

## **BOROUGH OF AKRON COUNCIL MEETING – November 2, 2020**

***Council Members present*** – Nathan Imhoff, President; Justin Gehman, Vice-President; Thomas J. Murray, Sr.; Darryl Witmer; Kleon Zimmerman and Paul Swangren, Jr. (Randall Justice not present).

***Others present*** – Mayor John McBeth; Susan Davidson, Borough Manager/Secretary; Police Chief Thomas Zell, and Kenelm L. Shirk III, Solicitor.

Meeting opened at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ***Approval of Minutes***

Paul Swangren, Jr. made a motion to approve the October 12, 2020 Borough of Akron Council Meeting minutes. Thomas J. Murray, Sr. seconded the motion.

Paul Swangren, Jr. stated that on page 5 of the October 12, 2020 minutes, under Personnel Committee – IBEW, it states that the contract will be distributed for Council’s review and approval. Mr. Swangren noted that at the end of the meeting he said that the contract will not be distributed to Thomas J. Murray, Sr. He would like this statement to be reflected in the minutes.

Motion carried.

***Visitors*** – West Earl Township Police Chief Eric Higgins; Porter Stevens, Lancaster County Planning Commission; Larry Alexander, Ephrata Review; Penny Talbert and Mike Eichenlaub, Ephrata Public Library; John Taylor and Richard Rupp.

***Observing via Zoom*** – Jennifer Gehman, Monica Hersh

### ***Ephrata Public Library***

Penny Talbert, Executive Director, Ephrata Public Library, introduced Mike Eichenlaub, Vice President of the Ephrata Public Library Board of Director and the Chairman of the Funding and Finance Committee.

Paul Swangren, Jr. stated that Akron Borough contributed \$23,800 to the Ephrata Public Library last year; he then asked Ms. Talbert what that money was spent on.

Ms. Talbert reported that all the municipal money that comes in, about \$300,000 a year, goes towards Collections and staffing. The state requires them to spend 12% of their budget on Collections (books, digital items, and other materials in the library). Those two items together equal about \$700,000. They do not necessarily separate out the municipal money that comes in. This year they were budgeted to spend about \$85,000; however, they are looking at a huge revenue loss this year. Mr. Swangren asked for a more specific list of items that the \$23,800 was spent on. Ms. Talbert stated they spend about 25% on adult books; about 50% on children’s books, and about 25% on teen and sight saver books. Programs are being covered by either sponsorships, or grants, or money that the Library is raising.

Ms. Talbert stated that Akron Borough is the highest contributing municipality, which is about \$6 per capita. She offered to supply the Council with quarterly statements to help them understand how the contributions are being spent..

### ***Complete Streets***

Porter Stevens, Sr. Planner, Lancaster County Planning Commission, presented a Complete Streets overview for Akron Borough. One of the goals in Akron's Comprehensive Plan is to adopt a Complete Streets policy. Complete Streets is a tool that the County recommends. It is an approach to the transportation network that focuses on accommodating all modes, and people of all ages and abilities. It is important to emphasize that Complete Streets is about looking at each street, each intersection and each neighborhood, and figuring out what the transportation issues are: safety issues, efficiency issues, etc., and coming up with solutions that are unique to solving those problems. Some potential applications for this concept in Akron could be improving uncomfortable intersections, improving access to Rail Trail, making community safer, more comfortable and vibrant. One thing that the Borough could do is adopt a Complete Streets Policy, also engage in projects like conducting a bike/ped analysis, looking at the existing sidewalk network and identify what the gaps and the safety issues are, as well as continue to work with the Implementation Committee to identify and pursue any potential grant opportunities. Mr. Stevens also talked about a potential implementation method called Tactical Urbanism which is an activity by which communities come out and use a very low cost materials like paint, movable planters, movable tables and chairs, etc. to make temporary and very low cost improvements to public spaces like parks, intersections and streets. It can be used as a tool to experiment and let communities interact with each other to think about how they can better use public space.

Mr. Stevens looks forward to continuing to work with the Implementation Committee and also with the Borough on this and other topics.

Nathan Imhoff liked the idea of Complete Streets. He thinks that they should definitely look into some of those difficult intersections in Akron Borough and make them safe.

### **Personnel Committee:**

#### ***Police Services***

Nathan Imhoff stated he forgot to appoint a Chairperson for the Police Services Committee when it was formed. He now appointed Thomas J. Murray, Sr. as the Chairperson of that Committee. Paul Swangren, Jr. is the alternate; Randall Justice and Mayor John McBeth are also serving on the Committee, and the Solicitor Kenelm L. Shirk III is helping them out.

Nathan Imhoff asked the Council for ideas of a timeline for the next several months of how many meetings they would like to have a week/month, when they would want to see the West Earl Township Police Services contract come to fruition, if they go that direction, and how quickly they want to move along.

The Council discussed different ideas and they agreed to have weekly meetings to discuss each section of the West Earl preliminary contract. The Mayor suggested that when the Committee first meets, they need to talk about what subjects the Committee needs to address. He also stated that he received a letter from the State Police Commissioner assuring Akron Borough that they will provide services when required throughout the state of Pennsylvania; however, the Mayor is not sure about the response time.

West Earl Police Chief Eric Higgins stated he reassured Akron Borough police officers that West

Earl police officers will continue to cover the Borough backing officers up, and if there is an emergency, they do not need to wait for the State Police.

Thomas J. Murray, Sr. stated that he would like to meet every Tuesday and Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the Borough Office for the rest of the month, except on Thanksgiving. If there is nothing to discuss, they will call the members of the Committee to let them know that there will not be a meeting.

### ***IBEW***

Paul Swangren, Jr. stated that a copy of the clean contract was distributed to all Council members and the Mayor, except for Thomas J. Murray, Sr. He asked the Council to review it and to contact the Borough Manager or himself, if they have any comments.

Thomas J. Murray, Sr. did not participate in the discussion.

### **Finance**

#### ***2021 Budget***

The Council reviewed the 2021 Borough budget

General Fund 2021 total \$2,025,037.00

Water Fund 2021 total \$664,532.00

Sewer Fund 2021 total \$999,244.00

Highway Aid Fund 2021 total \$155,169.00

Nathan Imhoff asked the Council how they feel about the Ephrata Public Library after their earlier discussion. Paul Swangren, Jr. Suggested reducing the contribution. Nathan Imhoff suggested they reduce it to \$16,000, which is \$4 per capita.

The Borough Manager suggested they adjust the Rail-Trail Bomberger Stream to \$15,000. Account# 454700.

### **New Business/Old Business**

#### ***Comcast***

The Borough Manager stated there was a meeting with Comcast last Wednesday, October 28, 2020 at the Fire Hall to discuss Area A, which is Westview Drive, Vista Drive and Bomberger Road; however, they did not have a good turnout.

The Borough Manager presented a Probable Construction Cost Opinion Summary of Areas A through F. She stated they initially talked about doing each area separately; however, after talking to Hanover Engineering and Mr. Shirk, it would be a better idea to have the estimates all together, that way they do not have to keep coming back for more permits for each area.

The Borough Manager asked the Council to review this Cost Opinion and put it on the agenda for Monday, November 9, 2020 meeting.

### **Committee Terms to Expire in 2021**

#### **Planning Commission – 4 year term**

2021-2024 (John Williamson currently is serving until the end of 2020)

**Zoning Hearing Board – 3 year term**

2021-2023 (Kay McEllhenney currently serving until the end of 2020)

2021-2023 (Alternate – Jeff Shirk is currently serving until the end of 2020)

2021-2023 (Alternate – Paul Swangren, Jr. previously served until the end of 2019)

**Akron Authority – 6 year term**

2021-2025 (Pam Musser is currently serving until the end of 2020)

2018-2023 (Vacancy since 2018 – previously held by Jeff Shirk)

2017-2021 This term goes through 2021 but is currently held by Terry Reber who will be moving out of the Borough by the end of 2020.

The Borough Manager asked the Council to review the list so she can put it on the agenda for Monday, November 9, 2020 meeting.

For informational purposes, Mr. Shirk stated that for Planning Commission one member can be a current member of the Council that is currently in effect, including the Mayor.

For Zoning Hearing Board, it cannot be any other office.

For the Akron Authority, can have a member of the Council and/or the Mayor, and also someone who is not a resident but has a business in Akron.

The Mayor stated he previously told the Borough Manager that he would be willing to serve on the Authority.

Nathan Imhoff asked the Borough Manager to reach out to those whose terms are expiring and see if they are interested to continue to serve.

***Back to New Business/Old Business***

Nathan Imhoff mentioned a sign at the Akron Elementary School that gets very bright at night and illuminates a lot of the 11<sup>th</sup> Street. The Borough Manager recommended they pull the building permit to see what it is.

***Back to Police Services***

Thomas J. Murray, Sr. said the Council needs to think about what option they would be in favor of (Option I or Option II), and to think about what is included in both options.

The Council discussed the school crossing guards' hiring, training, health insurance, etc.

The Council agreed to continue this discussion at their next Police Services meeting.

***Back to New Business/Old Business***

Paul Swangren, Jr. asked if they got the percentage of impervious surface for the Latitude 17 LLC property from Hanover Engineering.

The Borough Manager stated she will contact Hanover Engineering about that.

Paul Swangren, Jr. made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Justin Gehman seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lydia Kovalchuk  
Minute Taker

LK