

BOROUGH OF JIM THORPE

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

JANUARY 14, 2016

MINUTES

Meeting held in the Memorial Park Hall, East 10th Street, Jim Thorpe, Pa. 18229.

Meeting called to order by President Gregory Strubinger at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for the men and women serving our country.

Mayor Sofranko swore in Borough Manager Maureen Sterner.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Paulette Haupt	John McGuire	Thomas Highland
Joanne Klitsch	Jay Miller	Kyle Sheckler
Gregory Strubinger	Mayor Michael Sofranko	Police Chief Joe Schatz
Kim Mazur, Entech	Solicitor James Nanovic	Boro. Secy. McClafferty
Manager Maureen Sterner	Vince Yaich, PS Manager	

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Sofranko had handed out the year-end report and the statistics report for the police dept. for 2015.

Police Chief went over the report with everyone present. He informed everyone that the calls went down but the drug issues went up about 10 more incidents from 2014. They seized 1485 bags of heroin, marijuana, and meth rise in the area. They also seized U.S. currency about \$11,000.00 to \$12,000.00 and vehicles that were sized, which was turned over to the D.A. office for forfeiture.

Police Chief Schatz said they also have seen an increase in traffic due to the Turnpike exist on Route 903.

Police Chief Schatz said they are looking to put e-ticketing into the new vehicle. This will be paid out of the Policeman's ball funds. He explained they need a new server for the Police dept. so they can use this when they are on the road to connect to the server at the station.

Police Chief Schatz informed everyone that the start of 2016 the police officers when to 12 hour schedule. This allows him to be more in the office. They started the kiosk program and is researching a grant for them. They reprogrammed the meters in the downtown section they are up to \$1.00 an hour.

Mayor Sofranko asked that council review the statistics report.

Mr. McGuire said we need the chief to be the police dept. manager. This is why we hired a new patrolman, this gives the chief the opportunity to be in the office.

Mayor asked that you look at the report from detective Marzen that shows all the open, closed and ongoing cases. The other report that you will see is the Meter Maids report on the revenues.

Mr. McGuire spoke about getting a vehicle for the meter maid to use when she goes to do the meters.

Police Chief Schatz said what we have been doing is paying her mileage. He will look around.

Mayor Sofranko asked council what their official plan is for Front Street, with one-way going from North St to Center St then River St will be 2 ways. Then Second St going one-way from Center St to North St. Mayor Sofranko said the State will pay all the signs and the painting and everything.

Solicitor Nanovic said the ordinance will need to be advertised.

Kim Mazur said he will talk to Calvin Ulshafer to see what all is required on the plans.

MOTION: Jay Miller second Joanne Klitsch to begin the process to change the traffic patterns on Front Street and Second Street.

YES 7 NO 0

MOTION: John McGuire second Jay Miller to approve Entech to provide us with a Work Order for Front Street and Second St.

YES 7 NO 0

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bill Malatak welcomed Manager Sterner. He informed her that this is a tourist town and that we have allowed outside forced take over the town. He spoke about the parking lot that the County has made and has not given the borough any money out of that fund. He informed her there is no communication between us and the County or the School District. He asked what is her duty as the borough manager.

Manager Sterner said there are many different tasks that she will have to complete. She asked Bill Malatak to stop in the office to talk to her about his concerns. Council has heard what you are saying about the parking meters and parking lot, this was discussed with me at the interviews and we are all aware of that problem. We have to make sure there is communication always around. We will be working on a new website. Council has to decide what their goals are and what their priorities are for the town.

Jake Arner said he would like to work with the Borough. He is waiting for an answer on his pre-construction agreement.

President Strubinger said we will get the manager involved with this and revisit this agreement.

MOTION: John McGuire second Gregory Strubinger to approve the minutes from December 10, 2015 and January 4, 2016.

YES 7 NO 0

MOTION: John McGuire second Gregory Strubinger to approve the expenditures from all funds for December 2015, as presented.

QUESTION:

Mr. Miller said Memorial Park, they have \$7,000 almost \$8,000.00 dollars in expenses where is the money coming from?

Mrs. Klitsch said probably from the Sanitation account. She said as of December 31, 2015 the Memorial Park borrowed total of \$81,000.00. General Funds paid the mortgage \$25,387.00 and the rest came from the Sanitation account.

President Strubinger said what we have been doing is anytime the Memorial Park cannot pay the mortgage it has been being paid out of the General Funds account and any expenditures we have been using Sanitation funds to pay the operation bills.

Mr. McGuire said the Borough owns the loan. If the money doesn't come out of the hall it comes from the General funds until we either lease it, sell it or whatever we are obligated to pay that loan. This is a decision that council will need to make what we have to do with the hall. Whether we shut it down, bulldoze it or whatever we still owe the bank the money.

YES 7 NO 0

MOTION: Gregory Strubinger second Kyle Sheckler to approve the treasurer report as presented.

YES 7 NO 0

Mr. Miller asked what is the agreement for 65 High Street?

President Strubinger said what this the owner had a water leak and the property owner vacated the residence.

Solicitor Nanovic said the utilities were turned off, someone purchased the property and there was about a \$7,000.00 lien on the property. He spoke to the person and his attorney the agreement is that the utilities won't be turned back on until there is some type of arrangement made.

President Strubinger said they are requesting the late charges be forgiven. They are to put half of the money, and the new owner is to pay \$200.00 a month plus their current bill.

Manager Sterner said the property was purchased at Sheriff's sale, he bought it as is.

Solicitor Nanovic said the lien will stay until this is paid in full.

MOTION: Jay Miller second Joanne Klitsch to approve the Utility agreement with the property owner of 65 High Street

YES 7 NO 0

MOTION: Jay Miller second John McGuire to approve the Jim Thorpe Lion’s club to restore the basement silver display room/tourist reception area amount of \$2,500.00 and restoration of the brick exterior of the home and decorative metals and woodwork brackets estimated amount of \$32,000.00 with additional \$15,000.00 budgeted for carpentry and other issues unknown until the project progresses.

YES 7 NO 0

MOTION: Joanne Klitsch second Thomas Highland to retain Louise McClafferty as the Open records officer for the borough.

COMMENTS:

Manager Sterner recommendation to council is to keep Louise McClafferty until she learns the filing system.

YES 7 NO 0

MOTION: Jay Miller second Joanne Klitsch to approve Leader Business to update the computer system & servers for the Administration and Police Departments estimated \$6,816.65 each.

QUESTION

Mr. Miller asked where the money is coming from.

Manager Sterner said we have funds in office equipment, IT line items, this will be split amongst Water, Sewer, Sanitation and General Funds. The Police Dept. did budget for this.

YES 7 NO 0

MOTION: Joanne Klitsch second Paulette Haupt to approve Entech’s work order to do the annual Chapter 94 report amount of \$2,500.00

YES 7 NO 0

ADMINISTRATION

President Strubinger said talking with Manager Sterner we would like to set up a monthly committee workshop. We will keep this on the first Thursday of the month at 6:30. This will get the communication going between the Manager and the committees.

Mr. McGuire said he sits on Planning, Library, workshop and council meeting. He suggested the committees hold committee meetings then at the workshop we can go over what has been discussed at those meetings. This will make the meetings not last so long. There is a lot of work and things that need to be talked about. Buildings you have the Borough garage, Memorial Park, the Phoenix. We need to project what we would like to do in the future.

Manager Sterner said what we should do is hold the initial workshop. Council needs to let her know what direction you would like to go in. She wants to make sure everyone is on the same page.

MOTION: Gregory Strubinger second Kyle Sheckler to advertise the workshop meeting for the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 in the borough office.

YES 7 NO 0

MOTION: Gregory Strubinger second John McGuire to purchase a \$25,000.00 bond for the Manager.

COMMENTS

Mr. Miller asked where you buying this from?

President Strubinger said through Brown & Brown Insurance

Manger Sterner said Selective insurance.

YES 7 NO 0

President Strubinger said the Jim Thorpe Lion's club would like to hold a meeting with council to discuss the caretaker's home.

Mr. McGuire said this should be handled by the Building committee.

President Strubinger asked does council wish to get involved with the Carbon County Council of Governments?

Mr. McGuire informed all that he and Louise McClafferty were involved with Lansford & Summit Hill. What this involves is purchasing items through this program to save the municipalities money. Purchasing larger items like salt, road materials. The other thing is in the time of needs help each other out. Say Summit Hill had a paving project and we have people and equipment we would help them out and that would go vice/versa. He suggested Manager Sterner contact the other municipalities to see what they think about this program.

Manager Sterner said as long as the COG program is done correctly it is very beneficial. She will look into this.

Solicitor Nanovic said the way it is drawn up there is no cost involved and you can opt out with 30 day written notice.

MOTION: John McGuire second Kyle Sheckler to retain Jake Arner on the International Property Maintenance board.

YES 7 NO 0

President Strubinger discuss the Public Service Supervisor position. This will make one person as the contact person for all the departments Water, Sewer, & Streets. This will make the best use of our equipment and personnel get them to work together.

MOTION: John McGuire second Joanne Klitsch to appoint Vince Yaich as the Public Service Manager for all the departments effective Monday, January 18, 2016 and to execute the agreement.

COMMENTS:

Mayor Sofranko asked when there is a call out for snow plowing this will go to Vince Yaich?

Mr. McGuire said yes.

Mr. Miller said his benefits and salary will be split amongst the Water, Sewer, Garbage and Streets.

Solicitor Nanovic said when the job description is completed he will respond to the Manager. We will be putting together the job description.

Manager Sterner said Vince Yaich will get all of the calls.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Paulette Haupt
Joanne Klitsch
Jay Miller
Gregory Strubinger
John McGuire
Kyle Sheckler
Thomas Highland

YES 7

NO 0

WATER

Mr. Miller had handed the price quote to Manager Sterner from Medico for the back hoe. He would like to trade in the current back hoe and purchase this. He asked Manager Sterner to find the money He would ask for a temporary loan from the Sanitation account. He will sit with Mr. Yaich to go over the needs for the Water dept.

Mr. Miller asked that the Borough Manager look at our loans and look into refinancing. Maybe one of those loans and pay back what we borrowed. There is a balloon payment that is coming up soon. The Penn Vest loan payoff in 2017. And the one in 2018. The one he is looking to re-write is \$4.739 million due in 2036.

Solicitor Nanovic said with the Sewer project we talked about restructuring the debt, which include all the Penn Vest debt.

Mr. Miller would like to annualize this but be able to do some projects, stretch this out longer. He would like to ask outright for \$93,000.00 from the Sanitation account or a temporary loan and pay that back with the refinance. He does not have a problem using the Sanitation funds as long as he can show the public that we are doing something back for them.

Mr. Miller said the other thing the engineer is recommending for the Water plant and the tank on the East side. He is requesting we purchase mixers for those. DEP is requiring chlorination at the end of each system.

MOTION: Jay Miller second Joanne Klitsch to authorize the purchase of the mixers conditioned upon the seller being Costar approved and they are to be paid \$60,000.00 from the Water account and \$60,000.00 from the Sanitation account.

COMMENTS

Manager Sterner said the thoughts is to get the 3 department to come together as one and look over all the equipment and prioritize the list what you would like replaced.

Mr. Miller said we have been given a trade in price, if we do not act the price will go down. They have done their homework on this, they don't want to hold to long on this.

Manager said she will look at this and give the information to all at the committee meeting.

YES 7 NO 0

Manager Sterner asked council if they would like her to look into a collection agency for the Borough?

Mr. Miller said we get into a slippery slope with agreements on accounts. Accounts that are past due look into that but some of them may not be collectable.

Mr. Miller asked that the office staff go through all of the accounts to make sure everyone is paying what they should be paying.

POLICE

MOTION: Joanne Klitsch second Paulette Haupt to approve the resolution says whereas the Borough of Jim Thorpe has authorized the Jim Thorpe Police Dept.to enforce all police complaints by ordinance 2015-1 will replace the State enforcement of the LCB jurisdiction regards to noise complaints in the borough limits and the Borough of Jim Thorpe will enforce loud unnecessary or unusual noise prohibited and loud disturbing noise.

COMMENTS

Solicitor Nanovic said they will hold a hearing as to whether or not they agree.

YES 7 NO 0

Police Chief Schatz said the Greater Hazleton YMCA & YWCA will be holding their annual Anthracite on July 19, 2016. They have all volunteers that handle the traffic.

SEWER/SANITATION

Kim Mazur – Entech gave an update on upcoming sewer project. The plans are coming along they are about 90% complete. They need to make sure the structure will not change. They meet bi-weekly to go over the project. The schedule is to complete the final design by mid March, client review and then the plans will go out to bid. They have submitted the permits to DRBC should have a response back mid March. PPL is another hurdle with bringing the 3 phase wires over across the river. The challenge with this we still have to operate daily at the Sewer plant.

Mrs. Klitsch requested an executive session at the end of the meeting.

BUILDINGS/PARKS

Solicitor Nanovic said there is a property at 56 West Broadway. We have cited the owner \$50,000.00 fine, they have appealed this decision. Mrs. Cuocco has spent a lot of money fixing the property. She asked if she fixed up the property if she could go back to the borough council to see what council would like to do. He explained to her it costs the borough to enforce this with fees to BIA and for his services. The costs for BIA & Nanovic law offices is about \$3,100.00. In order to reduce this fine he needs council's approval to do this. Manager Sterner asked that there be an inspection done at the property by BIA both inside and outside the structure and also that the utilities are paid up to date.

Mr. Miller said there is a fine by the borough \$50,000.00, there is no simple way to go from \$50,000.00 to \$3,100.00 without an inspection being done.

Solicitor Nanovic said this is going on since Gene Mulligan was the zoning officer for the borough.

Mr. Miller said we have to be assure that this nuisance will be gone through an inspection.

Manager Sterner said BIA was out to the property and were able to do an inspection of the front of the property they were not able to get into the back yard.

Mr. McGuire said we have another property on Center Avenue – Ray Smith what are we doing with this one. We have over \$100,000.00 in fines on him. Do we go up and clean it up and put more of a lien on it.

MOTION: Joanne Klitsch second Jay Miller that council won't consider their request to reduce the fines until the property is inspected inside and out at 56 West Broadway.

YES 7

NO 0

STREETS

Mr. McGuire said we need to act on the Packer Hill where the guiderails were driven through. They suggested putting concrete barriers in there for safety measures.

Mr. McGuire also spoke about making Packer Hill one way road going up. This will be discussed at the workshop.

Mr. McGuire spoke about parking lots that the borough rents out. He asked if we should sell these lots?

Solicitor Nanovic said the lots would have to go out for bids.

Vince Yaich said the lot by the old jail you have to remember we will need an easement for that because we have a pressure reducing station on the property.

MOTION: John McGuire second Jay Miller to give the Dimmick Memorial Library 2 temporary parking spaces for their employees.

COMMENTS

Police Chief Schatz will talk to Jamie Solomon about this.

Mr. McGuire said they should talk to the County Commissioner's about giving them 2 parking spaces for nothing. This is something we support this is not a business it's an institution that we support.

YES 7

NO 0

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Nothing to report.

President Strubinger said Tony Sebelin would like to know if the borough would lease a piece of Kemmerer park property to him to put a new sign on the property.

Solicitor Nanovic said he believes the property he is talking about is the portion that we removed from the Kemmerer Park lease where the Carriage House is located.

Manager Sterner said we need to look at the lease agreement to see if we can do it.

Council will be going into executive session to discuss personnel and no action will be required.

MOTION: Gregory Strubinger second John McGuire to adjourn.

YES 7

NO 0

Adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Louise McClafferty
Borough Secretary