

A regular meeting of the Richland Borough Council was held on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the banquet hall of the Neptune Fire Company. The President being in the chair and the Secretary being present.

President Bricker called the Richland Borough Council Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and asked everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Bricker completed roll call, Present were President Kelly Bricker, President Pro Tem Larry Hartman, Councilmembers Matthew Johnson, Robert Rittle, and Travis Randler, Mayor Owen Landes, Solicitor Andrew George, Secretary Rebecca Schnoke, Road Supervisor Dwight Belleman, and Road Laborer/Water Technician Benjamin Becker. Absent was Vice-President Mark Brubaker, and Councilmember James Niethammer.

President Bricker announced that Owen Landes has graciously accepted the appointment of mayor to finish the term of late Mayor Ray Shanaman. President Bricker advised that Owen Landes was asked in honor of Ray Shanaman as Owen Landes is the individual who approached Ray Shanaman to be mayor.

The President asked for a motion to approve the previous months minutes. A motion was made by Larry Hartman, seconded by Robert Rittle, to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on October 10, 2023. Motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by Larry Hartman, to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the Council Workshop Meeting held on October 24, 2023. Motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker opened the floor for citizens' and visitors' comments. There were eighty-three (83) people present.

Robert Yohn – 208 S. Park Street – Inquire about installment payment dates. President Bricker advised the dates were listed incorrectly and have been corrected. The correct due date for the second installment is 3/31/24 and for the third installment 6/30/24. Mr. Yohn Inquired about his water pressure dropping very low to approximately 33 lbs. of pressure about two times per week. President Bricker advised there are projects for a new well and tank underway to address this issue. Councilmember Matthew Johnson advised that the Borough by law is required to provide a minimum of 23 lbs. of pressure and that throughout the Borough water pressures vary and that the ongoing projects will increase the water supply and help to better distribute pressures, and that the plans being put in place are not only to address current concerns but focus on better positioning the Boroughs water system for the future.

Holly Mulhern – 100 N. Race Street – Inquired how many companies were contacted that the trash contract was placed out for bid. Solicitor George advised that through the bid process the contract was publicly bid for a period of time and was open to any and all bidders. Secretary Schnoke advised she sent bid packets to three companies that had previously inquired about the contract renewal. Holly Mulhern inquired how long the current contract has been in place and why residents cannot get their own service. President Bricker advised the current contract with Eagle Disposal was 5 years and that the bid received could have been rejected however the bid amount is public

knowledge at that point and most likely would not have been advantageous to rebid because the bids received could be the same or higher. President Bricker advised that the Borough contracts refuse service to limit the garbage truck traffic on the alleys to preserve the integrity of the alleys because they are not designed to handle heavy truck traffic like a normal roadway, constant garbage truck traffic on the alleys would cause them to break up and cost the Borough substantially more money to maintain and fix the alleys. President Bricker advised that additionally a contracted service is in place to keep the Borough cleaner by limiting trash sitting out to one day a week and to ensure trash is collected, where if residents have their own service and do not pay their bill trash could begin to pile up and becomes a sanitation issue which will cost the Borough money to address and resolve. Weidle explained the contract is for a 6-bag limit per unit which is why the rate is higher than some residents quoted from other areas. Holly Mulhern inquired whether there was any consideration for senior citizens discounts, President Bricker advised that it was not but is something that could be considered for future contracts.

Brian Webber – 407 Elm Street – Inquire whether Eagle Disposal was permitted to bid on the contract. President Bricker advised Eagle Disposal could have bid on the contract, but they did not. Brian Webber inquired whether there is an option to opt out of recycling, President Bricker advised with a contracted service it is all in or none and currently opting out is not an option, but a pole can be taken and if the majority of residents do not want to recycle it can be considered and negotiated with Weidle for the next two years of the contract. Matthew Johnson advised that this is the first time that only one bid was received.

Robert Yohn – 208 S. Park Street – Stated he witnessed Eagle Disposal putting the recycling in the truck with the trash, President Bricker stated this was observed by the public works employees and was addressed.

Cody Shalters – 37 W. Main Street – Stated the bid could have been rejected and residents allowed to get their own service. Councilmember Matthew Johnson stated that with the short amount of time left residents would have had to rush to establish trash service for the new year and at the time Council made the decision based on what was received and in place but could consider other options in the future.

Rheta Killian – 300 Chestnut Street – Stated it is unbelievable with all the local trash companies that there were no other bids received and that residents should have been notified of the issue and that residents could have helped. Solicitor Andrew George stated it is unknown how many bidders there will be until the bid deadline. Councilmember Matthew Johnson encouraged residents to attend monthly meetings so they can stay informed of current matters.

Amy Pearsall – 207 Chestnut Street – Stated that this is how things have been done before is irrelevant and wanted to know how the existing ordinance could be overturned. Solicitor George stated that overturning the ordinance is a function of Borough Council. Amy Pearsall asked how Borough Council can be encouraged to take this action, Solicitor George stated to attend Council meetings and voice opinions and concerns.

Holly Mulhern – 100 N. Race Street – Stated she understands the issues companies are facing and increases are expected but the large increase was a shock and would have liked more notice about

the increase. Mrs. Mulhern inquired about white good collections, Weidle advised there is a spring and fall white good collection in the contract with no additional cost. Holly Mulhern inquired whether biweekly collection is an option, President Bricker advised at this time it is not and that according to the Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority the average annual trash bill in South Central PA is \$550.27.

Carl Zimmerman – 107 N. Race Street – Inquire about the Weidle contract length and if it is similar to the current contract with Eagle Disposal, President Bricker advised it is a three-year contract. Weidle representative explained the contract is similar but now there are penalties and ramifications in place in the contract to hold them accountable for the quality of service, and explained the large increase is due to the drastic increase in equipment, fuel, wages, benefits, and insurances over the last five years. Weidle Representative explained the disposal cost of recycling per ton is \$171.00 and five years ago a new trash truck could be purchased for \$250,000-\$300,000, where today the cost is about \$450,000-\$500,000. Solicitor George stated the previous trash contract was poorly written and the new contract includes penalties and procedures to protect the Borough to ensure higher quality of service. Carl Zimmerman asked if when one bid was received was there any effort to contact additional companies, President Bricker advised when a contract is put out for public bid, sealed bids are received until a specified deadline, and it is unknown how many there will be until the deadline. Carl Zimmerman stated the new trash price is not the highest and not the lowest and we are fortunate that we are in the middle of the range and not at the highest.

Jay Wenger - 201 Leffler Drive – Voiced his support for a contracted service and only having trash collection one day a week.

Rheta Killian – 300 Chestnut Street – asked why neighboring residents are paying so much less. Solicitor George advised without knowing the details of the contract it is not comparable.

Dalton Whitman – 35 W. Main Street – Voiced is displeasure that there is no way to drive down the cost of the contract.

Pattie Rowe – 12 S. Race Street – Asked about the bag limit and bulk items, Weidle explained the contract is for two 96-gallon totes or six 32-gallon bags and additional cost is associated with bulk items through a tag system.

President Bricker advised Eagle Disposal sent a communication that they will be picking up recycling totes on December 29, 2023.

Holly Mulhern – 100 N. Race Street – Stated through her research the rate, though it seems high is in the ballpark and is not a bad price.

Carl Zimmerman – 107 N. Race Street – Questioned how the term of the contract was bid and if the price can increase due to cost-of-living increase. Solicitor George advised the contract was bid as a three-year contract with the option of two additional one-year contracts and that the prices for year two and year three are already set.

President Bricker advised if you breakdown the annual price we are paying \$9.79 per week.

Additional discussion occurred with repeated questions.

President Bricker advised that Secretary Schnoke will include a summary letter of the contract details and pickup dates with the next water bill.

The following Committee reports were presented to Council: Water Report, Highway Report, Property Report, Finance Report, Safety Report, and Personnel Report.

Water Committee – President Bricker advised still working to get Well No. 9 online, and currently working with the farmer to acquire land behind the pool area where the new water tank will be constructed.

Highway Committee – Nothing to Report

Property Committee – Working to get appraisal for the land for the new tank location.

Personnel Committee – Nothing to Report.

Finance Committee – Working on 2024 budget.

Safety Committee – Nothing to Report.

A motion was made by Travis Randler, seconded by Matthew Johnson, to accept the Committee Reports. Motion unanimously carried.

The following reports were presented to the Council: Mayor Report, Road Supervisor Report, Office Report, Solicitor Report, Code Enforcement, and State Police Report.

Mayor Report – None submitted.

Road Supervisor's Report – No questions about the report.

Water Report – No questions about the report.

Office Report – No questions about the report.

Solicitor's Report – No questions about the report, all Well No. 9 easements have been obtained and recorded.

Code Enforcement Officer Report – No questions about the report.

Police Report – October 2023 report submitted.

MRJA Report – Meeting was held November 6, 2023, electronic copies of the monthly reports are on file and available for viewing upon request, the next meeting will be held December 4, 2023.

A motion was made by Travis Randler, seconded by Larry Hartman, to accept the Officials Reports. Motion unanimously carried.

The Financial Reports for October 2023 were submitted by Secretary/Treasurer Rebecca Schnoke. A motion was made by Robert Rittle, seconded by Larry Hartman to approve the Financial Report, and have it placed on file for Audit. Motion unanimously carried.

The invoices were presented and reviewed by Councilmember Matthew Johnson. A motion was made by Travis Randler, seconded by Larry Hartman, to pay all the invoices submitted; Motion unanimously carried.

The following communications were received:

- September 2023 Monthly Municipal Recycling Report from Eagle Disposal- 6.42 Tons.
- October 2023 Monthly Municipal Recycling Report from Eagle Disposal – 6.07 Tons.
- 2 Zoning/Building Permit Applications Received
 - 124 S. Race St. (Fence/Retaining Wall)
 - 701 E. Linden St. (Building Repair/Replacement)
- 6 Zoning/Building Permits Issued
 - 301 Chestnut St. (Garage)
 - 205 E. Main St. (Garage)
 - 708 E. Linden St. (Garage/Driveway)
 - 33 W. Main St. (Garage)
 - 124 S. Race St. (Fence/Retaining Wall)
 - 34 w. Main St. (Shed)
- Lebanon County Commissioner Meeting Highlights → 10/19/23 & 11/7/23
- GLRA → Free Christmas Tree Recycling Program Flyer
- Wreaths Across America Flyer → Ceremony December 16, 2023 @ 12:00 PM

Old Business:

Rave Alert – President Bricker advised this is used to notify residents in situations such as snow emergencies and water emergencies. President Bricker stated she highly recommends that all residents provide their contact information to Secretary Schnoke so they can be added to the alert system.

Refuse Contract and Bills – President Bricker advised the due dates listed for the second and third installments are listed incorrectly, and the correct due dates should be 3/31/24 and 6/30/24. Additionally paying installments includes an additional two percent.

Rigidply Glulam Plans, a motion was made by Larry Hartman, seconded by Robert Rittle to approve the Rigidply Glulam Land Development Plan; motion unanimously carried. A motion was made by Larry Hartman, seconded by Matthew Johnson to approve the Rigidply Glulam Water Connection Plan with the condition that the comments provided by Becker Engineering are satisfied and upon the setup of an escrow account; motion unanimously carried. President Bricker advised this is for the Glulam Project and not the office addition which was previously approved.

Playground Update – President Bricker advised Casey from Becker Engineering had a meeting with the County on October 18, 2023, the County confirmed that this project could proceed under the

exemption requirements. Currently working on a grading plan. Chuck from YSM is working through some playground equipment and poured in place surface pricing for the Borough, the plan is to bid the project January or February of 2024, starting construction in June after baseball season, and phase one project completion November 2024.

Water Project Update – Easement agreements for the Well No. 9 project have been finalized and recorded and the project can move forward.

N. Race Street Project - PennDOT had awarded the project to the JVI Group. Dwight and Ben had met with the contractors in September. Expect them to be on-site over the winter, to survey the ADA ramps, then begin marking out the site, before beginning either milling or curb removal in early spring. July 26, 2024, is the completion date for the project.

Quality of Life Ordinance – Solicitor George and Zoning Officer Glenn Bertolet are working to compose the ordinance and once a draft is available it will be advertised for review.

New Zoning Ordinance – second public meeting to be held December 11, 2023, 7:00 PM at the Neptune Fire Company, President Bricker advised this is the last public meeting schedule before the ordinance is proposed for approval.

New Business:

President Bricker advised the Borough is looking to apply for the State LSA grant for water project funding, last year the Borough was awarded \$750,000. A motion was made by Robert Rittle, seconded by Matthew Johnson to approve Resolution 2023-15 Authorizing Richland Borough to apply for funding through a Statewide & Local Share Assessment Grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority for the installation of a 500,000-gallon elevated water storage tank; motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker advised the 2023-2024 snowplow list will be tabled until the next meeting.

A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by Travis Randler to approve Secretary Rebecca Schnoke to advertise the 2024 meeting dates, reorganization meeting January 2, 2023, all other monthly Council meetings the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM, workshop meetings the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM and Zoning Hearing Board Meetings as needed; motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Travis Randler, seconded by Larry Hartman to approve Secretary Rebecca Schnoke to advertise the 2024 budget open for inspection for approval at the December 12, 2023, meeting; motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker asked if there were any comments for the good of the Borough. A resident asked what is needed to request to get speed enforcement. President Bricker advised this is in process and the Borough is working to enact an ordinance the beginning of 2024 to reduce speed limits within the Borough and to bring everything to code so that speed is enforceable in Richland. A resident asked if there are any updates on the Elm Street Development, President Bricker advised no final plans have been submitted for review however they have received DEP approval and they are hoping to start moving dirt spring of 2024. A resident reported that there are cracks in the roadways

in the areas of Elm Street and in the alley near the previous Hart Beaver Property and would like public works employees to look into the matter and consider crack sealing before the roads begin to break up. A resident stated that reducing the speed limit will not deter speeding and that speedbumps and digital signs are more effective, President Bricker advised she is currently looking into grants for digital speed signs. Michelle Voydik asked whether the Borough still receives money for recycling and what is done with it, Rebecca Schnoke stated at this time the disbursement has not been received and the plan for the funds is unknown as the amount is still unknown. A resident expressed his surprise that the park project will be completed so soon, President Bricker advised the first phase is to be completed by end of year 2024 and then work to complete phase two will commence. Questions regarding N. Race Street project were asked, President Bricker repeated the update provided under old business.

With no additional matters presented, a motion was made by Robert Rittle, seconded by Travis Randler, to adjourn. Motion unanimously carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Rebecca Schnoke,
Richland Borough Secretary