

Laurel Mountain Borough

July 21, 2021

A regular meeting of the Laurel Mountain Borough Council was held on Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at the shelter house. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Susan Crouse.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeff Snyder, 5 Laurel Rd, said the Borough hasn't had the drains and ditches cleaned for quite a while and is wondering if they have plans to have them cleared. Jeff stated they are currently plugged. Crouse responded that the drains and ditches do need done.

Cindy Bode, 10 Beechwood Rd., questioned why the minutes are not posted on the website from the June meeting. Roberts explained the minutes need to be approved before they are posted. Mayor Light added the minutes are not official before they are approved.

Natalie Appleby, 7 Walnut Rd., asked how they are to know before the meeting what went on at the prior meeting. Solicitor Sorice explained the Pa State Borough Laws states the approval of minutes are to be done at the next meeting. After approval the minutes are official and can be published. Agendas were then discussed. Roberts explained that a new law goes into effect August 23rd that if a Borough has a website, the Agenda needs posted within 24 hours of the council meeting. Roberts stated she will follow the ruling and will post the agenda to the website.

Donald Brant, 25 Walnut Rd., commented that large trucks have driven in to the ditches and have knocked down mailboxes.

Cindy Bode, 10 Beechwood Rd., asked if Sharon Detar and Kellen Detar are related. It was stated they are mother and son. Cindy noted that Sharon has voted for payment on Kellen's invoices and should not vote. Crouse stated, noted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes from the June 16, 2021 meeting were presented. A motion to accept the minutes as presented was made by Sharon Detar, second by Matt Thomas, and passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's Report for June 2021 was presented. A motion to accept the June Treasurer's Report as presented was made by Ty Honhart, second by Sharon Detar, and passed unanimously. The disbursements for July 2021 were presented. Thomas asked a question regarding the zoom invoice as it was decided to drop the subscription last month. Roberts explained she was told after the meeting that the planning committee still wanted to use the subscription. Thomas said the committee is planning to meet in person now. Roberts said she will cancel the zoom subscription. A motion to approve the July disbursements as presented was made by Matt Thomas, second by Ty Honhart, and passed unanimously.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Light reported there were 57 routine patrols and no calls to 911.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Roberts said her zoom question was resolved earlier.

Roberts presented the renewal bid from Higbee for the Borough's liability insurance. The renewal quote is \$3,012.00 to take affect 8-1-21. That is an increase of \$161.00. A motion to renew Higbee's Liability Insurance at \$3,012.00 dollars for 8/1/21-7/3/22 was made by Sharon Detar, second by Matt Thomas, passed unanimously.

Roberts said she received the 2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application. It is due by 9-30-21 if there is interest to apply again. Crouse explained there is a good bit of money available from these grants. These funds could be a huge help for our waterlines and roads. The requirement is based on the population and median of the household incomes. Last time some residents were hesitant to give personal information, which is understandable. We need to inform our friends and neighbors the need for the information to qualify for such grants. A motion to proceed with the application process for the CDBG was made by Ty Honhart, second by Sharon Detar, passed unanimously. Sharon and Ty agreed to help Sue with the process again. Mayor Light mentioned the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County has approached us of their interest in taking over our waterlines at some point. We need to take care and update most of our lines to do this. He said we need to make sure people understand the need for this grant so they are more comfortable providing their information. Different water pressures from different residents were discussed.

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

Emergency Manager was not addressed.

MEMBER'S REPORTS

Matt: Matt said he and Janice met for the Planning Committee. There has not been enough participation from the committee at this time.

Tom: Tom thanked Judy Fyock for putting flowers at the front entrance. Tom noted a few pot holes are coming back. Sue commented that brush needs trimmed along the roads too. Sue asked Tom to get bids for brush and cleanout along the roads.

Sharon: Sharon said the LMP Association are still working at the shelter house. It was noted their grant balance is \$2,114.00 remaining. Melinda Clark, 19 Hemlock, gave an update on the overall progress.

Ty: Ty said he and Sharon have worked on definitions for certain fees. He apologized that he did not get everything typed up for today's meeting. As for different forms that may be needed, he thought a code enforcement officer most likely could provide them.

Susan: Susan said the Borough still needs a tax collector, as David Fleming is done at the end of the year.

Crouse said representatives from Mesko & Associates were unable to come to the meeting to present their proposal for Code Enforcement. However, they would be available next Wednesday the 28th.

It was decided to hold a special meeting Wednesday, July 28, 2021 for the full purpose of code enforcement with a presentation and proposal from Mesko Associates.

Much discussion was made from the public regarding the necessity of code enforcement.

Natalie Appleby, 7 Walnut Rd.; Donald Brant, 25 Walnut Rd.; Cindy Bode, 10 Beechwood Rd.; Shelley Daum, 1 Laurel Rd., all spoke their concerns. Concerns such as, any benefit to homeowners, invasion of privacy, how much will it cost the homeowners, why change it now, etc. Solicitor Sorice addressed their concerns. There is a legal concern to fill these positions. Not just an idea council has. These codes are for safety concerns for all. They are not new codes, they just need enforced. Building codes are not the same as Borough Codes. Cindy Bode, 10 Beechwood Rd., said the new Stormwater Ordinance mentions land/soil disturbance, yet the Borough removed rocks from in front of her property. She also commented on the placement of speed limit signs and stop signs on peoples properties without checking with the owners. She stated she does not want Crouse on or near her property. Sorice then stated, the meeting is deteriorating, please move forward.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

None

CORRESPONDENCE

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Donald Brant, 25 Walnut Rd., asked why the Borough pays Ligonier Valley Police Department. Mayor Light and Sorice both explained that we have the State Police first, then the LVPD. The local have a quicker response, being the state may not be local at the time and the LVPD also patrol the area. Brant stated he is retired from the state and disagreed.

Melinda Clark, 19 Hemlock Rd., Melinda said she, as well as many others, work very hard for the good of the Community. She thinks many people would abide if they were more aware. She wants every person to be given all the Ordinances. Roberts added they have been uploading them to the website and are available for anyone if they ask.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tom Campbell, second by Ty Honhart, and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

There will be a special meeting July 28, 2021 at 7:30 PM at the Shelter House.

The next monthly meeting will be August 18, 2021 7:30 PM at the Shelter House.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Roberts, Borough Secretary/Treasurer