

The Borough of Speers Council met on April 5, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Mr. Rice, Mr. McCorkle, Mr. Hepple, Mr. Daylong, Mrs. Barcelona, Mrs. Spina and Mayor Herd. Absent was Mr. Todora.

The minutes of the previous were approved as read; a motion to accept was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mr. Daylong.

Secretary read the correspondence: TCB meeting on April 20, 2023 at Stockdale Fire Dept; Golf outing – more information to follow.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Police: March – 87 calls for Speers; Fire: 8 calls; EMS – 21 calls. Reports available.

Streets & Sewers: No report.

Finance: Mr. McCorkle – March budget available for review. Income = \$37,047.34; Expenses = \$62,738.74. YTD: (-) \$23, 362.14.

Borough Improvement: Mr. Daylong – residents are grateful that RT 88 along the railroad was cleaned up; a resident did the work, not the borough.

Streetlights: Lewis Ave still out, secretary reported 3 times already and will report again.

Parks: Mrs. Barcelona – working on the Lower Speers Park; grant was approved and waiting for the next steps. Upper Speers Park – new pavilion floors look great with very minimal disturbance to the grounds. A pipe was added between #2 and #3 pavilion to help with drainage. Craft Con used a pump truck (at his own expense for the concrete, which was not included in the bid) as to not damage the grounds.

Transit Authority: Mayor Herd – encouraged everyone to speak with the State Reps to help with financing for the Transit Authority.

Grants: Mrs. Spina – asked Council if they had their information (previous project wish lists) for upcoming grants applications?

Dennis Carson's report: cold-patch, remove plow and salt spreader, prepped park for pavilion project, removed all the tables, had new furnace installed, met with logging company and relayed information to Council, had 3 abandoned cars removed (total of 10), straightened falling Stop Signs, purchased drain pipe for the park, 2 downspout inspections and 5 One Calls.

Dennis presented a bid (Dillon) to have 4 trees cut down and grinding of the stumps around pavilion #1. The tree roots will eventually damage the new pavilion floor. The bid was for \$2,700. Dennis and Tim will be responsible for removing the trees and clean up once cut down. A motion to accept was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mrs. Barcelona; all in favor.

Dennis also presented an offer agreement from Valentine Troyer with Oak Leaf Forest Products to pay the Borough \$25,350 to cut 63 trees (18" or bigger at D-B-H). The trees are located along the outskirts of the park property, nothing inside the park playground area will be taken down. Some of the 63 timbered trees are located on Mr. Flamant's property which is adjacent to the Borough property. Mr. Troyer is also paying the Borough an additional fee for the use of our property to use as a temporary right of way and loading zone to drag the cut trees out. That area is located above the basketball court which will be covered with a load of gravel. The initial amount also includes the fee for bonding State St. and Charles

St. The agreement states that Oak Leaf Forest Products is liable for personal and property damages resulting directly or indirectly from this contract. Mr. Troyer will submit all required paperwork to the Conservation District and obtain all necessary permits before the timbering can begin. Mr. McCorkle questioned if there would be any legal ramifications to the Borough regarding this project? Per Mr. Lint – No. Unfortunately, if you don't log trees they just rot over the years. Should we plant trees to replace the ones being cut? In cutting these older trees, it opens the canopy for the younger trees to have room to grow; which also clears the ivy from growing and harming smaller trees. A motion to accept the agreement was made by Mr. Daylong and seconded by Mr. McCorkle. Mr. Krider will oversee that the paperwork is accurate and submitted properly for the permits.

Engineer: Mr. Krider – along with Greg Wagner, reviewed and compared the last two Arentzen Bridge inspection reports. The recommendation report is available. Mr. Krider stated he is still waiting for the grant money that we were approved for. He stated that the Redevelopment Authority will not issue the money. There seems to be confusion of who is in charge of when the money will be sent. Mrs. Barcelona and Mr. Krider will meet next week at the Lower Speers Park to start the specs for bidding. Mr. Krider left the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Solicitor: Mr. Lint – clarified the right-of-way for Borough property. Residents cannot block access to right of ways.

Citizens: Mr. DeSantis expressed thanks and gratitude for the cleaning up along RT 88 that was done by a resident.

TAX COLLECTOR'S: Deposit of \$21,024.71.

Old Business: Mr. McCorkle – is requesting a list of rental properties. Secretary will reach out to Jackie for the list.

Mrs. Spina – Working with the Vo-Tech regarding structures for around the digital signs. Dennis reported that Penn Dot might add a guard rail. They are also supposed to repair the grounds. Mrs. Spina will contact Mr. Zahand about the red bar along the bottom of the sign.

New Business: Mr. McCorkle presented a packet of information for Fire Dept. Tax Credit for retention and recruitment for the Fire Dept; Act 172. Can we start a tax break for volunteer fire fighters and non-profit emergency medical service providers? This would come from the earned income tax and/or property tax. The volunteer would not see that money; it would be taken off their bill. This would apply specifically to Speers Borough residents only. Can we create a resolution for a tax break of \$500 to enact in 2024? It would include certain criteria/requirements to be eligible. Would there be a cost to the taxpayers in the Borough? Yes. How would it apply if the volunteer was not a property owner; such as a person living with a parent? They would not be eligible. Council will research further and discuss at the next monthly meeting. Mr. Lint recommended to check the law for what is allowed; you can't just give money away. People might just want the money and instead of a tax break. Mr. Lint – "If you're going to give them money for being a volunteer, then they are not a volunteer." Money used towards a scholarship? Mr. Lint – "Taxes are imposed by law, you can't just change that."

Mr. McCorkle spoke regarding dogs in the park. He would like the "No Dogs" sign removed. Change the wording? Dogs must be on a leash? People don't pay attention to what the signs say, they do what they

want anyway. It is not Dennis or Tim's responsibility to clean up after dogs. The sign will be left as is. It also protects the Borough if it says "No Dogs".

Mr. McCorkle proposed to change Vorhes Drive back to Short Street. A motion to make the change was made by Mr. Hepple and seconded by Mrs. Barcelona.

Mrs. Barcelona reported on the Civic Club and the agreement/arrangement. She would like to have an updated agreement. Council is suggesting to meet with Civic Club before the next meeting to discuss.

Council discussed the payment for the pavilion floors. A motion for \$25,000 to be paid from the Borough Improvement Fund and the remaining balance (\$34,248) to be paid from the LSA Fund was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mrs. Spina; all in favor.

Mayor Herd reminded Council to be aware of what we are spending. We do not want to deplete our funds.

Mr. Hepple commented on fallen trees laying on Verizon lines. Contact WPP and Verizon. He also reported the "No Parking Signs" were removed from the Arentzen Bridge. Dennis will look into.

A motion to pay the bills was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mr. Daylong; all in favor.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m. was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mrs. Spina.