

President Harvey Marshall called the September 8, 2020 meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Council Members present were Mark Spotts, David Rohrbach, Rod Soliday, Dean Johnson and Mike Martin. . Also attending the meeting were SHPD Chief Leon Grim, Mayor Randy Gartner, Engineer Jennifer Van Dyke, Solicitor Andrew George and Manager Lisa Heilman.. Citizens and visitors attending the meeting were Ryan Knarr, Mario Dinunno, John Ravert, Jack Keener, David Bright, David Randler, Chris Heiniman, Kim Sassaman, Alexandra Pancu, Phil Perkins, Brian Keppley, Layla Malik, John Davis, Gordie Speicher, Kim Epler, Kenny Bright, John Shittler and Brian Rippey of the Reading Eagle. Additionally, there were close to 40 more people outside in support of the Tennis Association that, because of the COVID-19 restrictions, were unable to come inside during the meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Soliday to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2020 Council Meeting. Mr. Spotts seconded and Council approved unanimously. Mr. Martin then made the motion to appoint Matthew Miller to the Council seat vacated by Erica Ziegler at the August meeting. Mr. Soliday seconded and Council approved unanimously.

VISITORS & CITIZENS: Mario Dinunno, new owner of 105 East Penn Avenue, advised Council that he would like to subdivide the property with the home along Penn Avenue as one parcel and the apartment over the garage in the rear (along Maple Avenue) as a separate parcel. He was told by Technicon that he is short 159 sq. feet of land to do what he wants without a variance. He was hoping Council could override that requirement and allow him to go forward with the subdivision. Solicitor George advised him that Council has no jurisdiction over zoning matters....and that his request would have to be approved through the zoning board. Engineer Jennifer Van Dyke then proceeded to advise Mr. Dinunno of the several variances that would be needed to subdivide the property. She suggested the best way to proceed would be to have the property surveyed and submit a formal sketch plan. Technicon could then perform the review and spell out the several variances for which Mr. Dinunno would need to seek relief. At that point Mr. Dinello could submit for a zoning hearing to seek approval for all of the requested approvals at one time. Ryan Knarr, CW Tennis Association President, read a prepared statement strongly encouraging Council to complete the tennis court project to USTA standards. Mr. Chris Heiniman, a 2013 CW grad and 3x tennis team captain, noted that, as a current contractor, he would advise against the 6' grass strip around the perimeter of the field as he feels that this would cost more in the long run because of ongoing maintenance of that strip. He feels that Technicon's report regarding infiltration hazards and their recommendations would be better than the grass and for the few extra dollars would be a great community asset. Alexandra Pancu, a resident of Robesonia has spent nine years playing tennis...as does her entire family. Brian Keppley feels Council should do the right thing. He noted that the Hits for Hope Tournament has raised over \$60,000 for charity in the last several years and feels if the courts are done properly and used for the occasional tournament, would bring business into the community. Another gentleman speaking on behalf of the court project asked Council, in light of all the discord in the world, to show kids how resolving problems amicably and with compromise can be done .

John Ravert, Shade Tree Commission Chairman, asked Council to consider amending the existing Shade Tree Ordinance. He noted that the ordinance, when originally passed in 1990, somehow failed to include a penalty for willful destruction of trees. He feels that it needs to be included and has asked Council to look at the Ordinance that was passed in 1990 and consider the inclusion of some type of penalty. Mr. Randler addressed the matter of the trees he had removed at the Dominos property along North Robeson Street and the one tree he had removed on the corner of East Penn and South Robeson. He stated he was not willing to accept the liability risk created by the trees on the Dominos property and

his tenants could not get out the front door of the building on East Penn Avenue because the tree had not been trimmed in a long time and the branches were nearly up to the front door of the property. He feels the Borough should pay for the removal of the trees since they were borough trees. He demanded that the borough produce liability insurance for any trees planted in the planting strip of any property he owns or that the borough just not plant any more trees on any of the properties he owns.

Jack Keener provided a cost estimate of an additional \$27,000 to bring the tennis courts up to USTA standards. It is a matter of 16" of additional stone, a wall/fence work and 60 tons of additional asphalt. Mr. Marshall noted that does not include the required upgrades for a second ADA accessible entrance on the northwest corner, which would be \$8,000-\$12,000 additional. Mr. Rohrbach made the motion to withdraw from the USTA grant and it's requirements. Mr. Johnson seconded. Council approved unanimously. Mr. Johnson made the motion to return to the original plan and Mr. Spotts seconded. Council approved unanimously. All other visitors were observing.

MAYOR – Mayor Gartner thanked everyone involved in helping with the Labor Day Car Show. He noted that he received a lot of feedback, some positive and some negative. The intent going forward is to form a committee to plan and run the show. He advised Council that the Friends of the Robesonia Furnace Dinner will be held on September 10th at the Furnace Pavilion. Dinner costs \$25 and the guest speaker is Tracy Rice, who will give a presentation on Charming Forge. On 9/19, Foreplay will be playing at the Furnace Pavilion from 5-8 pm. All money raised will be donated to Wreaths Across America. Museum Tours will be available that day from 3-5PM

Mayor Gartner asked the status of 222 W. Penn Avenue. Borough Manager advised that both she and Kraft Codes spoke with the owner earlier in the day and he noted that he is in the process of moving in with his daughter and expects to be out of the house by the end of September. He told both that his daughter is taking the last eight cats to the ASPCA to be adopted out. He will allow Kraft entrance to the property at the end of September when he is done moving out. If he does not contact the Borough and Kraft at that time, Kraft will go for the immediate administrative search warrant. Mayor Gartner advised Manager that the grass at 32 West Ruth Avenue is getting high again.

SOLICITOR - Solicitor George advised Council that the Borough has received notification of approval of \$55,000 in CDBG grant money for the remediation of the Breininger property...leaving the Borough with a \$5,000 shortfall. Mr. Marshall made the motion to approve the additional \$5,000, if necessary, in order to keep the project moving forward. Mr. Martin seconded and Council approved on a vote of 6-1, with Mr. Spotts voting no. Mr. Marshall made the motion to accept and sign the CDBG agreement for the \$55,000 grant money. Mr. Martin seconded and Council approved on a vote of 6-1, with Mr. Spotts voting no.

ENGINEER – Building Permit and Engineer's reports were included in the agenda packet.

PLANNING COMMISSION – The next meeting is scheduled for September 16th, if needed.

MANAGER – Manager advised Council that the FALL Clean-up has been scheduled for October 2/3, 8AM-4PM. .

PAYMENT OF INVOICES- Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Martin and unanimously carried, the bills were ordered paid as presented, including those paid prior to the meeting to avoid penalties. .

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

Finance/Administration – Preliminary work has begun on the 2021 budget.

Personnel: Mr. Martin made the motion to appoint Harvey Marshall to Erica Ziegler's vacant spot on the Personnel Committee. Mr. Spotts seconded and Council approved unanimously.

Fire Protection/Safety – Mr. Martin reported that the annual collection will be conducted by mail this year due to the ongoing pandemic. Also, thanked everyone who helped at the Labor Day Car Show.

Streets/Highways/Sewer – Mr. Marshall advised Council that he has obtained an estimate from Martin Paving to do the 2021 Roadwork Project. The bid came in considerably lower than we expected so he added a few more streets. Even with the additional streets, he feels we can safely borrow only \$300,000 to get it all done instead of the \$500,000 we were expecting to borrow. Mr. Spotts made the motion to make application to the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank for the \$300,000. Mr. Rohrbach seconded the motion and Council approved unanimously.

Parks & Recreation- No report.

Library- No report..

Water/Sewer Municipal Authorities-Mr. Soliday advised Council that the next RMA meeting is scheduled for October 12 at 6PM.

Western Berks Joint Planning Commission: Mr. Randler noted that a meeting is scheduled for September 17th to discuss the inclusion of Marion Township into the Joint PC/Joint Zoning. Ms. Heilman will send out reminder notices to all board members.

Police: Chief Grim reported that the south end of South Robeson Street looks considerably better with all the cars from Fatzininger's removed from the street. Also, Chief thanked the Borough for the Back the Blue Rally and commended Robesonia for continuing to set a great example by continuing to host so many outdoor events.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Marshall – Mr. Marshall advised Council of a potential PPL Easement Agreement. Solicitor George is currently doing some research into it to determine how much money the Borough can expect to see if we sign the agreement. If we don't sign it at all, the property will simply be taken by eminent domain and the Borough would receive nothing. Mr. Soliday asked if the new power lines will involve an increase in EMFs..

Martin- No report.

Johnson- No report

Soliday- No report.

Spotts- Mr. Spotts brought up HB1069 that would amend the Sunshine Act to require a public agency to post public meeting agendas no later than 24 hours prior to the start of a meeting. He feels that, in the interest of transparency, the Borough should consider adopting something like this regardless of the state's actions on this bill. He suggested Council read it and be prepared to discuss it at the October meeting.

Rohrbach- Mr. Rohrbach advised Manager to remove Frank Schnee's name as Assistant Zoning Officer on the front page of the Borough newsletter.

Miller.. No report.

Mayor Gartner- Mayor Gartner thanked Mr. Spotts for the great job on the new Borough website

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – No report.

NEW BUSINESS – No report.

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Kraft Codes monthly Property Maintenance Report.
- Womelsdorf-Robesonia Joint Water Authority meeting minutes and treasurer's reports.

MINUTES

BOROUGH OF ROBESONIA

September 8, 2020

Page 4 of 4

- RMA July Treasurer's report
- Thank you letter from Western Berks Ambulance for contribution and monthly report.

On a motion by Mr. Spotts, second by Mr. Rohrbach and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42PM.

Attest:

Lisa Heilman

Manager/Secretary/Treasurer