

JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
December 7, 2023  
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:31 p.m. by President Gregory Strubinger with the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for the armed forces, first responders, and their families.

**Roll Call of Members**

Gregory Strubinger	Joanne Klitsch	Jay Miller-absent
Michael Yeastedt	Bob Schaninger	Tom Chapman-absent
Michael Rivkin	Mayor Sofranko	Solicitor Nanovic-absent
Police Chief Schatz	Borough Mgr. Sterner	Secretary Brooke Klotz

**Announcements**

Greg Strubinger thanked the various food stand participants, sponsors, and volunteers for everything they did to make the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Festival of Trees a success.

There is a vacancy on the International Property Maintenance Board. Any interested resident should submit their letter of interest to the Borough office.

Thank you to the Fairview Social Club and Frontline Graphics for their donation to the Police Department.

The 2024 Commission and Board representative openings are as followed: Planning Commission 4-year term, Planning Commission 4-year term, Zoning Hearing Board 5-year term, Shade Tree Commission 5-year term, Civil Service Commission 6-year term, International Property Maintenance Board 5-year term, Vacancy Board 1 year term, Library Board 1 year term, Lehigh Canal Recreation Representative 1 year term, and Carbon County Communications Representative 1 year term. Any resident interested in these seats should submit a letter of interest to the Borough office no later than December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Mayor Sofranko announced he was elected as one of the Carbon County Commissioners. He submitted a letter of resignation to go into effect on December 28<sup>th</sup> due to legally not being able to hold more than one elected official seat. During the short time the seat is vacant, either the President or Vice President of Borough Council would fill in as the mayor until one is appointed.

**Public Comment**

Debra Klechner – She was at the meeting to discuss the non-conforming lots section in the Zoning Ordinance that will be up for adoption next week. She said this will affect the Borough's tax base and cause properties to continually go up for tax sale due to not being developed.

Jake Arner – He was at the meeting to discuss the non-conforming lots section in the Zoning Ordinance that will be up for adoption next week. He said he discussed this section of the Zoning Ordinance with his lawyer who claims it is illegal and unconstitutional. He asked for this section to be stricken and wrote a letter to Borough Council describing what is illegal.

**Public Hearing**

NONE

**SALDO-Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance**

NONE

**Action**

The following items were reviewed:

35 Packer Hill Shed/Parking Lease – The property owners were in attendance to discuss the proposed shed and parking lease agreement. Based on the agreement that was sent to the Fogal's, it would be a 900% increase from their current lease. They plan on removing the shed and only have two parking spots. They asked for a 6-month lease agreement or a month-to-month agreement, rather than an annual agreement.

Council Meeting Minutes from October 25, 2023

Council Meeting Minutes from November 1, 2023

Council Meeting Minutes from November 2, 2023

Council Meeting Minutes from November 9, 2023 – Greg Strubinger said if any corrections need to be made to please get them to Secretary Klotz as soon as possible.

Expenditures from all Funds as presented – There was no information submitted for this week's meeting due to the Treasurer being out. The report will be available for next week's meeting.

Treasurer's Report -- There was no information submitted for this week's meeting due to the Treasurer being out. The report will be available for next week's meeting.

2024 Budgets – The proposed General Fund budget will have a tax increase of .64 mills. There will be an increase to utility billing as well. Sewer will increase by 2%, water will increase by 5%, and sanitation will increase by 106.56%.

Ordinance 2023-06 Tax Levy Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2024 – There is an increase of .64 mills.

Ordinance 2023-07 Zoning

Ordinance 2023-08 Vehicle & Traffic Ordinance Amendment-No Parking Reservoir Road – This Ordinance would prohibit parking along Reservoir Road on both sides from Center Street to the Rod and Gun Club. After discussing this at the November meetings, a property owner who lives on Reservoir Road since came forward requesting a small section be utilized for parking as this property owner does not have off street parking.

Resolution 2023-20 Housing Unit Numbering-312 School Street – This is a requirement by the County and 911 for any properties that do not already have a housing number assigned to them.

End of the Year Meeting-Schedule & Advertise for December 27, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

January JTBC Meetings-Schedule and advertise for January 2, 4, & 11, 2024

JTTA 2024 Winterfest Event Request – JTTA President James Dougher was present to discuss and answer any questions Council may have for the upcoming event that is scheduled to take place on February 17 and 18, 2024. There will be music in Josiah White Park. There is no need for Police assistance or any other extra activities with this event. James thanked the Fire Department and Police for their assistance during the Olde Time Christmas Event. Chief asked about the train schedule and how it was affecting the downtown area. James said he wasn't sure of the train schedule for that weekend. Mayor Sofranko asked about traffic control for the upcoming weekend. Mike Yeastedt said traffic was backed up due to County parking lot attendant's stopping vehicular traffic so cars are able to make a left turn out of the lot and asked if the barriers could be put up again.

Venditti/Cub Pack 138 RFA-Use of Memorial Hall on December 17<sup>th</sup> for their Holiday Party, use of Memorial Hall on February 18<sup>th</sup> for their Blue & Gold Party, and use of Memorial Hall on March 10<sup>th</sup> for their Pinewood Derby – The only concern Council had with these requests were for the February and March dates due to the upcoming construction that will be taking place to Memorial Hall. It was

recommended that the Cub Pack find an alternative location for those dates in the event construction does take place then.

Entech Engineering EWO's

*WTP NPDES Permit Renewal \$5,200.00* – This permit is renewed every five years.

*2023 Chapter 94 Report \$3,200.00* – This is an annual renewal.

Facilities Project

*Memorial Hall-Spillman Farmer Invoice 8122.22.12 totaling \$614.41* – This was for shipping of required USDA documents. Mike Yeastedt asked about the revised comments in the invoice and felt the Borough should not have to pay for something that was not the Borough's fault. Documents were sent to Bureau Veritas for review and they determined corrections needed to be made. The revised documents were then resent for approval.

*Public Service Garage-Spillman Farmer Invoice 8121.22.11 totaling \$303.81* – This was for shipping of required USDA documents.

Account #4390 Payment Plan

Account #5213 Payment Plan

Utility Accounts Proposed Updates – There is one property that needs to be updated from residential to commercial due to changing use for a short-term rental.

### **Exoneration Request**

The report was submitted for review.

### **Committees**

EP-ACT U.S. Department of Energy Charge @ Work Program -- The Program Director would like to have a meeting with Borough Council to discuss this particular program. Their goal is to design charging stations for the Borough. This will be the first of multiple phases. This would make it a shovel ready project. Council would like to set up a meeting with a program representative, neighboring municipalities, and businesses for the spring.

Silk Mill Project-Construction Phase Grants – Secretary Klotz asked Borough Council to look over the Silk Mill Project plans they received last month and submit any questions or concerns they may have as soon as possible. Kristie Fach of Wildlands plans to attend either the January or February Council meeting to discuss applying for grants for Phase II of this project. Phase II will consist of construction and demoing of the dams.

2024 Insurance – The Borough reached out to insurance brokers for insurance quotes for the 2024 year. Only two came back with proposals- Brown & Brown (who is the Borough's current broker) and Seltzer Group.

CFA Grants-PA Small Sewer & Water, PA H2O, CFA Multimodal – The State still has not acted on the grant applications they have received. Their next meeting to tentatively discuss and announce awardees is December 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **Administration**

#### **Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)**

2023 Streets Division Truck – The Borough was notified the truck that was order has been canceled. The Streets Supervisor is investigating other options for another truck.

LSL Inventory-Phase I deadline extension – Entech Engineering is requesting an extension through March 31<sup>st</sup> for the Lead Service Line Inventory. Water Supervisor Stern was questioned before the

meeting and he agrees this should be pushed back to March 31<sup>st</sup>. Mike Yeastedt said according to what is being discussed on the news, there is money the government is allotting for lead lines.

Main Street-Leisure Lane Association – This item was tabled at the last meeting. Joanne Klitsch is requesting a section of Main Street be taken over by the Borough. Concerns over the road meeting PennDOT specs and the HOA sign and mail boxes in the middle of the road were discussed.

#### Police

Police Pension Fund-seats must be held by a Borough Council member and an active resident. Currently, two seats are being held by council members. Michael Rivkin is holding the active resident seat and Bob Schaninger is holding the Borough Council member seat. Michael Rivkin could stay on the board as an active resident. Since Bob was not re-elected, his board seat would need to be reappointed

#### Buildings/Parks

Facilities Projects – the Borough is waiting for certain contractors to submit remaining forms to the office to send in to USDA.

#### Emergency Services

Onoko-Radiant Heat Exhaust Pipe – Mike Yeastedt explained the Fire Department is waiting for a 2<sup>nd</sup> quote. The only quote received so far is under the threshold requiring a project to go out for formal bid. Because it's under the threshold, a second quote is not really needed. Greg Strubinger agreed the work needs to get done.

### **Old Business**

### **Executive Session**

#### **Adjourn**

**MOTION** by Mike Yeastedt, second by Bob Schaninger to **adjourn the meeting**. There were no comments. Motion carries 5-0. The meeting ended at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz  
Borough Secretary