

Laurel Mountain Borough

February 17, 2021

A regular meeting of the Laurel Mountain Borough Council was held on Wednesday, February 17, 2021 by Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by President Susan Crouse.

Council members present were Susan Crouse, President; Tom Campbell; Matt Thomas; Sharon Detar; and Ty Honhart. Others present were Mayor Philip Light; Solicitor Mark Sorice; Robin Roberts, Secretary/Treasurer. A moment of silence was held.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the January 20, 2021 meeting were presented. A motion to accept the minutes as presented was made by Sharon Detar, second by Tom Campbell, passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's Report for January 2021 was presented. A motion to accept the January's Treasurer's Report as presented was made by Tom Campbell, second by Matt Thomas, and passed unanimously. The disbursements for February 2021 were presented. A motion to approve the disbursements as presented was made by Sharon Detar, second by Tom Campbell, and passed unanimously.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Light reported there were 43 patrols in January and 1 emergency response.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Roberts reminded everyone to submit the Statement of Financial Interest forms for prior year 2020 to her.

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

Code Enforcement Officer – Merle Muscik stated he was interested. He usually does an 80/20 agreement with Municipalities. It was decided to have a work session March 3, 2021 @ 7:30 to work on a new fee schedule to propose at the council meeting. Then proceed with Mr. Muscik as the Officer. Emergency Manager – Steve Barron has agreed to the position pending an Emergency Management Agreement. Roberts will send Solicitor Sorice the example she received.

MEMBER'S REPORTS

Matt: Matt stated he met with the planning committee on 2-18-21. They introduced themselves and he explained to them the objective of the committee. They will meet again 3-18-21.

Tom: None

Ty: Ty said he received some older maps from Monte. Crouse said she has some also.

Sharon: None

Susan: Susan reported the ground has been frozen and delayed Tomlinson to install the speed limit signs. He will complete the job when weather permits.

The Borough was denied the Ligonier Endowment Grant for the pillars. The pillars are in poor shape and could technically be a hazard. Mayor Light said the cracks are expanding causing more rocks to be loose. Crouse had 3 bids last year, 2 for repairs and 1 to replace. All the bids were costly. Matt said he will have someone take a look at the pillars and get some suggestions.

Susan has not heard from the Dirt/Gravel Roads Grant yet, so probably did not get that grant either. Crouse suggested 2 council members take a code enforcement training to learn more to help resolve some of the code concerns for the Borough.

Susan shared her concerns with the PA 1-calls regarding locating water lines. She does not feel adequate without some sort of locater. The locaters she has priced are expensive. She plans to reach out to Rural Waters for suggestions.

Crouse is doing the Ligonier Endowment one year report for the grant to the Laurel Mountain Park Association's shelter house improvements. The project has not been completed at this time. The amounts spent, remaining balance, work completed, and remaining work is being reported to the Endowment.

Crouse raised questions on the students using the shelter house for remote learning. Her main concern is if there is a liability concern. Solicitor Sorice agreed liability is a concern. He asked if there is a lease or informal agreement. Detar commented these type of places are all over town to help the students during the pandemic. Thomas said he has heard them referred as online learning pods. Honhart said the teacher has been hired privately by the parents by an informal agreement. They have made arrangements regarding utilities with the Association. Sorice agreed these arrangements can be beneficial for the students such as wifi and supervision. However, there is still a liability concern. Who is the insurer, teacher clearances, etc.? Detar stated the teacher is from the watershed. Honhart asked Emily Honhart to join the meeting to clarify the issue. Emily confirmed the group of parents have an informal agreement with the Association for use of the building. The teacher is Lynn Donnelly. She also does programs for the school districts. The remote learning is part of the Ligonier Valley School District. Ms. Donnelly is there to supervise and support the children with the remote learning. Sorice stated no formal agreement is required but the insurance and indemnity should be considered.

SOLICITORS REPORT

The Storm Water Ordinance research is ongoing. Sorice said he has seen comparisons from other small Boroughs. It is the defining areas that are in question. The Borough needs to have an engineer to come up with our own unique standards. Crouse said her friend would most likely help since he helped with the FEMA Report in the past. It was recommended she get more information for the March meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

Secretary Roberts shared from the Westmoreland County Boroughs Association that there will not be a banquet in 2021 due to the ongoing health concerns.

Roberts reminded everyone of the openings in the upcoming election. There are currently 3 Council positions; Mayor; Tax Collector; 3 positions for Election Board, Majority and Minority Inspectors and Judge of Election.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Matt Thomas, second by Ty Honhart, passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Roberts, Borough Secretary/Treasurer