

Lafin Borough Council Mtg.

October 8, 2019

6:00 P.M.

MEETING MINUTES

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG RECITED.

Roll Call:

Present: Carl Yastremski – Lisa Natt – Thomas Parry – Junior Councilmember Matthew D’Elia

Absent: Paul Benderavich, President – Anthony D’Eliseo, Vice President – Maureen Zavislak, Mayor

Also Present: Solicitor Bruce Phillips, Esq. and Charles Boyd, Borough Manager

Special Presentations: Martha Kahan, No Nonsense Neutering - Feral Cat Trap, Neuter and Return Program

Councilman Carl Yastremski welcomed Ms. Martha Kahan, President of No Nonsense Neutering and asked her to speak about her program.

Ms. Kahan introduced herself and spoke about the Trap, Neuter and Release program that her company runs as a 501(C)(3) non-profit company. Brochures and handouts were distributed to attendees. The company started out in 2008 in the Lehigh Valley area to provide pet owners an affordable way to fix their cats and dogs. The company also works with over 55 kennel dog rescues to fix and vaccinate the dogs before adopted out to the public.

The reason she asked to attend the meeting and speak to council was to discuss the feral cat problem that all municipalities must address. This is their core mission statement to provide Trap, Neuter and Return services to the community they service. No Nonsense opened in this area the first week of May (2019) in Plains Twmsp. on River Road.

Ms. Kahan discussed the guide put out for those that represent taxpayers by the Humane Society of the U.S. It is for the elected officials making decisions about animal controls in the community. Although, historically the state of Pennsylvania requires all municipalities to have an animal control plans for dogs, they have never addressed the feral cats. There are more concerns about feral cats at this point in time. No Nonsense Neutering handled over 75,000 cats to date. The handout informs community members what other municipalities are doing around the country to handle the problem. Ms. Kahan continued discussing a case study included in the hand-out.

Ms. Kahan noted Dallas Borough, Old Forge and Mountaintop are utilizing and paying for the program in their municipalities.

Ms. Kahan continued to discuss various topics including the tipped ear; the number of litters each cat produces per year; the termination of pregnancies of cats brought to the clinic; most rescues are feral; and the SPCA trap and kill program.

She believes society is moving away from trap & kill and feeding bands towards a more humane trap, neuter return program. The majority of society would like us to deal with the animals without having to kill them. This program will allow people to feel good about what they are doing.

The program is not quick but does work. It will require the elected officials to work with their communities to help educate the general public.

Ms. Kahan continued to discuss additional issues including the problems feral cats cause; finding hot spots for trapping; demonstrated the Have-A-Heart trap; and how the clinic processes the cats.

Cats taken to the clinic are neutered, given a rabies vaccine, flea treated, wormed and ear mite treated. The cats are held for one or two days before being released back to the property where trapped. This is a community driven program that works with volunteers both from the community and from No Nonsense Neutering. Loner traps are provided by No Nonsense. Walk-ins with only one cat can be done on the same day, but an appointment should be made before trapping is done.

Much discussion continued.

Ms. Kahan recommended that Laffin Borough add for 50 feral cats to the upcoming budget to start. Either the borough can pay the entire \$35.00 fee or pay only \$15.00 and the resident would pay the remainder. A voucher system can be setup for residents to use so that the borough can track the cats processed. The voucher would be given out at the borough office and numbered.

Ms. Kahan thanked Council for allowing her to present the Trap, Neuter and Return program.

Minutes: August 13, 2019 Meeting

Mr. Yastremski asked if everyone reviewed the meeting minutes and if anyone had any questions or comments. Asked for a motion to approve the prior month's meeting minutes.

Motion to Approve: Lisa Natt

Second: Thomas Parry

Roll Call:

Ayes were unanimous and motion passed.

Treasurer's Report:

Mr. Yastremski asked for a motion to accept the report.

Motion to Accept: Thomas Parry

Second: Lisa Natt

Roll Call:

Ayes were unanimous and motion passed.

List of Bills for Approval:

Mr. Yastremski asked if anyone had any questions or comments then asked for a motion to approve the bills.
\$176,030.47 plus payroll \$6,899.73.

Motion to Approve: Lisa Natt

Second: Thomas Parry

Roll Call:

Ayes were unanimous and motion passed.

Correspondences (e-mailed to Council during the month): No discussion.

Reports: Fire report was emailed to Council. No discussion.

Manager's Report –

Mr. Boyd reported on the progress to replace the damaged light pole at the Creekside playground. The pole was damaged by a large tractor trailer attempting to turn around off Market Street. Although, the driver's insurance information was obtained, Mr. Boyd is having a difficult time arranging for payment. Mr. Boyd believes the insurance company will eventually pay the estimated cost. If not, our solicitor may need to get involved.

An additional ten (10) septic tanks are scheduled to be pumped next week for a total of twenty (20) units for 2019. The borough pumped less tanks this year while anticipating DEP approval to continue converting the septic tanks to direct connections. DEP still has not approved the planning module for this to happen.

Mayor's Report – None

Mr. Yastremski asked for a motion to approve the reports as presented.

Motion to Approve Reports: Thomas Parry

Second: Lisa Natt

Roll Call:

Ayes were unanimous and motion passed.

Unfinished Business:

- A) 60 Oakwood Drive Property –
Solicitor's Opinion Letter

Mr. Boyd referenced the letter to be added to the minutes. Solicitor Bruce Phillips reviewed the solicitor opinion letter prepared by Sam Sanguedolce and stated the borough can now sell the property outright since it completed all the necessary steps.

Mr. Yastremski reviewed the steps to date with the property initially put out to bid at a minimum bid of \$40,000.00. The borough received one bid that was later withdrawn. The second advertised bid was at a minimum of \$30,000.00 without receiving an acceptable bid. The property was advertised twice.

The only other bidder was Kyle Costello, Oakwood Drive who submitted a bid of \$20,000.00 in the second bid round. Some discussion took place on who was bidding at the last council mtg. and preparing a sales agreement to be voted on by council before approving the transaction.

Councilman Yastremski recommended taking the \$20,000.00 offer for various stated reasons.

After some additional discussion where Solicitor Phillips initially recommend not approving anything at the current council meeting, he recommended accepting the offer at \$20,000.00 contingent upon an agreement of sale approved by council and accepted by Mr. Costello.

Councilman Yastremski asked for a motion.

Motion to Accept the Offer: Thomas Parry

Second: Lisa Natt

Roll Call:

Paul Benderavich Absent

Anthony D'Eliseo Absent

Lisa Natt Yes

Thomas Parry Yes

Carl Yastremski Yes

Motion passed.

New Business:

A) 1st Reading 2020 Laflin Borough Operating Budget –

Councilman Yastremski reviewed the proposed budget with total revenues at \$863,016.00 and total expenditures of \$863,016.00. The budget numbers include a carry forward of funds at \$131,265.00. The proposed budget did not have a tax increase for 2020. Funding is included for a \$161,100.00 infrastructure project in 2020. All elected officials received copies of the proposed budget.

The budget can be revised as needed for the next council meeting.

Councilman Yastremski asked for a motion to approve the 1st Reading of the 2020 Laflin Borough Operating Budget.

Motion to Approve: Thomas Parry

Second: Lisa Natt

Roll Call:

Paul Benderavich Absent

Anthony D'Eliseo Absent

Lisa Natt Yes

Thomas Parry Yes

Carl Yastremski Yes

Motion passed.

Public Comments:

Eileen Vera, 12 Cherrywood Drive – Thanked council for hearing the presentation from Martha Kahan, No Nonsense Neuter on the TNR program.

Councilwoman Natt – Recommended moving forward with the Trap, Neuter and Return program by adding \$350 or \$700 to the 2020 budget. She believes not doing anything will keep the cats multiplying.

Carlton McGrady, 71 Market Street – Disagreed with the TNR program and didn't want to see his tax dollars put towards it. Much discussion took place on the worthiness of the program.

Phil Ferland, 154 Maplewood Drive – Agreed with the TNR program and his daughter, who currently takes care of a feral cat, would volunteer, if asked.

Robert Novak, 191 Haverford Drive – President of the Hillside Townhouse Association recommended doing the TNR program because it would appease residents who are cat lovers in the townhouse association area. This will show the residents that don't like cats that the borough is attempting to do something about the problem.

Anthony Menendez, 4 Walnutwood Drive – Referred to an email that he sent to council a few weeks ago related to the borough purchasing the property behind his home. He also made an offer through the real estate agent to purchase the property. He lived here for 27 years and wants to preserve the wooded area behind his house. He asked the borough to forgo purchasing, just the parcel behind his house, so that he could purchase the land. The other issue he would ask relates to the property adjoining the back of his yard. He would like the borough to consider selling him a section if the borough moves forward with purchasing the entire tract.

Much discussion took place on changing the zoning district to prevent development, declaring the property clean and green, and the borough's intention to create a barrier.

Solicitor Bruce Phillips will look into zoning change options and report back to the borough.

Executive Session: None

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 7:26pm.

Motion: Thomas Parry

Second: Lisa Natt

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Charles Boyd, Borough Manager
Lafin Borough