

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
March 19, 2020 AT 5:30 P.M.
LEWISTOWN MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Council meeting opened at 5:30 p.m. with Borough Council President Venus Shade presiding. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Campbell, Mr. Terry, Mr. A. Wilson, Mr. DeArment, and Ms. Shade were present. Larry Searer and Mr. B. Wilson were absent.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT

****CONSENT AGENDA**

The following are routine, procedural, and informational non-controversial items and do not appear to require discussion or explanation prior to Council's action. These items will be acted upon by one motion, unless any member of Council desires to move an item to the Regular Agenda for further discussion.

- A. Facility Use Form submitted 3/11/20 from Megan Dubler for April 10 contingent upon receipt of COL insurance and the mandate being lifted
- B. Schedule of Bills

On a motion by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mr. Terry, Council by unanimous vote approved the Consent Agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

REPORTS

A. Treasurer/Borough Manager/Secretary

Ms. Walter reviewed some of the safety precautions taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Nuvision is now coming in to clean the high touch areas for an additional \$52.00 per week at the Municipal Building.
- Additional hand sanitizer and Lysol has been handed out to employees. Ms. Shade instructed Ms. Walter to get reimbursed for the purchase of the items since it was unavailable to be purchased online and it was not found locally.

- Displayed safety posters in the Municipal Building and disbursed them to the Supervisors to post appropriately. Along with, informing employees that if they are sick to go home and stay home until they feel better.
- A special run of bills was placed on the consent agenda in case something would happen, Borough business would continue to flow, and vendors would not be awaiting payment.
- Also, spoke with some of the downtown businesses and put up “10 minute drop off and pick up only” signs so that this can assist them with people parking.

Mr. Campbell questioned if she was able to locate a thermometer. Ms. Walter stated she hadn't been able to locate one but will continue to look for one.

UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Shade stated that Mr. Terry and Mr. DeArment had sent out information to the Council members regarding Zoom, an electronic meeting. Mr. DeArment stated that you set up a meeting and get a link for the specific meeting. Individuals type that link into their browser and it will go to that meeting. Mr. Terry talked about a webinar version of Skype that could accommodate up to 100 people that could have access to view the meeting. Ms. Shade questioned how the meeting would be transcribed. Mr. Terry stated that the entire meeting will be recorded. Mr. DeArment stated that considering the circumstances Zoom has waived their fees and time limits. Mr. Terry stated that this was for school districts and wasn't sure it would for government. Ms. Shade said she uses Skype and it's very convenient but in the past week her internet has become increasingly slow. Mr. Remy stated they can continue to monitor the Sunshine Act for changes. Ms. Shade questioned if they still had to have a quorum. Mr. Remy stated he wrote up the resolution that it could be an electronic meeting. Mr. Campbell asked if there was any other authority available for feed back like PSAB or the Governor's office. Mr. Remy stated that PSAB hasn't been a lot of help and he had a conversation with the head of the Pennsylvania Department of Open Records. Mr. Remy stated the gentleman could only give an advisory opinion but felt that the resolution was the way to go. Mr. Remy stated that the resolution also includes authorizing the Borough Manager to obtain the equipment, software, and professional services required. Mr. Campbell questioned that in Pennsylvania you cannot legally record any private conversation and would they have to make a statement at the beginning of the meeting for any public. Mr. Remy stated that they would not have any expectation of privacy with the meeting and doesn't feel it would be an issue.

On a motion by Mr. DeArment and seconded by Mr. A. Wilson, Council by unanimous vote approved the resolution to participate by electronic means.

The Mayor stated that because she was the head of the Emergency Management, she can release the Mayor's Declaration without Council's approval, but she wanted to present the declaration to have Council review before she released the document. Council members took the time to review the document presented to them as follows:

Declaration of Disaster Emergency

WHEREAS, a novel coronavirus known as "COVID-19" has been declared a "public health emergency of international concern" by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States, Donald Trump, has declared a National Emergency under the Stafford Act; and

WHEREAS, through a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency by Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf, the Pennsylvania Department of Health declared COVID-19 a public emergency; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has the potential to place Lewistown Borough in a significant public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 has the potential to endanger the health, safety, and welfare of a substantial number of persons residing in Lewistown Borough and threatens to create problems greater in scope than Lewistown Borough may be able to resolve; and

WHEREAS, emergency management measures are required to reduce the severity of such disaster and to protect the health, safety and welfare of affected residents and businesses in Lewistown; and

WHEREAS, this threat of imminent disaster and emergency has the potential to cause significant adverse impacts upon population, schools, businesses, local government services and others throughout Lewistown;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Mayor of Lewistown, pursuant to the provisions of Section 7501 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code, (35 PA C.S., Section 7501), as amended, do hereby declare the existence of an emergency in Lewistown Borough;

FURTHER, I direct the Borough Manager and Chief of Police or their designee to coordinate the activities of the emergency response, to take all appropriate actions needed to alleviate the effects of this emergency, to aid in restoration of normal daily proceedings, and to take any other emergency response action deemed necessary to respond to this emergency.

STILL FURTHER, we authorize officials of Lewistown Borough to act as necessary to meet the current exigencies of this emergency, namely: by the employment of temporary workers, by the rental of equipment, by the purchase of supplies and materials, and by entering into such contracts and agreements for the performance of public work as may be required to meet the emergency, all without regard to those time-consuming procedures and formalities normally prescribed by law, mandatory constitutional requirements accepted.

This Declaration shall take effect immediately.

Mayor Bargo said that declaration will help the Borough be able to apply and/or be eligible for funds if the COVID-19 pandemic prolongs and the Borough has issues. Mr. Campbell asked if they could include the Fire Chief along with the Borough Manager and Police Chief. Ms. Shade stated because of the Mayor is head of emergency services, she didn't feel the need to add the Fire Chief.

Ms. Shade presented the approval to allow residents to pay their bills online, through the mail, or use a drop box and mail their tags to them with a suspension of the mailing fees from now until the end of May. Ms. Shade questioned if there was a drop box. Ms. Walter stated there is a red box out front of the Municipal Building that is used for parking tickets however, since tickets are currently suspended the box could be utilized for the Refuse/Sewer payments. Mr. Terry said that they would have to check the box frequently. Ms. Shade said that considering the current situation that there shouldn't be a charge for mailing tags to individuals paying their bills online, drop-off, or through the mail. Mr. Terry questioned what the potential cost would be mailing the tags. Ms. Shade stated it would be \$5.00, but it is uncertain how many residents will be needing their tags mailed or have those in surplus and could pick them up later. Mr. Campbell stated that they could put it out to the public that if they are in an emergency situation and they are out of tags they will be mailed to them. Ms. Shade said it could also be for those that request them.

On a motion by Mr. A. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Terry, Council by unanimous vote approved to allow residents to pay their bills online, thru mail, or use the drop box and mail their tags to them with suspension of the mailing fees from now until end of May.

Ms. Shade brought the option of temporarily discontinuing Refuse/Sewer late fees including termination/delinquent/10% penalties. Mr. Campbell stated he thought it would be worthwhile to reach out to the Municipal Authority to see if they will do the same for the Borough Residents with the water bills. Ms. Walter stated they did send out a notice that their lobby was closed, and they will not be accepting walk-in payments, but there was no mention of waiving of fees. Mr. DeArment asked if it will put the Borough in any financial issue if residents know there isn't a late fee so they will pay when the lockdown is over, and the lockdown goes on for months. Ms. Walter said that her concern was that it doesn't hold the repeat offenders accountable and then they will have a huge bill. Mr. Terry asked if Council needs to publicly say they will forgive the late fees for a certain amount of time or

they quietly do that. Ms. Shade said she feels they should do it as long as the declaration is in effect. She also said if the Borough isn't open, not everyone pays their bills online and there is a fee associated with using a credit card that cannot be eliminated because it's not the Boroughs service. Mr. A. Wilson reiterated the question of would it put the Borough in a financial bind if COVID-19 goes on for 30 days. Ms. Walter said it would affect it, but it will be council's decision. Mr. DeArment asked what the timeline for people to pay their bills once the Declaration of Emergency goes out of effect. Ms. Shade stated they still have to pay their bill, but she understands what he is saying. She suggested 10 days after the Declaration of Emergency is rescinded, giving them 2 weeks to pay. Ms. Walter questioned the bags without tags. Council agreed if the Borough is willing to mail the residents their tags, they should be using them. Ms. Shade said those fees can be added and be paid within the 10 days as well. Mayor Bargo questioned how all the information would get out to Borough residents. Ms. Shade said they will put an announcement in the paper, radio, Facebook, and the website. Ms. Walter said maybe there should be an insert in the bills to inform customers. Mayor Bargo said she would be doing an interview and asked if she could relay the information talked about. Mr. Campbell questioned if Ms. Walter could get a press release ready for the Mayor. Ms. Walter said if Council approves, she will prepare a press release.

On a motion by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mr. A. Wilson, Council by unanimous vote approved to temporarily discontinue Refuse/Sewer late fees including termination/delinquent/10% penalties with the due date being with 10 days of the Declaration of Emergency being lifted.

Ms. Shade discussed the suspension of violations. Ms. Walter stated that Mr. Fink has been going out into the Borough and has been continuing to send out the courtesy letters. Ms. Shade said that he will continue to send the letters however, they will just not proceed further because the courts are closed. Ms. Walter asked if the violations will be suspended until 10 days after the Declaration of Emergency has been lifted. Ms. Shade stated they are suspending the violation and it will last for 10 days after the Declaration of Emergency is lifted.

On a motion by Mr. A. Wilson and seconded by Mr. DeArment, Council by unanimous vote approved closing Borough Hall & lobby of the Police Department to the public until further notice.

Mayor Bargo stated that a mutual aid agreement will be developed among the local police departments. She said that because all the police departments are small and if a few officers get sick in the police department it would cause an issue with staffing. Mr. Terry asked if the agreement was so that the police departments can interchange. Mayor Bargo said that the agreement would do that. Ms. Shade questioned if there was a date that it would expire. Mayor Bargo stated that it didn't need to expire, but they do have a mutual aid agreement with the Granville Police Department. Mr. Terry asked if the Borough has an officer out sick and they have an officer come from Granville to work how is the salary differences compensated. Mayor Bargo stated that all expenses are paid by the original department. Ms. Shade stated it is just a courtesy and it is more of expanding their boundaries. Mr. Campbell

questioned what the union says about the agreement. Mayor Bargo stated it was approved by the unions. Mr. Remy stated that all departments will sign the agreement and suggested Council to authorize the Police Chief to sign a mutual aid agreement when an acceptable form has been worked out.

On a motion by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mr. A. Wilson, Council by unanimous vote approved authorizing the Police Chief to sign a memorandum of understanding regarding mutual aid.

Ms. Shade discussed the suspension of street sweeper and parking tickets. Ms. Shade stated that people will not be going out to go to work and she wasn't sure how much they would be using their cars. Mr. Campbell questioned if this suspension would last 10 days after the Declaration of Disaster of Emergency has been lifted. Ms. Shade stated that all tickets should come back to affect the day the Declaration of Disaster of Emergency has been lifted. Mr. Remy asked what if someone decides to park their car in front of the OIP and never moves the car. Ms. Shade stated that is a different ordinance. Mr. Campbell said the Borough still needs to be enforcing the Carryout only parking spaces and the police should be keeping tabs on those spaces. Ms. Shade stated that they should consider suspending the street sweeping tickets.

On a motion by Mr. A. Wilson and seconded by Mr. DeArment, Council by unanimous vote approved the suspension of street sweeping tickets and they will resume after the Declaration of Emergency has been lifted.

Ms. Shade presented the Closure of the Community Center until the mandate is lifted & refunding of fees for any event closed due to the COVID-19. Ms. Walter stated they have had 3 calls to cancel and several to reschedule. Mr. Campbell discussed offering a 10% discount to rental agreements wanting to cancel. Ms. Walter said if you do for one you have to do for all and for those that have already rescheduled that would not be fair. Mr. Terry agreed saying someone will end up being offended. Mr. Campbell felt it was an incentive. Ms. Walter stated that the Community Center can be reopened as soon as the emergency has been lifted.

On a motion by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mr. A. Wilson, Council by unanimous vote approved the closure of Community Center until the mandate is lifted & refunding of fees for any event closed due to the Coronavirus.

On a motion by Mr. DeArment and seconded by Mr. A. Wilson, Council by unanimous vote approved Ms. Walter to issue a press release relaying the above issues that were approved to the public except for the courtesy notices.

Mr. Campbell stated that he spoke to the Fire Chief and a few other members of the fire company and they stated that all their social clubs and fundraisers have been shut down. They are concerned that they will not be able to pay their fuel and electric bills and possibly seeking an exemption on their sewer and water bills. Mr. Campbell stated he gave it some

thought and decided it would be a good thing for the Borough to give each Department \$750. Ms. Shade questioned when their allocations are due to be distributed. Ms. Walter stated the allocation is disbursed in May. Ms. Shade said her concern was if they had enough gloves and masks. She also asked if Council could give them their allocations early. Ms. Walter stated that it would be up to Council to decide. Mr. Campbell said that the allocation is not extra money. Ms. Shade said she understood and if they gave the allocation now, they could revisit the other later. Mr. DeArment said he felt better giving the allocations early because it was money they were getting already. He said he understood that they are struggling because their social clubs are closed, so they need to put their thinking cap on and find ways to raise money themselves. Ms. Shade stated they can revisit the issue later and if COVID-19 is over in a month or two they should be okay. Mr. A. Wilson stated if the state goes into lock down, they won't be able to do anything but fight fires. Mr. Campbell stated that it's the Boroughs responsibility to make sure they can do their job. He also said the fire department's budgets are already hit with other issues and the Borough cannot sit back and allow them to take the loss. Mr. Campbell stated that fire companies do not have examination gloves or masks and when asked if they reached out to the county level, they said the county told them they had nothing to provide. Ms. Shade said if this is the case then maybe the Borough should look into stock piling in the future. Mr. A. Wilson asked if someone could see if Lowes would be willing to donate. Ms. Walter said there are grants for the future that focus on EMS and Fire Companies.

On a motion by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mr. A. Wilson, Council by unanimous vote approved to release the next quarters fire allocation and revisit the potential financial loss at a later date to get a better understanding.

Ms. Walter wanted to know the stipulations for local government if there was a lockdown. Mr. Remy stated that the Borough will have to remain open, plus there is the collective bargaining agreement.

Mayor Bargo said she received an email from Carol King of the Bureau of Census asking if the Borough will put a reminder on the website to remind people to fill out their census.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A question was asked about the April 1, 2020 event to celebrate the 225th Anniversary; as of now the situation is to be monitored.

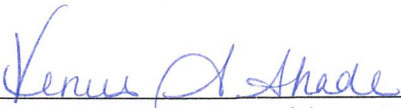
EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council went into executive session at 6:30 p.m. to discuss personnel issues.

Council came out of executive session at 6:37 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mr. Terry, Council by unanimous vote approved to suspend the employee in question for 10 days unpaid leave pending further review and require enrollment in an SAP program.

The meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.



(Vice) President, Lewistown Borough Council

(Seal)

ATTEST:



(Asst.) Borough Secretary