

MONROE BOROUGH MEETING MINUTES – 4/03/2023

Location: Monroeton Library Meeting Room, 149 Dalpiaz Drive, Monroeton PA.

The regular meeting of Monroe Borough Council was called to order by Council President Dan Troup at 6:15pm, opening with the pledge of allegiance.

Present were Council President Dan Troup, Vice President Joan Grenell, members Bill Shaw, Brenda Munkittrick, Leo Wills, Eric West, and Mayor Seth Wills. Amy Calaman was absent. Also present were Secretary/Treasurer Laura Hewitt, Ordinance Enforcement Officer Kurt Lafy, Borough Maintenance and Roadmaster Al Pronti, plus members of the public (listed on sign-in sheet.) Sergeant Joe Mitchell and Trooper Matt Santiago of the PA State Police also attended the beginning of the meeting.

Minutes from the March 6, 2023 meeting were passed unanimously by a Shaw/Wills motion.

The **treasurer's report** for March was approved, with a motion to pay bills, by a Munkittrick/Grenell passed unanimously. Amy Calaman was absent, so Laura sent March bank statements, reconciliations, and timesheets to Joan for later review/confirmation. Budget vs Actual reports for March were delivered to Joan and Dan.

PA State Police update: Sgt Mitchell and Trooper Santiago introduced themselves and provided an update on the March 26 incidents, answering as many questions as possible. They were not able to give specifics because of the ongoing investigation, but shared appreciation for the public support they received from local canvassing, surveillance and game cams. They noted 'prevention is the first part,' with a reminder to take valuables out of vehicles and keep them locked. Before they left the meeting, they agreed to return next month to follow-up, asking residents to bring ideas to continue expanding on a community partnership opportunity.

Correspondence received in March was reviewed. Laura responded to a request for a **copy of all ordinances** by noting they are too numerous to copy but are available to view during office hours or by appointment. Also noted were an overwhelming number of '**weather alerts**' from the County Emergency office; an upcoming **Broadband Expansion Webinar**, and a **PennDOT Outreach** meeting.

Public Participation: There were some additional comments about the increasing incidents of crime and vandalism, and how to prevent them. Reestablishing a neighborhood watch was suggested, and Council members noted willingness to support it. Someone suggested moving some playground equipment to a different, more visible, lot, but new cameras are now focused on the existing playground. Questions about the levee are addressed in the report below.

Borough Reports:

Library: report submitted, on file. Numbers were lower than usual due to furnace problems.

Fire: report submitted, on file. BBQ flyers were made available.

Ordinance Enforcement: report submitted, on file. Kurt noted if the Decker and Larcom properties do not sell at the upcoming "judicial sale", they wind up on a "repository list" but still remain owned by Decker and Larcom. The owners and the Borough remain in a catch-22 on resolving together, as demolition grants for private owners require them to rebuild, but the Borough cannot apply for blight removal of privately owned properties. Even if a grant could be assured if the Borough purchased the properties, the long time frame between grant application, approval, and until funds are available create an untenable liability.

Kurt also reported on the previously approved speed limit sign, noting that he has been unable to confirm if it conforms to PennDOT signage requirements. Costars lists only

"categories," not specific items, so Kurt is making further inquiries. A Munkittrick/Wills motion passed unanimously to approve the purchase of the \$3,945 model instead, IF the lesser cost sign is not PennDOT approved.

Frontier Communications have begun to respond to inquiries, but have not yet completed all of the information needed for the permit.

Levee Project: DEP's consultant will start the investigation on Monroe Hose Co. this month. We have not yet received a final drawing on the re-alignment. No further information has been received from Stiffler/McGraw on options to clean creeks.

Streets: A Wills/West motion was approved unanimously to accept and sign the Chesapeake Roadway Use and Maintenance Agreement, extending through Jan 2, 2025. Laura noted it was the Borough's responsibility to request an annual inspection, and she will contact them to address the road issues noted last month.

Al reported that the plow and salt spreader have been taken off the truck, he is now beginning work on potholes. He was asked to check some speed signs that may need replacing. Laura was reminded to reach out to PennDOT to request a meeting and walkthrough to get advice, she will pass along Al's phone number so they can coordinate.

Buildings/Grounds: The **spring cleanup** will be advertised on April 8. Laura met Karen Arnold, Keystone Historical Preservation Grant Manager, and Katie Smith, NTRPDC Economic Development Program Mgr. early in March and will be following up next month regarding grant options for **brick pointing** for the Library. Al will be picking up the **community bulletin board** this week from Northern Tier Career Center, a West/Munkittrick motion passed unanimously to pay for the bulletin board materials when the invoices are received, not to exceed \$350.

Vandalism: The recent vehicle break-ins were discussed earlier. Regarding the playground cameras, Penelec has finally responded to our inquires after Laura contacted corporate communications, but still only with incomplete information and an indefinite timeline. Leo and Eric installed the cameras in alternate locations; if Penelec determines an agreeable placement later, we will reconsider then.

Fire Escape: remains on Al's 'to-do' list.

Public Utility: One of the lights previously reported (in the Hose Company parking lot) is still not working. Two additional lights were also added to the list for Laura to report. Laura was asked to request three new lights: on West Laurel Street, at the end of Hinman and Shaw, and near the Hose Company flagpole. General dissatisfaction was also expressed about how the LED lights seem more problematic.

Water/Sewer (TMA): Bill missed the last TMA meeting, so has no report.

Finance & Insurance: Laura will be meeting with Caleb this week, to review the renewal, with payment not due until after the June meeting.

EMC: no report.

Mayor: Seth shared that Martin Lauber has expressed interest in getting a Neighborhood Watch group formalized.

New/Other Business: In response to prior inquires, Laura reported we are a member of Costars, and distributed 'membership cards' tonite.

Executive Session: Due to discussion of possible litigation, the public were asked to step out of the meeting room. All Council members and the secretary remained, from 7:56 to 8:15. No action or motions were brought forward from the executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 pm by a unanimous West/Munkittrick motion.

(not OFFICIAL without signature and seal)

Respectfully submitted by Laura H Hewitt, Borough Secretary