

The Borough of Speers Council met on November 3, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Mr. Rice. Mayor Herd, Mr. McCorkle, Ms. DeCooman, Mrs. Spina, Mrs. Barcelona, Mr. Daylong, and Mr. Hepple.

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

Secretary was absent from the meeting.

Correspondence was read by Mr. Rice – Tri-County Borough Meeting notice for November 18th; thank you letter from Charleroi Little Great Race for the donation for the block sponsorship. Donations went to the Police Dept, Fire Dept., EMS and also Charleroi School District for Christmas presents and a scholarship.

Police: 28 calls for the month of October; report available for review. Fire Dept. 9 calls

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Street and Sewers: will discuss under Dennis's report.

Finance: Mr. McCorkle – October budget complete; income = \$55,476.91; expenses = \$47,526.32. YTD – (+) 179,956.74. Insurance claim was paid for the damages done to streets and sidewalks from the tractor trailer.

Borough Improvement: Mr. Daylong – property on Grandview Way was cleaned up – no address given.

Streetlights: Nothing new to report.

Parks: Mrs. Barcelona – Nothing to report.

Grants: Mrs. Spina – Nothing at this time.

Transit Authority: Mayor Herd – attended his first meeting; they will be receiving a grant, once received then our fee could be reduced. At the meeting, discussion was started about adding additional bus stops.

Mayor Herd: Congratulated the Council members on re-election; hopefully write-in campaigns will bring the others back; We still have a job to do, please make sure we do it. Mayor Herd looks forward to working with everyone next year. He suggested purchasing a new flag pole.

Dennis Carson's Report for October: cut grass, weed whack, sprayed weeds, cleaned up leaves at the park, cleaned up grass areas at the IDC Park, ordered 2 "hearing impaired" signs – will install when the child is older (6 months old now) probably in the Spring, repaired the leaf blower, patched potholes and cracks on the bridge, ordered boards, Vo-tech is working on the bench, cleaned catch basins, 4 one calls and 2 downspout inspections. Mr. Daylong – is the Borough picking up leaves this year? Mayor Herd presented a letter from BIG's Sanitation stating they can provide boxes (in the size of 30 yard) for leaf disposal, only dispose of leaves in the box, no shrubs, no brush, no paper, no bags; they will charge \$575 per box to pick up and dispose of. Mayor Herd thinks we would need 3 boxes. It would be hard to make

sure it was only leaves being dumped in the boxes. Dennis can and will pick up leaves from the streets and sidewalks. He doesn't want residents bringing leaves from their back yard out to the street. Council is looking into composting and an exemption permit for next year. There are many requirements to follow for composting.

ENGINEER/CODE ENFORCEMENT: Absent. HMT submitted an agreement with Stahl Engineering in reference to the LSA grant for the Arentzen Bridge Project; their fee is approximately \$32,927. A list detailing the scope of services and fees to perform an inspection and rehabilitation details and plans for the bridge was previously submitted by Stahl (available for review). A portion of the grant can be used to pay Stahl Engineering. Ben Brown with MVA agrees with the fees Stahl Engineering submitted. Mr. Brown recommended the Borough pay Stahl Engineering out of pocket and keep the LSA grant for the bridge repairs. Mrs. Spina – do we need 3 bids before agreeing and awarding to Stahl Engineering? Per Mr. Lint – it is his understanding that Stahl Engineering will be sub-contracted by HMT. Therefore, no other bids needs submitted. It will be billed under HMT. A motion to accept the agreement with Stahl Engineering was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mr. Daylong; all in favor.

SOLICITOR: Mr. Lint stated no further action on the handicap parking issue at this time. Mr. Lint prepared a synopsis of the yearly budget process. The proposed budget needs to be prepared by December 1st; then advertised one time stating it is available for review at the office for 10 days. After the ten day review period (ends on December 11th), a meeting has to take place before December 31st to officially adopt the 2022 budget.

CITIZENS: Cindy Snyder – spoke regarding a handicap parking space. She previously submitted an application and was denied. The Borough ordinance states one handicap space per block on Grandview Way. There is already one handicap spot issued to another resident. Mrs. Snyder has been in contact with Transitional Paths to Independent Living regarding this matter. She was told our ordinance is against the law due to discrimination towards someone with a disability. Mrs. Snyder wants to know what Council is planning and if Council has any solutions to this issue. She is asking for a handicap space that is closest to her home, which would be right next to Mr. Daylong's handicap space; which she had before with no issue. Mrs. Snyder stated that it is hard to get her husband in and out of the van if she has to park a block away and she is worried with winter coming. She would rather not pursue in suing the Borough but has started the process of looking into her legal options. Mr. Lint reviewed the current ordinance again. Mrs. Spina asked what the current ordinance states? It is available for review in the Borough ordinance book and also on the website. Mrs. Spina asked Mrs. Snyder for her contact at TRPIL – John Flaherty. Mrs. Spina will reach out to Mr. Flaherty. The secretary did speak with Mr. Flaherty and forwarded him a copy of the Borough ordinance. He was confusing Charleroi ordinance with Speers ordinance. Mr. Daylong questioned since she had a handicap space before for her son, who has since passed away, can she be grandfathered in and be granted a handicap space now? Per Mr. Lint – No. Mr. Rice read the current ordinance aloud. Mr. Lint is defending the current ordinance; it would be up to Council to change the ordinance. To Mr. Lint's understanding, the ordinance is based per the engineer on the PennDot requirements. Mr. Lint would need to further review and discuss with Mr. Krider. Mrs. Spina explained the concerns of changing the ordinance since it is a growing elderly population. Mr. Hepple asked Mrs. Snyder if the previous handicap space she had was for the same address she applied

for this time – Mrs. Snyder – yes. Mrs. Spina asked Mr. Daylong and Mrs. Snyder if either one of them has a driveway? Mrs. Snyder has a shared driveway with the neighbor so she cannot stay parked in the driveway. The driveway is very narrow and on a hill/slant. The front yard is on a slant also which makes it hard to park in the grass as well. Mrs. Spina – how did we have 2 handicap spaces on the same block before? It was a different Council that approved it back then. Mr. Lint and Mrs. Spina will do some research and add to the agenda for the December meeting. The previous handicap space she had was in front of 281 Grandview Way; which was located on another block as defined in the ordinance. The handicap space now being requested is for 273 Grandview Way; which is in the same block as a handicap space already issued to Mr. Daylong. Mr. Lint clarified that initially the two handicap spaces were on separate blocks. When Mrs. Snyder’s son moved from that residence (281 Grandview Way), they gave up that handicap space. The Snyder’s requested the handicap space be moved to 273 Grandview Way, (her residence) which made it two handicap spaces on one block. The prior Council allowed that to happen. Council will gather information and discuss at the December meeting on the next steps.

Karen Simala – She feels everyone is attacking her. She does not start the aggravation that goes on in the community, she gets the brunt of it all. Ms. Simala spoke on the alley next to her home and the issues she has had with the neighbors. She feels the neighbors have a vendetta against her. She stated there is a trailer parked in the alleyway. She states that she has maintained (cut grass) the alley for 38 years. The trailer is parked in the alley and blocking access to her back yard; also part of the trailer is in her backyard. She stated someone (did not say who) told her to call the police to report it and said the Chief told her to call the borough, that it was our issue to resolve with the neighbor. Mr. Hepple stated it is a public right of way and is a police issue. Ms. Simala feels there is a misunderstanding or no communication. She is tired of being hassled. She has enough to deal with in her life. She is tired of people going in her back yard doing whatever they want that is not proper or legal. She does not like the way the neighbor is parking his boats with the propellers towards the alley. She doesn’t like vehicles with gasoline in them parked so close to her house. Council will notify code enforcement to look into. Ms. Simala states she was promised the property (alley) from a previous Council President. She is asking that no one be prejudice against her. Council asked Ms. Simala is she would be home or available if code enforcement needs to speak with her? She will be in and out and they can call her. She feels there is “selective policing” going on. She doesn’t feel the Police Chief is aware of what is going on. She wants more communication relayed to everyone. Ms. Simala has not called the Borough office at any time with any messages or complaints to forward along. She only speaks at the meetings.

Al Rost – spoke in regards to the notice advertising the proposed budget in the newspaper; not everyone gets the newspaper, can we post on the Borough website also? Yes. Any upcoming meeting notices will also be posted on the website. The meeting agenda is also posted on the website.

Mayor Herd thanked the residents for attending the meeting.

Mel spoke on the packet that was given by HMT at the last meeting regarding composting; there was some information on grants for park rehabilitation. Mel will forward information to Mrs. Spina.

TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT: Deposit of \$6,884.21

OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Mayor Herd spoke on the church renting the back room; the understanding was that it was on a temporary basis for Sunday services. It seems to be more than that. The church is using the room from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Borough is providing and paying for the cleaning supplies and utilities. There needs to be a more detailed written agreement with the Church, not just the basic rental agreement that Civic Club usually provides renters. Lauren, Civic Club rep, stated they were hesitant to start this agreement with the Church and it is becoming more than they anticipated. They did agree to rent to the Church because legally they could not deny the Church from renting the room for services. Civic Club does not have any legal representation to write up a more detailed, specific agreement. They just have their standard rental agreement. The Church rental is becoming more involved than initially proposed. The Borough is incurring more expenses. The Civic Club would prefer to terminate the rental agreement with the Church. Mrs. Spina asked to see the letter that was mailed out to the residents regarding the Church services. Not every resident received a letter. Mrs. Spina questioned who lets the Church members in the building? Lauren – a Speers resident helps run the Church services and picks up a key on Sundays and lets them in. No Civic Club member is at the building. Mayor Herd – can we write up an agreement? Mr. Lint – yes, discuss and negotiate and let him know so he can draft an agreement to have signed. The Church renting the room goes beyond the scope of the basic rental agreement the Civic Club adheres to. Mr. Lint – Civic Club cannot deny the Church but they can negotiate a more specific rental agreement with them. Mr. Rice – what about insurance – if a Church member or quest gets hurt, who is responsible? Mr. Lint – the Borough has liability insurance that covers the building. Lauren – does the Civic Club have any legal ties to the room; can they be held accountable for anything? It is the Borough building, but the Civic Club takes command of the back room. Previous Council made the agreement/hand shake with them. Since Civic Club is signing the lease/rental agreement, can they be held liable? No. Lauren - How does this affect long term rentals for the Civic Club? Can you (Council) decide one day to say no more rentals? Cindy Snyder spoke as a Civic Club member - she spoke to the Church to let them know that no kids attending the church services are permitted to touch the voting equipment that will be in that room for the elections. The Church agreed to not use the room for 2 weeks so there will be no disturbances to the equipment. They were very reasonable. Mrs. Snyder stated if Civic Club has to pay the Borough for supplies and utilities, they will increase the rental fee for the Church. She does not think the Church will want to pay more. Mr. Lint stated that Civic Club has to charge the same fee for everyone who rents. The Civic Club does not want to be legally attached to the Church rental agreement. Mr. Lint suggests instead of renting per day, Civic Club would need to rent per hour. Council and Civic Club will have to get together and decide on what to charge for a rental fee. Mr. McCorkle will gather the utility costs and present them to the Civic Club. We will add it to the agenda for the December meeting and decide if any changes will be made to the rental agreement. A Speers resident is renting the back room as an individual for services, not as an organization. Lauren – since there is no formal written agreement, can the Civic Club relinquish the back room back to Council pertaining to rentals? Yes- Civic Club as a whole would have to present that to Council. Is it an option for Civic Club to still use the back room but have Council handle the rental agreements? All the options can be discussed. A resident asked if it can be a 3 time limit per year on renting? The rental agreement can have any parameters as long as it is the same for everyone.

Mr. Rice – spoke on bids to remodel the office. A limit was voted on to purchase office equipment. First, we need to decide on what to do in the offices, such as new walls, ceiling and flooring. Mr. Lint suggests having a building committee make a list of wants and needs then contact a contractor to see what the total cost might be to determine if it needs to be advertised for bids to follow the rules of the bidding threshold. Building committee will be Mr. McCorkle, Mrs. Barcelona, Mr. Rice, Dennis and Jody. Mayor Herd is willing to help as well.

Grant money for the park – still waiting.

West Penn Power contract/agreement – Dennis and Jeremy met with WPP several times regarding the streetlights at the IDC Park. Mr. Rice read aloud the agreement (available for review) that Christine Smith sent; a motion to accept, sign and pay \$18,462.65 was made by Mr. Hepple and seconded by Mr. McCorkle; all in favor. Mrs. Spina thanked Mr. Hepple for all his work on this.

Mrs. Spina – the 2nd digital sign should be installed this week, the steel for the poles just came in. The sign along RT 88 has been tampered with 4 times already; someone keeps turning the sign off. A box and padlock was installed to cover the switch, the box was pried off as well. Mrs. Spina filed a police report. The Police suggested adding a camera facing the sign. The Police will patrol the area more. Mrs. Spina recommends posting a message on the Facebook page that a report has been filed. Dennis will speak with Jody about getting the security camera turned around.

Karen Simala asked for a copy of the October meeting minutes. She was informed they are posted on the Borough website. Mrs. Barcelona gave her copy of the minutes to Ms. Simala.

Dennis stated there is a huge maple tree in Lower Speers in an alley (Charles St) that is on Borough property, the tree is hanging over a resident' garage. Their insurance company is telling her the tree needs cut down before they can get the garage insured. The resident does not want the tree completely cut down, just those limbs trimmed back. Dennis advises Council to consider completely removing the tree, otherwise it will need trimmed every year. Mr. Lint stated if the tree is on Borough property, cut it down.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Rice – spoke on Christmas parade; Mr. McCorkle asked to table for now until he speaks with the Fire Chief. Mr. Rice and Mr. McCorkle suggested having Santa come to the Borough Building and letting the kids come and provide snacks and treats for them; also suggested having the community donate new toys for “Toys for Tots.” The Civic Club is planning an activity as well.

Mayor Herd – spoke on the Bruno property – water running over the sidewalk; gets very icy in the winter. It is a spring coming out of his property.

Mrs. Barcelona asked if we need to get bids to install new electrical wires at the park for next year? It was the understanding that was all tied into the grant. Mrs. Spina - we can't apply for a grant without the bid specs.

Kenny suggested checking to see if the old PNC Bank still has cameras to see if it shows the digital sign and who is tampering with it.

Mrs. Spina – we need bids before we can proceed with the grant application; can we add this to the building committee to work on as well? Dennis will contact an electrician and get a written estimate on burying the lines at the park. He will have the concession building included in the bid.

Executive Session: 9:05 p.m. – 9:26 p.m. for personnel matter.

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

Council will work on the 2022 proposed budget on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 7 p.m.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 p.m. was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mr. Hepple.