

BOROUGH OF LEHIGHTON

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April 7, 2025

RE: Lehighton Borough Council Meeting Minutes – March 3, 2025

CALL TO ORDER – 6:30 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation

Roll Call

The regular meeting of Lehighton Borough Council was held in the municipal building on Monday March 3, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Grant Hunsicker. Council Members in attendance were: Autumn Abelovsky, Jordyn Miller, Dave Zimmerman, Rebecca Worthy, and Steve Hawk. Council Member not in attendance was John Kreitz. Officials in attendance were: Mayor Ryan Saunders, Police Chief Troy Abelovsky, Fire Chief Patrick Mriss, Public Works Superintendent Kris Kunkle, Light & Power Superintendent Barry Fisher, Recreation Director Tom Evans, Solicitor James Nanovic, Borough Engineer Vanessa Nedrick, and Borough Secretary Jessica Ahner. Officials that were absent: Borough Manager Dane DeWire, and Junior Council Member Alex Sebelin.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

Jesse Roldan and Rigoberto Ramirez owner of 121 South First Street. They are looking for guidance on how to make their property into apartments again and if there were 6 spots they could rent behind the Highrise. They would like to comply with the Borough but need to know what to do. Mayor Saunders suggested they should start by seeing our Zoning Officer to go through proper procedures.

Nick Catania of 164 South First Street spoke about the last meeting and the parking issues for businesses. He voiced his frustrations about residents parking on the street and having no parking for businesses. He thinks the Borough should act on the parking problems, so business owners do not continue to lose money. Mayor Saunders said he will discuss options with Chief on the parking policies.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RW/SH motioned to approve the Regular Meeting minutes dated February 3, 2025 and Hunsicker asked if there were any questions.

Councilwomen Abelovsky said she had questions about the changes she requested last meeting. She said *she wanted the minutes to reflect her full name or a different way to distinguish the difference between herself and the Chief going forward.* She also said *in January, when the PathStone contract was brought up, she addressed that PathStone would only be responsible for anything broken in the areas they are renting.* Abelovsky said *that is not what she said and what she said was she wanted the lease to be altered to include all areas including the auditorium/gymnasium.* She said *she also asked for the section of the lease be removed saying that we couldn't access the building when we needed to after hours.*

Secretary Ahner responded that the changes are made in the meeting minutes which they were addressed. Nothing will change in passed minutes that were approved. For example, January changes will be made in February. Solicitor Nanovic agreed and clarified.

RW/SH motioned to approve the Regular Meeting minutes as written dated February 3, 2025, and 4 were in favor and Autumn Abelovsky and Jordyn Miller Opposed. 4-2

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DeWire and Evans have been working with the Director at PathStone regarding the rental lease. Nanovic made changes to the lease on Paragraph 16, utilities section. He needed to know what other changes Council would want to make, such as where access is needed in the building or if there were any other questions on the lease. Councilwoman Abelovsky said the contract states "Every room on the ground floor, first floor, and second floor of the Leighton Annex". She asked if this means we have access to these floors. Evans replied, yes, and the contract has always been written that way. Evans said he wants access to Boiler, Mechanical, Basement, and Cage areas of building. Later, Evans decided to leave the lease as-is because we have access to those areas anyway. Councilwoman Abelovsky pointed out that Brenda's name was still on lease. AA/JM made a motion to approve the PathStone Rental Lease with changes and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

Discussion on changes to the Food Vender Application were briefly discussed. It was decided to look into what is considered 'non-profit,' and it was tabled until next meeting.

Nace Property Clean-up was discussed. The owner was cited for multiple violations. DeWire was in touch with the Zoning Officer and Nanovic for some solutions. Nanovic mentioned we can file a writ of execution, pushing the property to be sold. The property was discussed, and Jim answered questions. Tabled until next meeting.

Zimmerman spoke about a demonstration of a new Street Sweeper at our Public Works Building. He then spoke about costs and comparisons between the purchase of a new Street

Sweeper versus a used one. There was discussion amongst Council. AA/SH motioned to have financing options presented to Council for a new machine and all were in favor with no objections.

Kunkle suggested that when we receive street sweeper back from Harrisburg, we can think about removing the chassis and using it elsewhere. Mayor said that would be perfect, as long as it fits.

NEW BUSINESS

There was discussion on a property on Sergeant Stanley Hoffman Boulevard that may be owned by the Borough, connecting Carl Gustafson's property on the right and Joe Marks' property just South of the LVHN building. Marks believes the Borough owns the land and is asking to purchase his side of the lot to provide his developers access to RT 209-S. The property on Carl Gustafson's side has Borough utilities on it. He already allows access to his property for Borough workers, and that is not a problem.

AA/JM motioned to approve the Sewer application for 338 Ochre Street to Northwest Alley and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0. Owner was present at meeting and thanked everyone for the quick response.

SH/RW motioned to approve the \$50.00 ad for the 30th Annual Carbon County Sports Hall of Fame and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

SH/RW motioned to approve Payment Application #3 for Advanced Pipe Technologies in the amount of \$273,328.21 for Leighton I/I Abatement Project and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

Motion to approve Resolution R10-2025 – Establishing the 2025 Salaries to include L&P Vice Superintendent and Police Dept. Administrative Assistant. SH/AA motioned to amend the Agenda to add discussion of Crossing Guard pay and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

Councilwoman Abelovsky asked how the agreement was proposed for Crossing Guard pay. Mayor said that when he met with the School District, they were proposing that Borough will have a 3-year agreement, with the 1st year being a 70/30 split with Crossing Guards being paid \$12.00/hour. The 2nd year will be a 85/15 split with a \$12.25/hour rate, and the 3rd year having 100% at a \$12.50/hour rate. Once this agreement is exhausted, the LASD will be responsible for their pay in full. This agreement will be voted on at the School District's March meeting. AA/SH motioned to approve Resolution R10-2025 Establishing the 2025 Salaries to include L&P Vice Superintendent, Police Dept. Administrative Assistant, and Crossing Guard pay increase and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

DZ/SH motioned to approve Resolution R11-2025 Disposition of records for standard financial destruction list and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

RW/JM motioned to approve (8) \$50.00 Gift Cards in honor of Administrative Professional Day and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

Fisher said he has an unsigned Contract from Pioneer for damages that occurred from a mower that hit the building. SH/DZ motioned to approve Pioneer's Contract of \$5,500.00 to repair the Light & Power Building and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

SH/DZ made a motion to approve letters of interest for the Parks and Recreation board, appoint them as voting members, and set the term length for members. 3 were in favor, Autumn Abelovsky opposed, and Jordyn Miller and Rebecca Worthy abstained. 3-1-2

5-year Term – Tina Henninger
Lisa Kishbaugh

4-year Term – Rebecca Worthy
Jordyn Miller

3-year Term – Nicholas Catania

2-year Term – Byron Schnell

1-year-Term – Steve Mellifont

OFFICIAL'S REPORTS

President of Council – Nothing to report.

Borough Manager – Paper report provided. Not Present. DeWire provided information not on report about the Multimodal Transportation Fund grant. The state released their decision on funding, and Leighton was not awarded funds for the rehabilitation of Sergeant Stanley Hoffman Boulevard. The only grant awarded in Carbon County was to the Commissioners for the rehab of a bridge near Beltzville.

Borough Engineer – Paper report provided. Nedrick reported that the I/I project should be completed by the end of September 2025. In Planning we are finishing up a 255 Bankway Street Land Development Project. There is a Lot Line Adjustment on 431 South 7th Street. Two Minor Subdivisions; one on 103 E Penn Street and the other on 606-608 Iron Street. There is also a Land Development plan on 930 Bridge Street, PennDOT Maintenance Facility.

Solicitor – Nothing to Report.

Treasurer – Paper Report provided. SH/RW motioned to approve bills in the amount of \$545,626.25, and additional bills of \$186,337.28 and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

Mayor – Mayor thanked Council for motion approving Crossing Guard Salary. He also asked Council to relook at Parking on 1st Street and put together a Task Force. Mayor said he will

serve on board and will meet with Chief to see what they can come up with. Worthy said she will serve on the Task Force, as well.

Police Chief – Chief reported that Police Officer applications closed February 28, 2025. The civil service will hold testing on Sunday, March 9, 2025 at 9am at Borough Hall. Secretary Ahner supplied Chief with the information on the police officers that applied, and he thanked her for that. Our new office employee started February 24, 2025, she is adapting well to her new environment, getting along well with the other office staff, and is learning her position. Chief spoke about grant funding that was available 2 years ago, but is not available this year. There is another grant he is looking into. Chief will be working on getting bids from contractors for bullet proof glass to be added to office for added safety.

Fire Chief – Paper Report provided. Chief Mriss reported that we are looking to replace our fire engine and think it would be a good idea to start thinking about securing funding in the event we do not receive the full funding of grant. The cost was \$1,008,000.00. Our department was contacted to send more information, so this may be a good sign.

Light & Power Superintendent – Paper report provided. Fisher said they have been busy trimming tree branches.

Public Works Superintendent – Paper report provided. Nothing to Report.

Recreation Director – Councilwomen Abelovsky asked about a letter for the Senior Games and said we can't approve if it's not on the agenda. Evans said he will add letter for Senior Games to the April Agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Administration – David Zimmerman, Chair; Jordyn Miller. Nothing to Report.

Economic Development, Buildings and Codes – Autumn Abelovsky, Chair; John Kreitz, Co-Chair. Nothing to Report.

Police, Fire and Safety – Jordyn Miller, Chair; Rebecca Worthy, Co-Chair. Nothing to Report.

Light & Power Committee – Rebecca Worthy, Chair; Steve Hawk, Co-Chair. Nothing to Report.

Sewer Committee – Steve Hawk, Chair; Autumn Abelovsky, Co-Chair. Hawk mentioned data from the Central Carbon Municipal Authority showing our total load usually shows 70-75%, but last month, reports showed 62%. Nedrick commented that this percentage should see a greater reduction as they are lining manholes.

Nedrick addressed Nanovic on whether she would need to rebid if the Borough wanted to continue I/I work until funds are exhausted. His reply was, yes. Kris asked if they could do pipes by Public Works. Nanovic said you would need to get estimates.

Streets, Public Works & Recreation – John Kreitz, Chair; David Zimmerman, Co-Chair. Kreitz-Nothing to Report.

Library Board – Rebecca Worthy. Nothing to Report.

Parks & Recreation Board – Rebecca Worthy. Nothing to Report

Canal Commission – Ryan Saunder-Nothing to Report.

Council of Governments- Steve Hawk, Delegate; Dave Zimmerman, Alternate. Nothing to report.

Civil Service Commission – Rebecca Worthy – Testing Scheduled for March 9th at 9am. Chief covered in his report.

Junior Councilperson – Alexander Seblin. Nothing to Report. Not Present.

ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICIAL’S REPORTS

AA/DZ motioned to accept the official’s reports as presented and all were in favor with no questions or objections. 6-0

ADJOURNMENT

RW/SH motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 pm and all were in favor with no objections. 6-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Ahner, Borough Secretary