

June 12, 2025

The regular meeting of the Ligonier Borough Council was held Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 7pm in the Town Hall with Vice President Mariah Fisher presiding in the absence of President Matt Smith.

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

Others Present: Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw, Street Supervisor Ron Ross, Mayor Ormond “Butch” Bellas, Engineer Jason Mash, Solicitor Mark Sorice, and Ligonier Hose Co. #1 Phil Fleming.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Karen Lynn to approve the minutes of last month’s meeting of May 8, 2025. All of Council was in favor.

BILLS PAYABLE

A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Carol Barton to approve the Bills Payable as presented. The motion carried with all in favor.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sandy Podlucky of 227 W Main Street was present and asked Council for an update of any change to the noise ordinance. Secondly, Podlucky questioned if there was any update on the decibel readers that was being looked into and if there was any news on the Thistledown Pavilion.

Solicitor Sorice answered that the ordinance itself has been under consideration and there are three aspects that must be considered with regards to the decibel readers. The decibel readers originally proposed would not be subject to the state standards as mandated by the ACT. Sorice added that he thinks that at least two could comply with the state regulations. Certification and testing these units could qualify for the state standards.

With regard to the proposed noise ordinance; Sorice stated in PA there are not a lot of ordinances for towns and cities of Ligonier Borough’s size that would be applicable under the circumstances. Hence the need to start from scratch for work on this ordinance.

With regard to the pavilion at the Gardner property, Sorice explained that this is currently in litigation. Sorice further explained that there is an appeal from the determination of the zoning officer that entailed several meetings before the Zoning Hearing Board. The Zoning Hearing Board rendered the formal decision. There was then an appeal from that formal decision and is now in the Court of Common Pleas.

Sandy Podlucky questioned if something could be done with the decibel level permitted in the meantime with summer coming and events to take place in the pavilion. Ms. Podlucky and the Fornals are asking for a change in the noise ordinance.

Solicitor Sorice explained that she along with the Fornals have the option to go to court tomorrow and file a complaint alleging a private nuisance and this could be addressed immediately. Ms. Podlucky was advised to talk to her lawyer for guidance.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Free Parking Permits for Fire Department as recruitment incentive:

Councilwoman Carol Barton feels that Parking Permits would be a nice thank you to the firemen.

Councilman Jordan Frei added that through surveying the firemen in regards to how much they each come into town; Frei estimated that the Parking Permits would cost the Borough \$200 / \$250 annually. While Frei didn't have formal language as yet for the proposed parking permits, it was however suggested that the stipulations and eligibility requirements would be very similar to that of the volunteer service tax credit program. The fire department would present a list each year to the Borough with the names and the number of permits needed.

***A motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Carol Barton to authorize Solicitor Mark Sorice to proceed with an ordinance for parking permits for the Fire Department throughout the Borough as a recruitment incentive. The motion carried 4 to 2 with Judy Hoffer opposing and John Poznick abstaining due to his membership with the Fire Department.*

Hazel Alley Stormwater Project Bid Package:

Borough Engineer Jason Mash presented to Council the Hazel Alley Stormwater Project. Jason explained that the intent of the project is to relieve some of the stormwater issues in the area. It is proposed to add a few inlets and or catch basins & pipe runs to collect some additional stormwater from Indian Street, Spruce Alley, Millcreek and Hazel Alley. A new outfall is proposed as well that will dump some water into Millcreek.

Street Supervisor Ron Ross advised that the streets will have to be repaved after being torn up, new storm drains, new asphalt and everything. Once the bid package is out, the project may need to be downsized.

Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw added that this was originally a \$440,000 project for which we did get a grant from the county but we have been having some issues getting some of the information back from our former engineer. It is a matching grant. This project was from 2022 or 2023 so prices will most likely have gone up and therefore we may need to downsize the project.

***A motion** was made by John Poznick and seconded by Carol Barton to authorize Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw to advertise and put the project out for bid. The motion carried with all in favor.*

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter received from **Rotary Club of Ligonier with a check for \$2,875.45** representing the remaining funds in the checking account from the initial Friendship Park account to be used **for maintenance/repairs to the original park.**

Letter received from **Westmoreland Conservation District** with an invitation to participate in the Watershed Planning Advisory Committee (WPAC) to help bring needed updates to Westmoreland County's Act 167 Stormwater Plan.

***A motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by John Poznick to support the Watershed Planning Advisory Committee. All of Council was in favor.*

Letter received from **LV Library** thanking Ligonier Borough for continued support and **requests Council to consider increasing its annual contribution to the library to \$1,700.**

Request was referred to the Finance Committee to re-evaluate for next year's budget.

Letter received from **Angela McDonnell of Weeders & Seeders Garden Club** asking for approval to hold a **re-dedication event** on site at Municipal Lot A for the completion of the renovations made to **Valley Veteran's Park Sunday, June 29, 2025 at 2pm.**

*A **motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Judy Hoffer for approval of the re-dedication Sunday, June 29, 2025 at 2pm as well as for the closure of 4 parking spots for the event. The motion carried unanimously.*

Letter received from **Fort Ligonier Days, Inc.** asking permission to hold the annual **Fort Days Festival within the designated festival zone area on October 10, 11, 12, 2025.**

*A **motion** was made by Carol Barton and seconded by Jordan Frei to approve Fort Ligonier Days Festival to be held October 10, 11, & 12, 2025. All of Council was in favor.*

Letter received from **Fort Ligonier Days, Inc.** asking permission for **signage** to be posted in the Borough as it relates to **Fort Ligonier Days festival**; around the Diamond, East & West Main Streets & North and South Market and throughout the Borough as needed. Also requested is to hang event banners on the Diamond and East & West Main Streets. The Banners will be up for approximately 4-6 weeks.

*A **motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by John Poznick to approve Fort Ligonier Days Festival signage and banners for the event. The motion carried with all of Council in favor.*

Letter received from **Fort Ligonier Days, Inc.** listing the proposed **Temporary Festival Areas and Sales Permits approved by Fort Ligonier Days 2025.**

Proposed Temporary Festival Areas

1. Pioneer Presbyterian Church yard
2. Mack M Darr Company, Inc.
3. West Main Street and Walnut Street – (LV Railroad Assoc., Fort Allen Antique Farm Equip.)
4. Rosalie Keslar, lot behind 331-333 W Main Street
5. St. James Lutheran Church, 300 W Main Street. – church yard
6. Holy Trinity Catholic Church (grass area)

Requests for Sales Permits

1. Pioneer Presbyterian Church
2. Mack M Darr Company, Inc.
3. Fort Allen Antique Farm Equipment
4. Ligonier Valley Railroad Assoc.
5. Rosalie Keslar – 39 – 10'x10' spaces
6. St. James Lutheran Church

*A **motion** was made by John Poznick and seconded by Jordan Frei to approve the proposed list of Temporary Festival Areas and Sales Permits. The motion was unanimously approved.*

Letter received from **Fort Ligonier Days, Inc.** requesting detour for **Fort Ligonier Days Festival to be held October 10, 11, 12, 2025.**

*A **motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by John Poznick to approve the detour for Fort Ligonier Days. All of Council was in favor.*

Tom Stablein stated that Fort Ligonier Days, Inc. recently purchased **6 metal barriers** to be used if a car was trying to enter a crowd, the barriers fold under the car and lift front end of car off the ground while spikes go up and damage the drive train of the car. It was noted that the barriers are approved by homeland security. Stablein explained that it is planned to place one in front of McCabe Funeral Home and VFW, one at Market Street where detour starts and another where the detour comes down and around at the other end of Market. One on Walnut and another would be at Railroad Street by Giant Eagle and maybe one in the area of the Dollar Store. They will require jersey barriers to be placed on either side of them.

Email received from **Ginny Fitzner, President of LVHC#1** requesting that the parking lot in the back of Carol and Dave's be closed from **1pm-10pm Monday, July 21, 2025 to hold a crab dinner fundraiser**. Secondly, it is also requested to close Fairfield Street between Main Street and Church Street, and Bank Alley from Oak Alley and Dice Alley between the hours of 10am and 8pm Sunday, October 19, 2025 for Witches Brigade Fundraiser Event.

***A motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Karen Lynn to approve the closure of the parking lot behind Carol & Dave's for the crab dinner fundraiser Monday, July 21, 2025 from 1-10pm. The motion carried unanimously.*

***A motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Carol Barton to close Fairfield Street between Main Street and Church Street between the hours of 8am-10pm October 19, 2025 as requested. The motion carried with all in favor.*

Letter received from Julie Donovan of **Fort Ligonier** requesting permission to use any available parking spaces at the **Bus Lot Friday, July 11, 2025** for two major events.

***A motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Judy Hoffer to approve use of available parking spaces at the Bus Lot Friday, July 11, 2025. The motion carried.*

Letter received from Julie Donovan of **Fort Ligonier** requesting permission to **hang 3 temporary banners** from the end of June through mid-September 2025 to advertise upcoming activities:

1. Displayed on the post and rail fence facing the Fort's entrance 120"x18"
2. Displayed on the Fort's post and rail fence facing Loyalhanna Street 5'x3'
3. Displayed on the Fort's metal fence facing Route 30, 26'x4'

***A motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Judy Hoffer to approve the temporary banners for Fort Ligonier. All of Council was in favor.*

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PARKS & RECREATION

Chair Mariah Fisher thanked everyone for their hard work and making adjustments to their schedules in regards to the Hershey Movie being filmed in town. Fisher thanked all the local businesses for handling the disruption during the filming. It is hoped that the film continues to draw visitors to our community. Fisher praised Ron Ross Street Supervisor and Jan Shaw Secretary-Treasurer for their behind the scenes work done every day and their willingness to take on extra work while still making sure that the day to day needs of our Borough are taken care of.

TOWN HALL

Chair Judy Hoffer reported that the kitchen has the new flooring in it and is beautiful. The appliances have arrived and are in the Community Room awaiting hook up. Judy thanked Ron Ross and the Public Works Crew for doing the work.

Hoffer stated that the floor in the Community Room will not be worked on until winter when there is no snow.

PUBLIC WORKS

Chair Carol Barton reported that the filming of the Hershey Movie was amazing. Barton thanked Ron Ross and the Public Works crew for helping make the whole week a success.

Stormwater Authority: the committee has nominated the following 5 individuals willing to take terms serving on the Stormwater Authority;

Paul Goodfellow – 1 yr. term
Tom Freeman – 2 yr. term
Karl Horman – 2 yr. term
Wade Stoner – 2 yr. term
Carol Barton – 5 yr. term / member of Council
Paul Fry has agreed to be a consultant if needed.

***A motion** was made by Karen Lynn and seconded by John Poznick to appoint the stormwater authority members as nominated as well as Carol Barton / member of Council. The motion carried unanimously.*

Stormwater Authority Ordinance draft:

Councilman Jordan Frei suggested removing the 1st paragraph. It was agreed by all.

***A motion** was made by Karen Lynn and seconded by Carol Barton to advertise the Stormwater Authority draft ordinance with the amendment made. All of Council was in favor.*

Carol Barton advised everyone to get the Savvy Citizen app.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilman Jordan Frei thanked everyone present for the positive reception with the parking idea for the firemen.

Frei welcomed Phil Fleming for sitting in on the meeting in the absence of Fire Chief Matt Ferry.

FINANCE

N/A

PLANNING / PERSONNEL

Chair Karen Lynn thanked Chief Matrunics for his countless hours spent researching, & contacting the largest and most reputable manufacturing companies representing the handheld noise calibration system that we are looking at.

In addition Chief Matrunics has spoken with local and state wide police forces for their input; none of which use the handheld calibration system.

Karen herself stated she too has spoken with one of the detectives down at North Huntington which is the largest police force in Westmoreland County and they do not use them.

LVPD continues to receive phone calls every time a gathering at Thistledown or their tenant's winery sponsor an event. Lynn added that after many discussions and review, the Planning Committee was tasked with a solution for the noise ordinance which is still at a standstill.

Recommendations are always discussed, always welcomed and reviewed. Input is always wanted and appreciated.

SHADE TREE

N/A

NEW BUSINESS

Apply for Hershey Grant for \$25,000:

Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw reported that she was approached by the philanthropic department director of Hershey offering to do a grant for \$10,000 for the playground as Hershey does things for children. After meeting and touring the playground, the offer is now for \$25,000 grant. Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw needs Council approval to apply for the grant. Also, if we have any kind of events involving children; Hershey is willing to give us inventory i.e.; Hershey bars, Twizlers, popcorn. Shaw clarified that the offer is for the Friendship Park Sports Complex Project and can be used for upgrading the restroom facilities.

A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by John Poznick to approve and authorize Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw to apply for the Hershey grant. The motion carried with all in favor.

Re-appoint Ed Matson to Zoning Hearing Board for another 3-year term:

It was noted that Ed Matson is willing to continue to serve on the Zoning Hearing Board.

A motion was made by John Poznick and seconded by Jordan Frei to re-appoint Ed Matson for another 3 year term on the Zoning Hearing Board. All of Council was in favor.

Parks & Recreation Movie Night Sponsors:

Councilwoman Mariah Fisher reported that the Parks & Recreation Committee is hoping to host a free movie night Saturday, August 16th in order to raise funds for the Sports Complex Project. She along with Ron Ross have tested equipment for a projector. It is planned to hold the movie night in the tennis court; inviting people to bring chairs. Taking advantage of Hershey's offer, Parks & Recreation Committee would give away snacks. Mariah requests permission to send a letter out for sponsors asking for donations to help with any expenses incurred with the movie night so that any funds raised would go towards the project.

A motion was made by Mariah Fisher and seconded by Jordan Frei to submit letters for sponsors to donate towards movie night Saturday, August 16, 2025. The motion carried unanimously.
Update to follow in July.

National Night Out Tuesday, August 5, 2025. Closure of Lot A 2:30pm for set up. Event start at 5:30pm.

The event typically lasts until 8:30pm with clean up done by 9pm. Mariah explained the need to close Oak Alley from Market to Fairfield and Church Street from Market to Fairfield as done in previous years as well.

A motion was made by Mariah Fisher and seconded by Jordan Frei to close Lot A at 2:30pm to host National Night Out Tuesday, August 5, 2025. The motion carried with all in favor.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None

COMMENDATIONS & COMMENTS from OFFICERS and DEPARTMENTS

Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw reported how accommodating the Hershey crew and locations manager Barry Stephens was with Stephens going out of his way to make it as painless as possible. Two painters with the movie crew are still in town fixing up some scratches and knicks in a few doorways.

Secondly, Shaw reported just getting back from the PSAB Conference and noted that she always gets so much out of the conference; legislative updates, panels from the local legislative committees, with a session on AI, cyber security, & Right To Know to name a few. Shaw thanked Council for sending her.

Street Supervisor Ron Ross asked all to bear with the crew as they are getting as much done as they can. Four trees were taken down in Mellon Park, & the crew will be getting the brush cleared from there as well. Line Painting will begin soon. Ron reported being a month and a half behind due to the Hershey Movie filming. Ron added that the hanging baskets are now up and the planting of the Diamond will take place next week by the Public Works crew and Borough office employees.

Ron stated that Council is welcome to bid projects out but by having the work done in-house saves the Borough a lot of money.

Fire Representative Phil Fleming reported LVHC#1 has 4 new members in training.

Mayor Bellas reported a positive experience with the Hershey movie. Mayor Bellas praised the Public Works crew.

Vice President Mariah Fisher noted that the next meeting of the Ligonier Borough Council will be held Thursday, July 10, 2025 at 7pm in the Town Hall.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

*A **motion** was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Judy Hoffer to adjourn the meeting. All of Council was in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Janette Shaw
Secretary-Treasurer