

JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORKSHOP
MARCH 4, 2021
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:34 p.m. by President Gregory Strubinger with the pledge of allegiance and moment of silence for the men and women serving our country and our first responders.

Roll Call of Members

Gregory Strubinger	Michael Yeastedt	Joanne Klitsch
Kyle Sheckler	Robert Schaninger	Thomas Highland
Jay Miller	Mayor Michael Sofranko	Manager Sterner
Police Chief Schatz	Public Service Manager Yaich	Solicitor Nanovic – absent
Connor Rodgers, JCP	Secretary Louise McClafferty - absent	Borough Engineer – absent

Mayor's Report

Mayor Sofranko stated the police report has been distributed; Chief is working to secure the electronic signs to assist with speeding issues; truck traffic on local roads may be increased if the tolling of bridges by PennDOT is instituted.

Announcements

UCC Joint Board of Appeals Board Vacancy

SALDO

Ogden/Bennick Subdivision – is due for expiration; extension submitted for council to accept; time period discussed was 6 months

Public Comment

Leroy Strohl and Trish Spillman – thanked Mayor, Chief and Public Service for help with the ice rink at Sam Miller Field. Discussed upcoming work including volleyball court, here to see what was needed. They were instructed to submit in writing their plans so a determination can be made regarding Land Development Plan and Stormwater Management Plan. Waivers cannot be considered until the paperwork is submitted for review.

Robert Dages – stated he is interested in the UCC Joint Board of Appeals Seat; opposed to the Short-Term Rentals Ordinance; commented on the language included in the Ordinance heading paragraphs; suggested a Commonwealth Committee person.

Action

Meeting Minutes included in council packets, typographical error on the February 11 minutes has been corrected, no other comments.

Discussed Expenditures from all Funds as presented.

Discussed Treasurer's Report for February, 2021.

COVID Disaster Declaration to June – to ensure borough and residents remain eligible for any state or federal programs and funds that may be available.

Short-Term Rental Ordinances – permitting ordinance and zoning ordinance amendment; zoning public hearing held last month; have been advertised; before council for consideration.

Parking Ordinance Amendments – snow event ticket amount and no parking portion of Oak St; before council to vote to advertise for consideration, if desired.

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Updated Fee Schedule Resolution – drafted for consideration if the Short-Term Rental Ordinances are adopted. Only change would be a Short-Term Rental Permit Application Fee of \$60.00.

Stong Leave Time – leave time owed to Tammy Stong for unused sick, personal, vacation.

Police Pension Board appointment – Michael Rivkin has submitted a letter of interest to replace Kurt Jackson who must step down due to his appointment to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Police Collective Bargaining Agreement – time extension for the DROP Program to be completed.

2020 Freightliner Lease Purchase – delivery anticipated mid-March; two quotes for lease purchase received.

Street Sweeper Agreement – with Lehighton Borough, provided to council for review and consideration. Includes sweeper with operator.

2018 PA Small Water Grant Church Alley – time extension requested to December 31, 2021 from DCED; submitted; council to ratify.

Black Forest Krampusnacht Festival – Dec. 4; information provided; Marianne Rustad addressed the Council on the proposed Krampusnacht Festival for December; explained event, discussed possibility of closing Packer Hill Road and utilizing an additional police officer to assist with drop off of handicap persons at Kemmerer Park site.

Chief Schatz reported that the events meetings have begun again and are proving to be very helpful.

Lisa Napoletano Running with the Angels – May 8; foot race; information provided, organizer works nights so questions should be forwarded to the manager prior to next week's meeting and she will speak with organizer to address.

Keystone Backyard Ultra – May 22-23; foot race; information provided; will be at council meeting; needs County and MC Park approvals also.

Tamaqua Transfer – request dumpster be placed back in Leisure Land Development. Residents are calling Tamaqua. Options were discussed. Manager will contact Tamaqua to investigate the possibility of delivering a smaller dumpster on Wednesdays and picking up the entire dumpster on Thursdays.

WWTP – Requisition 46 – corrected; engineering amount decreased; Entech Invoice – funds available for work invoiced; both items will also need USDA approval.

Utility Action

No reports at this time with reduction in office staff.

Exoneration Request

None.

Committees

Administration

Utility Secretary/Billing – job description distributed to council; position will be discussed in executive session after meeting.

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Junior Council Person – JCP Connor Rogers will be stepping down, as he is off to college. He and Council President Strubinger are working on a replacement(s).

Engineering Work Policy – policy drafted as requested; will move to Action agenda.

Employment Application Policy – policy drafted as requested; will move to Action agenda.

Vendor Permits – will wait for April to make final decisions; should be subject to CDC guidelines; obtain update on County's status; contact PA State Association of Boroughs to inquire if they have any guidance.

Public Services (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)

Wildlands Conservancy MOU & Project Plan – for dam breaching; Kristie Fach of WC reviewed the project and MOU with Council; will move to Action agenda.

Sewer Department Employee – after discussion on moving forward, council instructed that this item be placed on the Action agenda for the regular meeting.

Yost Stormwater Inspection Fees – no payments received; discussed placing lien on property; manager to discuss accepting multiple payments to assist resident with fees.

2021 Streets Projects – discussion on how to move forward with our street paving projects; estimate for stormwater engineer to develop a site evaluation list/process for council to understand everything that is involved with one site. Requiring property owners to pay for and install curbing was discussed – must determine if this will be done; should this be done a year in advance to property owners have adequate time to plan and save funds; does not seem to be a consensus of council at this time to require homeowners to install curbing.

Police

Second Amendment Sanctuary Status – discussion on matter brought before Council by Brandon Bell. Marissa Strohlein addressed council with opposition to this item. Solicitor review was included in the discussion. Will move to Action agenda for council to give direction on this item.

Buildings/Parks

Borough Facilities Projects – Council President Strubinger reported the building committee held a meeting to discuss next steps; we are working on obtaining information to review to determine options moving forward.

Emergency Services – n/a

Old Business

Flizak Request – 4th St Quit Claim Deed

457 Plan

Parking Study

Readdressing Phase II

Blight Landbank

Parking Ordinance Amendment – permit parking West Broadway

Bob Dages – asked council to consider changing the language included in the Ordinance heading paragraphs.

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Executive Session

Personnel – will be held after this meeting.

Adjourn

MOTION: Tom Highland, second by Kyle Sheckler to adjourn and go into an executive session for personnel. Motion carried 7 to 0.

The meeting ended at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Sterner
Borough Manager