

MINUTES
LANGHORNE MANOR BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER - The Zoom virtual meeting of Langhorne Manor Borough Council was called to order in the Langhorne Manor Borough Hall, 618 Hulmeville Avenue, Langhorne, Pennsylvania, on September 15, 2020 at 7:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time, after Zoom participants were admitted to the meeting at 7:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time by Dawn Seader, President.

PERSONS PRESENT – Dawn Seader-President, Nicholas Pizzola-Vice President, Robert Byrne-Mayor, William R. McTigue, Jr., James Niwinski, Alicia Gasparovic, Maryann Barnes, Sarah Brucie-Assistant Solicitor and Barbara Ferraro-Secretary/Treasurer.

PERSONS ABSENT – Robert Byrne-Mayor, Grace Judge

2. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by James Niwinski.

Ms. Seader stated that the meeting was being recorded and Council, Solicitor and Mayor attendance was taken. Ms. Seader reminded people of the professional nature of the Zoom meeting and that conduct should reflect this, all would be muted, there would be time for resident comments during which the raised hand feature should be used and the chat feature should not be used.

3. RDA GRANT RESOLUTION - Ms. Seader presented a Resolution for approval of a grant request to the RDA for the Langhorne Middletown Fire Company's (LMFC) Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) loan repayment. Ms. Gasparovic made a motion to approve Resolution #2020-17 supporting the grant request in the amount of \$27,883 for the purpose of the loan repayment for the SCBA which the Borough will provide to Langhorne Middletown Fire Company. Mr. McTigue seconded. There were no objections. The motion carried.

4. RESOLUTION REQUEST – Ms. Seader introduced Andy Foley from Penndel/ Middletown Emergency Squad to request a resolution and sponsorship for the RDA for two of the squad's projects. Mr. Foley explained the two projects which are funding for ballistic protective vests and the replacement and relocation of a generator. Mr. Foley cited statistics and reasons for their need. Mr. McTigue clarified that they are just looking for the Borough to sponsor support at the full dollar amount. Mr. Foley stated that Langhorne Borough will be the primary applicant. Ms. Gasparovic asked for confirmation that the Manor is not applying for the grants. Mr. Foley responded that is correct. Mr. Niwinski made a motion to approve Resolution #2020-18 supporting the applications of Penndel/Middletown Emergency Squad for grants in the amount of \$26,994 for ballistic protective vests and \$23,877 for the replacement and relocation of a generator for its station at 616 East Lincoln Highway, Langhorne, PA. Mr. Pizzola seconded. There were no objections. The motion carried.

5. POSITION OF BOROUGH MANAGER – Ms. Seader presented background information on the possibility of a need for a Borough manager. She stated that they are typically found in larger municipalities, but smaller boroughs are finding the need for a manager due to different expectations and for increasing responsiveness to residents. Ms. Seader investigated numerous job descriptions. She stated the Borough Code allows for a Borough manager and legislative powers are still the responsibilities of Council. The Borough manager would be responsible for administrative functions, would not supplant the activities or the responsibilities of Council but would support them and bring a much needed expertise and skillset around codes, variances, ordinances and zoning issues. These items may not always be skillsets a volunteer Council would possess. The position would be established and dissolved by ordinance. She stated that savings would be seen in solicitor, engineer and inspector fees and the position would more than pay for itself. Ms. Seader stated that Council received bullet points on the Borough's needs. She stated that she and Ms. Ferraro have navigated many of the issues but does not feel it has been a good use of time. A Borough manager would have knowledge of these issues. Ms. Seader stated that the position would focus on codes, variances and ordinances and would be no more than a part-time position. Ms. Seader asked for discussion among Council.

Mr. McTigue stated as being a long-time participant in Borough matters, he can attest that there are many issues that require coordination with the engineer, solicitor and other parties and a manager would be very useful in cost and timeliness of communication. He suggested an additional bullet point of "other duties as assigned" so there are no limitations or misunderstandings from the start. Ms. Seader stated that the official ordinance would include things such as "good communication skills" and "knowledge of the local government" along with the specific skillsets and pay scale.

Mr. Pizzola agreed with Mr. McTigue. He stated that the position is required due to the amount of activity and governmental regulations that the Borough has to comply with and that Council needs to spend time on such as the stormwater management. He stated that the Borough needs to be judicious in budgeting and in hours, take the approach that it is something new for the Borough and it will be monitored.

Ms. Gasparovic stated she supports the position. She stated that items that might be added over time could be the handling of resident complaints, especially against each other, grant research and emergency management. She stated that manager consistency through time would be a benefit.

Ms. Barnes stated that the bullet points are a good start and she agrees that this is something Council needs to look into and work out.

Mr. Niwinski agrees with the need and the position especially with the issues that are coming up. He suggested that each year Council would vote to bring the position in as opposed to taking it out. Ms. Seader asked Ms. Brucie if this is a position that would be voted on each year. Ms. Brucie stated that Borough Code states that Council may enter into an employment agreement, but in a situation like this it is not required. She stated if this kind of flexibility is desired, it would probably be done via contract and ordinance. Mr. Niwinski stated that government has a

tendency to expand and never shrink and the position is voted on each year then the need for it can be assessed each year. Ms. Seader stated she feels the needs will grow and become more complex through the years. She stated that Council should review the needs for all of the Borough's services. Mr. Niwinski spoke to the budget and Ms. Seader stated that she would not have brought this to Council if she thought it would require an increase in taxes. Ms. Brucie stated that the Borough manager could be someone who also holds another position within the Borough, but not a Councilperson or the Mayor.

Ms. Seader stated that her thoughts on hours were 30-40 hours/month as it is a very focused position.

Ms. Gasparovic asked if there would be an issue if there was a need to fire the person. Ms. Seader stated the position would be established and dissolved by ordinance. Ms. Brucie stated that it could be in the ordinance that the position was held pursuant to an employment agreement the terms of which could address this. Mr. Pizzola asked that if the contract could be made to be an employment at will. Ms. Brucie stated that she would look into it.

Ms. Seader suggested a salary position of \$1,000/month, \$12,000/year, approximately 10 hours/week, 30-40 hours/month. Ms. Gasparovic stated she is typically seeing \$120,000/year in openings. She stated that might be more where Council needs to be. Ms. Seader spoke to the size of the other municipalities in comparison and that this would be a part-time position for someone who has another job or may be retired.

Mr. Pizzola stated that the budget can handle \$12,000/year. He would not support more than that. He stated that the police budget has increased and if it is kept the same, the budget would increase by \$25,000 next year. He stated that it also would probably take time to see the position pay for itself. Mr. Niwinski agreed.

Mr. McTigue suggested advertising and see who expresses interest.

Ms. Gasparovic asked to what the Langhorne Borough's manager's salary is. Ms. Seader stated she would check.

6. COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS AND VISITORS -

Lynn Barry, 301 Park Avenue – Ms. Barry asked if Council would consider if the position could be a 1099 contracted position. Mr. Niwinski stated that care needed to be taken that the IRS does not consider the person an employee. Ms. Brucie suggested considering all flexible options.

Stephen Perloff, 301 Hill Avenue - Mr. Perloff stated that he agrees with Ms. Barry but if the contract is limited to one year it may limit the pool of candidates.

Mr. Pizzola stated that if Council finds the right candidate, they would negotiate the terms and there can be flexibility.

Ms. Gasparovic asked if the candidate needs to live in the municipality or not and if there are any conflicts to it. Ms. Seader stated she has seen both in job descriptions but read in the Borough Council Handbook that it is required that the manager live in the municipality but feels there is wiggle room because she has recently seen both. Ms. Gasparovic clarified that the handbook is just advisory and Ms. Seader stated the code is vague.

Ms. Seader stated that she would take the comments and ideas and start working with the Solicitor to develop an ordinance. She will send drafts of information and then the ordinance will be created, advertised and presented for public comment.

Ms. Seader asked if there was any other business. Ms. Barnes mentioned that Frank Farmer had passed away. He was a Mayor, president and vice-president of Council, and stated people should be reminded of what he did for the Manor and the community. She suggested that his contribution should be recognized at one of the future Borough activities. She stated that the Veteran's Memorial was done by him with no funds from the Borough and the Tree Lighting Committee could highlight this. Ms. Seader stated there is a Tree Lighting Committee meeting Wednesday evening and she would bring it up. Ms. Barnes stated that sharing past history to new people in the Borough is important.

Ms. Gasparovic asked about the advertisement of and voting on the Truck Ordinance. It will happen at the next meeting.

Mr. McTigue stated that he was looking at stormwater management information on the internet and came across the notion of intermunicipal agreements. He suggested that before another municipality is spoken to, they meet as a Commission to discuss. He stated more information should be gathered before engaging with the professionals. He stated that the Borough may not be able to get full credit for sediment reduction dollar for dollar as if the Borough was going to do the project themselves. Ms. Gasparovic stated she was just casually reaching out to the people she knows to get a feel.

7. ADJOURNMENT – Ms. Seader entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Niwinski to adjourn the meeting. Mr. McTigue seconded. There were no objections. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 P.M.

The next meeting will be October 6, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara T. Ferraro
Secretary/Treasurer
Langhorne Manor Borough

