The motion carried unanimously.*

##### **Planning Commission Term – Peggy Shepler:**

Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw stated that Peggy Shepler is willing to take on another term serving on the Planning Commission.

*A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Mariah Fisher to re-appoint Peggy Shepler to serve another 4 year term on the Planning Commission. All of Council was in favor.*

##### **2025 Meeting Calendar:**

**Ligonier Borough Council meetings:** January 9, February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, October 6, November 13, and December 11, 2025.

**Planning Commission:** January 28, February 25, March 25, April 22, May 27, June 24, July 22, August 26, September 23, October 28, November 18, & December 16, 2025.

*A motion was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Mariah Fisher to adopt and advertise the meeting dates for Ligonier Borough for 2025. The motion carried with all in favor.*

#### **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

N/A

#### **COMMENDATIONS & COMMENTS from OFFICERS and DEPARTMENTS**

Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Street Supervisor Ron Ross gave everyone a heads up that according to PA One Call there will be more gas lines replaced; Arch, Hillside, Delaware, McGowen & North St. Clair Street. It is unknown at this time when the work will begin.

Solicitor George Welty wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sgt. Jimmy Friscarella reported no issues with recent Light Up Night.

Sgt. Friscarella also asked everyone to please try to keep their cars off the street when it starts to snow to give the plows room to clear the streets.

Sgt. Friscarella read a letter from the LVPD Union thanking Council for their unwavering support.

Sgt. Friscarella also reported that he has asked the Police Commission approval to get another Police Dog as Kilo will be 10 and will be retiring in 2025. Friscarella has been promised a significant amount of money from an outside entity but will also be fund raising to try to cover the cost of approximately \$20,000. Upon retiring, Kilo will continue to live with the Friscarella family.

Mayor Bellas commended the LVPD for their help always with the ambulance crew. Mayor Bellas reminded everyone to keep their sidewalks shoveled. After the recent snow fall there had been complaints regarding un-shoveled sidewalks in regards to both businesses and residences. Snow removal from Borough sidewalks will be enforced by our code enforcement agency.

Bellas wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

President Matt Smith also thanked our police for their service and stated that they are invaluable to the valley.

Smith wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

President Matt Smith called for a brief executive session after the meeting for personnel with no action to be taken.

The next meeting of the Ligonier Borough Council will be held Thursday, January 9, 2025 at 7pm.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

*A motion was made by Mariah Fisher and seconded by Jordan Frei to adjourn into executive session. All of Council was in favor.*

Respectfully submitted,

Janette Shaw  
Secretary-Treasurer