

A regular meeting of the Richland Borough Council was held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the Richland Borough Building. The President being in the chair and the Secretary being present.

President Bricker called the Richland Borough Council Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

The President asked for a motion to approve the previous months minutes. A motion was made by Mark Brubaker, seconded by James Niethammer, to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on March 12, 2024; Motion unanimously carried.

The President asked for a motion to approve the previous months minutes. A motion was made by Larry Hartman, seconded by Matthew Johnson, to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the previous workshop meeting held on March 26, 2024, with the correction of Robert Rittle being absent from the workshop meeting; Motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker opened the floor for citizens' and visitors' comments. There were five (6) people present.

Gary Althouse - - in two years it will be 20 years since the 2006 celebration and suggested in 2031 having a celebration to mark 125 years for Richland. Gary Althouse discussed some ideas for the celebration. Gary Althouse inquired when the shed will be empty and moved to its new location. President Bricker advised as soon as the Richland Beautification Committee's stuff is out of the shed, it will be moved, and he will be notified. Gary mentioned working with Visit Lebanon County to get some good publicity for Richland Borough.

Carol Hickey & Ron Birch – Lebanon Valley Conservancy – The Lebanon Valley Conservancy is a non-profit volunteer organization that protects open air spaces by allowing property owners to put easements on property to preserve private land. Currently there are 20 properties totaling 1,069 acres preserved with 5-6 properties in the works. An introductory slideshow presentation introducing the members and outlining the goals and accomplishments of the program was viewed. Carol Hickey and Ron Birch thanked Council for allowing them to introduce the organization and help raise awareness for the program.

John & Patti Pasquale – 200 Oak Street – No comments presented.

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

Water Committee – The Well No. 9 easement area has been cleared, it will be leveled and cleaned up. Will be having a meeting with the engineers on 4/22/24 to discuss and review plans for the current water projects. Working to finalize environmental studies for the release of the HUD grant funds.

Recreation Committee – President Bricker advised the Marcellus Shale Grant should be awarded in April or May 2024.

Highway Committee – Nothing to report.

Property Committee – Nothing to report.

Personnel Committee – Mark Brubaker advised a personnel meeting was held April 8, 2024, public works employees expressed they are working to replace curb stops on N. Race Street, however JVI is moving too quickly to keep up and A.H. Moyer may need to be involved to replace a few of the curb stops. Gating the Well No. 9 easement entrances was discussed. Eshelman may have the playground building down by the end of the month, weather permitting. Secretary Schnoke advised the 2024 alley tar and chip project is being advertised. Question for the Solicitor regarding kids playing along the railroad tracks, throwing stones at passing trains, building forts, and starting fires, who should be contacted. The Solicitor advised contacting Norfolk Southern and the owner of the old wire factory building to suggest posting no trespassing signs in the area.

Finance Committee – Nothing to Report.

Safety Committee – Concerns presented regarding kids playing along the railroad tracks, throwing stones at passing trains, building forts, and starting fires.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Mark Brubaker, 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 – No report submitted.

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

Water Report – No questions about the report.

Office Report – No questions about the report.

Engineer's Report – Matthew Johnson reviewed the engineers' report highlighting the meeting to be held with Becker Engineering on 4/22/24 to review and discuss the plans for the Well No. 9 project and the water storage tank project.

Solicitor's Report – regarding the new water storage tank land, Solicitor Andrew George advised, once the Ordinance authorizing the declaration of taking is approved, the property owner will be served, once served there is a 30-day appeal window.

Code Enforcement Officer Report – No questions about the report.

Police Report – March 2024 report submitted.

MRJA Report – Meeting was held April 1, 2024, electronic copies of the monthly reports are on file and available for viewing upon request, the next meeting will be held May 6, 2024.

A motion was made by Mark Brubaker, seconded by Richard Strickler, to accept the Officials Reports; motion unanimously carried.

The Financial Reports for March 2024 were submitted by Secretary/Treasurer Rebecca Schnoke. A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Robert Rittle to approve the Financial Report, and have it placed on file for Audit, motion unanimously carried.

The invoices were presented and reviewed by Councilmember James Niethammer. A motion was made by Robert Rittle, seconded by Mark Brubaker, to pay all the invoices submitted; motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by Larry Hartman, to ratify the bills paid; motion unanimously carried.

The following communications were received:

- February 2024 Monthly Municipal Recycling Report from Weidle – 5.42 Tons.
- 9 Zoning/Building Permit Applications Received
- 5 Zoning/Building Permits Issued
- Lebanon County Commissioner Meeting Highlights → March 21, 2024
- Dauphin Lebanon County Borough Association Meeting → April 30, 2024

Old Business:

Water Project Update – President Bricker stated a reminder that the water bill minimum increased to \$75.00 effective April 1, 2024.

President Bricker stated an ordinance is required in the process of taking the land for the new water storage tank. Solicitor Andrew George advised the required resolution was previously approved and this ordinance has been advertised and is a required step in the process, and once adopted and signed will be filed at the courthouse. President Bricker advised negotiations were had with the landowner but no agreement could be made and this was a last resort. A motion was made by Mark Brubaker, seconded by Robert Rittle to adopt Ordinance No. 398 Authorizing the Declaration of Taking; motion unanimously carried.

John Pasquale inquired whether there are final plans for the ELM Street development, President Bricker advised there are no final plans at this time and the preliminary development plans will be reviewed at the meeting with the engineers on 4/22/24.

Playground Project Update – President Bricker advised a draft of the PCSM plan is being reviewed before submitting the entire NPDES plan to Lebanon County Planning and the Lebanon County Conservation District, and we are hoping to have the entire NPDES plan submitted this week.

N. Race Street Update – President Bricker advised JVI is currently working on curing and handicap ramps, and Borough employees are working to replace water curb boxes.

2024 Street Sweeping will occur Thursday, April 11th and Friday, April 12th. There is no On Street parking between 6:00 AM and 5:00 PM. President Bricker requested that residents please clean/sweep sidewalks prior to street sweeping since the public works employees are busy with current projects. Dwight Belleman advised that they were able to blow off the Main Street and Chestnut Street sidewalks.

New Dump Truck – Matthew Johnson advised that Dwight Belleman and Benjamin Becker received a call requesting early payment for the chassis of the new dump truck. The terms of the contract will be reviewed and if early payment is not required, early payment will not occur.

New Business:

Lebanon Federal Credit Union Financing Options and Proposals – President Bricker advised that herself and Secretary Schnoke previously met with members of the Lebanon Federal Credit Union and they are willing to offer special financing for resident of N. Race Street for sidewalk replacement by offering a signature loan up to fifteen thousand dollars with 5 year term, or a home equity loan up to 100% of appraised value of home with a fifteen year term with a half point discount off of current rates and waiving the appraisal fee, financing is credit dependent. Secretary Schnoke also advised there are some financing options available through Lebanon County Housing Development, but these programs are a little more restrictive. President Bricker tabled this matter, but advised when the public meeting is held for the residents of N. Race Street this information will be presented.

Solicitor George advised a fee schedule should be approved and on file in the event the Borough would need to file a lien against a property, this resolution documents that the associated costs can be passed on to the property owner. A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Larry Hartman, to approve Resolution 2024-18 Authorizing collection of unpaid municipal liens and claims for delinquent accounts and adopting an updated fee schedule; motion unanimously carried.

No Executive Session needed.

Michele Voydik – 29 N. Race Street – Inquired if there was a good turnout for the white goods collection, Secretary Schnoke advised that Weidle had a box truck full of items collected. President Bricker advised for the next collection she will request it is advertised on the Fire Company's sign so that more people are aware of the collection.

John Pasquale asked for information regarding a zoning variance regarding the exclusion that in the Residential High-Density District a single-family home cannot be added onto, to make a two-family home. President Bricker advised all variances go through the Zoning Hearing Board, but preliminary questions can be addressed to Kraft Municipal Group. Rober Rittle advised that if submitting to the Zoning Hearing Board for a variance hardship will need to be proved and would recommend, he enlist a lawyer to assist.

President Bricker asked if there were any comments for the good of the Borough. With no additional matters presented, a motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Mark Brubaker, to adjourn; motion unanimously carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Rebecca Schnoke,
Richland Borough Secretary