

## PLYMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES

#### REGULAR MEETING-NOVEMBER 10, 2020

The Plymouth borough work session began at 6:00pm and the Regular meeting was called to order immediately following the work session by: Mr. Ron Kobusky, President.

Guest Speaker: Mr. Chris Belleman - Exec. Director of the Flood Protection Authority of Luz County. Mr. Ryncavage introduced Mr. Belleman and stated his reason for speaking was to discuss increased ATV activity on the levee system.

Mr. Chris Belleman: There has been increased activity by ATVs and quads on the levees causing damage to those levees, perhaps due to the Covid-19 pandemic and more people staying home. Cleared up the misconception that the Flood Authority is associated with Luzerne County, they are not. There is no access to the Sheriff's Office or their deputies. Depend on the municipalities for their police force. Asked for increased patrols here to try and tamp down the activity.

Mr. Alec Ryncavage inquired about a sting operation conducted with Newport Twp

Mr. Belleman: the operation was performed with the Earth Conservancy and was, as he understands, successful. Received phone calls from citizens reporting a # of near misses with pedestrians. If the problem goes unchecked it could result in the loss of certification of the levee and risk loss of the grant to help get accreditation. In addition, the levee system could be decertified thus increasing flood insurance rates. The US Army Corps of Engineers has a program call the Accelerated Levee System Evaluation Project. Unfortunately, Hanover, W-B and Plymouth cannot be accredited. He is looking for assistance from the Borough In trying to correct the situation. The cost to do an evaluation though this project is \$800,000.00 which would be split 50/50 between the municipality and the Flood Authority. Let's partner together. Actions taken so far to correct problem: posting signs, erecting concrete blocks and barriers at the access points.

Mr. Ron Kobusky: Suggested speaking with the Mayor and our solicitor – set up times to meet and discussed what he has experienced and is willing to help in any way and that includes the Police, Mayor and Council. Can the Sherriff's dept help?

Mr. Belleman: will reach out to Mr. David Pedri regarding assistance from the Sheriffs dept.

Mr. Bill Dixon: past meetings funds were spoken of to shore up gates at the levee in and around the Beade Street area.

Mr. Chris Belleman: Borton Lawson Engineers are close to finalizing the design and it should be completed by the end of the year and then will be released for bid hopefully by spring. Added they have grants out there but b/c of the pandemic they have been delayed

Mr. Adam Morehart: Social media shows that the ATV's are using the levee to get to the flats.

Mr. Ron Kobusky – using the flats to get to W. Nanticoke Bridge/Newport Township area.

Mr. Chris Belleman: The Earth Conservancy is working with Newport Twp to put in an ATV Park there or a nearby area. Intend to put up blocks/barriers as a deterrent.

Mr. Frank Coughlin: Ongoing problems. He has been talking to the county for years trying to get a hold on this problem. Possible guard rails? Police will not chase the ATV riders due to safety and liability concerns.

Mr. Chris Belleman: Guard rails would be very costly. Thanked council for their time and allowing him to speak.

Work session began at 6:15 P.M. Mr. Ron Kobusky opened the work session by asking if anyone had any questions or comments before proceeding to the agenda.

Mr. Alec Ryncavage: Chris and he are working on the memorial and signs which are in now and will be installed by the end of November, by the Flood Authority. All has been approved by the families. Placed at the bench area on Beade St. The Covid-19 Care grant has been 100% approved for approx. 92 thousand dollars. It is a reimbursement grant. We will need to spend the amount before the end of November and then submit to the County. We will then be reimbursed by the end of December 2020. Money out of account for possibly a month.

Mr. Ron Kobusky: spend the money up front to get the stuff the Borough needs

Mr. John Thomas: voiced concern that it was the end of year and we have to spend 92 thousand dollars and then another 7200.00 for the Electronic Grant- had better be a guarantee that we get the money back - expressed concern that more notice should have been given regarding the grant. Discussion took place regarding the time frame and reimbursement procedure

Mr. Alec Ryncavage- assured that the money has been approved and the reimbursement will take place. All were involved in getting receipts and in the ordering of items, police, fire, Gail etc.

Mr. Ron Kobusky: raised concern over the approval and voting of these funds and purchases. Every dept involved has much work that needs to be completed and if they have to be paid by end of month - when will it be voted on? Buy the items but not vote until Dec. unless there is a special meeting?

Atty. Kostelansky- are all items accounted for tonight? Could approve items at tonight's regular meeting and authorize the purchases, then bring all of the payments and approve the payments for those purchases at the regular December meeting

Mr. Frank Coughlin: questioned why other communities have already received their money. Stated 92 thousand dollars is a lot of money to spend at end of the year

Mr. Alec Ryncavage: responded that the County had many questions regarding our items - other obstacles - 3 weeks to approve and deny our purchases/list of items. Explained further - all work is done - a lot of people assisted and cooperated - all worked together  
Atty Kostelansky - reiterated the procedure on events involving the approving of the 92 thousand dollars - give list of items to Gail to scan into minutes

Mr. Ron Kobusky: add to the end of meeting - let's move on!

Mr. Alec Ryncavage: Electronic Grant - originally planned two e-cycling events. We have 50% coverage. If we want 100% coverage, we need to collect 3,000 more pounds to meet the DPW requirement. At present we received a bill for \$7000.00 of which we need to pay 50% Suggested hosting another event - truck weighs 8,000 lbs. Goes by calendar year - if we hit 10,000 lbs we pay nothing unless we go over. Aim for the end of December for another event.

Mr. John Thomas: raised concern over cost - originally thought cost was 2000.00 now it is 7 thousand - have to be mindful of our costs something in writing - requested Alec email info to him

Mr. Alec Ryncavage rebutted - not costing 7 thousand dollars, only approx. \$4,000.00. The amount of \$2,000.00 was a buffer in case we went over the limit.

Mr. Earl Cunningham: Please wear masks as the corona numbers are on a rise. At one of the fire department meetings there was a positive case of Covid-19. 2 full time drivers that were at the meeting were exposed but had a negative result. All shifts/positions were handled in the event they were positive. Safety precautions were put into place during this time, at all

departments. More masks have been ordered from the county EMA. Please wear masks when inside the Borough building. No visitors will be allowed at any of the fire departments. Mr. Adam Morehart: On November 5<sup>th</sup> he spoke with Mr. Todd Hevner, Director of the SPCA, Luzerne County, regarding the contract involving the stray animal. Refer to insert provided by Adam. Adam will look to see if per animal price is more cost effective. At present we pay on a per Capita basis. Process is in place with the SPCA on how the strays are handled. Keys are provided to us for the SPCA requires that A Police officer must perform the duty – our keys are missing but we will get them replaced. Please take the animal to the SPCA rather than keeping at your home. Encouraged the use of this service. Call Jim Spencer, dog warden. Transport to SPCA yourself since the pandemic has taxed the dog warden availability. Will work with Gail regarding numbers and per capita vs per animal and research other partnerships with shelters in area.

Ms. Alexis Eroh: November 4<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission met. Meeting minutes are on file. Would like to add another person to commission. Request to council. Next meeting is Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>. Alec will attend to brainstorm on website and other items. Discussed resolution from January that created the Planning Commission that said you could build upon an existing plan Wanted to make sure there was not an existing plan and if the commission would need to start from scratch

Mr. John Thomas: what about the plan from Julie at the PDD?

Mr. Alec Ryncavage: review the document that PDD confirmed as final but does not think that it will work in a COVID environment and we should not be paying for the proposal that we cannot use.

Ms. Alexis Eroh: Will follow up with Julie from PDD re: final report. Spoke with Ted Ritsick from DCED regarding the Stamp plan with Jim Rhodes – we never joined. Ted and Jim are asking Alexis to handle – we pledged a lot of money to this – most municipalities get 50/50 but we may get 70/30 for the operational part – someone comes in to do an operational overview of the Borough – part 2 funding to get comprehensive plan together because it has to be certified by engineers. In order to move forward with anything, we need to handle the stamp plan

Mr. John Thomas: Happy Thanksgiving Electrical outlets installed on Main St. – 100 and 7 of the lights have already been hung and will be hung from Bull Run to Academy. In the last 2 years, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Kovach and Mr. Dixon saved a little over \$30,000.00 doing the electrical work in Borough building. Applause! Have about 40 Christmas lights left to install and see how far they can get – both sides of street.

Mr. Bill Dixon: Ron, Bill and John will meet with COG. Hailstone Economics was hired by LSVCOG for a regional development plan – things like improving our community. We have State streets and borough streets – ppl complaining about E Shawnee, It is a state road – re: pot hole 82 E. Shawnee Ave - 2 things going on – toilet was running, stuffed with material causing the problem – the borough is not responsible for fixing a homeowners lateral – a lot of people are out patrolling and every effort is made to find any problems – can only report and walk away. Cannot do anything if it is a state road.

Mr. Frank Coughlin: Happy Thanksgiving. Please remember the Veterans at our moment of silence in regular meeting. Line painting last week – some cars got paint on them. Call Pen Dot in Dunmore and file a claim. Ms. Mary Beth Rosensteel and Donna Coughlin have been helping to restring the lights helping the Rotary.

Mr. John Thomas and Mr. Bill Dixon: can hang the lights up next week Thanked all who helped with the lights.

Mr. Frank Coughlin: People from out of town asking about what's going on in town – last year Wells Fargo was bought, Dollar General came to town, new business in hair salon and

Plymouth Pizza, to name a few. Please keep a pleasant attitude. It attracts people to come to town. Support small business. Policing is tough. Please be patient

Mr. John Thomas: commented on how well the town worked together when the Wall that Heals was in town- hoped that kind of cooperation can happen again

Mr. Ron Kobusky: WVSA will rebuild 2 storm drains and that will save us more money- over \$30000.00 will be saved by WVSA doing this work. Beverly Drive project starts next week - home at bottom of Jeanette St. will be down by end of month (401 E. Main St)

Mr. Alec Ryncavage: garbage contract closed RP slated to go out this week - working to get new contract for town.

Sergeant Michal Thomas: receiving complaints regarding checks being stolen from boxes at PO. Any deposited in side box check your statement. From August to Mid - October. Issue through whole county

**CITIZENS IMPUT REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS:**

Mr. John Frey: Asked if there would be another recycling event?

Mr. Alec Ryncavage said he is trying to coordinate another by the end of December.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited and followed by a moment of silence.

**ROLL CALL: COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ms. Alexis Eroh  
Mr. Earl Cunningham  
Mr. John Thomas  
Mr. Adam Morehart  
Mr. William Dixon, Vice-President  
Mr. Alec Ryncavage  
Mr. Ronald Kobusky, President

**AGENDA VOTING:**

MOTION WAS MADE TO APPOINT PASTOR BRYAN DODSON AS CHAPLIN FOR COUNCIL, BOROUGH EMPLOYEES AND THE EMERGENCY PERSONNEL OF THE BOROUGH. PASTOR DODSON HAS VOLUNTEERED HISTIME AND SERVICES AT THE PLEASURE OF COUNCIL NAD IS THE PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHRCH LOCATED ON GAYLORD AVENUE.

MOTION: Mr. Earl Cunningham

SECOND: Mr. John Thomas

PASSED: 7 YES

MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES FROM:

1. REGULAR MEETING MARCH 10, 2020
2. REGULAR MEETING MAY 12, 2020
3. REGULAR MEETING JUNE 9, 2020
4. SPECIAL MEETING APRIL 30, 2020
5. SPECIAL MEETING JUNE 25, 2020

MOTION: Mr. William Dixon

SECOND: Mr. Adam Morehart

PASSED: 7 YES

MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE FIRE AND POLICE REPORTS FOR OCTOBER.

MOTION: Mr. Earl Cunningham

SECOND: Mr. John Thomas

PASSED: 7 YES

MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE AND PAY THE MONTHLY BILLS:

\*On the question: John Thomas votes yes to pay all bills except bill #20-835GF-John Thomas, which is the payment for health insurance for retired police, of which there is a contractual conflict of interest.

GENERAL FUND: 20-762GF - 20-858GF

LIQUID FUELS: 20-372LF - 20-382LF

RECREATION FUND: 20-049RF - 20-053RF

MOTION: Mr. William Dixon

SECOND: Mr. Adam Morehart

PASSED: 7 YES

MOTION WAS MADE TO AMEND THE AGENDA

MOTION: Mr. Earl Cunningham

SECOND: Mr. Adam Morehart

PASSED: 7 YES

WHEREAS THE BOROUGH WAS GRANTED \$92,000.00 FROM THE COVID-19 GRANT FOR LUZERNE COUNTY, AND PURCHASED ITEMS ADDING UP TO \$90,999.43, A MOTION WAS MADE TO PAY THE INVOICES FOR THE ITEMS ON EXHIBIT A (A LIST OF ALL ITEMS THE BOROUGH PURCHASED FOR THE COVID-19 CARES GRANT), AND THE PHYSICAL PAID INVOICES TO BE PRESENTED TO COUNCIL AT THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING FOR DECEMBER.

MOTION: Mr. Alec Ryncavage

SECOND: Mr. Earl Cunningham

PASSED: 7 YES

MOTION TO ADJORN WAS MADE BY COUNCILMAN EARL CUNNINGHAM

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY;

  
Gail Burdulis, Borough Secretary