

JIM THORPE BOROUGH
WORKSHOP SESSION
JANUARY 6, 2020
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 8:00 pm in the Memorial Park Hall, 115 East Tenth Street, Jim Thorpe by President Gregory Strubinger with the pledge of allegiance and moment of silence for the men and women serving our country, first responders and their families.

Roll Call of Members & Officials

Gregory Strubinger	Kyle Sheckler	Joanne Klitsch
Thomas Highland	Robert Schaninger	Edith Lukasevich
Michael Yeastedt	Borough Manager Sterner	PSM Yaich
Connor Rodgers, JCP	Police Chief Schatz	Solicitor James Nanovic
Mayor Michael Sofranko	Secy. McClafferty	

Public Hearing

Mayor's Report

Mayor Sofranko said they have the year end report for the Police Department if you have any questions please contact them. He requested an executive session at the end of the meeting for personnel.

Police Chief Schatz said the only thing he has is the course of events for the new year. The goal this year is to manage our events better. That will start with putting our police down at the different events. They are looking at better management of traffic control for the events.

Police Chief Schatz said they will be applying for the "Go Green Go Grant" for the traffic lights and some other grants. They will be looking at traffic control devices that they can utilize at any point and time. They will be holding a meeting this week to discuss managing the events. He said what they are looking into for events: the events that they did have any police services at, they are turning the tables around and are making you have police services there because of the incidents that take place. The main goal is to manage every event. If the event planner does not need it, the borough and the police department may say we do need it, because we need to manage the events.

Borough Manager Sterner asked Police Chief Schatz if he spoke to JTTA on Winter Fest?

Police Chief Schatz said no.

Borough Manager Sterner said this is supposed to be 2 months in advance and we still have nothing.

Police Chief Schatz said as we know, we stress this, the trainings that they go to, you are looking at 6 to 8 years out for the planning. We have to plan man power for all of this. Getting an EV Plan in place with Emergency Services and Police Department it takes time. They have a committee meeting together to discuss the goals and make them reality. If you don't come to us within that certain amount of time, you won't have the event.

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President Strubinger said the borough is responsible for the safety for all of these events.

Mayor Sofranko said he and the Police Chief did a breakdown on part time police officers and what they are paid in the area. We are \$2.00 under the average for this area. We are at \$16.00 an hour. Chief sat with the Manager and there is money in the budget for some adjustment. They will be running this through the committee first. This will be on the February agenda.

SALDO

Discuss the Ogden/Bennick Subdivision Waivers:

- 390-13.B.1 Floodplain
- 390-13.K Sanitary Sewer Connection
- 390-20.B.6 & 7 Topographic Contours
- 390-21.B.1 Plan Scale

President Strubinger discussed the Ogden/Bennick subdivision plan. This is in the Germantown section of the East side. They are looking to transfer some property to the Germantown Grove Club.

Borough Manager Sterner said Planning Commission has reviewed the waiver request and they are recommending approval of the waivers. It is only for the dividing of the land. Land development plans will be drawn up at a later date. The only thing the Planning Commission has with sewer connections, there is a condition that the plans state both lots are not approved for construction. They are referring to Lot 1, which is writing that off to give to the Germantown Grove club and the remaining lands.

Public Comment

Leroy Strohl, representing, Sam Miller field. He is here to request a zoning permit waiver for the temporary ice-skating rink. It is free of charge to use, donations are accepted. They are trying to make the field a more friendly place to visit.

Borough Manager Sterner said the request is to waive the fees only, estimated fees are \$455.00.

President Strubinger thanked the committee for doing this and thinks this is a good idea.

Curtis Jackson said you still have the meeting on 1/3/20, will you be making the appointments then or will they still be deferred?

President Strubinger said we are hoping to make the appointment to finish that out.

Action

Discuss Council Workshop Meeting Minutes from December 5, 2019

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Discuss Council Meeting Minutes from December 12, 2019

Discuss Council Meeting Minutes from December 30, 2019

Discuss Expenditures from all Funds as presented.

Borough Manager Sterner said you don't have the bill list yet. We will try to have it to council tomorrow so you can see and it will be updated again on 1/9/20.

Discuss Treasurer Report December, 2019 as presented

Discuss PSAB Annual Conference

Borough Manager Sterner said Mr. Schaninger has some interest in attending.

Mr. Yeastedt said he is interested in attending also.

Borough Manager Sterner said they don't have the registration forms out yet. There are different packages that you can choose from, as soon as they come out, we will let you know. Council can approve the attendance of whoever they wish to attend.

Discuss Resolution 2020-01 Price Adjustment Bituminous Materials.

Borough Manager Sterner said this is an annual resolution that we are required to do for an escalation clause for the materials.

Discuss Resolution 2020-02 Tax Levy

Borough Manager Sterner said this is the resolution setting the taxes for the 2020 year. In the past we were required to do this via ordinance, that changed last year. They changed the borough code to allow us to do it by resolution. When it was an ordinance you only had to do it if there was a change in the taxes. With the resolution you do it every year whether there is a change or not.

Discuss Resolution 2020-03 Fee Schedule

Borough Manager Sterner said this is updating the Water utility rates, this is the 5% increase in the budget.

Discuss Resolution 2020-04 Francis E. Walter Dam

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President Strubinger said there has been some things in the news media in regards to some potential changes in the water usage there. Some of the local bodies have prepared resolutions requesting our repour to continue the usage of the water as it is currently.

Discuss Resignation – James Mason, UCC Joint Appeals Board

President Strubinger asked if he would be interested in the alternate position on the UCC board?

Borough Manager Sterner said we will ask him.

Discuss Resignation - Terry McElmoyle, Real Estate Tax Collector

Borough Manager Sterner said council can advise us. We do have one letter of interest. She would suggest announce it, post it in the office and on the website and spread the word.

President Strubinger asked how long is the term?

Borough Manager Sterner said this would be to fill out Terry's term, which would run until the end of 2021. The next election in 2021, they would run to take office for the new term to start in 2022.

Tax Collector Audit

President Strubinger said as the result of Terry's resignation, it needs to be audited. We will be reaching out to the other entities the School District and the County to see if we can do a simultaneous audit as a cost savings.

Borough Manager Sterner said she did talk to our auditor. She did get a proposal to do our audit. She asked them if they were available to do the simultaneous for the 3 entities and they are available. She is checking with the other entities. She has not asked for a proposal for all 3 because she has not heard back from them.

McElmoyle, Jay – medical leave

10 Ton Street Truck

President Strubinger said this is budgeted, we will be moving forward with the purchase.

PSM Yaich said the one that is going to be replaced is 22 years old.

Borough Manager Sterner said this will take 6 to 9 months.

PSM Yaich said this will be put out for bids on Municibid.

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Discuss Repository Sale 82A-15-K5

Discuss Repository Sale 82F-16-A345

President Strubinger said these are vacant parcels of land. These would go through tax sale.

Discussed Sam Miller Zoning Permit Fee Waiver Request

Discuss Earth Day Festival – 4/18/20 rain date 4/19/20

President Strubinger asked if Police services will be required?

Police Chief Schatz said they should.

Borough Manager Sterner said either her or Chief will contact them. She said we will have to make sure, all of them, even if they didn't need the Police service contract in the past, we will have to have a copy of it, this is new from last year.

Borough Facilities Projects

- a. Spillman Farmer Administration Invoice
- b. Spillman Farmer Garage Invoice

Borough Manager Sterner said we don't have anything pending yet, same with the Master Site plan.

Park Master Site Plan

- a.

WWTP Upgrade Project

- a. Eastern Environmental payment application #32 - None
- b. Howard Company payment application #27 – None

Borough Manager Sterner said there are just some small repairs. We have been having difficulty getting them there, if they want to get paid, they have to show up.

Utility Action

Utility Accounts Lien Reports

Active Utility Accounts Garbage & Others Lien Report (0)

Active Utility Account Garbage Only Lien Report (3)

Active Utility Accounts Sewer/Garbage Lien Report (0)

Active Utility Accounts Water/Garbage Lien Report (0)

Active Utility Accounts Water/Sewer/Garbage Lien Report (0)

Temporary Off Lien Report (0)

Inactive (0)

Uncollectible Accounts Report – (0)

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Utility Accounts Proposed Updates (1)

President Strubinger said as we are auditing the utilities, we are finding things that need to be corrected, whether we find another unit and apartment, etc.

Borough Manager Sterner said the monitoring of the Air B&B website, this is what this is they advertise a unit in their basement.

Discuss Account #7090 Payment Plan.

Mr. Sheckler asked if they made their first payment?

Borough Manager Sterner said yes. This is the current plus an additional \$75.00 a month.

Discuss Account #6400 Request

Borough Manager Sterner said this is the request for a credit on the sewer, they had a leak.

Discuss Account #3930 Request (tabled last month)

Borough Manager Sterner said this is a property on Laurel Street, he has apartments that are vacant and he is looking for a base fee. We had suggested he turn the water off, we don't have any type of reduced fee. If the water is on, he needs to pay the water fees. If you want us to instruct him if there are any apartments that are vacant, they are required to pay the water and sewer bill if the services are on. He does have the option to turn the water services off but will still be responsible for garbage.

Tax Exoneration Action

Robin Stermer - retired

Committees

Administration

Mary Packer Cummings Trust

Borough Manager Sterner said the MCTC has been handling this trust, this came from their auditors., they aren't doing anything for us. With what they are making and what their fees they are charging us, it's pretty much a wash. Their auditors suggest they distribute the money to the borough, that is what the bank would like to do. They can't just do this; they would have to petition the court to have this done. Amount \$87,700.00, it is for general purposes, it does not have to go to any of the Mansions, there aren't any restrictions. She would suggest to Council, put this into an account that would go towards improvements to Memorial park. It could be a nice amount for a matching grant for DCNR to get new equipment or do some improvements after the Master Site plan is done.

JCP Newsletter Proposal

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JCP Connor Rodgers said it would be 4 times a year publication that he would be working on. It is pretty simple: new ordinances, announcements, projects both upcoming and completed, vacancies. He would like something from the Mayor, Council President, important telephone numbers would be a standing section, and progress from different committees.

President Strubinger said you are proposing in print and electronically.

JCP Connor Rodgers said the electronic would be posted on the website, printed copy will be in the office. I should only be about 1-page, legal sheet so it's not much in cost.

President Strubinger asked if this is something that could be run off in the office?

Borough Manager Sterner said yes.

Patricia Spillman, letter of interest for Tax Collector vacancy.

Public Service (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)
Flizack Request

President Strubinger said we had a request for vacating a portion of unopened 4th St.

Borough Manager Sterner said the person making the request owns property on either side of this unopened portion of 4th street. However, he built his house and placed it on the unopened portion of 4th St. She believes other than any utilities, other than for his house.

PSM Yaich said there are no borough utilities up there. Right where his driveway comes off of Fairview St and runs up through his property, this piece of 4th St that he wants vacated a portion of the driveway to go to the property next door to him, runs right across this piece of 4th St. that he wants to get. He talked to Maureen, and said we got to make sure he can't at anytime in the future stop them from crossing his property, these people have been crossing this for 20 years. The other thing is, there are a lot of unopened streets, paper streets in the borough that are named. You will see long stretches of street that says Jim Thorpe Borough and the name of the street, then there will be a section of the street that somebody owns. Nobody has any idea how they acquired it. In that area, Blakeslee Street runs through there, an unopened paper street approximately 60 ft wide by 300 ft piece of it was purchased by a property owner. This is something that the borough needs to start looking at. If we don't need these paper streets, they aren't a benefit to the borough, we should start vacating them and get them on the tax rolls.

PSM Yaich said the other thing, we have another problem with the Bus road, same thing. People are telling the neighbors they can't access the back of their property any more, they own the road. When you look at it, it says property of Jim Thorpe Municipal Authority, then this section of the property which is 49 ft on one end and 19 ft on the other end by 60 or 70 ft wide, then back to the borough as a borough street. One of the problems he sees the first time they need to plow this year; we go to this particular street to plow and then these people are going to be here.

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PSM Yaich said there is no place to put the snow and these people are saying they own it. The first time they go to push snow there we are going to have some trouble.

President Strubinger said this would be a question for the solicitor.

President Strubinger asked if the solicitor to render his decision on this?

Borough Manager Sterner said he has not been asked yet.

President Strubinger said we should ask solicitor for his legal decision.

Temporary Sewer Employee

Borough Manager Sterner said she did not speak to the solicitor about this yet.

PSM Yaich said he has been sending guys down on days, when they aren't cindering and patching, to help them out. The reason for the temporary employee, being down a guy at the WWTP, the one guy moved up and we can't take him out of the plant to drive truck. Eddie gave him a schedule and they work around that, if we get hit with any weather it puts us down a man.

Police

Mayor Sofranko said last month Mr. Malatak was here about us going to meet with the Commissioners. We did meet with Commissioner Nothstein, Council President and himself to discuss the crosswalks. The easiest fix is to eliminate parking spots there.

Buildings/Parks

Narenco – solar farm

Borough Manager Sterner said she does not know where they are looking. This would be something for the Building Committee to contact them.

President Strubinger said have the Building Committee do this.

Emergency Services

PSM Yaich said Mike and he finally got all the paperwork for the guys that are eligible for the Act 172, there are 10 guys eligible this year.

Old Business

- Permit Parking
- Readdressing Phase II
- Susquehanna Street No Parking Ordinance
- Blight Landbank
- Zoning Ordinance Group Homes

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Executive Session

Personnel

MOTION: Gregory Strubinger second Robert Schaninger to adjourn and go into executive session for personnel.

YES 7

NO 0

Adjourned at 9:08

Respectfully submitted



Louise McClafferty
Borough Secretary