

November 12, 2015

The regular meeting of the Ligonier Borough Council was held Thursday, November 12, 2015 @ 7:00 PM in the Ligonier Town Hall with Robert Helterbran presiding.

**Members Present:** Robert Helterbran, James McDonnell, Margaret Garland, Judy Hoffer, Matt Smith, Pat Scanlon, & Terry Murphy.

**Others Present:** Secretary-Treasurer Paul Fry, Mayor Ormond "Butch" Bellas, Engineers Ben Faas & Greg Elliot, Solicitor George Welty, Police Chief John Berger, Ligonier Hose Co. #1 Representative Phil Fleming and Zoning Officer Rick Schwab.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A motion** was made by Pat Scanlon and seconded by Judy Hoffer to approve both special meeting and regular meeting minutes of October 5, 2015. All of Council was in favor.

#### **BILLS PAYABLE**

**A motion** was made by James McDonnell and seconded by Matt Smith to approve the Bills Payable as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A motion** was made by Pat Scanlon and seconded by Judy Hoffer to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. All of Council was in favor.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

##### **Regional Police Consolidation Discussion:**

Terry Carcella was present at the meeting to discuss Phase II of the Police Study. Terry Carcella stated that he has formed a committee at the township to study the Consolidation.

Councilman Helterbran suggested getting the two committees together. Grant funding is available for phase II.

##### **Memorandum of Understanding & Agreement (s):**

###### **Firearms Agreement:**

Township Manager Terry Carcella explained that there are several police officers whom are shared between the borough and township. The memorandum of understanding & agreement is to share the weapons for the officers as opposed to both township and borough issuing a gun to each officer that is shared.

###### **Animal Control and Code Enforcement Agreement:**

The agreement between the township and borough would be to utilize the Ligonier Township's recently hired animal control officer, Amber Noel and code enforcement officer, Richard Bell on an as needed basis for the borough at a cost of \$30 an hour plus mileage.

Solicitor Welty noted that both agreements were good ideas but suggested they be revised with year to year terms.

**A motion** was made by James McDonnell and seconded by Judy Hoffer to table until next month's meeting to study and discuss the agreements and receive comments from Borough insurance carrier. All of council was in favor.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Letter received from the LV Library thanking the Borough for support and \$1,200 donation.

**Letter received from Borough Bookkeeper Jan Shaw** listing all payments received from the Commonwealth of PA in 2015. On March 2, 2015 the Borough received its Liquid Fuels (Act 655) Allocation of \$47,992.92, an increase of \$1,416.78 over the 2014 distribution. September 24, 2015 the Borough received two payments from the Commonwealth of PA; the 2015 allocation of General Municipal Pension System State Aid was \$50,970.85 (\$626.01 increase over last year's disbursement). This distribution is used to defray the municipality's police and non-uniformed pension costs. Also received was \$10,608.64 of the 2015 Commonwealth allocation supporting the Volunteer Relief Association. This payment is made in accordance with Act 205 of 1984 which stipulates that 50% of the Borough's allocation is based on the population of our municipality, and 50% is determined by the market value of real estate in Ligonier Borough compared to the state average. (The 2015 distribution is \$282.50 less than last year's amount.) As required by Act 205, the \$10,608.64 was paid to the Ligonier Fireman Relief Association.

**A motion** was made by James McDonnell and seconded by Terry Murphy to accept bookkeeper Jan Shaw's letter explaining the different funds received from the state. The motion carried unanimously.

Letter received from the LV Chamber of Commerce requesting Council's support in displaying the candlelight luminaries during the upcoming holidays. The luminaries will be on display from 5-8 PM; Fridays and Saturdays from November 27-December 18, 2015. Locations include the Diamond, first-third blocks of East Main, first block of West Main, first block of North and South Market and first block of North Fairfield.

**A motion** was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Matt Smith to approve the request from the LV Chamber to display the luminaries on the above dates. All were in favor.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **PARKS & RECREATION**

**Friendship Park:** Chairman James McDonnell reported attending a recent meeting and noted that 5 or 6 grant applications have been submitted. Fundraising has been ongoing. McDonnell presented a proposed layout of Friendship Park provided by the Leathers Group. It is hoped to begin mid-March on the project. McDonnell noted that he advised the group to attend a Council meeting in February to bring Council up to speed on the project as far as financially and otherwise.

Pat Scanlon added that the group is currently selling T-Shirts to help defray costs for Friendship Park.

Zoning Officer Rick Schwab presented to Council a temporary sign permit applied for by the Friendship Park group who wish to erect a sign at Friendship Park.

**A motion** was made by James McDonnell and seconded by Pat Scanlon to approve at no fee. All of Council was in favor.

Councilman James McDonnell reminded citizens to complete a comprehensive plan survey available on the Borough's website as well as Town Hall office. Council will use residents' input on their community and local issues to make decisions on their behalf.

### **TOWN HALL**

Judy Hoffer, Town Hall Chair, reported that the Town Hall Committee will be meeting in the near future to receive bids for a price on replacement windows for the Town Hall, particularly the Court Yard area.

Hoffer also reported that it is ongoing with the heating and cooling repairs for the units on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Town Hall. This too will be discussed by the committee.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

Margaret Garland reported that the Public Works crew has been busy with leaf clean up.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY / SHADE TREE**

Matt Smith reported that it has been approximately six months since the hiring of part-time police officers Anthony Vittone and Chase Mollomo.

**A motion** was made by Matt Smith and seconded by James McDonnell to remove the two part-time officers from probationary period. The motion carried unanimously.

**A motion** was made by Matt Smith and seconded by Pat Scanlon to activate the Fire Police for Santa's Arrival November 27, 2015. All of Council was in favor.

Smith thanked Ligonier Hose Co. #1 for their help in the recent fire in the Borough. Smith also thanked everyone who helped with the recent tree planting.

## **FINANCE**

Chairman Terry Murphy presented a draft for the proposed budget. Murphy thanked Secretary-Treasurer Paul Fry and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw for their help and input with the proposed budget for 2016.

Murphy reported that taxes have not been raised since 2012. The committee unanimously agreed to have a 1 mill increase in taxes. The additional mill will bring in \$17,085.

Murphy explained that the revenues received during the first 10 months of this year are down about 10% compared to the same period in 2014 because of lower interest rates in Borough investments, fewer traffic tickets issued, fewer Town Hall facilities being rented along with rising health care coverage for Borough employees. All factored in, this has led to the proposed millage increase. Murphy added that the Borough also will need to replace a 2011 police car and a 1995 flatbed truck either next year or at the beginning of 2017.

**A motion** was made and seconded by Pat Scanlon and seconded by Matt Smith to approve the proposed budget for 2016. All were in favor.

The proposed budget will be available for the public to view in the Borough office. Council will vote and approve on the final numbers of budget 2016 at their December meeting.

## **PERSONNEL / PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Chairman Pat Scanlon reported that the Planning Committee had a meeting and discussed a few amendments to Zoning Ordinance #545 concerning apartment conversions, granny flats, & heights of fences. The Committee is asking Council's approval to submit the amendments to Solicitor Welty for review and change. Scanlon explained that the committee would like to delete the apartment conversions as Conditional Use in the R1, R2 and Village Residential, with no more than two in an R2 District. Granny Flats would be changed to Conditional Use in the R1, R2, R3 and R4 and Village Residential. The fence height would be changed from 42" to 48" for front and side yard fences.

**A motion** was made by Pat Scanlon and seconded by Margaret Garland for Solicitor draft up the above noted changes to Zoning Ordinance #545. All of Council was in favor.

Scanlon further reported that the next meeting of the Planning Committee will be Monday, November 16, 2015 @ 7:00 PM in Room A at the Town Hall.

**Personnel:** Scanlon reported that the contracts for the police and general laborers have been approved. Contracts for both expire November 30, 2017.

**NEW BUSINESS**

N/A

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

N/A

**COMMENDATIONS & COMMENTS from OFFICERS and DEPARTMENTS**

N/A

**SOLICITOR**

N/A

**FIRE CHIEF / REP.**

Phil Fleming thanked Council for the Relief Association payment contribution. Fleming spoke about an upcoming letter from a working committee with representation from Ligonier Borough, Ligonier Township and Laurel Mt. Borough regarding declining man power and other critical issues concerning the local volunteer fire companies.

**ENGINEER**

EADS Engineer Greg Elliot presented a final drawing and cost estimate for the Diamond Project. EADS will need approval to submit two grant applications which will be intended to fund the engineering and construction costs of the projected \$1.8 million Diamond renovation project. Elliot assured Council that there is still ample time to fine-tune the design with any changes but EADS needs to move forward in order to keep the construction project on schedule to begin in April of 2016.

EADS will first submit a grant application for the engineering fees with others to follow for 100% of the construction of the Diamond project.

**A motion** was made by Margaret Garland and seconded by Pat Scanlon to authorize EADS to submit the grant applications. The motion carried with all in favor.

At Councilman James McDonnell's prior suggestion, President Robert Helterbran advised that a Town Hall meeting should be set up for the public to come in and discuss the project.

**POLICE CHIEF**

Police Chief John Berger reported that along with 9 other departments the Borough will be involved with the Laurel Highlands Task Force for DUI Check Points. The Borough will be doing a roving patrol over Thanksgiving.

Councilman James McDonnell commended Chief Berger and Borough police for their quick response to a recent call he placed to 911.

**MAYOR**

Mayor Bellas thanked Council for the new police car and for moving ahead with the Diamond Project.

President Helterbran thanked everyone for attending the meeting and congratulated newly elected Council members for the upcoming year; Chick Cicconi, James McDonnell, Judy Hoffer, and Terry Murphy.

The next monthly meeting of the Ligonier Borough Council will be held December 10, 2015 @ 7:00 PM.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**A motion** was made by Pat Scanlon and seconded by Terry Murphy to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned @ 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul A Fry  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Office Manager