

A regular meeting of the Richland Borough Council was held on Tuesday, May 14, 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, 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. Absent was Vice President Mark Brubaker.

The President asked for a motion to approve the previous months minutes. A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Larry Hartman, to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on April 9, 2024; Motion unanimously carried.

The President asked for a motion to approve the previous months workshop 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 workshop meeting held on April 23, 2024; Motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker opened the floor for citizens' and visitors' comments. There were two (2) people present.

Phillip Barry – 210 Church Street – Mr. Barry introduced himself and shared his negative experience with a contractor during a recent boiler conversion and encouraged everyone to follow the recommendations of the consumer home protection act.

Andrew Kriss – 34 N. Race Street – Mr. Kriss provided the yearly schedule of events for the Richland Community Association. Mr. Kriss stated that there are movie nights scheduled for June 15, 2024, and July 4, 2024. Mr. Kriss expressed gratitude for the removal of the old hydrant at the Richland Community Association property. Mr. Kriss inquired if there was a limit to the length of time that a vehicle can be parked along the street without moving. Robert Rittle explained that as long as the vehicle is legally parked with up-to-date registration and inspection there is no time limit.

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 met with Becker Engineering and the environmental engineering firm to complete final steps of the environmental review process for the HUD grant, May 12<sup>th</sup> the environmental study was advertised open for public review until May 29<sup>th</sup>, any questions on the findings must be written and forwarded to the engineers to respond. Final plans for the water tank have been submitted to DEP. Matthew Johnson stated the final water tank design type is not final and reminded council to continue to research the different design types.

Recreation Committee – Playground building to be taken down in June. After baseball is complete the backstop and basketball court will be removed. Casey from Becker Engineering has submitted the MPDES permit.

Highway Committee – Nothing to report.

Property Committee – Nothing to report.

Personnel Committee – Kelly Bricker met with the Borough employees 5/13/24 to review ongoing matters.

Finance Committee – Nothing to report.

Safety Committee – Nothing to report.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Richard Strickler, 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. Dwight Belleman stated hydrant flushing is planned for the week of May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024. President Bricker requested Secretary Schnoke to send an alert and requested hydrant flushing be posted on the Borough's website and fire company sign to notify residents.

Water Report – No questions about the report.

Office Report – No questions about the report.

Engineer's Report – No questions about the report. President Bricker advised that Hess Home Builders questioned the maintenance responsibility of the water lines on the proposed plans for the ELM Street Development with regards to PUC regulations, Becker Engineering informed Hess Home Builders that responsibility for the water lines is on the property owner based on the design of the proposed water plans and that Richland Borough Water is not regulated by the PUC

Solicitor's Report – No questions about the report.

Code Enforcement Officer Report – No questions about the report.

Police Report – No report submitted.

MRJA Report – Meeting was held May 6, 2024, electronic copies of the monthly reports are on file and available for viewing upon request, the next meeting will be held June 3, 2024.

A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by James Niethammer, to accept the Officials Reports; motion unanimously carried.

The Financial Reports for April 2024 were submitted by Secretary/Treasurer Rebecca Schnoke. A motion was made by Larry Hartman, 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 Larry Hartman, seconded by Matthew Johnson, to pay all the invoices submitted; motion unanimously carried.

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

The following communications were received:

- March 2024 Monthly Municipal Recycling Report from Weidle – 4.51 Tons.
- April 2024 Monthly Municipal Recycling Report from Weidle – 6.93 Tons
- 3 Zoning/Building Permit Applications Received
- 11 Zoning/Building Permits Issued
- Lebanon County Commissioner Meeting Highlights → April 18<sup>th</sup> & May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024
- Richland Community Library → thank you letter
- Xfinity → updates to residential services agreement, changes to arbitration provision and a provision addressing cloud DVR technology.
- Kraft Municipal Group → memo regarding complaints submission.

Old Business:

2024 Alley Repair and Tar & Chip Bid – President Bricker advised the bids were opened and recorded at the April 23, 2024, workshop meeting. There were two bids received, one from Russell Standard Corporation in the amount of \$71,566.29, and one from Martin Paving Inc. in the amount of \$41,693.85. The bids have been reviewed by Solicitor Andrew George, both bids contained all required documents. A motion was made by Robert Rittle, seconded by Matthew Johnson to award the 2024 Alley Repair and Tar & Chip contract to Martin Paving, Inc. in the amount of \$41,693.85 and to pay this project from the liquid fuels fund; motion unanimously carried. Mayor Owen Landes inquired when the pothole at the intersection of ELM Street and Chestnut Street will be addressed, Supervisor Dwight Belleman stated the pothole will be part of the contract, but he will fill it in as a temporary solution until it is fixed.

Water Project Update – President Bricker provided two reminders; effective April 1, 2024, the water bill minimum increased to \$75.00; and the water project’s environmental assessment is available for public review upon request until May 29, 2024. Solicitor Andrew George advised that for the PennVEST funding certain steps must be taken per the Local Government Unit Debt Act, and one of the steps is enacting an ordinance to incur general obligation debt, another lawyer who specializes in this process has been hired to assist with this matter. A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Richard Strickler to approve the advertisement of the ordinance for the Borough to incur general obligation debt; motion unanimously carried.

Playground Project Update – President Bricker advised that Richland Borough was awarded \$13,000 through the Marcellus Shale Grant Program. A motion was made by Larry Hartman, seconded by Matthew Johnson to authorize the signing of the Marcellus Shale Grant Agreement; motion unanimously carried.

N. Race Street Update – Road Supervisor Dwight Belleman advised JVI questioned the storm drain to be removed, the state engineer got involved and JVI is being fined for violations in their work zones, so the project will be moving very fast, and once the project starts wrapping up, he will look at things and present any questions and concerns to the state inspectors. Mayor Owen Landes questioned if the hitching posts will be replaced, Dwight Belleman advised that per the state and resident at that location, the post is to remain where it is. Mayor Owen Landes asked if paving

around the tree going out of town was intentional, Dwight Belleman advised that it was because the resident did not want the tree cut down and the state could not force the owner to cut it down.

New Business:

Employee PTO for personnel hired after 1/1/2020 – President Bricker advised there was some confusion regarding the reset of the employee’s PTO, and to make everything less confusing and uniform she is proposing all employee PTO to reset January 1<sup>st</sup> of every year. A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by James Niethammer to reset all employee PTO on January 1<sup>st</sup> every year; motion unanimously carried.

Sale of small dump truck – Benjamin Becker advised the new dump truck is being built in the next couple weeks and he investigated options for selling the small dump truck. Benjamin Becker stated there are no brokers in the area, but he did investigate a heavy equipment auction company and municibid. Benjamin Becker recommended placing the small dump truck on municibid with a reserve sale price for a couple weeks, and if the reserve is not met to sell it through the heavy equipment auction company. No action taken, Benjamin Becker will research the options and determine a reserve amount to take action at the next meeting.

President Bricker announced that Council will recess the regular session to enter executive session at 7:53 p.m. to discuss legal matters. The Council returned from executive session at 8:13 p.m. reconvening the regular session after discussing legal matters with no action taken.

After discussing legal matters in executive session and reconvening the regular session a motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Matthew Johnson to approve a thirty-five-foot-wide Ag access easement across the condemned Newswanger property; motion unanimously carried.

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 Robert Rittle, to adjourn; motion unanimously carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Rebecca Schnoke,  
Richland Borough Secretary