

**BOROUGH OF ST. LAWRENCE
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting of the St. Lawrence Borough Council was called to order by Council President, Mr. Robert J. May, at 7:30 PM.

ROLL CALL: Mr. May did roll call and the following people were present, Mr. Robert J. May, President, Mr. David W. Eggert, Vice President, D. Michael Bennethum, Member, Mr. Michael Fritz, Member, Mr. Steve Geibel, Member, Mr. Warren Lubenow, Member, Mr. Gregory Zawilla, Member, Mr. Barrie Kinsey, Mayor, Mr. Ty Leinneweber, Borough Engineer, Ms. Joan London, Borough Solicitor, arriving at 7:40 PM, Ms. Allison Leinbach, Borough Manager, Mr. Derrek Rhoads, Roadmaster and Mrs. Susan Eggert, Borough Secretary.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: The minutes from the previous meeting held on Thursday, March 10, 2022, were distributed prior to the meeting for review. There were no questions, corrections or clarifications to the minutes. **MOTION:** Mr. David Eggert made the motion to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Mr. Warren Lubenow; all were in favor and the motion carried.

APPROVAL AND PAYMENT OF THE BILLS: Bills requiring payment and ratification were distributed to the members of Council prior to the meeting for review. Bills requiring payment and ratification from the general fund totaled \$102,174.77. Bills requiring payment and ratification from the sewer fund totaled \$201,061.90. Bills requiring payment and ratification from the liquid fuels fund totaled \$2,891.73. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion authorizing payment and ratification from the general, sewer and liquid fuels funds; seconded by Mr. Michael Fritz; all were in favor and the motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The treasurer's report was distributed to the members of Council prior to the meeting for review. There were no questions, corrections or clarifications to the treasurer's report. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion approving the treasurer's report as presented and file it for audit; seconded by Mr. Lubenow; all were in favor and the motion carried.

GENERAL: \$353,885.57 **RESERVE:** \$82,235.83 **FIRE TAX:** \$12,890.06 **SEWER:** \$320,657.95 **LIQUID FUELS:** \$241,055.41

PUBLIC HEARINGS, PETITONS:

MR. JAN PLUTO - Mr. Pluto who resides at 3817 Patton Street sent in a request to the Borough to post the police activity report with the number of calls and types of calls in the next newsletter. This was discussed and this will appear in the next newsletter and will also be available on the Borough website.

REPORT OF THE BOROUGH ENGINEER - TY LEINNEWEBER

READING REAL ESTATE – This was initially deferred until Ms. London arrived. When Ms. London arrived, it was discussed. The plans were initially signed in April of 2021. A deed of consolidation has been prepared. A reaffirmation needs to be approved for another 90-day period and a copy of the consolidation deed is needed for the files. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion reaffirming another 90-day period; seconded by Mr. Steve Geibel; all were in favor and the motion carried.

WOODLAND SURVEY: The survey has been completed on the land off of Church Lane Road. The original easement was not correct. Mr. Koch has granted the Borough access to the Borough staff and professionals to complete the survey. They still need to put two to three pins to complete the survey.

REPORT OF THE BOROUGH MAYOR - BARRIE KINSEY

The Mayor reported to Council that the police report shows the Borough being 13 percent of the calls in March. He also indicated that Exeter Township has waived all permit fees to Central Berks Police for the building of an evidence garage at the AVMA property; the garage will be on the Exeter Township side of the property. He also read an article that was in the Reading Eagle with regard to the Animal Rescue League and that they are awaiting three test results for rabies in addition to the one positive result from a few weeks ago. There was also a discussion about the Jacksonwald Avenue property that was also part of the rabies investigation by the Animal Rescue League. Mr. May feels that the Animal Rescue League should investigate further whether or not cats were harbored in the home and not taken to be checked and neutered; this was brought to his attention by a neighboring property.

REPORT OF THE BOROUGH ZONING OFFICER - ALLISON LEINBACH

There were eight zoning permits done in the first quarter three of which were denied.

REPORT OF PUBLIC WORKS - DERREK RHOADS

Mr. Fritz indicated that he witnessed Mr. Rehab not following proper PPE and had a concern that the Borough could be liable if something happens to an individual working in the Borough. Ms. London indicated that the Borough would not be liable but Mr. Rhoads will talk to the foreman. Mr. Rhoads indicated that Comcast Cable is going to be running cable throughout the Borough over the next two years.

BUDGET & FINANCE – ALLISON LEINBACH

SMALL BORROWING FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS - Ms. Leinbach was in touch with Mid Penn Bank and we can loan up to 30% of revenue which would be approximately \$125,000 which would be enough to pay for the sewer rehabilitation project. The interest rate is around 4% for 5 years. The paperwork should be ready for the May meeting. There was a discussion about considering a sewer rate increase during the budget process to rebuild the sewer funds for projects of a similar nature. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion authorizing Ms. Leinbach to obtain the paperwork for the small borrowing loan; seconded by Mr. Lubenow; all were in favor and the motion carried.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Lubenow is the new chairman of the Planning Commission. The Commission met in March to work on the small wireless communication ordinance. In the future they will be working on a complete overhaul of the zoning ordinance especially since over 50% of all properties in the Borough are pre-existing non-conforming. Ms. London suggested addressing solar in the zoning ordinance. Mr. Lubenow commented on the height of the new poles that Met Ed are putting in and asked whether or not we had a height restriction. Ms. London will investigate as to whether or not you can restrict height of utility poles.

RECREATION - DAVID EGGERT

EGG HUNT – The egg hunt is scheduled for tomorrow, April 15, at 9:00 AM at the playground.

OLD BUSINESS

BERKS NATURE - Ms. London prepared an amendment to the agreement which needs to be recorded. Mr. May is still opposed to the statement that Berks Nature can turn the easement over to someone else. There was a discussion and it was noted that the Council would like there to be a physical presence in Berks County and would like there to be a statement that no assignment of the easement can be made without consent of both parties. Ms. London will send a letter to Berks Nature addressing the questions that arose. **MOTION:** Mr. Lubenow made a motion authorizing Ms. London to send the amendment to Berks Nature; seconded by Rev. Bennethum; Rev. Bennethum, Mr. Eggert, Mr. Lubenow, Mr. Zawilla, Mr. Fritz and Mr. Geibel voting in favor and Mr. May opposed.

TRAISSER PROPOSAL - The proposal was e-mailed to all the members of Council prior to the meeting for review as well as part of the packet to be reviewed this evening. This software will make the permitting process easier as well as document management, code enforcement, Municipay, asset management, traffic signs, and citizen complaints. There was a lengthy discussion and Mr. Fritz expressed a concern about the price and whether or not we could financially afford to purchase the software. Ms. Leinbach indicated that just the time it would save her from processing the permits will more than make up for the price of the software. Ms. Leinbach indicated that she has been looking at software for quite some time and even though we looked into Civic GOV it never really worked out the way that we would have liked it to. This software will basically support 30 users which is more than sufficient for what we need. All of the questions and concerns that were raised by Mr. Fritz and Mr. Lubenow were addressed and answered. **MOTION:** Rev. Bennethum made the motion to approve the purchase of the Traisser software; seconded by Mr. Eggert; all were in favor and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

EXETER FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE - Mr. Geibel indicated that Exeter Township is interested in starting up the Fire Advisory Committee again. The question being asked is if St. Lawrence would like to have representation on the committee as it had in the past. There was a discussion and it was decided that since Exeter Fire Department is getting St. Lawrence tax dollars that we would indeed like to have representation on the committee. **MOTION:** Mr. Geibel made the motion indicating that St. Lawrence would indeed like to have representation on the fire advisory committee; seconded by Mr. Lubenow; all were in favor and the motion carried. It was noted that Mr. May was the representative from St. Lawrence in the past and he is willing to be a representative again; Mr. Lubenow indicated that he would indeed like to serve as the alternate if Mr. May is unable to attend.

BOROUGH HALL STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENT - Mr. May indicated that last month there was discussion about getting the Borough Hall assessed for what upgrades would be needed to actually bring the building up to code. If we are going to stay at this current location upgrades and repairs need to be done to the building. Mr. May put out a few feelers and only one submitted a proposal. The proposal received was from SSM Group and the proposal is in the minutes for review. There was a lengthy discussion; the proposal was broken down into two and the existing building condition assessment would cost \$16,000 and the master planning study for the site and building upgrades would cost \$23,800. Mr. Fritz indicated that he would like to go on record by stating that he thinks that this is a huge amount of money to spend to find out the condition of the building. Mr. Leineweber and Mr. May, who are both professional engineers indicated that they did not feel like that this figure is out of line because this is a professional service. It was decided that we will go with the option of \$16,000 for the condition of the building and wait on the master plan. **MOTION:** Mr. Eggert made the motion authorizing the assessment of the condition of the building at a price of \$16,000 by SSM Group; seconded by Mr. Fritz; all were in favor and the motion carried.

ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: Rev. Bennethum made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Fritz; all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting of the St. Lawrence Borough Council adjourned at 9:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan D. Eggert', written in a cursive style.

Susan D. Eggert
Borough Secretary