

2017-22
STRASBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
JULY 11, 2017
MINUTES

Members Present: Mike Chiodo Ray Garraffa
 Jim Rice David Dunn (by speakerphone)
 Will Hutchinson Bob Bennethum
 Bruce Ryder

Others Present:

Henry Miller, Mayor	Dee Fegan
Lisa M. Boyd, Borough Manager	Denise Waller
F. Steven Echternach, Chief of Police	Lynne Griffin
Lynn Commero, Lancaster Newspapers	Ann Willets
Larry Lawyer, ELA Group	Terri Lausch
Chuck Haley, ELA Group	John Hershey
Mike LaSala, LandStudies	Stephanie Eshleman
Robert Gaynor	May Gaynor
Tim Walter	Dolores Walter
R. Harnish	

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG: Council President Mike Chiodo called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m., followed by the salute to the flag. President Chiodo announced that the meeting is being audiotaped and maintained until the minutes are approved. The Borough Manager took the roll call.

REQUESTS TO BE HEARD:

POLLUTANT REDUCTION PLAN PRESENTATION – LARRY LAWYER, ELA GROUP AND MIKE LASALA, LANDSTUDIES: Mr. Lawyer stated that he and Mr. LaSala were in attendance to review the Pollutant Reduction Plan and complete the public presentation as required by DEP.

John Hershey, 48 East Main Street, asked if the report could be available online and/or emailed to him to which the Borough Manger stated that it would be provided to him electronically. He also asked if installing vegetative areas on Main Street had been considered to address not only water quality but also traffic calming and beautification by the addition of street trees. Mr. LaSala stated that if the Borough chose to pursue that option, that could be considered but the Borough needed an definite project that would not be impaired by PennDOT highway occupancy permit regulations.

MINUTES OF JUNE 13, 2017: A motion was made by Jim Rice, seconded by Bob Bennethum and passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2017 meeting as printed.

REPORTS:

MAYOR – Mayor Miller had nothing to report.

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PRESIDENT – President Chiodo stated that he felt the LNP newspaper article about Strasburg Borough put us in a good light and was done well.

MANAGER – The Borough Manager provided her written report dated July 10, 2017 and added that Bob May did provide the Lancaster EMS response times for the first six months of the year and she had copies available for the members.

POLICE – The Police Department’s report for June 2017 received and accepted.

PUBLIC WORKS – The Public Works report for June 2017 was received and accepted. Bob Bennethum acknowledged the cooperation between the Borough and Township with working together on projects.

ZONING OFFICER – The Zoning Officer’s report for June 2017 was received and accepted.

TREASURER – A motion was made by Bruce Ryder, seconded by Ray Garraffa and passed unanimously to accept and file for audit the Treasurer’s Report for the period ending June 30, 2017.

CONSENT AGENDA: A motion was made by Bob Bennethum, seconded by Jim Rice and passed unanimously to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

PAYMENT OF BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$142,200.48

HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD CERTIFICATE OF
APPROPRIATENESS – 15 WEST MAIN STREET AND 1 WEST MAIN
STREET

TRAILS AT STRASBURG – REDUCTION IN MAINTENANCE GUARANTEE
HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS – REDUCTION IN LETTER OF CREDIT

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

TOURIST HOME/AIRBNB DISCUSSION: The Borough Manager stated that she attended meetings of the B&B Association and with our Solicitor and Mr. Smucker’s lawyers who put together an ordinance revision proposal, which was provided to the members for their review.

Mike Chiodo expressed his concerns regarding the proposal which include supervision and monitoring if the owners are not in the area and it not being owner occupied. He also stated that he wanted to obtain input from the Police Chief because of the potential impact on them.

Bruce Ryder expressed his concern that the proposal includes allowing non owner occupied residences to be used for vacation rentals.

The Borough Manager is recommending to require them go through the Special Exception process through the Zoning Hearing Board and to match our current requirements for bed and breakfasts.

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Dee Fegan, representing the PA Association of Bed & Breakfasts, was in attendance and stated that she agreed with the concerns already raised and added that the existing bed and breakfasts believe tourist homes/Airbnbs should have to follow the same rules and regulations that apply to them. She also expressed her concern for fire safety and the visitor's safety is improved if the property is occupied by the owner.

Linda Griffin, from the Australian Inn Walkabout Inn Bed & Breakfast, stated that she was concerned with the proposal being so much different from the existing ordinance regulating bed and breakfasts as well as setting an example for other towns.

John Hershey stated that he was in favor of them being regulated through the Special Exception Zoning Hearing process. He added that he was in favor of them bringing in younger tourists.

Bruce Ryder stated that his interest was for the residents of the community and the impact on the Borough for allowing non owner occupied residences to become businesses. He added that our ordinances encourage maintaining the single family residence style of life and providing opportunities for businesses that serve local needs for the local people and that does not make us a tourist town. Additional concerns he has are properties would be less affordable for people who want to own and live here because businesses could pay a higher amount to purchase them to be used as vacation rentals and the homes sitting vacant and not maintained because they wouldn't be rented 365 days a year.

Ann Willets, owner of Kings Cottage in Lancaster Township, stated that Airbnb requires property owners to agree to their terms of agreement which states they are responsible to pay your state, local and bureau taxes and to meet all of the zoning ordinances and laws within the state and within your county/township/borough. She noted that the properties in violation on Strasburg Borough are not complying with the Airbnb terms and agreements.

May Gaynor stated that she was also concerned about opening up Strasburg to Airbnbs.

Mike Chiodo stated that no action was required this evening and that the Borough would continue to research and carefully consider this matter before proposing any changes to the current ordinances.

REVIEW OF DRAFT BURNING ORDINANCE: Mike Chiodo stated that the draft burning ordinance was put together by Bruce Ryder with the assistance of the Borough Manager and Police Chief. Bob Bennethum suggested a change be made to the title for Section 102 to read: Cooking and Recreational Burning Permitted Without a Permit. The permitted hours were discussed and it was the consensus to have the cutoff time for recreational burning be 12:00 midnight as drafted.

A motion was made by Jim Rice, seconded by Ray Garraffa and passed unanimously to authorize the staff to forward the draft burning ordinance to Bill Crosswell for his review and to proceed with advertisement it as long as there are not significant changes.

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NEW BUSINESS:

MID-YEAR FINANCIAL OVERVIEW: The Borough Manager provided her mid-year financial review memorandum and reviewed it in detail. She is recommending to forward the Pension Unfunded Liability payments and the GASB 45 payments that were outlined in the budget now and it was approved by consensus.

The Borough Manager stated that last year she had Christine Shipman attend an insurance meeting last year and we were recently notified that we will receive a 20% discount on our policy for attending. She also reminded the members that we receive a 5% discount on our Workers Compensation insurance because of the Safety Committee.

OTHER BUSINESS: Bob Bennethum asked for an update on 8-10 East Main Street and the Borough Manager stated that the draft injunction has been prepared by the Solicitor.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS: John Hershey stated that he believed it would be interesting to do a zip code survey of patrons of the businesses in the square and added that he believed the majority would be tourists. He also asked if an economic development strategy could be considered to encourage businesses to address local needs. Bruce Ryder stated that what he means by us not being a tourist town is that we do not have ordinances in place to encourage tourism-related businesses. He added that we have taken steps to restrict homes being turned into businesses that cater to tourists (like Intercourse and Cape May) but we do allow smaller scale businesses such as lawyer's offices, doctor's offices and self-employed carpenters to run their businesses out of their home.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – POLICE NEGOTIATIONS: At 8:29 p.m., Mike Chiodo adjourned the regular meeting into an Executive Session to discuss police negotiations.

The regular meeting was reconvened at 8:37 p.m. at which time no official action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Bob Bennethum, seconded by Ray Garraffa and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Boyd
Borough Manager