

JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL WORKSHOP
SEPTEMBER 2, 2021
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:33 p.m. by President Gregory Strubinger with the pledge of allegiance and moment of silence for the armed forces, first responders and their families and for those suffering effects of the recent storm.

Roll Call of Members

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

Mayor's Report

Mayor Sofranko asked if there were any questions or concerns on the police report. There were none. He informed council the new police vehicle had arrived; his intent to renew the COVID Disaster Declaration to October 15 and a second Declaration for the IDA storm; discussed fall festival items. Mayor Sofranko informed the Council that Councilman Highland is recuperating at home and making great strides and reported that the Mauch Chunk Road and Gun Club did a great job on the recent fundraiser held for Tom.

Announcements

Pocono Mountains Visitor Bureau Pick Up the Poconos Day is September 25. See the PMVB website for details and to sign up.

Fall tire and electronic recycling scheduled for October 16, 7:00 to 11:00 am at the borough garage.

SALDO

Ogden/Bennick – time for action on the plan is due to expire. Councilman Strubinger will contact the applicant to inquire about granting a time extension.

Public Comment

Jake Arner commented on the proposed curbing ordinance amendment.

Action

Meeting Minutes included in council packets for review.

Expenditures to date presented; additional will be forwarded to council for review for next week's meeting.

Treasurer's Report presented for review.

Proposed draft Disaster Declaration for COVID was presented.

Disaster Declaration for the IDA storm was presented – council to ratify.

Ordinance 2021-04, Streets & Sidewalks Amendment; curbing standards – draft presented and discussed.

Ordinance 2021-05, Vehicles & Traffic Amendment; permit parking downtown – draft presented and discussed.

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Police Collective Bargaining Agreement Addendum for Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) – has been ratified by police; presented to council for review and discussed; to be ratified by council next week.

Proposed Ordinance for (DROP) distributed – presented and discussed; council to consider advertising for adoption.

Resolution 2021-14, Authorizing application for an LSA Monroe Grant for Memorial Park Phase I Construction in the amount of \$159,838.88 – presented and discussed.

Memorial Park Grant funding commitment – recommending \$32,000.00 for match presented and discussed.

Resolution 2021-15, Authorizing application for an LSA Monroe Grant for Community Center PA System/Electronics in the amount of \$32,099.00 – presented and discussed. No funding match for this grant.

2022 Police Pension Plan Minimum Municipal Obligation from actuary received – presented for council's review for action next week.

2022 Non-Uniform Pension Plan Minimum Municipal Obligation from actuary received – presented for council's review for action next week.

Police Policies – Special Order 1.14 – distributed for council to review for next week.

Police Operation Plan – Fall Festival – distributed for council to review for next week.

Blight Remediation Grant Projects – engineering proposals for two properties and demolition quotes for a third were presented and discussed.

Church Alley – Pioneer Payment Application #4 for \$119,500.50 – presented and discussed.

Raising the House; Lights in the Park – presented and discussed. Representatives will be present at next week's meeting.

Carbon County Susquehanna Project Water HOP Supplement – discussed ratification and project.

Onoko Bay Floor Repair - \$5,300.00 – reviewed and discussed.

Utility Action

No Account Lien Reports for this meeting.

Two proposed payment plans – reviewed and discussed.

Exoneration Request

None.

Committees

Administration

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November meeting is scheduled for Veteran's Day. There was discussion on rescheduling. Council did not wish to reschedule. Meeting will be held November 11, 2021 as scheduled.

Budget meetings – dates discussed and those to be considered are – Oct. 27, Nov. 3, 10 and 17, only as needed, 6:30 pm in Memorial Hall.

Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment (STR nonconforming lots, hotels, regulation tables updates) – public hearing scheduled for Oct. 14, 2021. Draft has been forwarded to borough and county planning commissions for review & comment as required.

Medical Marijuana regulations for zoning – waiting for updated mapping showing playgrounds.

Zoning Ordinance Updates – transfer of development rights and environmental impact studies information previous distributed; the committee meeting scheduled for Sept. 27 will be advertised as a public meeting in order to have a joint public meeting with council and planning commission to ask questions and educate themselves on these topics to determine if they are a fit for our community.

Jim Thorpe Little League – requesting the borough be the applicant for and LSA Grant for equipment and improvements to McGarvey's field. Manager Sterner will contact JTLL for answers to questions raised during the discussion. Council will consider at next week's meeting.

Public Services (Sewer/Sanitation/Water/Streets)

2021 Street Project – Front Street – no update

Facilities Projects – Solicitor Nanovic does not believe we can use COSTARS for the projects. He believes the COSTARS vendor can bid on the projects, but they should be bid.

High Street Water Main Project – ARP Funds – engineer working on project and specifications.

Police

Parking – 1st block of Broadway – reviewed and discussed. Move to Action agenda.

Parking Authority – Jay Miller believes an authority should be formed to address Broadway and West Broadway and other areas. He would like to see an authority established with the intention of constructing a parking lot and then a parking deck; utilizing trams and busses; should work in conjunction with permit parking; be a working authority that can hire employees, incur debt, etc. He is asking this be placed on the agenda to ask council if they wish to pursue and if so, turn over to the manager and solicitor and authorize the solicitor to begin researching an authority. The authority would handle ticketing and looking at other places to park.

Mayor Sofranko suggested council do their own research; check other areas – most are large cities, the smallest is Pottsville; your parking related revenue now goes to your general fund budget, if you form an authority, that revenue will then go to the authority; the authority would handle the parking issues, not the police; it is possible work such as street sweeping and snow removal would fall under the authority. Councilman Miller state he thinks we need this and it will take the burden off of council; an authority would have to give funds back to the borough so the borough doesn't lose revenue. Move to Action agenda.

Buildings/Parks

Jim Thorpe Rotary Summer Camp Report – reviewed and discussed.

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Emergency Services

Chipmunk Trail Addressing – no update.

Old Business

No updates

Executive Session

Personnel – will be held after this meeting.

Adjourn

MOTION: Mike Yeastedt, second by Jay Miller to adjourn and go into an executive session for personnel. Motion carried 5 to 0.

The meeting ended at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Sterner
Borough Manager