

The Borough of Speers Council met on November 2, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Mr. Rice, Mr. McCorkle, Mayor Herd, Mr. Daylong, Mrs. Spina, Mrs. Barcelona, Mr. Todora and Mr. Sauer.

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

Secretary read the correspondence: Tri-County Borough Meeting will be held November, 17 at 7 p.m. at Elco Civic Center. Effective October 1, 2022, KLH Engineers and HMT & Associates merged.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Police: October: 107 calls; Fire Dept: 42 calls total for the area; reports available.

Streets & Sewers: Mr. Todora – Nothing to report.

Finance: Mr. McCorkle – October: income = \$72, 259.24; expenses = \$70,153.28. To show transparency - two direct deposits were not included in September's report (\$56,715.08: CARES ACT – 2nd payment, \$750.00: Liquor Control Board). Secretary did not have a payroll transfer in September. October expenses will show 2 transfers for September and October payroll. YTD: (+) \$5,014.08. Mayor Herd commented for a budget of that size, Mr. McCorkle did a great job.

Borough Improvement: Mr. Daylong – Nothing to report.

Streetlights: Secretary reported 3 streetlights out in front of borough building to WPP; work order is in.

Parks: Mr. Sauer – meeting with Mrs. Barcelona monthly to work on plans for the Lower Speers Park Rehabilitation Project; waiting for final grant approval paperwork before work can begin.

Transit Authority: Mayor Herd – The majority of the Transit Authority meeting was in Executive Session. The Authority will research the 2 stops that were recently added to study how many people are using the new stops.

Grants: Mrs. Spina – Submitted 2 LSA grants. Mr. Todora did not submit the necessary narrative, that he committed to, to Mrs. Spina by the deadline to apply for the grant to cover the re-lining of the sewer lines. Therefore, Mrs. Spina had to submit the application for another project. She submitted an application for an increase in funds for the bridge repairs. Initially, HMT & Associates applied for \$88,000. She increased the amount to \$150,000. The first LSA grant that HMT & Associates applied for was not officially or completely approved. Mr. Krider previously stated that we would not get notification on approval, that we would just get the money. After further research and working with Jamie at Mon Valley Alliance, Mrs. Spina found out that was not true, we would get notification. The original request application submitted by HMT & Associates stated that we needed \$22,000 in matching funds and support letters. That was not completed. Mrs. Spina was able to obtain letters to be signed for the matching funds and the support letters that were needed by the submission deadline.

The second grant application Mrs. Spina submitted was for the digital speed limit signs that Mr. McCorkle proposed. He presented all the information previously so Mrs. Spina was able to complete the application. She also obtained the required support letters and letters committing to the \$2,000 in matching funds. That grant is for \$15,780.

Mrs. Spina provided all members of Council a “Grant Wish List” to complete. From reviewing minutes from previous meetings, she made a list of 8 possible projects that were discussed. Each Council member and Mayor Herd can pick a project to lead and gather all the information needed and Mrs. Spina will submit the final applications. Mrs. Spina is asking for everyone to commit and help make this possible. She is asking that all the information be sent to her by March 31, 2023. The grant applications are very time consuming and time sensitive. Everyone can do their part to help. The park electricity update is mostly completed. Dennis has taken care of the majority of that already. Mr. McCorkle thanked Mrs. Spina for all her time and hard work in securing grant money for the Borough.

Mayor Herd: working with the Police Board to complete the budget. He spoke on possibly adding pickle ball to the park. He would like a stop sign added to the corner of State St and Elizabeth St. Mayor Herd would like everyone to work on the grant wish list to better the community.

Engineer: HMT – Not present.

Solicitor: Mr. Lint – Filed 3 liens at the courthouse. He also reviewed guidelines for 2023 budget procedures; must advertise proposed budget 30 days prior to adopting. Final budget must be adopted by December 31, 2022.

Citizens: John – Davidson Dr. – Questioned the status of adding catch basins. This has been explained multiple times that there is nowhere for the outfall to go. It would drain onto private property. We cannot do that. We cannot add to the existing sewer line. Mr. Todora again explained the reasons why. He offered to look at the situation again.

Mr. Smith, YMCA director - Commented on pickle ball. He suggested contacting the YMCA to get more information.

Mrs. Spina stated that since Mr. Todora missed our window for applying for funding regarding the sewers and drains, there is still a problem with the drain at the corner of Arlington Ave and Grandview Way. How are we going to fix it? And how are we going to pay for it? Mr. Todora – It wasn’t our window, I could still do it. Mrs. Spina – How are we going to pay for it? The deadline has passed already. Mr. Todora – another grant could still come along. Mrs. Spina – but it needs fixed now. Mr. Todora stated he would write up the grant application and submit it himself. Dennis spoke on the catch basin at Hosner Street as well. That catch basin overflowed due to a water main break. The next catch basin is down at Charles St. Mr. Todora will add that to the grant application as well. Mrs. Spina is requesting a traffic cone be placed by the catch basin at Arlington Ave and Grandview Way until it can be fixed. Mr. Rice confirmed that Mr. Todora will work on the grant application himself.

Tax Collector’s Report: Deposit of \$7,553.41.

OLD BUSINESS: Mrs. Spina reviewed previous meeting minutes to follow up on questions and projects that were to be worked on. In April – free and clear tax sale? Mr. Lint suggested to contact tax collector. In June – replacing 3 sewers lines contingent on a grant HMT was working on; no updates from HMT. Did Mr. Smaracheck pay for the electrical repairs at the park? No. ****UPDATE**** His insurance company, State Farm, submitted a release for a settlement payment of \$5,510.86 on 11/9/2022. In June, Mr. Todora stated he was going to contact Penn Dot regarding one-way traffic on Grandview Way. He did not contact them yet. Mr. McCorkle stated he believes traffic should be one-way due to traffic and congestion of the street. We should try to push for one-way. Dennis stated that this issue is addressed

every year. The main reason of concern would be the issue with plowing. It makes it hard to plow uphill and turn the snow outward on the bend. Mr. McCorkle – can we make an exception for plowing? Add flashing lights? Mr. Todora will contact Penn Dot. Mr. DeSantis – stated it is not a problem with the residents, they know what to do. New residents or visitors are the ones who are not sure what to do. Mr. Todora stated that residents do get used to it. Dennis stated it's hard to plow and pick up leaves due to garbage trucks and the school buses. They have to drive around several times so they do not hold up other vehicles. Mr. Todora – can we add a convex mirror at the bend on Grandview Way to help see? We will look into it. In October – status of bridge bids – Mrs. Spina spoke with Jamie at MVA and he will help us with that and send contacts to us. In September – list of rental properties – Mr. McCorkle is working on.

NEW BUSINESS: Mrs. Spina spoke on the matching funds for the grant applications; digital speed limit signs - \$2,000. A motion to sign a commitment letter in the amount of \$2,000 in matching funds was made by Mr. Sauer and seconded by Mrs. Barcelona; all in favor. The total grant would be for \$15,780. The grant for the bridge repairs would include matching funds in the amount of \$22,000.

Mr. McCorkle spoke on the Christmas Parade/Decorations contest. Council will decide on the categories and gift card prizes. Personal donations will cover the fees for the prizes, not Borough funds. Council can decide if treat bags will be passed out again as well. The parade/light-up night will take place on December 10 at 6 p.m.

Mrs. Spina presented an option to update the Borough letterhead. GK Graphics – 500 letterhead/envelopes for \$418.00. A motion to accept was made by Mrs. Spina and seconded by Mr. Daylong; all in favor. We will use red and black colors.

Mr. Daylong spoke on farm animals – Are chickens and/or roosters permitted in the Borough? The ordinance only states no pigs allowed. Ordinance 347: 3-12 states Animals not to make noise. Mr. Todora will speak to the resident (262 Grandview Way) who has a rooster and let him know what our ordinance states. Secretary will send a letter after Mr. Todora speaks with them. Dr. Daylong also reported an abandoned vehicle along Grandview Way. He tried to call the police station with no response. He was instructed to call 911 as a non-emergency call.

To show transparency, Mr. McCorkle spoke on a recent incident where a resident reported that vehicles were driving and parking at the Upper Speers Park late at night. It was discussed to again start locking the gate at night. A few Council members, Mayor Herd and Dennis and Tim have been locking/unlocking the gate daily. Mr. McCorkle suggested looking into a sliding gate for the entrance of the park. We can look into a grant for a gate that can be programmed to open and close at specific times. We can get a remote control as well for Dennis and Tim to use during plowing. Total cost would be \$6,000 - \$8,000. Mr. Daylong asked about the electricity reaching that far? Solar powered options? Liftmaster is \$2,299; key pads are \$150 each; gates are \$1,00-\$2,000 each and installation is an additional charge. What happens if someone is locked in? In the past, someone who was locked in would just drive through the neighbor's yard. Possibly set a sensor underground on the inside of the gate to automatically open if a vehicle pulls up. Who would be the person to call in case of an emergency in the middle of the night if the gate does not open? Post a sign stating park hours for when the gate will open and close.

Mr. Sauer spoke on installing a 15 mph speed limit sign on Grandview Way along the bend, even if we can't enforce it. Also, a "Drive slow, Children in the area" sign in that area. Dennis will install signs. We will look into installing a mirror as well.

Mr. Todora thanked Mr. Sauer for the considerate comment on the safety of the children in the area. He does not see the need for Mr. McCorkle to keep saying the word transparency when reporting. Mr. Todora presented information on a video camera called an Owl that will turn and observe the person speaking at the time. It is compatible with Zoom, Teams and Google Meets, so it can be played on any of the platforms. The cost is \$1,049. People should be able to view the meetings without having to drive to the building. "It's only a matter of time until all of us are old and retired. There is a new way to bring people in. God forbid what if they are all Republicans, you guys don't want to see that? You don't want to see what goes on at the meetings? Why does that upset you (to Mr. McCorkle)?" Mr. McCorkle – what upsets me is that you think there are party lines, who cares what ticket you run on. Mr. Todora – I care, you're acting like that's true but it's not true. The Democrats carry things out. Mr. McCorkle stopped the conversation because it went off topic of the cameras. Mr. Todora thinks there should be cameras in the meetings and everywhere as far as Council goes. Mr. Daylong – Is there a monthly fee to run the camera? Mr. Todora – No. Just the fee for the camera. Mr. McCorkle – How does it work? Mr. Todora – Plug it into the laptop, the owl turns to who is talking and the microphone hones in on who is speaking. Mr. McCorkle – where does the laptop come from? Mr. Todora – I would use my personal laptop if we had to, but just buy one. Mr. McCorkle - If it is someone's personal laptop, what happens when they retire? The Borough does not have a laptop. Mr. Todora would like Council to vote on a camera and all equipment that would go with it. Mr. Todora asked if anyone has a reason why a camera would be bad? "I know you guys are about to vote do you like Mike, not is a camera smart. What would be bad about a politician being viewed by the people who voted for them. We made a promise to people that we would be honest." Mr. McCorkle – Every meeting is recorded and available to listen to. Mr. Todora – That is the most bargain bin recording device. Mr. Rice - We are following the requirements. Mr. Todora – We wouldn't have to chase and scratch, we would have recorded meetings where we could follow up. Lori would not have to read through hours of (texts)minutes. They would've saw you school me twice today. (The secretary would still need to have a hard copy of the minutes available in the office). Mrs. Spina – Because you didn't do what you were supposed to do. Mrs. Spina – It looks like there is a monthly fee, Wi-Fi involved. Did you look at all that? A motion to install cameras for Council meetings was made by Mr. Todora, Council President asked three times for a second on the motion. There was no second on the motion. Motion dies for a lack of a second.

Budget committee will start working on the 2023 budget.

Mr. Rice reported on receiving a call from the water company. They are applying for an LSA grant and are asking for support letters from the Borough. Letters on file.

Dennis Carson's Report: cut grass, weed whacked, picked up leaves, cleaned out leaves at the park, worked on sewer line at IDC park, got utility pole installed at the park - all electric service is on and working, planted 4 trees at the park, checked sewer line on Davidson Dr, winterized the park - pulled meter and closed bathrooms and water fountains for the winter, flushed sewer lines on Elizabeth St, checked on sewer problem at 281 Grandview Way – flushed the line 4 times, worked on leaf machine, 2 new tires for it, new battery, 2019 truck inspected, 10 One Calls and 5 downspout inspections. Dennis reported that Insight Pipe submitted a bid on re-lining the sewer line at the IDC Park.

Dennis commented that there are many old sewer lines in the Borough. Will funding always be there to fix the lines? Should we consider turning over the lines to the water company? Dennis offered the bid information to Mrs. Spina to see if a grant is available. Re-lining the lines would prevent tree roots from causing blockages. Mrs. Spina is asking for the whole scope of the work to be submitted by the March 31st deadline to apply for the grant. Mr. Todora asked why Lori would be involved in this? Mrs. Spina is the grant writer and has obtained several grants for the Borough already. Mr. Todora – I didn't know that was a thing. I thought whatever department you are in, you're in. It's not fair for Lori to work on it. He can handle his own committee. Mr. Todora said he can do it. It was stated that he didn't turn in the requested information needed for a previous grant application. There will be circumstances where 2 committees will be working on one project. Mr. Todora said he will commit himself to applying for a grant.

Mr. Rice reported that the Athene Club is having an open house on November 11.

Mrs. Barcelona questioned the status of the break-in on Arlington Ave. Mr. Rice stated the Police are reviewing camera footage and it is considered an active investigation. Can we install another camera at the bottom of Grandview Way? License plate reader?

A motion to pay the bills was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mrs. Barcelona.

Work for the 2023 proposed budget will begin on November 10th or 11th.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m. was made by Mr. McCorkle and seconded by Mr. Todora.