

Lafin Borough Council Mtg.
December 12, 2023
6:00 P.M.

MEETING MINUTES

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

Roll Call:

Present: Carl Yastremski, President – Anthony D’Eliseo, Vice President – Paul Benderavich – Kyle Costello –
Marc Malvizzi –

Absent: Mayor William Kennedy

Also Present: Solicitor Leonard A. Sanguedolce, Esq. and Charles Boyd, Borough Manager

Special Presentations: None

Minutes: November 14, 2023 Meeting

Mr. Yastremski asked if everyone reviewed the meeting minutes and if anyone had any questions or comments. He asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

Motion to Approve: Paul Benderavich

Second: Anthony D’Eliseo

Roll Call:

Ayes were unanimous and motion passed.

Treasurer’s Report:

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

Motion to Accept: Paul Benderavich

Second: Anthony D’Eliseo

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.

\$596,431.80 plus payroll \$11,764.07

Motion to Approve: Paul Benderavich

Second: Anthony D’Eliseo

Roll Call:

Councilman D’Eliseo abstained on the CVI invoice due to employment.

Ayes carried and motion passed.

Mr. Boyd noted two additional invoices not indicated on the list of bills that will be due before the end of the year. The Fidelity Bank Oakwood Park quarterly loan payment for approximately \$44,000 from the general fund and \$11,085 from the sewer fund will be paid by 12/31/23.

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

Reports:

The Laffin Volunteer Fire Dept. report was emailed to councilmembers. No discussion.

The state police discontinued providing monthly reports since the completion of the PSP crime data website.

Manager's Report –

Mr. Boyd spoke on receiving the general audit and financial reports from Rainey & Rainey CPAs for the required annual audit. A written report was emailed to elected officials and copies are available to the general public.

The additional street lights approved by council for Old Mill Road will be installed at the end of January by ppl Electric Utilities. Tree cutting was completed in that area for the utility poles and lights to be installed.

Some discussions took place on the Inkerman Road, Jenkins Township embankment at the Williams Gas pipeline location. With the removal of trees and hill grading at that area it created a drop-off from Inkerman Road down toward warehouse building number ten (10), Golden Technologies. Originally, Mr. Boyd believed that guiderail would be installed by Jenkins Township or Golden Technologies to prevent a vehicle, coming from the Carey Lane area of Jenkins Township, from potentially leaving the roadway and going down the embankment. Some discussions followed with Solicitor Sanguedolce, Esq. indicating he would contact the new solicitor for Jenkins Township on the issue.

The digital solar powered speed aware radar sign was delivered to the borough. Mike Dudeck, DPW did assembled the sign and a webinar will be attended by Mike Dudeck and Charles Boyd on the installation and use of the new sign. Some discussions took place on different locations in town to place the moveable unit.

Mr. Boyd noted the next council meeting will be Tuesday, January 2, 2024. All council meetings for 2024 have been advertised in the Times Leader newspaper.

Mayor's Report – No report (absent)

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

Motion to Approve: Paul Benderavich

Second: Anthony D'Eliseo

Roll Call:

Ayes were unanimous and motion passed.

Public Comments Relating to the Agenda:

Walter Wrazien, 38 Redwood Drive – questioned the draft copy of the security camera procedures. He was concerned with the 72hr. camera storage time limit and, he believes, the residents have a right to view the camera footage if something happens in town.

Solicitor Sanguedolce responded to say that the procedures and ordinance will be taken up with the new council next year. This agenda item tonight is just a draft copy for discussion and things will change. However, as it stands now, the borough has to balance public safety concerns and constitutional rights. A police report

needs to be filed and video would be given to them. As it is written in the draft copy, that will or could change in 2024, the borough's obligation would be to keep video for 72hrs.

Some discussions continued.

Unfinished Business:

A) Inkerman Road Retention Basin Sediment Removal –

Mr. Yastremski indicated that this item was voted on earlier in the year. After heavy rain falls the retention area completed next to Inkerman Road is filling up with water more than was anticipated. Originally, Don E. Bower, Inc. was going to remove sediment from the basin area while the company was working on Inkerman Road for the previously approved \$3,000. The company did the work without charging the borough. However, additional areas need to be corrected.

After spending over \$200,000 on work down there, the town wouldn't want an adverse impact on what was done and he believes a small investment would help the project. After much discussion, Mr. Yastremski asked for a motion to, again, approve up to \$3,000 towards sediment work in the retention area of Inkerman Road. This work would be included in the 2024 Laflin Borough Operating Budget as a line item.

Motion to Approve: Paul Benderavich

Second: Anthony D'Eliseo

Roll Call:

Kyle Costello Yes

Paul Benderavich Yes

Anthony D'Eliseo Yes

Marc Malvizzi Yes

Carl Yastremski Yes

Motion passed.

B) Laflin Borough Security Camera Procedures and Ordinance –

Mr. Yastremski indicated that this issue was discussed during Public Comments on the Agenda. He added that his proposed revisions have been given to Solicitor Sanguedolce prior to the meeting. He asked councilmembers to provide comments to the solicitor but noted it would be taken up with new council next year. Mr. Yastremski asked for a motion to table. Some discussions continued.

Motion to Table: Paul Benderavich

Second: Anthony D'Eliseo

Roll Call:

Ayes were unanimous and motion passed.

C) Deputy Tax Collector Resolution –

Resolution #8 or 2023 - Appointment of Mary Kay Boyd

Mr. Boyd explained that this would allow for the smooth transition to a new tax collector if something should happen to himself. It is required by Act 164 of 2014. This is an unpaid position.

Motion to Approve Resolution for Deputy Tax Collector: Paul Benderavich
Second: Anthony D'Eliseo

Roll Call:

Kyle Costello	<u>Yes</u>
Paul Benderavich	<u>Yes</u>
Anthony D'Eliseo	<u>Yes</u>
Marc Malvizzi	<u>Yes</u>
Carl Yastremski	<u>Yes</u>

Motion passed.

D) Laflin Borough Infrastructure Project(s) –

Creekside Estates Paving / Inkerman Road Underdrainage & Paving / Chestnutwood Stormwater and Chestnutwood Stormwater Curb Damage by Phillips Fuel (Button Energy) \$1,800

Mr. Boyd spoke briefly on the different projects to update councilmembers. He noted the Creekside Estate paving work for Creekside and Peachwood Drives is about 90% completed. The contractor will be back in the spring for seeding work on lawns behind the newly installed curbs. Two areas of concern for water ponding on the newly paved roads were discussed. A portion of the payment will be retained until the work is completed.

Inkerman Road is completed with the underdrainage and paving work finalized. The state funding was obtained and payment was made to Don E. Bower, Inc. in full. The double culvert pipe replacement was completed and paid out of the general fund to satisfy all invoices.

Chestnutwood Stormwater project was completed and is on the list of bills to approve. Mr. Boyd noted curb damage that was done by a fuel delivery truck during the project while the road was closed and road closed signs in place. The propane truck drove over the freshly installed curbing. The repair curb work and final seeding on the project will take place in the spring.

No council vote was taken.

E) 3rd / Final Reading of the 2024 Laflin Borough Operating Budget –

Mr. Yastremski provided copies prior to the council meeting and noted the final revenues of \$1,319,387 and expenses of \$1,319,387 for a balanced budget without any tax increase or fee increase. He noted the revenues of \$466,562 from grant funding and the tax anticipation loan of \$125,000 will be taken out. The budget indicates a \$77,874 carry forward from 2023 that will be used for the 2024 operating budget.

Some discussions continued on the proposed operating budget. After discussions, Mr. Yastremski asked for a motion to approve the third reading of the 2024 operating budget.

Motion to Approve: Paul Benderavich
Second: Anthony D'Eliseo

Roll Call:

Kyle Costello	<u>Yes</u>
Paul Benderavich	<u>Yes</u>
Anthony D'Eliseo	<u>Yes</u>
Marc Malvizzi	<u>Yes</u>
Carl Yastremski	<u>Yes</u>

Motion passed.

F) 2024 Budget & Tax Authorization Resolution –
Resolution #9 of 2023

Motion to Approve the Resolution: Paul Benderavich
Second: Anthony D’Eliseo
Roll Call:
Ayes were unanimous and motion passed.

New Business:

A) 2024 Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) Proposal –
Fidelity Deposit & Discount Bank 5.95% \$250.00 Fee \$125,000.

After some comments from audience member and resident Mr. Joseph Niemiec on looking at a line of credit type TAN and discussion on those comments, Mr. Yastremski asked for a motion to approve the 2024 tax anticipation loan proposal.

Motion to Approve the TAN at 5.95% for \$125,000 with a \$250 fee: Paul Benderavich
Second: Anthony D’Eliseo
Roll Call:
Ayes were unanimous and motion passed.

Mr. Boyd noted the need for a resolution to be prepared and passed at the January 9, 2024 council meeting. He indicated that there would be time to determine if a line of credit would be beneficial to the borough.

B) Sewer Interceptor Main Line Repairs near 135 Haverford Drive Townhouses –
Koberlein Environmental Services Proposal \$5,700 for SDR Manhole to Manhole

Motion to Approve Repairs: Paul Benderavich
Second: Anthony D’Eliseo
Roll Call:
Kyle Costello Yes
Paul Benderavich Yes
Anthony D’Eliseo Yes
Marc Malvizzi Yes
Carl Yastremski Yes
Motion passed.

Council Comments / For the Good of the Order:

Council President Carl Yastremski took a moment to thank outgoing councilmembers Paul Benderavich, Anthony D’Eliseo and Kyle Costello for their service to Laflin Borough. This is their last council meeting together and also noted the exorbitant number of hours that each gave to the borough. They have never changed since they entered office to serve and they always did the right thing. It has been a pleasure and a joy servicing on Council with them, Mr. Yastremski said.

Mr. Yastremski listed the many accomplishments that came about from the efforts of Paul Benderavich, Anthony D'Eliseo and Kyle Costello. He mentioned that every borough road was paved in town except for one; completion of the Oakwood Park sewer and stormwater project; completed numerous MS4 Stormwater projects; repaved the borough parking lot; new traffic light funding for Rt315 signal work; obtained several million dollars in grant funding for various projects while not increasing property taxes since 2010; fully funded municipal pension plans; purchased all new vehicles for the borough over the last seven years with another one on the way; purchased over 40 acres of land in the borough for conservation; Williams Gas pipeline project; removed three nuisance property homes in the borough; purchased the old schoolhouse property at tax sale; installation of new signage in town; updated both playgrounds with new equipment & resurfaced the basketball court; revitalized the baseball fields & walking track area; added a pavilion; and one of the crowning achievements would be the advanced security camera system throughout the borough for public safety.

Mr. Yastremski also spoke on the security camera system, that is setup at every entry and exit point in town, that have already paid for itself since several people have been caught doing unlawful things. Continuing on public safety, he spoke on the agreement that was signed with the Greater Pittston Ambulance Association with state-of-the-art resources. Electronic radar speed sign was just approved to be installed in the borough. These are some of accomplishments that are noteworthy.

He went on to personally thank Kyle Costello and his wife, Carley, for organizing the Oakwood Park Block Party every year. It is a great time with more and more people showing up. He finished by thanking them again. Some comments continued.

General Public Comments:

Lisa Costa, 17 Oakwood Drive (not present) – Councilmember Paul Benderavich read a text message from Lisa Costa who could not attend the council meeting in person due to illness. She asked Mr. Benderavich to voice her concerns to the rest of Council regarding the lower Laflin walking track that is used daily by many people, including some with disabilities, since it is hazardous to walkers to use the town roads. Referring to the borough contemplating closing the walking track in the winter months, she noted in her text that there is a liability to the borough whether a person is at the walking tract or at the borough building sidewalks. She asked Council to please take this into consideration when deciding on what to do at the parks during the winter months. Some additional comments were made on her behalf.

Mr. Benderavich asked that this issue be added to the January council meeting agenda so that a decision could be made on the status of the parks during inclement weather.

Joseph Niemiec, 2 Concord Drive – requested to be added to the agenda for the January council meeting so that he could be approved to take a look at the fire department and its interface with the borough. He submitted a six- or seven-page report on the operation of the fire department back in 2017 for the former council. He would like to do that again with Mr. Boyd and Mr. Marc Malvizzi so that a new report can be prepared for council's review. One of the items he has already discussed with Mr. Boyd was on insurance coverages and possible overlap between the fire department insurances and the borough insurances to save a few dollars.

Mr. Marc Malvizzi responded to say that the fire department reports back to council on a quarterly basis and he asked Mr. Boyd to provide copies of those reports to Mr. Niemiec. These reports include the full treasurer's report with bank statements. These are submitted every three months to the borough and Mr. Niemiec should have the latest copy.

Mr. Niemiec indicated that the last time he reviewed the fire department everything was in order and it had a very efficient set of books. Mr. Malvizzi also noted that Mr. Boyd did have a discussion with the borough insurance company, who is also the fire department insurance company, and no overlap exists. Some discussions continued.

Mr. Boyd indicated that after the January 2, 2024 Reorganization Council Meeting, the new Council President would have to make the decision to add or not add Mr. Niemiec to the agenda to be appointed to officially review the fire department operations.

Executive Session: None

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 6:53pm.

Motion: Paul Benderavich

Second: Anthony D'Eliseo

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Charles Boyd, Borough Manager
Lafin Borough

_____ <<< END >>> _____