

MOUNT PENN BOROUGH
BOROUGH COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING
May 28, 2024

The Mount Penn Borough Council met for a Business Meeting on May 28, 2024, at Borough Hall at 200 N. 25th Street, Reading, PA 19606. Council President Troy Goodman called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Members in attendance were Council President Troy Goodman, Council Vice President Rick Lombardo, Council Member Thomas Baer, Council Member Christine Dise, Council Member Michael Kindlick, Council Member Roger Stief, and Mayor Ryan Maurer. Staff and Professional Members present were Borough Manager Hunter L. Ahrens, Solicitor Tom Klonis, Chief of Police Ray Serafin, and Engineer Ty Leinneweber.

Others present included John Giardello, Donna Giardello, George L. Saltzman III, Don Long, Holly Rohrbach, Clark Bussey, Richard Odenweller, Karen Sciole, Renee Katzenbach, James Sparks, Amanda Stief, Kerry Gergen, Jennifer Lopez, Kirk Silas, Lyndsey Cameron, Roberta Banks, and several other residents.

Public Comment

John Giardello, 17 Endlich Avenue – Mr. Giardello indicated his opposition to the draft parking permit ordinance limiting non-residents' ability to park around his home and in parts of the Borough. Mr. Giardello indicated that he also thought the survey was not well conceived. Mr. Giardello asked several questions during comments about specific parameters of the ordinance. He also shared that the draft ordinance did not solve the underlying problem, the parking challenges the school district was experiencing. Mr. Goodman and Mr. Klonis indicated that the draft on the website was not finalized and that a committee was being formed to address the questions he raised.

Donna Giardello, 17 Endlich Avenue – Ms. Giardello commented that she believed the school district's parking challenges were shown by a recent traffic study to alleviate the challenges when the Mount Penn Primary Center was converted to a High School. She indicated that the ordinance may not be necessary if that would stop the challenge. Ms. Giardello indicated that she hoped that the committee would work well to address the concerns mentioned.

George Saltzman, 6 Earle Gables Court – Mr. Saltzman encouraged the Borough to ensure that school parking was not on streets where public parking is limited.

Don Long, 115 N. 25th Street – Mr. Long asked if a draft copy of the ordinance was available and if residents would be required to pay for the permits. Mr. Long indicated that he supported a group that would discuss the issues raised about the ordinance. Mr. Long indicated his concerns about Mt. Penn's trend toward community quality and safety.

Holly Rohrbach, 2610 Filbert Avenue – Ms. Rohrbach indicated that Hollywood Apartments should be included in the plan because they take up a lot of parking around her home; she emphasized that the Borough should not exclude folks for the sake of making the ordinance easier to implement. She shared that visitor access, including contractors, was important to her. Ms. Rohrbach shared that she doubted that the students would be willing to walk from the A-Field to the Primary Center for supporting parking.

Clark Bussey, 3 Earle Gables Court – Mr. Bussey asked if the Endlich Avenue Survey work included anything that would eliminate the street dividers on Endlich Avenue. Mr. Leinneweber indicated that it did not. Mr. Bussey also shared that he supported the Ordinance concept and believed the school district should pay for the program's cost.

Richard Odenweller, 101 Endlich Avenue – Mr. Odenweller indicated he had family and wanted to ensure they could park at his home. He was concerned that permit parking would impact that. Mr. Odenweller shared that the school district should consider regulating where students could park because that would change the underlying challenges that neighbors were facing.

Richard Odenweller, 101 Endlich Avenue – Mr. Odenweller indicated that he had family and wanted to make sure they could park at his home. He was concerned that permit parking would impact that. Mr. Odenweller shared that the school district should consider regulating where students could park because that would change the underlying challenges that neighbors were facing.

Renee Katzenbach, 191 Endlich Avenue – Ms. Katzenbach commented that she wanted to ensure that her home and area would remain open for friends and family. Ms. Katzenbach emphasized that the Council needed to consider the community members who were absent because they were elderly, disabled, or some other condition that prevented them from getting information or being present tonight.

James Sparks, 8 Earle Gables Court – Mr. Sparks indicated that he was a High School teacher and realized that a High School is disruptive to a community because it is always open to some degree. He believes that high school is beneficial for the community. He emphasized that parking conditions are delicate to manage. Any work that the Council can do to enforce the parking requirements placed on the High School was something they should consider without putting undue burden on the residents.

Amanda Stief, 125 N. 25th Street – Mrs. Stief offered her thanks to the Police Department for the additional officers around the Mount Penn Primary Center and the effect that it has had on the surrounding area.

Jennifer Lopez, 2413 Cumberland Avenue – Ms. Lopez indicated that the conditions that residents were sharing their concerns about, especially not being able to have visitors at her home, was a condition she has been dealing with throughout the school year. She indicated that the Borough and the School District had not addressed her concerns, and the permit parking answered a question she had been asking regularly since the July flood.

There were several ongoing discussions between residents, the Solicitor, and members of the Council. These conversations revolved around disagreements about comments made and the draft ordinance.

Engineering Items

Mr. Leinneweber explained that bids were received and opened on May 28, 2024. Seven bids were received and tabulated in sheets Mr. Leinneweber disseminated to the Council. Doug Lamb Construction, Inc. of 1180 Zeager Road, Elizabeth, PA 17022, was the apparent lowest, most responsive, and responsible bidder.

The bid tabulation also includes other bidders: M&J Excavation, Inc. of 1618 Spruce Street, Bloomsburg, PA 17815; Drumheller Construction Co., Inc. of 1176 Commerce Drive, Pottstown, PA 19464; LB/DB Construction of 905 Bethlehem Pike, No. 232, Spring House, PA 19477; Heim Construction Co., Inc. of 44 Pheasant Run Road, Orwigsburg, PA 17961; Reamstown Excavating, Inc. of 560 N. 5th Street, PO Box 147, Denver, PA 17517; and Construction Masters Services, LLC of 150 Grings Hill Road, Sinking Spring, PA 19608. Mr. Leinneweber indicated the bids were active for 60 days.

Richard Lombardo motioned to authorize a review of the ADA Ramp Project bids and issued a recommendation to the Borough Council at its next meeting. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Mr. Leinneweber shared the scope of the ADA Ramp Project for 2024 and discussed it with several members of the Council. The summary of that scope is improvements to the riding surfaces, curbs, and sidewalks. It did not include any removal of medians, trees, or other features.

Richard Lombardo motioned to authorize the Engineer to begin the survey of Endlich Avenue for the 2025 Streetscape Improvements Project. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Regular Approvals (Continued)

Roger Stief motioned to approve the March 26th, 2024, Business Meeting minutes. Richard Lombardo seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Thomas Baer motioned to approve the April 30th, 2024, Business Meeting minutes. Yrisol Garcia seconded the motion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Richard Lombardo made a motion to approve the May Financial Report. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Reports

Mayor Maurer shared that the Police Commission was interviewing three candidates for the Codes Administrator position and that the hire would hopefully be approved at the next Commission meeting on June 6th, 2024.

Mr. Goodman shared that he wanted to formally establish a parking ordinance ad-hoc committee to revise the draft documents further. Mr. Goodman shared that he would appoint Roger Stief as the Chair of the Committee and Christine Dise as the second member. Mr. Goodman indicated that the community raised good questions that needed to be considered by the community. The committee agreed to meet next week to discuss the draft further. Mr. Stief also indicated that the public survey collection would close on June 10th, 2024.

The council agreed to table the discussion about purchasing signs, poles, and other permit parking expenses before the Ordinance comes into effect.

Richard Lombardo motioned to approve repairs to a Borough Road Crew Vehicle by Tom Masano Dealership in an amount not to exceed \$3,500.00. Mike Kindlick seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Mrs. Dise asked if the meeting on the turning radii discussed at the April Business meeting had been held with the Fire Company, Mr. Lombardo, and J.P. Mascaro. Mr. Lombardo shared that it had not taken place yet.

Mr. Goodman asked how successful street sweeping was. Mr. Lombardo indicated that it depended on which area of that Borough because residents left their cars in sweeping areas, affecting their ability to complete their work. Mr. Ahrens shared that there were cost savings for the equipment rental compared to hiring a service to do the work.

Mr. Goodman and Mr. Ahrens shared that four companies were requested to quote; two declined, and Haller Enterprises and Wagner's Heating & Cooling. Mr. Goodman explained this was for separate mini-split AC units in the three Borough Offices.

Richard Lombardo motioned to approve purchasing Mini-Split AC Units at a cost not to exceed \$13,977.30. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Mr. Ahrens shared a synopsis of the Solid Waste Fund Policy for the Borough. This policy would create a Fund for Sanitation Expenses, including the Trash, Recycling, and Yard Waste Collection contract, and other sanitation activities, including leaf collection by the Road Crew and Administrative Expenses. Members of the Council discussed the merits of the policy implications of the policy draft, especially whether it was wise to include the waste collection contract or all sanitation activities. The discussion led the Council to refer the policy draft to the Finance Committee for further discussion.

Mr. Klonis shared that a draft ordinance was ready to be advertised that would amend the Mortgage Foreclosure Ordinance to be consistent with the request from a potential contractor that would enforce the Ordinance on the Borough's behalf.

Thomas Baer made a motion to advertise the Ordinance amending the Registration of Mortgage Foreclosure Properties to revise definitions. Richard Lombardo seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Mr. Ahrens shared that the Codes Complaint Policy was in the final form to be adopted; it sets out a standard process of adjudicating Codes and Property complaints by the Borough.

Richard Lombardo made a motion to approve the Codes Complaint Policy. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Mrs. Dise shared that the Block Party was officially on a hiatus for 2024. Mr. Goodman shared that Pennside Presbyterian may be planning to hold another event.

Mr. Ahrens shared some brief updates on the building permit. Mr. Stief asked if the school district paid the check for the traffic reconfiguration. Mr. Ahrens shared he had not received the check, but after listening to the School Board meeting, he believed they would be issuing payment shortly.

Mr. Klonis shared that he was made aware of a request by the Antietam School District for an interpretation of the Zoning Hearing Board decision on whether they could offer Summer Programming in the Trinity Lutheran church. He recommended that the Borough offer an interpretation that the end of

the Antietam School District's school year would be at the end of the Summer programs. Mr. Stief shared that he was concerned that the Solicitor of the Zoning Hearing Board did not offer an interpretation of their decision. Mr. Kindlick asked if it was understood why he did not provide an opinion. Mr. Ahrens summarized that the Solicitor had shared that his opinion would have been speaking from the rest of the Zoning Hearing Board, which he did not have the power to do.

Chief Serafin announced that the department would resume participating in National Night Out on August 6th, 2024, jointly with the Exeter Township Police Department. Chief Serafin shared that the Codes department was beginning to receive complaints about Aulenbach's Cemetery again. Mr. Klonis commented that if the Cemetery became defunct, the Borough would be required to take over the Cemetery. Mr. Lombardo shared that after a previous Council Member left their board, they rejected any assistance from the Borough or City of Reading. The Borough Council consented to citations being filed against Aulenbach's Cemetery for not maintaining the property.

Mr. Stief asked the Chief for feedback on the draft permit parking ordinance. Chief Serafin commented that he believed the fines were too high and needed to be decreased so they could stick at the District Justice office. The Council engaged in discussion with the Solicitor and Chief of Police on how to reflect the language that was being recommended. It was agreed that the Chief of Police would meet with the Permit Parking Ad-Hoc Committee to finalize this language.

Ordinances

The Solicitor read Ordinance information for Ordinance 892 and 893.

Richard Lombardo made a motion to advertise Ordinances 892 and 893, establishing a handicapped parking spot and restricting parking on Center Street, respectively. Roger Stief seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Resolutions

Christine Dise made a motion to adopt Resolution 42-24, Appointing Thomas Baer to the Planning Commission expiring December 31, 2024. Michael Kindlick seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Roger Stief made a motion to adopt Resolution 43, which revises the Comprehensive Fee Schedule for Hera Registry's programming. Thomas Baer seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Adjournment

Richard Lombardo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 PM. Roger Stief seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Submitted,

Hunter L. Ahrens
Borough Manager