

December 12, 2019

The regular meeting of the Ligonier Borough Council was held Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall with James St. Clair presiding.

Members Present: James St. Clair, Matt Smith, James McDonnell, Mariah Fisher, Judy Hoffer, Jeff Craig. Absent was Terry Murphy and Jr. Council Member Izabella Wentzell.

Others Present: Secretary-Treasurer Jan Shaw, Streets Supervisor Ron Ross, Mayor Ormond "Butch" Bellas, Engineer Ben Faas, Solicitor George Welty, Assistant Police Chief Mike Matrunic, Fire Chief Steve Barron, & Zoning Officer Rick Schwab. Absent was Code Enforcement Officer Shawn Knepper.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Jeff Craig and seconded by Mariah Fisher to approve the minutes of November 14, 2019 as presented. All of Council was in favor.

BILLS PAYABLE

A motion was made by Judy Hoffer and seconded by Matt Smith to approve the Bills Payable. The motion carried with all in favor.

CONSENT CALENDAR

A motion was made by Matt Smith and seconded by Jeff Craig to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mini Cell Tower Ordinance:

A motion was made by James McDonnell and seconded by Mariah Fisher to approve the ordinance. All were in favor.

Traffic Ordinance – 4 Way Stop Sign:

A motion was made by James McDonnell and seconded by Mariah Fisher to approve the ordinance. All of Council was in favor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter received from LV Chamber of Commerce requesting consideration to bag the following parking meters for Ice Fest January 25-26, 2020:

- 2 meters in front of the Library for Hanson's Original Kettle Korn from 5pm Friday until Sunday at 5pm.
- The first 4 meters on East Main Street along the side of Town Hall for the entertainer's to load and unload their equipment Saturday from 9am-4pm and Sunday 9am-3pm.
- The first 4 meters on Fairfield Street beside the YMCA from 8am-4pm Saturday and Sunday for Misty Haven Carriage to park their horse trailer and truck.

A motion was made by Matt Smith and seconded by Jeff Craig to approve the request from the LV Chamber of Commerce. All were in favor.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PARKS & RECREATION

Chairman James McDonnell reported that the Rotary's (approved last March) Geotechnical Testing at the Tennis Courts will be completed through a grant with a company in Pittsburgh, Construction Engineering Consultants Inc. to determine if it would be feasible to restore. The Borough will be notified prior to the drilling. Precautionary efforts will be taken for safety.

McDonnell reported still waiting on parts for the speaker buttons on the two digital voice exhibits for Diamond Park.

McDonnell thanked the volunteers that decorated the Diamond.

Jeff Craig and Sam St. Clair thanked James McDonnell for his 20 years of service and countless hours to Ligonier Borough.

McDonnell expressed with pleasure in serving and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

TOWN HALL

Judy Hoffer, Chairperson for Town Hall Committee is waiting for prices on alarm systems for Town Hall as well as prices for cooling & heating. Hoffer also wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

PUBLIC WORKS

N/A

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public Works: Chairman Jeff Craig reported that Ron Ross is going to begin to winterize the former police building and will be turning the heat down. The fire department will begin to have their monthly meetings at the Town Hall in January.

Public Safety: Jeff Craig reported that the first year with the new Ligonier Valley Police Department is coming to a close. Jeff feels things are going very well and should finish on budget. The balance of the police fleet will be wrapped from a grant received after two new police cars are purchased in the spring.

A grant has been received to hire The Hill Group (Pittsburgh Pa) to undertake an evaluation of locations for the LV Police Department new headquarters. While there is no commitment to build a new headquarters, it is a step towards this direction. After the first of the year the Hill Group will determine potential locations, building costs, renovations on any particular site chosen. It is not disclosed at this time any sites that will be looked at but the committee is open to any and all suggestions. It is hoped that within a matter of a few months a preliminary decision will be made and the committee will come back to council / Township with a recommendation. Jeff Craig feels confident the grant dollars will be there to either build or renovate whatever plan that they come up with.

Fire: Jeff Craig stated that the Fire Department is in great condition with more members than in the previous 10 years.

Jeff Craig thanked Steve Barron who is retiring as Chief after 42 years of service.

Mayor Bellas presented Steve Barron with a proclamation for his service.

Council Mariah Fisher reported that Ligonier Borough has been nominated as an award recipient of their first time participant category for National Night Out event held in August of this year. It was noted that a plaque will be received.

FINANCE

Mariah Fisher reported that the 2020 budget presented at last month's meeting has been advertised and is available in the Borough office and website for review.

Resolution 2019-05:

Tax Rate 2020 – no tax increase

A motion was made by James McDonnell and seconded by Mariah Fisher to adopt Resolution 2019-05 and to approve the 2020 Budget. All of Council was in favor.

PLANNING / PERSONNEL

Chairman Matt Smith reported that the personnel committee is working on a few things for the 2020 first quarter.

NEW BUSINESS

N/A

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Dianna Denning, holding an office at 113 S. Fairfield Street was present and voiced her concern about the parking spaces at the front of her building. Dr. Denning requests that ticketing at this location be stopped.

Bridget Coyne of Ligonier Pharmacy; having the same address, also commented on the parking at 113 S. Fairfield Street. Coyne added receiving a phone call from the Borough Streets Department that the curb cut will be paved over, thus eliminating the parking in front of the building for Ligonier Pharmacy and Ligonier Gynecology. Coyne was further told that there couldn't be parking meters placed in front because it would get in the way of the Dollar General Delivery trucks. Coyne presented a site plan showing that the curb cuts have been there for years. Coyne asked what precedent there is to pave over existing curb cuts with no change of use, no enlargement, no substantial improvements to indicate any new zoning requirements. Coyne noted in the past year patients and customers at 113 S. Fairfield seem to be targeted by parking enforcement. Coyne asked how to remedy the situation.

Solicitor George Welty suggested a meeting be held between Engineer Ben Faas, Street Supervisor Ron Ross, Streets Committee, Police Chief John Berger and himself to look into the situation and requirements to find a resolution in this matter.

President Sam St. Clair asked that they meet and then come back to council for next month with clarity for those at 113 S. Fairfield St.

Councilman James McDonnell asked Bridget Coyne to rid her mind of the targeting as it does not happen. People need to take responsibility for their actions.

Bridget Coyne asked to be present at any meeting.

COMMENDATIONS & COMMENTS from OFFICERS and DEPARTMENTS

Jan Shaw, Secretary-Treasurer reported being contacted by Mt Pleasant Borough to join the G17 Conference which is a group of 17 local municipalities. The group gets together on a regular basis to discuss and share information occurring in their municipalities. A motion is necessary to prove the Borough joining.

A motion was made by James McDonnell and seconded by Mariah Fisher to approve the request to join the G17 Conference. All of Council was in favor.

Shaw added receiving a text from Chief Berger thanking Council for past and continued support for the Police Department.

Shaw also thanked departing Fire Chief Steve Barron, Councilman Terry Murphy and Councilman James McDonnell for their help.

Solicitor Welty acknowledged Fire Chief Steve Barron's years of service and thanked Councilmen James McDonnell for his years of service to Ligonier Borough.

Streets Supervisor Ron Ross reported that leaf season is now over. The machine will be put away tomorrow. Any collecting of leaves now will again need to be placed in the biodegradable paper bags.

Two parking spots in front of Calvary Church were removed and made into a loading zone for the Pre-School going in.

Ross finished his report by adding that two yellow lines and an NP spot were placed by Ramada at the entrance to Shaker building because they will be doing some work there.

Fire Chief Steve Barron reported that there were 328 fire calls this year. 2190 man hours were put in. Barron praised the work of the members and volunteers.

The Borough was thanked for enacting the ordinance for invoicing repeat alarm offenders. Barron closed by thanking Council for their support of the fire department.

A discussion ensued regarding the need for all residents / businesses to have proper house numbers placed on their homes / buildings.

Engineer Ben Faas reported that the Hazel Street storm sewer grant application has been submitted earlier this week. No hard copy available at this time.

Faas also thanked James McDonnell for his years of service and for his pleasure working with him as well as departing Councilman Terry Murphy.

Zoning Officer Rick Schwab congratulated and honored council leaving and those incoming as well as Fire Chief Steve Barron who will now serve as President of the Fire Department.

Mayor Bellas thanked James McDonnell for his years of service.

Mayor Bellas also reminded everyone to shovel their sidewalks this winter.

President St Clair wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

A motion was made by James McDonnell and seconded by Jeff Craig to adjourn the meeting. All of Council was in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janette Shaw
Secretary-Treasurer