

**BOROUGH OF ST. LAWRENCE
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2015**

ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Robert J. May, Council President
Mr. David W. Eggert, Council Vice President
Rev. D. Michael Bennethum, Councilman
Mr. Rick Davidson, Councilman
Mrs. Joan Eshelman, Councilwoman
Mr. Warren Lubenow, Councilman
Mr. Cary G. Whitman, Councilman

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms. Joan London, Borough Solicitor – Kozloff Stoudt
Ms. Pamela Stevens, Borough Engineer – SDE
Ms. Allison A. Leinbach, Borough Manager
Mrs. Susan D. Eggert, Borough Secretary
Mr. William C. Daniels, Code Enforcement Officer
Mr. Michael Fritz, Borough Mayor
Mr. Matt Stairiker, LAEMS
Mr. Luke Miller, LAEMS
Chief Robert Jordan, Exeter Township Fire Department
Chief Christopher Jordan, Exeter Township Fire Department

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting of the St. Lawrence Borough Council was called to order by Mr. Robert J. May, Council President, at 7:31 PM.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: The minutes from the previous meeting of Thursday, October 8, 2015, were presented to Council for review. There were no questions, corrections or clarifications to the minutes. **MOTION:** Mr. David Eggert made the motion to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Mr. Rick Davidson; all were in favor and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET MEETING MINUTES: The budget meeting which was held on Wednesday, November 4, 2015, required minutes to be taken since there was a quorum. The minutes were reviewed and Rev. Bennethum pointed out that November 4, 2015, was not a Monday it was a Wednesday, so that change will be made; other than that there were no changes, corrections or clarifications. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion to approve the minutes as presented with the above change; seconded by Mr. Warren Lubenow; Mr. Lubenow, Mr. Eggert, Mrs. Eshelman, Rev. Bennethum, Mr. Davidson and Mr. Whitman were in favor; Mr. May abstained since he was not present.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The treasurer's report was presented to Council for review. There were no questions, corrections or clarifications to the report. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented; seconded by Mr. Lubenow; all were in favor and the motion carried.

GENERAL: \$330,841.17 **SEWER:** \$226,093.05 **RESERVES:** \$48,726.05 **LIQUID FUELS:** \$136,873.94

APPROVAL AND PAYMENT OF THE BILLS: The bills requiring payment and ratification from the general fund totaled \$67,108.48. The bills requiring payment from the sewer fund totaled \$5,927.34. There were no questions, corrections or clarifications. **MOTION:** Mr. Rick Davidson made the motion authorizing payment and ratification of all bills presented; seconded by Mr. Eggert; all were in favor and the motion carried.

REPORT OF CODE ENFORCEMENT - WILLIAM C. DANIELS

330 PARKVIEW ROAD - Mr. Daniels indicated that the property at 330 Parkview Road was cleaned up to the best of his ability at this time. The pool is an in-ground pool with a safety cover, there is a hot tub but the hot tub is empty and imposes no danger.

REPORT OF THE BOROUGH ENGINEER - PAMELA STEVENS, SDE

PA AMERICAN REFUND – PA American is requesting a refund for the road opening permit for the work that was done on Parkview and Beechwood. They have applied for another permit for work that is going to be done on Bingaman Street. It has been decided to reimburse them the difference between the two so at this time the refund will be \$22,830.00. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion to refund PA American in the amount of \$22,830.00; seconded by Mr. Lubenow; Mr. Eggert, Mr. Lubenow, Mr. Davidson, Mr. Whitman and Mrs. Eshelman voting in favor; Mr. May was opposed.

EMERGENCY WATER REPAIR – There was an emergency PA One call for a PA American water leak on Bingaman Street right across from the entrance to the carwash. The permit will be filed after the fact since it is an emergency however PA American has been very cooperative and has made good repairs in the past.

TOSCO PENNDOT LETTER - Ms. Stevens and Ms. London are drafting a letter to PennDOT with regard to the property at 3001 Perkiomen Avenue and their HOP. The letter is stating that we would like to see the zoning hearing board decision for a right in right out be upheld due to accidents. PennDOT is looking for the timeframes of the accidents over a period of time. The letter is ready to be sent after that information is received from the police department to confirm the information about the accidents and then needs to go on Borough letterhead.

NPDES MS 4 PERMIT - The permit documents were sent on time.

REPORT OF THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR - JOAN LONDON, KOZLOFF STOUDT
RFP FOR FIRE/AMBULANCE SERVICE

FIRE SERVICE - Ms. London indicated that RFPs for fire service were sent out and responses were received from City of Reading and a joint proposal from Mt. Penn Fire and Exeter Township Fire. The proposals were reviewed by Council prior to the meeting. Mr. Lubenow distributed a sheet with calculations that he came up with after doing research with Mt. Penn Borough and Exeter Township with respect to what the residents pay for fire protection. This was discussed in detail and Chief Robert Jordan explained how Exeter Township's fire tax works and what is covered and how the tax dollars for a fire tax must be used. Rev. Bennethum indicated that we need to do what is right for the residents and for the fire companies. There was discussion about the proposal with regard to the millage rate they are looking for and monies to be given for their apparatus funds. **MOTION:** Mr. Lubenow made the motion to accept the proposal made by Mt. Penn Fire/Exeter Township Fire jointly for a 0.5 millage fire tax with a contribution of \$10,000 for the apparatus funds; seconded by Rev. Bennethum; Mr. Lubenow, Rev. Bennethum, Mrs. Eshelman, Mr. Eggert, Mr. Whitman and Mr. Davidson voting in favor; Mr. May was opposed. Of note this is a 3-year proposal.

AMBULANCE SERVICE - Ms. London indicated that proposals were received from both Lower Alsace Ambulance and Exeter Township Fire. Both proposals included an option for zero tax dollars with the ability to solicit residents for memberships. There was some discussion. It was noted that when Lower Alsace took over in March it was a very easy transition with no problem. Rev. Bennethum commented that in the past when we changed police departments we had positive feedback from the residents and wondered if staying with Lower Alsace would be beneficial for the Borough. There was some discussion back and forth. Mr. Lubenow indicated that he would like to be consistent with the fire department and would lean more toward using Exeter Township Fire. Mr. Eggert stated that he felt that Lower Alsace would be a better choice because their run area is smaller and they are currently being underutilized and felt that we should stay with Lower Alsace Ambulance. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion that the Borough accept the proposal from Lower Alsace Ambulance for zero tax dollars with the ability to solicit memberships from the residents; seconded by Mrs. Eshelman; Mr. Eggert, Mrs.

Eshelman, Mr. Davidson and Mr. Whitman voting in favor; Mr. Lubenow was opposed and Mr. May abstained. Mr. Geibel asked what the timeframe of this proposal would be; the proposal submitted was a 3-year proposal. Chief Christopher Jordan commented that he believed that St. Lawrence was missing out on a great opportunity to work with a very stable and experienced company.

POLICE AGREEMENT - The police agreement was available this evening to be signed. Mr. May was previously authorized to sign the police agreement. This was done this evening and given to Chief Serafin to take to the Police Commission who will sign the agreement at their next meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Ms. London requested an executive session at the end of the meeting to discuss potential litigation.

BUDGET & FINANCE - ALLISON LEINBACH

NEW VIST ACCOUNTS - The paperwork to sign for the new bank accounts was available this evening. **MOTION:** Mr. Lubenow made the motion authorizing the Borough Manager, Borough Secretary, Council President and Council Vice President to sign the paperwork to establish the bank accounts; seconded by Mr. Davidson; all were in favor and the motion carried.

FOREIGN FIRE DISTRIBUTION - The Foreign Fire Insurance money needs to be distributed this evening. As discussed previously it was decided to split the money 50% to Mt. Penn Fire Company and 50% to Exeter Township Fire Department. Mrs. Eggert has already obtained the necessary information from both companies to complete the necessary paperwork to the state. The amount of the Foreign Fire distribution is \$10,626.03. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion to split the Foreign Fire Insurance monies 50% to Mt. Penn Fire Company and 50% to Exeter Township Fire Company; seconded by Mr. Davidson; all were in favor and the motion carried.

2015 CONTRIBUTIONS - A list of the contributions given in 2014 were distributed to Council for review. There was some discussion. Mr. Lubenow asked that the Borough Council consider increasing the library donation in the future since Exeter Township has increased their contribution to them. There was discussion and comment made that they cannot provide information about how many St. Lawrence Borough residents use the library. Also Mrs. Eggert indicated that the letter from the Animal Rescue League asked if the Borough could consider increasing their donation. Mrs. Eggert called the Animal Rescue League to find out how many strays were taken their by St. Lawrence's residents and the number of strays was 3. **MOTION:** Rev. Bennethum made the motion to give the same contributions for 2015 that were given in 2014 which include the following Animal Rescue League \$500, Exeter Library \$5427 (\$3 per resident), Mt. Penn Fire Company \$7000, Exeter Fire Department \$7000, Berks County Crime Alert \$250, Berks County Solid Waste Authority \$250, and Berks County Conservation District \$50; seconded by Mr. Eggert; all were in favor and the motion carried. We will also contribute \$500 for a membership to The Center for Community Leadership and do four subscriptions to Borough News.

PRELIMINARY BUDGET - The preliminary budget was reviewed and discussed. The budget was projected. There was a discussion about the fire tax and what amount that would need to be in order to meet the joint proposal from Mt. Penn Fire and Exeter Township Fire that was accepted early in the meeting. It was decided to add the apparatus donation into the fire tax. After some discussion it was decided to make the fire tax 0.64 mills and the general fund will remain unchanged at 6.0. There was some discussion about stormwater repairs and how that needs to be budgeted and what fund that should be kept in; capital or operating.

ORDINANCE 435 – 2016 TAX MILLAGE RATE - The tax millage rate for 2016 will be a general millage rate of 6.0 and a fire tax millage rate of .64. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion to advertise Ordinance 435 setting the 2016 tax millage rate at 6.0 general and to add a fire tax of .64; seconded by Mr. Davidson; all were in favor and the motion carried.

GRANT FOR TRUCK - Ms. Leinbach indicated that she has a meeting next Monday with Jane Meeks and DEP about a possible grant for a leaf collection truck that could also be used for plowing and salting. They may pay for 50% of the truck and the rest can be paid for out of liquid fuels for this purchase. If we get the grant the liquid fuels money will be used therefore does not have to be accounted for in the general and sewer budgets.

SANITARY SEWER

EXETER TOWNSHIP - We are still in negotiations with Exeter.

NEW BUSINESS

PRELIMINARY MEETING SCHEDULE - The preliminary meeting schedule for 2016 was distributed. The reorganization meeting has to be on Monday, January 4, 2015 with the regular meeting to follow. The rest of the schedule is the second Thursday of the month with no holidays affecting the schedule. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion to advertise the Council meeting schedule as distributed with January 4 being the reorganization meeting with the regular meeting to follow and the rest of the months will be the second Thursday of the month; seconded by Mr. Lubenow; all were in favor and the motion carried.

GENERAL COMMENTS

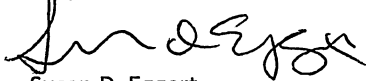
WEBSITE - Mr. Lubenow is very upset about the website and would like to see it taken down since there is incorrect information and dates on it. Ms. Leinbach indicated that she is working on getting it changed and that she no longer has access to it. There is a college student who is currently working on revamping the entire site. Ms. Leinbach indicated that she will again ask Mr. Golashovsky to take down the current website's incorrect information.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: MOTION: Mr. Eggert made the motion to go into executive session to discuss potential litigation; seconded by Mr. Davidson; all were in favor and the motion carried. Council went into executive session at 9:26 PM. Council came out of executive session at 9:40 PM.

MOTION: Mr. Eggert made the motion authorizing Ms. London to file a motion to dismiss the lawsuit against the Borough of St. Lawrence; seconded by Rev. Bennthum; all were in favor and the motion carried. Ms. London also asked Ms. Leinbach to contact the Borough's insurance provided to find out if they are filing on behalf of the Borough as well.

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: Mr. Whitman made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Davidson; all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting of the St. Lawrence Borough Council adjourned at 9:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted



Susan D. Eggert
Borough Secretary