

The regular meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Sinking Spring was called to order on Thursday, January 7, 2021 at 7:03 p.m., via Zoom meeting by Council Vice-President Tracy Peterson. After the pledge to the flag, Elizabeth Egelman called the roll reflecting the following Council Members present:

James Pachuillo  
Tracy Peterson  
H. David Miller  
Denise Stine  
Lisa Gantner  
Brian Hoffa  
Robert Metzgar

Other officials present were: Charles Haws, Borough Solicitor; Brad Smith, Engineer, ARRO Consulting; Michael Hart, Borough Manager; Police Chief James Oxenreider, and Elizabeth Egelman, Borough Secretary, who recorded the minutes of the proceeding.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 3, 2020 Council Meeting. Mrs. Stine made the motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Mr. Metzgar. AYES – 5, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 2. Motion carried.

**VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

There was no correspondence to discuss.

Mr. Pachuillo entered the Zoom meeting and took over. Mrs. Gantner also joined meeting.

**APPROVAL OF THE BILLS:**

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to approve the bills for December 2020. Mrs. Peterson made a motion to approve the bills, seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Mr. Pachuillo asked for a motion to accept the Treasures Report for December 2020 as written. Mrs. Stine made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as written; seconded by Mrs. Peterson. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried.

**WESTERN BERKS FIRE DEPARTMENT:**

Mr. Pachuillo stated that their December 2020 report was included in everyone's packet. Mr. Renshaw mentioned that they finished 2020 with 903 calls which was actually 150 down from the prior year. He stated that they contributed the decrease to the fact that there were no major storms that required pump details and also the automatic alarm calls were down due to COVID-19 and a lot of the industries and businesses being closed. He also mentioned that he was just notified that they will be receiving over \$22,000.00 in reimbursement for COVID expenses.

**WESTERN BERKS AMBULANCE:**

Mr. Pachuillo stated that their November and December 2020 reports are included in everyone's packet. Mrs. Sherry Berriker reported that this week their employees began receiving the vaccination from the County efforts on getting them the Moderna Vaccination. She mentioned that she will have the year-end report for next meeting. Mr. Hoffa asked what the percentage of participation is for the Vaccine. Mrs. Berriker stated that it is about 60% taking it right now and that they cannot make it mandatory. Mr. Pachuillo asked Mr. Renshaw if they, the Fire Department, was also getting the Vaccine. Mr. Renshaw stated that they have not received notification yet on when they would be in line.

**REVITALIZATION:**

Mr. Hoffa mentioned that Mr. Loth sent him a brief outline as to what is going to happen in 2021. He stated that in January they are going to update their bylaws, put in place five standing committees, do a newsletter and spruce up the website.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

The only item was the Village Greens Time Extension. Mr. Robitzer stated that it is a sixty day time extension. Mr. Miller made the motion to grant the time extension; seconded by Mr. Metzgar. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried. Discussion ensued concerning the plans and the pending approval of the waivers and conditional approval that was tabled at the December 3, 2020 meeting. Discussion also ensued concerning meeting in person so everyone could view the plans. Decision was made to have the January Workshop meeting in person and via Zoom for anyone that would not be able to attend in person. Mrs. Gantner mentioned that everyone should be ready to discuss everything that needs to be done so we can move on the items at that meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The first item was Mr. Charles Coleman's letter of resignation from the Planning Commission. Mrs. Stine made the motion to accept Mr. Coleman's resignation with regrets; seconded by Mrs. Peterson. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried. Mr. Pachuillo asked where we stand with the Planning Commission now. Mr. Hart stated that we are one member down now. Mr. Pachuillo stated that we should put it out on social media. Mrs. Eagelman stated that she would put it on the Borough website and Facebook page.

The next item was an estimate from H.A. DeHart & Son for parts to replace a hose reel and associated parts and new hydraulic filters for the jet truck. Mr. Hart stated that the hose reel for the jetting part of the truck warped and is rubbing against the housing. Mr. Miller stated that the estimate, less the hose, is \$8,085.54 which does not include labor. Mr. Hart stated that we are going to do it ourselves. He stated that they are looking for Councils approval to spend the \$8,085.54. Mrs. Eagelman mentioned that Mr. Zohner's e-mail to her stated that freight was not included and that he didn't know how much that would be. Mr. Miller stated that maybe they should weigh it out and consider going to get the stuff. Mr. Pachuillo asked if someone wanted to make a motion to buy the parts, weigh the options, and go from there. Mr. Miller made a motion to approve spending \$8,100.00 to purchase the parts requested for the sewer truck; seconded by Mrs. Peterson. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried.

The next item was Tyler Davis's promotion to Operator. Mr. Hart stated that Mr. Davis is our newest employee and that he has obtained his Operators License. He stated that we were only paying him the mechanic rate so now that he has his license we would like to bump him up to Operator rate less \$.50 until he gets his CDL which should be shortly. Mr. Miller made a motion to approve Mr. Davis's increase to Operator rate less the \$.50 but approve the \$.50 once he passes his CDL test; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried.

The next item was the Barrasso time extension. Mr. Smith explained that the contractor's production has been slowed due to adverse soil conditions, trenches getting wider, trenches collapsing and hitting a lot of ground water. He stated that the extension is to increase the contract time to February 16, 2021 for substantial completion and May 1, 2021 for final completion. Mr. John Bonderchuk of 301 Broad Street asked about the ground water. He stated that all of a sudden he is pumping water out of his basement and he is not sure what has changed. He asked if there were any underground changes. He also mentioned that he is concerned about the road and asked what the plan is for repaving. Mr. Smith explained that the significant change happening underground is that we are replacing the sanitary sewer pipe which was old and a lot of ground water was leaking into the pipe. He stated that we have replaced it with a new plastic pipe and now that water has to find a new way to get to the creek so that is going to affect the ground water. He mentioned that they will also be installing some under drains in the road so hopefully that will help lower the level once those go in. Mr. Bonderchuk stated that he will keep an eye on it. Mr. Smith asked him to keep him posted. Mr. Bonderchuk also mentioned that his house is being shook by shocks two or three times this week and he is seeing impact to his property. Mr. Hoffa also asked about paving plans. Mr. Hart stated that they just have to do the trench repair, and they could be held liable if they cause extensive damage to the road. Mr. Miller made a motion to approve the time extension; seconded by Mrs. Stine. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried.

**BRAD SMITH – ARRO CONSULTING – ENGINEER:**

Mr. Smith mentioned that they sent out notifications to all of the utilities requesting verification and resolutions of conflicts for the Phase 2 intersection. He also mentioned that the right-of-way documents were recently approved by PennDOT pending a new title search being done. He stated that they are in the process of trying to obtain a copy of the Erosion and Sediment Control Plans from the County Conservation District so they don't have to go back to the designer of those. He mentioned that they are trying to pull the bid together and that they are going to have a meeting with PennDOT in a couple days and they are going to want some additional language put both on the plan and into the bid spec. He also mentioned that they recently got approval to use Penn Bid instead of going through PennDot's ECMS bidding site which will make it much simpler and more time efficient for the Borough.

Mr. Smith mentioned that they have some additional work to do on the MS4 this year with inventory and possible sources of pollutants in the Borough.

Mrs. Stine signed out of the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

**MICHAEL HART – BOROUGH MANAGER:**

Mr. Hart stated that he will need an executive session at the end of the meeting for a personnel issue.

**TRACY PETERSON – LIBRARY:**

Mrs. Peterson mentioned that they had to close the Library for a little over a week because an employee had COVID. She stated that we need to look at the structure of the Library because she was getting phone calls and texts over the weekend and Christmas. She stated that she is the President of the Library Board but she is not an employee. She mentioned that she has started receiving applications for the Library Director position and she has no problem sitting on the Board but believes that Mr. Hart should be more involved with it as Borough Manager. Mr. Metzgar stated that they can discuss it at their Admin Committee meeting. Mr. Hart stated that he doesn't believe that there are any policy's set up for that side. Mrs. Peterson stated that she believes they have some and that a lot of it comes from the state which is the reason they had to close for so long.

**ROBERT METZGAR – FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION:**

Mr. Metzgar stated that they will have their Admin Meeting on Monday at 11:30 a.m.

Mr. Metzgar mentioned that within the next day or so everyone should be receiving a survey from him regarding the Sinking Spring Downtown Community Character. He stated that this is in relation to our efforts for the form based code for the Downtown District. He asked all of Council to take some time and complete the survey.

**BRIAN HOFFA – ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

Mr. Hoffa stated that he had a chance to look at the survey that Mr. Metzgar put together and that he did a great job. He stated that it is important that everybody participate in this and that they are going to send it out to as many people as they can to get the feedback to Derck and Edson so we can get a vision of where we want to go with this.

**ELIZABETH EAGELMAN – BOROUGH SECRETARY:**

Mrs. Eagelman mentioned that we needed to reappoint a few Board Members whose time ended the end of December. She stated that we need to reappoint Mr. Brandon Snyder to the Zoning-Hearing Board for a three year term. Mrs. Gantner made a motion to reappoint Mr. Snyder to the Zoning Hearing Board; seconded by Mr. Hoffa. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 1. Motion carried. Mrs. Eagelman mentioned that Mr. Robert Metzgar and Mr. John Stine need to be reappointed to the Planning Commission for 5 year terms. Mrs. Gantner made a motion to reappoint both to the Planning Commission; seconded by Mr. Hoffa. AYES – 5, NAYS – 0, ABSENT – 1, ABSTAIN – 1 (Mr. Metzgar). Motion carried.

**POLICE CHIEF JAMES OXENREIDER:**

Chief Oxenreider mentioned that his December 2020 activity report is attached to everyone's e-mail along with his yearly report. He also mentioned that Mr. Chris Orzech, part-time police officer, handed in his formal resignation effective December 21, 2020 due to his full time job at the prison. Mrs. Peterson made a motion to accept his resignation; seconded by Mrs. Gantner. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 1. Motion carried.

**LISA GANTNER – RECREATION:**

Mrs. Gantner mentioned that they did forward letters to Santa that were received and that she believes that Santa responded to all of them. She also mentioned that she put signs in everyone's yards that won the Decorating Contest. She stated that they are delivering pizza/lunch to all the departments tomorrow in appreciation for the year.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council went into Executive Session at 8:12 p.m. for a personnel issue for the Public Works Department.

**RECONVENE:**

Council reconvened and the following action was taken.


Mrs. Peterson made a motion to increase Mr. Richard Paplosky's salary by \$.42 per hour and that there will be a ninety (90) day probationary period; seconded by Mr. Miller. AYES – 6, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 1. Motion carried.

Mrs. Gantner questioned if we should move the Workshop meeting up so we can give Mr. Robitzer an answer sooner. Mr. Metzgar agreed that the sooner the better. Discussion ensued. Decision was made to move the Workshop meeting to next Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 7 p.m. live and via zoom. Mr. Hart stated that he will contact Mr. Robitzer tomorrow morning to make sure he is available and then advertise the meeting change.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Hoffa made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Elizabeth A. Eagelman  
Borough Secretary