

September 12, 2024

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

Members Present: Matt Smith, Judy Hoffer, Carol Barton, Karen Lynn, & John Poznick. Mariah Fisher, Jordan Frei & Mayor Ormond "Butch" Bellas present via ZOOM.

Others Present: Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw, Street Supervisor Ron Ross, Engineer Jason Mash, Solicitor Mark Sorice, Police Chief Mike Matrunics & Fire Chief Corey Blystone.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by John Poznick and seconded by Judy Hoffer to approve the Minutes of August 8, 2024 as presented. 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. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT CALENDAR

A motion was made by John Poznick and seconded by Judy Hoffer to approve the Consent Calendar provided. The motion carried with all in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

George Kerezi of 312 N St. Clair Street complained of individuals building a balcony after 9:30pm in the evening and back at it by 7:00am. Kerezi questioned if there is any ordinance pertaining to hours for construction work.

Kerezi was told that it would be looked into.

Dawn Metz of 107 S Dice Alley was present with concerns pertaining to noise regarding the plans for an event pavilion at Adam Gardner property.

Sandy Podlucky of 227 W Main questioned if Adam Gardner has received a zoning permit. It was noted that he did indeed get a permit and Sandy Podlucky would have 30 days to file a zoning appeal if she so chooses. Podlucky stated that she has a petition with over a 100 people opposed to the planned pavilion. Podlucky added that she is planning to appeal the zoning decision.

Gina Schifino of 304 W Vincent asked questions regarding vendor parking, dumpster placement and pick-up, bathrooms or port-a-pottys as well as how long tear-down would last for the planned pavilion events.

Nancy Hangeland of 411 Washington Street questioned the procedures if Laurel Municipal Agency is making decisions unilaterally without approval of Council. Hanklin asked if Laurel Municipal is required to inform Council of permits they put through or any new zoning ordinances.

Solicitor Mark Sorice replied that Laurel Municipal does not decide zoning ordinances but that Council does. Sorice further explained that applications received and approved by Laurel Municipal must then go to the Borough Secretary. Hanklin asked how residents are to be notified of big things like this other than through the Trib.

Laura Fornal of 230 W Main Street spoke in regards to the planned pavilion with concerns of the objectionable noise residents in the surrounding commercial zoned property will be exposed to. Fornal stated that she sees no reason why we cannot come together and educate ourselves on how to appropriately address the acoustics level.

John Fornal also of 230 W Main Street stated that the noise from prior business; Sweet Rust Distillery at this location rattled their windows. Fornal asked that the noise be kept down.

Franchesha Howden owner of La Vigneta Winery, which is leasing part of Thistledown's first floor addressed concerns of noise. Howden noted that they will respect their neighbors and whatever is decided as far as ordinances and sound control.

Sandy Podlucky stated that if the Wicked Googly has to put something on their windows to insulate sound from inside their building then she feels that Adam Gardner must also do something.

While Council sympathizes with resident's concerns, Council has no authority to grant or reject the building permit recently approved and issued by Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency (LMIA).

It was explained that Laurel Municipal Agency handles zoning and code enforcement matters for the Borough and reviewed the application using the Borough's zoning ordinance.

Solicitor Sorice stated that the best place to address these concerns with the entity that has the power to do something would be the zoning hearing board. The board can take into consideration the nature and character of the neighborhood, decibel levels, parking, and other aspects raised during this meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Vendor Ordinance:

Solicitor Mark Sorice explained the proposed Vendor Ordinance. The ordinance updates an existing ordinance. The ordinance regulates the activities pertaining to the sales of vendors, mobile vendors, and outside sales and solicitation.

A motion was made by Mariah Fisher and seconded by Karen Lynn to move forward with advertising to update the ordinance. The motion carried with all in favor.

LVPD Charter Agreement:

Solicitor Sorice advised that the language which Council had passed was rejected by the Twp. Supervisors. Information has not yet been received as to what specific terms the Supervisors found objectionable. Solicitor Sorice advised to table the topic.

A motion was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by Judy Hoffer to table the LVPD Charter Agreement. All of Council was in favor.

Volunteer Service Credit Program for Volunteer Members of LVHC#1:

Councilman Jordan Frei explained that the proposed ordinance establishes a volunteer service credit program; enacting tax credits for volunteer members of the Ligonier Volunteer Hose Company #1.

Frei stated that this program is provided through the state allowing municipal governments to provide a rebate to active firemen essentially thanking them for their service. The proposal is for a rebate of up to \$300 for EIT or 50% of RE Tax. LVHC#1 has eight members that live in the borough as of 2023. The cost to the Borough is less than a \$1,000. ("active firemen" is explained by making 20% of calls, training, other activities considered as extra credit) It is hoped that this will aid in the retention and recruitment program.

A motion was made by Jordan Frei and seconded by John Poznick to proceed and advertise the ordinance. The motion unanimously carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

Application for use of Mellon Park received from **St. Michael's of the Valley Episcopal Church** for **Pet Blessing Sunday, October 6, 2024** from 1pm-3pm.

A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Mariah Fisher to approve the request for the Pet Blessing at Mellon Park October 6, 2024. The motion carried with all in favor.

Email received from Jenny Goswick of HT Highflyers requesting to hold a Jump-A-Thon event at the bandstand to promote physical fitness and community spirit while raising funds for HT Highflyers Jump Rope Team May 3, 2025. The event will run from 9am-12pm. Pledged jumpers will perform on the Bandstand with other jumpers and parents stationed at TH corner of E Main and Diamond Arcade corner of W Main holding donation boxes.

***A motion** was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Carol Barton to approve the request from HT Highflyers for the Jump-A-Thon event Saturday, May 3, 2024. The motion carried with all of Council in favor.*

Email received from **Ginny Fitzner of LVHC#1** requesting to close Fairfield St. from Church to Main Streets and Bank Alley one block in both directions from Fairfield St. on **October 20, 2024 from 9am-6pm for fundraising during the Witches Brigade to sell food and drink.**

LVHC#1 further requests to close Fairfield St. from Church to Main St., and Bank Alley one block in both directions from Fairfield St., on **Thursday, September 19, 2024 from 4pm-9pm** for fundraising during the Witches Brigade pass distribution and to sell food and drink.

The LVHC#1 also requests to **hang the same banner as last year advertising their annual 50/50** raffle on either the fire house overhang or (during Fort Ligonier Days) the old borough building facing the town parking lot.

***A motion** was made by Carol Barton and seconded by Karen Lynn to approve the request by the LVHC#1. The motion carried unanimously.*

Letter received from **Clint Mullen of LVMS in regards to the annual 5k Race** to be held Friday, September 27, 2024 from 10am-11am. The event will be supervised by the entire LVMS staff and Parent Volunteers.

Street Supervisor Ron Ross advised they make a slight change in the route LVMS provided due to gas line construction.

***A motion** was made by Mariah Fisher and seconded by Karen Lynn to approve the annual 5k Race by LVMS. The motion carried 7-0.*

Letter received from **LV Chamber of Commerce** asking permission for the following;

1. **Diamond Decorating**; permission to decorate Diamond Park area at the beginning of November 2024.
2. **Adopt A Lamppost**; permission to decorate the lampposts in the Diamond Park & around the sidewalks.
3. **Light Up Ligonier**; assist with Light Up Ligonier by filling necessary paperwork for road closure. Santa to arrive at 6:30pm on Friday, November 29. Also asked to bag two meters by Town Hall and four meters on N Fairfield by YMCA for Misty Haven Carriages.
4. **Light Up Ligonier Santa Meet & Greet**; permission for use of Community Room after light up ceremony for Santa to greet children.
5. **Let's Get Ready to Crumble**; permission to hold the 3rd Let's Get Ready to Crumble cookie walk December 7 & use Town Hall Auditorium lobby for event check in.
6. **Town-Wide Open House Ligonier Wholidays**; place decorations on Thursday, December 5 and remove on December 9, 2024. (lollipop decoration attached to parking meters & face sidewalks, life size Grinch by bandstand, bag 2 meters by the LV Library from 9am-5pm for kettle corn vendor, 4 meters on N Fairfield St. by YMCA for Misty Haven Carriage & 1 meter in front of Town Hall for carriage rides.
7. **Free Holiday Parking** – permission to offer free parking on the 4 Saturdays beginning on November 30 through Saturday, December 21. The Chamber will secure a \$1,200 sponsorship to cover the cost.

A motion was made by John Poznick and seconded by Judy Hoffer to approve all the events proposed by the LV Chamber. All of Council was in favor.

Thank you received from LV Library for assistance with their 2024 Historic Photo Show.

Email received from **Faryn Wolf asking permission to host a lemonade stand** outside of Town Hall for childhood cancer research Saturday, September 28, 2024 from 11am-2:30pm.

A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Jordan Frei to approve the request. The motion carried with all of Council in favor.

Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw reported a **letter was received from Richard Flickinger** in opposition to the resolution passed at last month's meeting offering relief to Black Bunny.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair Mariah Fisher reported that Friendship Park Sports Complex does now have their logo. The committee has T-shirts for sale @ \$20 and stickers for sale for \$3 each with proceeds going directly to the Friendship Park Sport Complex project. If interested they are available at the Borough Office or Mariah has some as well.

Over the summer the Parks & Recreation Committee has attended several events to help spread awareness for the project; Country Market, Brandon Boyd Foundation Community Carnival, & National Night Out. During each event numerous T-shirts were sold and donations received totaling to over \$650. Enthusiasm for the project was well received.

It was reported that grant rewards have not been successful at this time but the committee is continuing with efforts.

Mariah announced a community committee meeting will be held Monday, September 23 at 6pm in the Town Hall. Anyone interested in joining may do so.

Councilwoman Fisher added that the recent National Night Out was a success and thanked everyone involved.

TOWN HALL

Chair Judy Hoffer welcomed new council member Karen Lynn. Judy relayed that the new Town Hall custodian hire Debbie Grguric is reportedly doing an excellent job.

Hoffer also reported that the portrait of General Mellon destroyed during the garbage truck accident has been restored and thanks went out to Scott Gongaware of RK Mellon & Sons.

PUBLIC WORKS

Chair Carol Barton reported that tar & chipping has been completed.

Carol added that the **Stormwater Committee** is working towards a few goals with a public presentation to be held with Council's approval at Town Hall Tuesday, **October 1, 2024 at 2pm and 7pm to educate residents on stormwater**. Flyers for the meeting were presented to Council for approval as well. Three presenters are expected; Jason Mash of Mash Engineering with a power point, Justin Mansberger of Penn State Extension along with Street Supervisor Ron Ross reporting on the Borough stormwater locations.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Chairman Jordan Frei thanked Council for moving forward with the ordinance for the tax credit for the LVHC#1 borough members.

Frei also commended Chief Matrunics and his officers by responding quickly to a recent illegal purchase that was about to occur.

FINANCE

Chairman John Poznick reported that he along with Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw will soon begin work on the 2025 budget. A committee meeting will be held in the near future.

PLANNING / PERSONNEL

Chair Karen Lynn reported that the planning committee is currently in discussions in response to residents of Washington Street concerns on Airbnb and Short-term Rentals.

The committee met to review what other PA boroughs similar to size and scope to Ligonier have done so far. The committee is reviewing their ordinances and permitting systems. Ligonier currently has no ordinances in the books. In 2022 this matter was brought to Council and Karen feels that now is the time to move forward with it. A second meeting is being planned and the committee will continue to review all the information gathered to move the issue along. It is planned to have a more structured outline to present to Council at next month's meeting.

SHADE TREE

Chairman Matt Smith reported that a few trees have been taken down. Street Supervisor Ron Ross added that approximately 10 trees will be ordered and they will be here within a few weeks.

Matt also noted that Ligonier Borough is still in need of 2 borough residents to sit on the Shade Tree Commission.

Carol Barton added to her report that the Stormwater Committee will also need individuals to serve on this committee. Interested individuals are asked to submit a letter of interest.

NEW BUSINESS

Applicant for Planning Commission:

Matt Smith introduced **Carla Arnone of 112 E Vincent Street** who submitted a letter of interest to serve on the Planning Commission.

A motion was made by Karen Lynn and seconded by Carol Barton to appoint Carla Arnone to serve on the Planning Commission. All of Council was in favor.

Rotary Peace Pole Project:

The Rotary is interested in purchasing a Peace Pole. The peace pole is a vinyl 4 sided pole with words or phrases of peace. The pole can be 6, 7 or 8 feet tall. Up to 8 different languages can be placed on it. The Rotary would like to see it somewhere on the East Main Street side of Town Hall maybe amongst the landscaping, Mellon Park or even the Courtyard.

Councilwoman Carol Barton suggested St. Clair Park at the cement platforms.

Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw replied that the Rotary had concerns with St. Clair Park in that it would not get noticed. The Rotary is looking for something a little more central.

A discussion ensued with Council recommending St. Clair Park for the Peace Pole.

Permission to apply to Vail's Grant & Casino Give Back Boxes – Laura Manion

Laura Manion is asking permission to apply for a grant with the Give Back Program for Friendship Park Sports Complex.

More information was needed therefore no action was taken.

Revised Emergency Evacuation Plan:

The Emergency Evacuation Plan has been updated with current contact information.

A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by John Poznick to approve the revised Emergency Evacuation Plan. All of Council was in favor.

2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application for Friendship Park Restroom upgrade:

Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw reported that she was told that if the Borough is looking to improve ADA structures the Borough could qualify for this grant. The restrooms at Friendship Park need upgraded. It was discussed to put in a pre-fab restroom. While we cannot move the restroom, we can knock down what is there and replace. Estimated total grant request would be \$376,924.00 with a 15% match which would be approximately \$56,000. The Borough's engineering costs would qualify as well as work the Public Works crew would do to raze the building.

A motion was made by Mariah Fisher and seconded by John Poznick to move forward and apply for the grant. The motion carried with all in favor.

Temporary Traffic Restrictions & Other Designations for Fort Days 2024:

The list is the same as previous years with the addition of West Loyalhanna St. from South Market to Walnut Street and Railroad Street from Hadley to Walnut Street to be added to the list of locations to be designated as No Parking / Tow Away Zones.

A motion was made by John Poznick and seconded by Jordan Frei to accept the Temporary Traffic Restrictions and Other Designations for Fort Days 2024 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Richard Flickinger spoke of his frustrations in working with Laurel Municipal Agency for a building permit.

Flickinger further questioned Council's decision to approve a private right on public property in regards to Black Bunny's request to install a mini split AC/heat pump on the side of their building which faces the courtyard space of Town Hall.

Solicitor Mark Sorice answered that this is an easement that would be subject to the conditions that in the event that they would ever not own the property or make other improvements that it would be removed. Sorice explained that in regards to ownership the Borough is custodians in which they have applied for special relief and Council does have the authority over property it manages.

COMMENDATIONS & COMMENTS from OFFICERS and DEPARTMENTS

Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw reported that a group of 5th graders will be coming tomorrow to St. Clair Grove to help with weeding and mulching.

Engineer Jason Mash reported that he is looking forward to the Stormwater Meeting Tuesday, October 1st and thanked Carol Barton, Jan Shaw and Ron Ross for their time on the project thus far.

Mayor Bellas announced that October 31st will be Trick or Treat in the Borough from 6-8pm. It was also noted that the Borough office has received complaints of people not picking up their dog waste when walking around town. The Borough has an ordinance in regards to this matter.

Mayor Bellas welcomed new Council Karen Lynn.

President Matt Smith also welcomed new Council Karen Lynn, Carla Arnone to the Planning Commission and new custodian Debbie Grguric.

Matt Smith also noted that the Diamond has been looking great and thanked custodian Tom Gibson and Public Works.

The next meeting of the Ligonier Borough Council will be held Monday, October 7, 2024 at 7pm in the Town Hall.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by John Poznick to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janette Shaw
Secretary-Treasurer