

Richland Borough Council – Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Richland Borough Council was held on Tuesday, December 10, 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. Absent was Vice President Mark Brubaker, 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 James Niethammer, seconded by Richard Strickler, to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on November 12, 2024; motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Robert Rittle, seconded by Larry Hartman, to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the workshop meeting held on November 26, 2024; motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker opened the floor for citizens' and visitors' comments. There was one (1) person present.

Michelle Voydik – 29 N. Race 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 – President Bricker provided the following updates on current water projects, herself, Secretary Schnoke and Solicitor Andrew George were on PennVEST conference call #3 to review documents and address minor corrections, settlement for the Well No. 9 funding is scheduled for 11:00 AM on 12/19/24, test DocuSign documents will be sent on 12/16/24 in preparation for settlement; Becker engineering finalized and dropped off the water Operations and Maintenance Plan; Becker Engineering had a site visit with Dwight Belleman and Benjamin Becker to evaluate water levels and are working with Kohl Brothers to install the transducers and data loggers in the supply wells; the DEP inspection has been rescheduled until further notice.

Recreation Committee – President Bricker advised the park construction is underway, and councilmember James Niethammer is working with FROMM on a lighting study to prepare a conduit schedule.

Highway Committee – Nothing to report.

Property Committee – Nothing to report.

Personnel Committee – Nothing to report.

Finance Committee – Nothing to report.

Safety Committee – Nothing to report.

A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by James Niethammer, 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. President Bricker added that a response was received from PennDOT stating the stormwater pipe infrastructure is the Borough’s responsibility. Additionally, there were four water main breaks in the last three weeks, this did not happen in Richland only, water main breaks have also occurred in Lititz Borough, Myerstown, Womelsdorf-Robesonia, and Newmanstown, suggesting something occurred somewhere shifting the ground. The reported water main break dispatched by 911 today was not a break, Dwight Belleman was flushing hydrants.

Water Report – No questions about the report.

Office Report – No questions about the report.

Engineer’s Report – No questions about the report.

Solicitor’s Report – No questions about the report.

Code Enforcement Officer Report – No questions about the report.

Police Report – No questions about the report.

MRJA Report – Meeting was held December 2, 2024, electronic copies of the monthly reports are on file and available for viewing upon request, the next meeting will be held January 6, 2025.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Robert Rittle, to accept the Officials Reports. Motion unanimously carried.

The Financial Reports for November 2024 were submitted by Secretary/Treasurer Rebecca Schnoke. A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by James Niethammer 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 Robert Rittle, to ratify the bills paid; motion unanimously carried.

The following communications were received:

- November Monthly Municipal Report from Weidle – 5.54 Tons.
- Weidle – 2025 Holiday Collection Schedule. Secretary Schnoke will include this with the next water bill, white goods collections to occur 4/2-25 and 10/1/25 and Christmas tree pick up 1/8/25.

- 2 Zoning/Building Permit Applications Received
  - 200 E. Linden Street (Pool)
  - 23 Chestnut Street (Solar Panels)
- Commonwealth of PA Department of the Auditor General Municipal Pension Reporting → 2024 Biennial distress determination score is zero, funding ratio is 105%.
- First Aid & Safety Patrol → 2024 Stakeholder Newsletter
- Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority → Christmas Tree Recycling Program. Residents and contracted hauler can dispose of Christmas Tree's at the Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority at no charge until 2/15/25.

#### Old Business:

##### Water Projects

Andrew George advised that PennVEST suggested the Borough approve a reimbursement agreement resolution in the event the Borough uses Borough General funds for the Well No. 9 project the Borough can submit for reimbursement from the PennVEST funding. A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Robert Rittle to authorize the execution to adopt Resolution 2024-22 PennVEST Reimbursement Agreement for General Funds; motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker stated the revenues, expenses and change in net position for each Borough account, noting the large revenues reflect the grant funding to be received.

General Fund: Revenues \$2,368,696.56 Expenses \$2,368,395.48 Change in Net Position \$301.08

Water Fund: Revenues \$2,079,234.00 Expenses \$2,062,770.90 Change in Net Position \$16,463.10

Liquid Fuels Fund: Revenues \$44,442.69 Expenses \$44,000.00 Change in Net Position \$442.69

Fire Tax Fund: Revenues \$30,010.00 Expenses \$30,000.00 Change in Net Position \$10.00

General Reserve Fund: Revenues \$10,000.00 Expenses \$0.00 Change in Net Position \$10,000.00

Water Reserve Fund: Revenues \$553,000.00 Expenses \$128,416.52 Change in Net Position \$424,583.48

A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by Richard Strickler to adopt the 2025 Budgets for all Borough Accounts; motion unanimously carried.

#### New Business:

President Bricker advised that Secretary Schnoke with the help of GLRA and DEP submitted a grant application for the 2024 grant round of the 902-recycling grant for the purpose of purchasing a new leaf truck and Richland Borough was awarded \$200,000 to be utilized in two years, in 2026 the Borough can reapply for the remaining balance of the leaf truck minus the 10% match. A motion was made by Matthew Johnson, seconded by James Niethammer to approve the purchase of the ODB leaf picker; motion unanimously carried.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Larry Hartman to approve the 2025 Snowplow list; motion unanimously carried.

The council reviewed a list of 2025 refuse exemption request's submitted by multi unit's and businesses. President Bricker advised that each exemption request submitted must provide an invoice as proof of service. A motion was made by Robert Rittle, seconded by Richard Strickler to

approve the 2025 refuse exemption requests submitted by businesses and multi unit's; motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker stated that effective with the upcoming fiscal year of 2025 the Borough will implement a modest tax increase of 0.50 mills. President Bricker advised this decision was made after careful consideration and is necessary to address critical community needs, and to please keep in mind that tax money cannot be used for any water infrastructure or projects. The Borough has not raised taxes since 2018 and the Council has worked diligently to manage expenses while maintaining services however two key projects require additional funding, the playground improvements which is enhancing the community's recreational facilities, and the stormwater management on East and West Main Street is a vital project to address issues in infrastructure and to protect properties. The 0.50 mill increase equates to an additional \$74.48 annually for a property assessed at \$148,950.00 which is the medium assessed value in the Borough per the Lebanon County Tax Assessment Office. This small adjustment will ensure that these essential projects can move forward, strengthening our community's safety, quality of life and future resilience. A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Matthew Johnson, to authorize the advertisement of the tax ordinance for enactment at the January 2025 meeting; motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker advised the 2025 meeting schedule will be as follows:

Monthly Council Meetings → 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM

Council Workshop Meetings → 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM as needed

Zoning Hearing Board → Conduct hearings upon receipt of relevant challenges, appeals, or applications, as needed.

A motion was made by James Niethammer, seconded by Larry Hartman to approve the 2025 meeting schedule and authorize Secretary Schnoke to advertise the 2025 meeting schedule; motion unanimously carried.

President Bricker announced that Council will recess the Regular Session and enter Executive Session at 7:29 p.m. to discuss personnel matters.

The Council returned from the Executive Session at 7:39 p.m. after discussing personnel matters and reconvening the Regular Session with no action taken.

President Bricker advised that the Wreath's Across America ceremony will take place on December 14, 2024, at the cemetery. President Bricker stated it is a beautiful ceremony and encouraged all to attend.

President Bricker stated that 2024 was a very busy year with all of the current projects, and expressed gratitude to everyone for all their help, availability, and hard work. President Bricker wished everyone Happy Holiday's and Happy New Year.

Michelle Voydik advised the Isaac Myer Homestead for the second year will have the Winter Giving Fence from January 7, 2024, through March 6, 2024. The Winter Giving Fence makes hats, scarves, and gloves available to anyone in need. For anyone who would like to contribute to this cause, there is a donation box in the Myerstown Library, please put items in a plastic bag, marked with the size. Secretary Schnoke advised she will include this information in the next newsletter, and contact the Neptune Fire Company to display the event on their sign.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Rebecca Schnoke,  
Richland Borough Secretary