

Laurel Mountain Borough

August 18, 2021

A regular meeting of the Laurel Mountain Borough Council was held on Wednesday, August 18, 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 Robin Roberts, Secretary/Treasurer and Solicitor Mark Sorice, by phone. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Melanie Brant, 25 Walnut Rd., asked if the cutting back brush is to widen roads. Crouse responded only to clear the current road ways for increase visibility.

Natalie Appleby, 7 Walnut Rd., asked about the fees for Mesko, who sets the fees, how are they proportioned to the Borough. Crouse stated Mesko's fee is \$50.00. Other questions will be discussed during meeting.

Melinda Clark, 23 Hemlock, would like to have meetings on zoom. Crouse commented that is to be discussed.

Ben Faus, 12 Locust Rd., asked if the trees outside of his fence is Borough property, if so, will the Borough remove the dead trees? Crouse responded, yes if they are the Boroughs. He has two that need to be taken down. Matt said he will take a look at them. Faus commented he would like to tear down a garage and rebuild. Ty said he could look at the zoning ordinance online.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes from the July 21, 2021 meeting were presented. A motion to accept the minutes as presented was made by Sharon Detar, second by Matt Thomas, and passed unanimously.

The Minutes from the special meeting July 28, 2021 were presented. Crouse commented to add Mesko's fee of \$50 for each review to the minutes. A motion to accept the minutes with, Mesko's fee of \$50 for each review, being added to the minutes, was made by Matt Thomas, second by Ty Honhart, and passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's Report for July 2021 was presented. A motion to accept the July Treasurer's Report as presented was made by Sharon Detar, second by Matt Thomas, and passed unanimously.

The disbursements for August 2021 were presented. A motion to approve the August disbursements as presented was made by Matt Thomas, second by Tom Campbell, and passed unanimously.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Light reported one traffic citation and 60 routine patrols in July.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Borough received the first annual deposit of the Local Fiscal Recovery Fund for \$8,059.53. These funds are for infrastructure in water/wastewater/broadband.

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

The need for a Tax Collector was discussed.

Solicitor Sorice commented that Greg Sullenberger, who was a state trooper, is certified for Emergency Management. He is a backup for Ligonier Borough. He will email Greg.

Regarding the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Crouse said we can apply by streets instead of a Borough as a whole. They would need 51% of the residents on the street to be in the median or below income range.

MEMBER'S REPORTS

Matt: Matt said the planning committee is meeting tomorrow, July 22nd at the shelter house pavilion. Natalie Appleby said she would check with the LMP Association for use of the building for their meeting. He asked to have Rose Dixon and Lance Appleby added to the planning committee. A motion to add Ross Dixon and Lance Appleby to the planning committee was made by Matt Thomas, second by Ty Honhart, passed unanimously.

Tom: Tom said there is a dead oak tree that needs removed at 33 Walnut Rd. He is meeting with Sanners Tree Service on Friday to look at the tree. They can possibly look at Ben's trees as well. As far as the cutting of brush bids, he hasn't received an answer back yet. Chad Cairns may get back to him if he can get an arm for his brush hog.

Susan: TKL will be driving thru the Borough.

Matt asked Sue about the people that were interested in hemlock trees a while back. He has some that should be taken down before the larvae come out. The Borough has an injector but he wants to be cautious of what chemicals are safe to use. Sue said his name was Bob McColly, but he was not interested in the area due to wires and close buildings. Matt is concerned with the mass amount of hemlocks dying. Ty suggested Champion Lumber and Barkless Tree Service.

Melinda Clark mentioned a root chemical imadofit.

Regarding the stormwater cleanout needing done, Sue contacted Laurel Cog Blairsville/Indiana as they did the work previously. They charge \$185.00 an hour. A motion to have Laurel Cog clean out the stormwater at a rate of \$185.00 an hour was made by Ty Honhart, second by Matt Thomas, passed unanimously.

We need an ordinance for TKL for building codes. Solicitor Sorice will draft an ordinance to be advertised and reviewed.

Mesko Associates have merged with CME Engineering. Everything will remain the same for our business with them. The fee schedule will need changed to cover their \$50 review fee.

Natalie Appleby, 7 Walnut Rd., commented on the political sign restrictions as her right, freedom of expression. Ty responded the ordinance only pertains to the size and amount of time the signs are up.

Melanie Brant, 25 Walnut Rd., commented they should not have to have a sign permit or time line to express their views.

Ty: Ty sent everyone a draft of definitions. Most are standard.

Cindy Bode, 10 Beechwood Rd., said the term business needs defined. Several hypotheticals were named. Sorice said specifics are needed not hypotheticals, then the decision goes to the zoning board.

Sue shared a document the Township has on their website that defines the difference of zoning and building inspection. It was proposed that Ty tweak the document for our Borough and we post on our website.

Sharon: Sharon shared an update from the LMP Association. They are currently having an electrician adding additional outlets at their expense. They will use the remaining grant funds to finish inside work. She also commented that the pool passed inspection.

Crouse presented three mowing bids. A motion to approve the bid from White Rose for \$150 initial clean out of ditch and \$75 for each mowing was made by Ty Honhart, second by Matt Thomas, passed unanimously.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

None

CORRESPONDENCE

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cindy Bode, 10 Beechwood Rd., asked what the planning committee does? Matt explained they gather information for suggestions and ideas, research them, then make suggestions to the Council. She asked who makes the decisions on paying for things. It was explained that all five council members vote on all expenditures.

A question was raised regarding the Homestead Exclusion. Roberts responded that it is handled through the Westmoreland County Assessment Office.

Melinda Clark, 19 Hemlock Rd., stated she is feeling extremely scared and threatened of her financial stability in the Borough. She commented on zoom meetings. It was discussed that the next council meeting will be held at the shelter house and by zoom. A motion to resume the zoom account at \$14.99 a month was made by Matt Thomas, second by Ty Honhart, passed unanimously.

Sue thanked Don Brant for working on the flag pole. He said the ropes will need replaced. She will be checking for a new flag as well.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tom Honhart, second by Matt Thomas, and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

The next monthly meeting will be September 15, 2021 7:30 PM at the Shelter House and via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Roberts, Borough Secretary/Treasurer