

**Borough Council Workshop Meeting
Minutes – March 12, 2025**

Call to Order – Mrs. Dekar called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Roll Call - The following members of the Borough Council were present; Cori Belles, James Daly, Derrick Hall, Dan Wayman, Jessica Meyer, and Jessie Dekar. **Also present;** Henry Farley, Mayor; Gil Crossett, Fire Chief; Christopher Kaiden, Code Enforcement Director; Blane Lathrop, DPW Foreman; Robert Repasky, Assistant Fire Chief; Daniel Reynolds, Police Chief; and David Jarrett, Borough Manager.

Citizens to be Heard – Clint and Holly Keller addressed the Borough Council regarding their interest in constructing four (4) studio apartments on the second floor of the Enterprise Center building. The Kellers explained that they have invested more than \$300,000.00 in the building since they purchased it two years ago and that the proposed studio apartments would provide much needed housing opportunities in the Borough.

Mr. Kaiden explained that the building is zoned as Business Incubator and that the zoning designation includes several permitted uses however it does not include residential housing. Mr. Kaiden stated that a variance would need to be granted by the Zoning Hearing Board or the Business Incubator zoning ordinance would need to be amended to include housing as a permitted use before the project can move forward.

The listing of permitted uses for the Business Incubator zoning designation was discussed and Mrs. Keller stated that two new businesses have expressed interest in locating in the building. Mrs. Keller stated that one of the potential businesses is a company that manufactures tea products and the other potential tenant is interested in opening a café inside the building. Mr. Kaiden stated that any renovations to the building would require a building permit and an occupancy permit.

Mr. Kaiden explained that the next step would be for the Planning Commission to meet with the Kellers to review the project and to apply for a zoning variance.

Traffic Study Report – David Kruse, AICP, PTP, RSP1, Senior Transportation Planner with Passero Associates reviewed the findings of the traffic study that the company completed for the Borough.

Mr. Kruse explained that traffic data was collected during peak times during the morning (6am-9am), afternoon (11am-1pm), and evening (3pm-6pm) at various locations throughout the Borough and extended data was collected at intersections with higher frequency of traffic accidents.

Mr. Kruse stated that enhanced signage could be added at intersections where there are more frequent traffic accidents such as Elmer and Mohawk and Wilbur and Mohawk. Mr. Kruse explained that the type of signage could indicate that opposing traffic does not stop, Stop ahead signs, and installing stop signs with LED blinking lights that could be solar powered.

Mr. Kruse explained that data collected did not reveal any dramatic concerns and that the traffic flow at intersections is operating at an acceptable level of service and the study took into consideration growth rate of traffic. The acceptable level of service at an intersection evaluates the amount of time vehicles wait at an intersection before proceeding through that intersection.

Mrs. Dekar asked for a clarification of partially marked crosswalks referenced in the report, and Mr. Kruse explained that there are intersections that are not completely marked with crosswalk lines at all four (4) corners but that it was not a major concern.

Mrs. Dekar also asked if there are any issues with lighting, and Mr. Kruse explained that there were no issues with the amount of existing lighting.

Mrs. Belles asked if the study took into consideration best practices for lighting, and Mr. Kruse explained that best practices would require as many as eight (8) lights per intersection and a secondary study to address lighting is not needed.

Miss Meyer asked about the time of day that most traffic accidents occurred and Mr. Kruse stated that the majority of traffic accidents have occurred during daytime hours and were directly related to driver error. Miss Meyer suggested that enhanced signage be posted at the intersection of North Wilbur Avenue and Stevenson Street to increase awareness for motorists.

Mrs. Belles asked if visibility at intersections was evaluated, and Mr. Kruse stated that sight lines at all intersections were evaluated and that there were no issues.

Mr. Hall asked if it would be beneficial to install double stop signs at Wilbur and Mohawk and Elmer and Mohawk, and Mr. Kruse stated that stop signs should only be placed on the traffic lane side of the roadway.

Mr. Kruse asked the Borough Council to review the traffic report one more time and advise him of any comments so that the report can be finalized and submitted to PennDOT for their comments. Mr. Kruse stated that PennDOT would likely need thirty (30) days to review and provide comments on the report.

Approval of Bills List & Supplemental Bills List – February 20 – March 12, 2025 – A motion was made by Mr. Daly and seconded by Miss Meyer to approve the bills list and supplemental bills list. **Under the question:** There were none. **Roll Call: Mrs. Belles, Mr. Daly, Mr. Hall, Mr. Wayman, Miss Meyer, and Mrs. Dekar; YES.**

Elected and Appointed Officials – Mrs. Dekar congratulated Mr. Jarrett on the recent grant award for the downtown streetscape project. Mrs. Belles asked for an update from each department's SWOT items. Mrs. Dekar asked about the status of the tax incentive for the solar project, and Mr. Jarrett explained that he was in the process of completing the required application. Mr. Jarrett stated that the application requires an individual to apply for the tax incentive because there is not a provision in place that would allow the Borough to be the applicant. He stated that he is working through the issue with assistance from Congressman Meuser's office and will see if the Borough's tax ID number could be used although the application is in his name.

Finance Report – February 28, 2025 – There were no questions or comments.

Workshop Meeting Correspondence Summary – There were no questions or comments.

Items for Discussion – The following items were presented for discussion;

Kali's Mission Proposal – The proposal outlining the services that will be provided to trap, neuter, and release feral cats in the Borough was reviewed and \$2,000.00 will be initially allocated for the first phase of the program. The first phase of the program will begin in April and concentrate on the section of the Borough between West Lockhart Street and Center Street and South Keystone Avenue and Toolan Lane. Notifications will be sent out to residents in the April sewer bill and an announcement will be posted on the Borough's Facebook page and website. Kali's Mission will be required to provide the Borough with proof of insurance and name the Borough as an additional insured.

E-Recycling Event – Mr. Jarrett explained that he spoke with two (2) e-recycling companies that were interested in working with the Borough on hosting an event and information about a third company was provided to him prior to the meeting. Mr. Jarrett explained that he will compile the information provided by the companies in a spreadsheet format so that a clear comparison of fees and services can be evaluated. The event will be limited to Borough residents and held sometime in May after the necessary permit is approved by PA-DEP. Mr. Jarrett asked the Borough Council to consider a fee schedule so that the cost of overtime incurred at the event is covered.

Playground Equipment - Additional options were reviewed and the cost of installation was discussed. Mr. Jarrett explained that for budgeting purposes, installation costs will be calculated at 40% of the items' list cost. A final decision on what equipment will be purchased and installation location will be made in April.

Park Use Requests – There were no comments or concerns regarding the Park Use requests submitted by the Epiphany Church for Howard Elmer Park in June and the annual Pound the Ground for Ultrasound 5K hosted by Hopegate in May. The requests will be placed on the regular meeting agenda for approval.

Conference Attendance Requests – Mrs. Dekar asked Mr. Lathrop if there were any additional training and educational opportunities for DPW staff, and Mr. Lathrop explained that continuing education credits are a priority but opportunities are limited in our area. The requests for Ms. Ferguson to attend the annual PSAB Conference, Mr. Jarrett and Miss Landis to attend the annual GFOA-PA, and Dylan Haynes and Jason Phillips to attend a Basic Hydraulics course hosted by the Rural Water Association program will be placed on the regular meeting agenda for approval.

Department & Committee Reports – The following reports were presented;

Fire Department – There were no questions or comments.

Police Department – Chief Reynolds reported that officers are currently training on the new Incident Management Reporting System and that the go live date for the program is in June. Chief Reynolds also reported that new service weapons have been purchased and that officers are being trained on the new weapons. Chief Reynolds stated that the old weapons will be traded in to the vendor after all of the officers have completed their training on the new weapons.

Chief Reynolds explained that he will be submitting Conference Attendance Request for approval for this year's NYTOA Conference. Chief Reynolds explained that the conference provides several opportunities for officers to receive training certifications for their specific responsibilities as trainers in the Department. Chief Reynolds stated that he received a \$9,500.00 grant from the North Central Regional Task Force that will offset a majority of the conference costs.

Mrs. Belles asked if there has been any progress on enhancing security in the schools, and Chief Reynolds stated that federal funding is being sought for the project and that the Sheriff's Deputies have been assigned as School Resource Officers in other school districts.

Borough Manager – Mr. Jarrett reviewed the items on this report and explained that the proposed ADA crosswalk improvements will go out to bid once PA-DCED approves the modifications that were requested for the FY2022 and FY2023 CDBG budget. He also stated that the third phase of the streetscape project will likely begin in 2026 and include improvements in the 100 block of Desmond Street, 100 block of South Elmer Avenue, and 100 block of West Packer Avenue. Mrs. Dekar asked if lighting improvements in the downtown were included in the scope of work, and Mr. Jarrett explained that lighting improvements were included in the original application but Penelec advised the Borough after the first grant was awarded that they could not provide new metal poles. Mr. Jarrett suggested that the existing metal poles could be painted and installing decorative lights on the poles to extend over the sidewalk to enhance lighting could be considered. Mrs. Belles emphasized the importance of including aesthetic enhancements to the streetscape project. Mr. Jarrett explained that grant funds can be allocated for new trees, trash receptacles, and benches.

Code Enforcement – Mr. Kaiden explained that County Land Bank is currently finalizing their by-laws. Mr. Kaiden asked Attorney Foster if there is an update on the purchase agreement for 310 East Lockhart Street. Mr. Kaiden stated that one of the estate executors had recently informed the Borough that they wanted more money for the property.

Mr. Kaiden explained that the Borough has acted in good faith since making an offer on the property to secure the forgiveness of medical liens and reimbursement of his time and expenses should be made by the estate if the deal is not completed.

Attorney Foster stated that he will contact the estate executors to resolve the issue.

Public Works Department – Mr. Lathrop reported that he has been working with vendors to obtain quotes for the purchase of a new dump truck, refuse truck, and packer that are planned in 2025.

Borough Solicitor – There were no questions or comments.

Emergency Management – There were no questions or comments.

Planning Commission – There were no questions or comments.

Adjourn – Mrs. Dekar adjourned the meeting at 7:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Jarrett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David M Jarrett
Borough Manager/Secretary

