

Jermyn Borough

Council Meeting

1/3/19

The Jermyn Borough Council held a council meeting on Thursday, January 3, 2019 at 7:00 pm in Council Chambers of the Jermyn Borough Building, 440 Jefferson Ave, Jermyn PA.

The meeting was called to order by President Frank Kulick with the Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone was asked to remain standing for a moment of silence in memory of Carol Morcom and Ann Moskovitz, both of whom were pillars of the community who passed away recently.

On roll call, the following members were present: Frank Kulick, Kristen Dougherty, Jennifer Schreiner, Kevin Napoli, Carl Tomaine, Cynthia Stephens, Joanne Wilson. Attorney Aquilino, Mayor Fuga and Bob Chase were also present. Ray Rood and KBA were absent.

**Minutes:**

A motion was made by K. Dougherty to accept the minutes of 12/20/18 as presented. Seconded by C. Stephens. All in favor, motion carried.

**Bills Payable:** A motion was made by K. Napoli to pay the bills as presented. Seconded by J. Wilson. All in favor, motion carried.

**Correspondence:**

F. Kulick stated we have a proposal from Kylie Engineering, and asked if we asked for a proposal? D. Markey stated no. F. Kulick advised to notify them we're not currently looking to change our engineering firm, but we will keep their information on file.

F. Kulick read a letter from the Pennsylvania Environmental Protection Agency addressed to Mayor Fuga regarding the borough's MS4 status. The EPA has given a checklist for compliance to the borough, and is seeking an update within 30 days of receiving the letter, with either the completed checklist, or a request for extension with a list of what has been completed.

LCAB is having a dinner on Thursday, January 17, 2019. Barbara Giovagnoli is the guest speaker. That is a meeting night for Jermyn Borough, but Joanne Wilson will go and represent Jermyn Borough.

Jermyn Youth Sports Association is selling engraved bricks that will go on the new dugouts. The dugouts will be built in 2019. Engraved bricks are \$26 each.

**Public Comment:** Kaitlyn English from Lackawanna County presented the "Healthy Moms" Program for mothers that are struggling with opioid addiction. Penn State Extension is holding Northeast Vegetable Meeting on Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 3pm at the Newton Ransom Fire Company in Clarks Summit.

**Shade Tree Meeting:** J. Wilson announced there will be a Shade Tree Commission meeting this Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 7pm in Jermyn Borough Council Chambers. KBA will be presenting MS4 information, and J. Wilson noticed that there is now an MS4 Committee. She invited the committee to the Shade Tree Meeting to obtain information and see how the Shade Tree Commission can help the MS4 Committee. J. Wilson stated she is trying to get a guest speaker from Penn State Extension at the meeting.

**Property Maintenance Code Violations:** W. Aquilino asked if there was anyone present to discuss code violations. There were not. W. Aquilino updated council on a property inspection at 511-513 Washington Ave earlier in the day by NEIC and KBA. Results are pending for the 7 unit building. W. Aquilino invited Frank Constantine to talk about the daycare for the second time, and he is still a no-show.

**Rental Permit Application Inspections:** F. Kulick stated that with the issues that have been arising at apartment buildings on Washington Ave., Rushbrook St., etc., he believes we're being lax in not requiring inspections. He thinks there are safety issues that are missing. W. Aquilino stated we can change the ordinance to require inspections. D. Markey stated the ordinance already provides for inspections at the borough's discretion, as far as he remembers. W. Aquilino stated that where periodic inspections don't occur, we run into issues. Case in point the 511-513 Washington Apartments that were inspected this morning were inspected because a fire drew attention to possible code issues, and the inspection revealed several issues in the basement, the sewer pipe was leaking, causing methane gas to spill into the basement, and the sewer is vented from the basement into the basement. The electrical system includes components from 1919; there is a lot of wiring down there, so one spark could cause big problems. Footers holding up the building in the foundation are logs that still have bark on them. B. Chase stated that many houses in Jermyn are like that. B. Aquilino stated that half the building sustained significant fire damage in the past. We are finding significant problems, so we do need to identify and prepare a program where we are inspecting rental units, for the safety of first responders. F. Kulick stated that most of the issues we're hearing about is from multi-family units. W. Aquilino stated that with this particular dwelling, there might have been much added stress to the electrical system, which may have caused the fire. J. Wilson stated there are many more appliances these days using electricity than there were in the past. D. Markey stated that the first apartment we inspected this morning, the front door wouldn't even open all the way, due to the refrigerator being in the way, so if a firefighter tried to go in with an air pack, he probably wouldn't make it through the door. F. Kulick asked B. Chase if there is a limit in the zoning book as to how many units you can turn a building into? B. Chase stated yes, he believes the limit is 3, and beyond 3, a variance or zoning hearing is required. B. Chase said there has been one since he has been zoning officer, at the old Jermyn Manor on Rushbrook St., where the owner wound up making it only 3 units. B. Chase stated the old LaRosa's store was done illegally, and the old building inspectors in town missed it. W. Aquilino stated we're not currently inspecting unless a problem is identified or reported. C. Tomaine stated it seems we have the mechanism in place to inspect but we're not doing it, so we need an even handed approach in inspecting. W. Aquilino stated we can identify multi family units and start with size and/or age in inspecting. F. Kulick stated we can start with multi-family. W. Aquilino stated that where properties have Section 8, we need to work with them to make sure HUD is inspecting the units as well. D. Markey stated that for the 2019 rental unit permits, we're already halfway through the process, so let's make the improvements on applications for the 2020 permit, and if we need to inspect, we can do so during the course of the year, but we need to keep costs in mind to, and also who will be doing the inspections? If we create a rental inspection checklist of our own to complete inhouse, that's fine but we're not certified housing inspectors, so we may not catch everything. W. Aquilino stated that for the rest of the permits for 2019 we will look to see what we can inspect. D. Markey stated we should add in the application a spot for the owner to check whether units are section 8 or not. D. Markey stated all inspections thus far were complaint driven, which falls under the property maintenance code, which costs can fall back on the property owner, but if we're doing preemptive inspections for rental permits, we need to keep in mind that costs will be incurred.

**Insurance:** F. Kulick stated we're currently without Government Crime and Computer Fraud Coverages. He asked how we could be without it? D. Markey stated we're currently without it. K. Napoli made a motion to

purchase the Government Crime and Computer Fraud Coverages for a premium of \$88 each. Seconded by C. Stephens. All in favor, motion carried.

**Employee Handbook and Job Descriptions:** F. Kulick stated we've been dancing around the employee handbook for a few years, and it certainly needs to be updated. We have someone on our staff that does these professionally and teaches classes regarding this type of thing. W. Aquilino has agreed to complete an employee handbook and job descriptions for all appointed employees for a cost of \$1500. D. Markey stated the issue right now is you have a handbook that was taken from a plant and put here with a staff of 5 full time employees. D. Markey asked what the usual rate is for this for a local municipality of our size? W. Aquilino stated he's been doing them for the past 20 years, and handbooks are usually \$5000, and adding job descriptions are about another \$1000, so if this went out to bid, it would be probably about \$6000. K. Dougherty stated she doesn't disagree with him. D. Markey asked if he ever did one for a municipality before? W. Aquilino stated no, but the law is the law, and there's no difference. He stated he'll sit down with everyone and get information about time off, whether the borough is interested in going to a PTO bank, etc. F. Kulick asked when this would be deliverable? W. Aquilino stated the first week of March would be good. F. Kulick made a motion to hire William Aquilino to prepare a new borough handbook and job descriptions for all appointed borough employees at the cost of \$1500, deliverable by mid-March. Seconded by K. Dougherty. All in favor, motion carried.

**Scout Corner:** K. Napoli would like to have Scout Corner named after Carol Morcom for her dedicated service to the Girl Scouts for over 30 years. She received the Jermyn Lifetime Achievement Award and was a lifetime member of Crystal Fire Company. K. Napoli would like to assemble a resolution to have a Carol Morcom Day and have Scout Corner named after her. He will speak with the Scout Leader in Jermyn, then get with Shade Tree Commission and the borough manager, and will gather everything needed to present at a meeting.

**Feral Cats:** D. Markey advised that he reviewed the ordinance sent to us from Old Forge, and it's not anything that doesn't already apply in the Jermyn ordinances, and asked the solicitor to continue to research ordinances that have penalties for feeding feral cats. W. Aquilino stated that we need to look into enforcement and how it will happen, and that will drive how the ordinance is written. He mentioned trap, neuter, release program, which C. Stephens stated the fee is \$35. She stated domesticated cats are more. W. Aquilino stated we can enforce by complaint, there doesn't need to be patrols. Council and the Mayor discussed the issue with the cats on the 700 block of Jefferson Ave. The Mayor states he doesn't think there are as many feral cats as there are portrayed to be over there. K. Dougherty stated we shouldn't have the cat issue on the agenda for at least the next two meetings. D. Markey stated he would take the item off the agenda.

**New Business:** F. Kulick stated he will be attending the Shade Tree Commission meeting as a resident, and would like the blessing of council to speak on their behalf also. He doesn't think Shade Tree Commission should turn down people that want Hometown Hero banners, and people will be willing to pay extra for the banners to go on the PPL or Verizon poles. F. Kulick stated there are many people that still want banners that could not get them and were turned away. J. Wilson stated Shade Tree did not have information about the PPL or phone poles. The first phase was decorative poles only, and it's not that they're not going to do it, it's that Phase 1 was finished. D. Markey said that J. Wilson advised him not to accept any more applications. J. Wilson stated that's correct, because they don't want the money lying there, and the public will be made aware when the second phase will be opened. The banners will be bigger in the second phase, and possibly a third phase also. Mayor Fuga stated it's not that bad to put them up, but if there's a time constraint, that's a problem, and that if people are still allowed to request where the specific banners go up, it's a problem also.

F. Kulick stated there are plenty of poles in town to put banners on. J. Wilson stated they are only putting the banners up for two years, and giving them back to the purchasers, then the purchasers can have them put up for a reduced fee. D. Markey asked why they're going back to the purchasers, and why they're not being put back up? J. Wilson stated they are being put back up, but they're only guaranteed for two years by the manufacturer. Mayor Fuga states if they're still in good shape after two years, why wouldn't we just use the same banners? J. Wilson stated there is a commission that makes the rules and regulations, and she is just stating what the rules and regulations are.

D. Markey thanked the DPW for their hard work to refurbish the side stairwell at the borough building. Also the parking lot paving grant expires at the end of June. D. Markey called KBA, and they came to gather final plans for the parking lot paving, and estimate that the project will go out to bid in February. The parking lot estimate included sub base, etc that we may already have out there, or we could use millings from our old paving project. The project will need to be completed by the beginning of June so we can submit invoices. KBA is aware of the time constraints. The DPW Garage loan is up in the air right now with the government shutdown, and we will have to pave prior to getting the garage up, so the engineers will try to account for that also.

All American Rooter is currently working on the Woodlands Sewer Camera Project, and most of it looks ok, but there are some spots that don't look that great. Mayor Fuga stated we will know more when we get the DVD and see what kind of shape everything is in, but the DPW found and dug up the buried manholes.

The gym floor grant will provide for a new gym floor sometime, hopefully, in Spring of 2019, and the borough manager is working with DPW regarding LED light conversion in the gym, as well as a new paint job. K. Dougherty asked if we can paint the bleachers also? Mayor Fuga stated we can pressure wash and paint them, or you can even paint them after they're installed again. K. Dougherty asked where we would put them? D. Markey stated we can carry them right out front, and Randy Parry stated he would assemble people to help carry the bleachers out and back in as well. C. Tomaine asked if we will incur any type of cost as far as codes go with this project? Mayor Fuga stated no, because the lights in the gym are the wrong type of lights, and if anything, we will be bettering our lighting situation in there, and this is similar to the Main St. lighting project completed a few years ago. Jack Dougherty stated his company has a program in which someone will come in and help us with the project and look at what rebates are available at no charge. If the borough has a locked in rate, there won't be any rebates available. D. Markey stated he will look into the account and see if we have a locked in rate at all.

D. Markey also reminded the solicitor about the R&L Carriers land deal that needs to be prepared.

**Adjournment:** With no other business to come before the meeting, a motion was made by K. Napoli to adjourn, seconded by C. Tomaine. All in favor, motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:09pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Daniel Markey

Borough Manager