

MECHANICSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, BOROUGH OFFICE BUILDING
2 West Strawberry @ North Market Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-6282

March 5, 2002

7:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Vice President Eichelberger called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: In attendance were, Vice President Eichelberger, Councilman, McDermott, Ritter, Seagrist, Whitcomb, Winchell, Mayor Ritter, Jr. Councilperson Lopez, Chief Spotts, Solicitor Shorpp, Secretary Stough, and Assistant Secretary Boyer. Also present Cress – Sentinel, Miller – Patriot News, Ron Blauch, Chris Gromlowicz, Floyd Kautz, Marty Kaberle, Mike Mills, Jack Neibert, Jack Otstot, Larry Seagrist and Martini Sowers. President Rider was absent.

GUESTS:

◆ Darren J. Asper, AICP, Vice President of Planning & Development for Delta Development Group, was in attendance and continued to address questions from Borough Council that continued from the Finance Committee meeting that proceeded tonight's work session. Mr. Asper indicated that within the next two years, the Federal window of opportunity would be opening and planning at this time would put the Borough in a good position to apply for funding. Mr. Asper pointed out that many grant applications are requiring information on the planning process used to identify the need for improvements. It was also noted by Mr. Asper that water and sewer grant funding is also available at the federal level as well as through PennVest at the State level. Councilman Seagrist stated that the new state budget cuts back or eliminates many grant funding programs. Mr. Asper agreed some programs are being cut, but added many programs are being funded at current levels. It was pointed out by Mr. Asper that the planning process takes some time and puts the Borough in a position of being ready when funding opportunities arise. Mr. Asper noted that Federal grant programs involving homeland security issues are receiving priority. A discussion followed on recreational grant funding for park and trail planning and implementation. Mr. Asper explained the difference between a strategic plan and a comprehensive plan and how a strategic plan could be incorporated later into the comprehensive plan process. The possibility of future light rail service to Mechanicsburg was discussed and Mr. Asper was asked if his firm has assisted any communities with rail projects. Mr. Asper stated that his firm worked with Steelton Borough, on updating the Borough's comprehensive plan, which includes the possibility of future rail service coming through the Borough from the airport into the Harrisburg terminal. The possibility of a parking garage in conjunction with future rail service could be included in this type of plan for future consideration. Mixed use Intermodal Transportation projects are usually considered favorably for federal transportation funding according to Mr. Asper. After some additional discussion, Vice President Eichelberger thanked Mr. Asper for his presentation and noted that Council would need some time to discuss and review the information presented.

◆ Larry Seagrist, Fire Chief, presented the following items to Borough Council.

1. First Chief Seagrist asked Council's support for an application to FEMA for a Federal Emergency Management Agency Grant for funding purchase of a new Class "A" pumper. This pumper would replace Engine 127, which is 22 years old and functioning at only eighty percent. The approximate cost of this piece of equipment would be \$400,000. The grant, if awarded, would pay ninety percent. The ten percent match for the Borough would be \$40,000. Chief Seagrist is requesting Borough Council adopt a resolution of support for this grant application.
2. The County informed Chief Seagrist that the 800 mhz radios will not be coming in until the last quarter of this year, or possibly even into next year.
3. Chief Seagrist requested Borough Council consider leasing space from DriveKore to house truck #8, which is currently housed at the Borough's highway department. The location at 8 Allen Street is available for a rental price of \$1,000 per month plus utilities. This building would allow better access to the roadway for the aerial truck and would also provide a sink and restroom for operators and allow space for the cleaning and maintenance of the truck and related equipment. An additional garage to the rear could provide storage space for supplies.

Past budgets and funding levels, as well as the condition and value of Engine 127 were discussed at length. Lease terms and site renovations were discussed. Chief Seagrist indicated that sufficient money is in the budget to cover the rental expenditures. The Manager indicated that there is \$50,000 in the capital improvement fund for new fire equipment. After much additional discussion, Vice President Eichelberger asked that the Manager add both items of the agenda for action at the March 19, 2002 meeting.

- ◆ Mr. Jack Otstot, 2 Cedar Road, spoke in support of the Fire Chief's request for rental space to house Truck 8, noting that the highway departments has asked that the truck to be removed from the highway garage. Mr. Otstot stated that the rental facility would allow space to better maintain the equipment as well as better roadway access.
- ◆ Mr. Jeff Sanders, 501 North Market Street, thanked the fireman for their dedication and volunteer service to the Mechanicsburg Community. Mr. Sanders spoke in favor of the request to rent space to house Fire Truck #8 and voiced his opinion that the Council should provide more support to the volunteers of the Fire Companies.

Mr. Sanders thanked Councilman McDermott for his efforts through his newsletter and web site to keep the tax paying residents informed and noted that the Council minutes have improved. Mr. Sanders then submitted a petition with fifty signatures from residents who are opposed to the proposal of the Mechanicsburg Little League to erect advertising signs on the fences at Finkenbinder Field. The petition also requests that all tournaments be moved to another site where there would be sufficient parking, and more space. The petition cited the loss of property value, lack of parking and noise as the reasons for the opposition to the expansion of activities and/or addition of promotional signage at this location. Vice President Eichelberger accepted the petition on behalf of Borough Council.

Mr. Sanders also mentioned the green tarp that is covering the backstop at the ballfield stating it is unsightly, and asking Council to request its removal when the field is not in use. A discussion followed on the parking issues associated with field use and the enforcement of parking regulation by the Police Department. Mr. Sanders stated that people attending sporting events do not abide by the parking regulations and park to close to stop signs and in front of driveways, and do not stop at signed intersections. Mr. Sanders asked for better enforcement of the parking regulations in this area.

A discussion followed about the soccer field at the high school, and the opposition voiced by Borough residents in the past to the installation of a soccer field at this location. Council discussed at length the provision agreed to by the school district when the field was put in place, however, no written documentation is in place regarding the matter. Chief Spotts noted that the legal enforcement of the noise ordinance during the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. is very difficult as there are no legal provisions to support excessive noise during this time frame. Noise Ordinances and their adoption and enforcement was discussed. The Borough Code does not address the noise issue at the present time. Junior Councilman, Michael Lopez, noted that the air horns, which Mr. Sanders voiced objection to, are blown at the end of each period and that noise is not ongoing throughout the game. Mr. Sanders stated that he is not against sporting activities, but feels that the rights of Borough residents should not be compromised to accommodate tournaments, which bring excessive noise and traffic congestion into residential neighborhoods. Vice President Eichelberger stated that in the matter of the ballfield signage, the Council will take the petition under consideration. He thanked Mr. Sanders for taking time to bring the concerns of the residents of his neighborhood to the attention of Borough Council.

- ◆ Chris Gromlowicz, 40 West Main Street & owner of Ivy House, spoke on behalf of the "Foot Traffic Group" thanking Borough Council for the article in the winter newsletter about the new downtown brochure. Vice President Eichelberger stated that the brochure was nicely put together, and thanked Ms. Gromlowicz for her comments.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- ◆ Manager Stough reported receipt of a fax from Cumberland County Vector Control announcing the date and location for the spring drop off of rimless tires. Tires will be collected April 6th at the East Pennsboro Public Works building from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

MANAGER'S REPORT

- ◆ The Manager requested a brief executive session at the conclusion of tonight's meeting for discussion of several personnel matters with no action to be taken.
- ◆ Pictures were distributed to Borough Council of the furniture that has been donated to the Borough for the new municipal center by Amp/Tyco. Items will be picked up by Borough staff next week.
- ◆ Settlement was held yesterday on the property at 34/36 West Allen Street. The Borough is now the owner of the former DriveKore property. The highway department is doing some preliminary work, in preparation for the architect's preparation of the construction bid documents.
- ◆ Some of the construction materials removed from the 34/36 West Allen Street site will be used in the construction of a new salt shed at the highway department.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- ◆ Washington Fire Company held their annual banquet February 23rd with record breaking attendance.
- ◆ Cumberland, Perry Association for Retarded Citizens (CPARC) held their annual awards banquet Saturday, March 2nd. They have two group homes in Mechanicsburg and provide a work force to the center for Industrial Training on Silver Springs Road.

- ◆ Friends of the Library need volunteers to help with the community Book Sale, April 20th and 21st, if you can help contact Sue Erdman at the Library, 766-0171.
- ◆ Crime Watch Meeting will be held March 11th at the Senior Citizens Center. Guest speaker is Mechanicsburg Police Department Officer Keith Anthony. Officer Anthony is a member of the Cumberland County SRT (Special Emergency Response) Team.
- ◆ March 16th the Knights of Columbus are holding a 5-K race to raise funds for the St. Joseph Parish's new school and parish center. The race starts and stops at the Mechanicsburg High School.

Trivia Question: Baseball bats were made here in Mechanicsburg, where were they made ?

Answer: The correct answer was Eberly & Orris Manufacturing on West Allen Street, site of the new Borough Building. Councilman Whitcomb knew the correct answer and won a Mechanicsburg paperweight.

CHIEF OF POLICE REPORT

- ◆ Chief Spotts noted that the Police Department was treated to a basket of goodies from the Mechanicsburg Intermediate School on February 25th. The basket included thank you notes from the students and was delivered by Mrs. Sharon Wagner of the Intermediate School staff.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – NONE

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Recycling Committee: Winchell: Mr. Winchell had no report. Manager Stough noted that he has received many e-mails from residents in support of the Borough pursuing composting. The Manager said he has received more e-mail in the past few days since the newsletter came out than he had received since the e-mail account was set up in June. Many of the comments were positive.

Finance-Appropriations-Insurance: Eichelberger: No report at this time, however, Vice President Eichelberger asked if any residents had questions on the Finance Committee meeting that proceeded the Committee meeting. There were no questions or comments from residents.

Health-Recreation: McDermott: Councilman McDermott stated that the recreation commission meets next week and he will pass along the issues discussed this evening to the recreation commission. March 23rd will be the annual Easter Egg Hunt at Memorial Park. The Pool Feasibility Study is underway and information will be available shortly. The Joint Recreation Board will meet March 21st. The possibility of a Skateboard facility will be discussed at that meeting.

Public-Safety-Highway: Eichelberger: NONE

Public Communications: Eichelberger: Newsletter was mailed to residents, the next edition is underway.

Ordinance-Administration-Legislative Action: Seagrist: Councilman Seagrist noted that he has not received a draft ordinance from Mr. Shatzer, so he has nothing new to report at this time.

Property-Building: Ritter: NONE

School Board: McDermott: Next Tuesday night will be the School Board meeting. Strategic Planning meetings for the School District have been scheduled and resident input is encouraged. Mr. McDermott is on the Strategic Planning Board

Community Development: McDermott: Pennsylvania Heritage week will begin March 8th and different activities are planned throughout the State to commemorate Pennsylvania's 323rd birthday. The Union Church has scheduled a meeting for April 8th at 7 p.m. The Halloween Parade Association will be submitting a request for date approval for October 15th. Community Breakfast will be October 29th at 6:45 a.m. at the Community Center. This is sponsored by the Mechanicsburg Community Service Clubs.

Councilman McDermott brought the issue of the two-hour parking in the downtown area to the floor. The location of the two-hour parking was discussed at length. Chief Spotts suggested that Council might consider making the two-hour parking regulations in effect for the area designated by the Zoning map to be the Central Business District. Discussion followed on the practices of business owners, who park in front of their own or other peoples business for the entire day. Ms. Gromlowicz, business owner, noted that many residents park in front of business, when off street parking is available to them in the rear of their residences. Employees' parking for eight hours while working is also a problem that Ms. Gromlowicz has observed. She suggested that Council designate an area and go for it, and see how it works. The issues of the Fire Company located in the Central Business District and the Funeral Home located there were also discussed. Councilman Seagrist suggested that exceptions to the parking rules for these two locations may result in allegations of selective enforcement. Chief Spotts noted that consistent enforcement might not be possible due to staffing levels within the department. Vice President Eichelberger advised Councilman McDermott to schedule a Community Development meeting to include chamber representatives to define the area, days and time frame for the parking regulations, so that a proposal can be

presented to Council for consideration. Councilman McDermott will let the Manager know the date and time of the meeting for advertisement.

Councilman McDermott noted that Council might want to seek additional proposals on the Strategic Plan from other consulting firms. Manager Stough stated that it may take some time to receive additional proposals and any plan developed should meet the criteria for federal grant applications, if we are going to consider going for funding down the road.

W.S.C.O.G.: Ritter: NONE

AGENDA ITEMS FOR March 19, 2002

- ◆ Consideration of Ordinance 1038 amending Code of Ordinances descriptions for Handicapped Parking Spaces. – Solicitor Shorpp said this ordinance may not be ready for action at the next meeting due to advertising delays. Manager Stough advised that the delay is due to the inventory and replacement of signs, so that all signage is correct before the advertisement is made.
- ◆ Discussion on Street Sweeping in regard to the drought situation. – Manager Stough reported that Shippensburg Borough is sweeping without water, but Mr. Yinger, highway superintendent, has advised the manager that the machine is not to be run without water, as it may cause damage resulting in the need for costly repairs. The highway department is doing some hand sweeping in the downtown area until Council takes action on the 19th.
- ◆ Review and discussion on parade policy draft. - Solicitor Shorpp is reviewing the information and preparing a draft.
- ◆ Approve Disbursement of Memorial Day Parade Contribution to Veterans Council – This item is an annual item with this year's disbursement set by budget at \$150.
- ◆ Tri-County Borough Meeting – Newport – March 26, 2002 – RSVP by March 14, 2002 to Manager Stough. Additions to the agenda will be the Fire Department Grant, rental space for Fire Truck #8, two hour parking proposal and the 2002 proposed paving program.

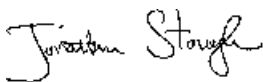
GUESTS:

- ◆ Jack Otstot, 2 Cedar Road, questioned why the Borough is hiring an outside contractor to perform excavation of sewer lines when the Borough has a backhoe at the highway department and an operator on staff. The Manager explained that four projects needed attention and were scheduled with a contractor, due to department staffing levels. Mr. Otstot stated that he believes the backhoe was purchased with sewer funds and asked why the sewer plant did not employ an operator for this piece of equipment. The Manager noted that piece of equipment was purchased many years ago and he is not familiar with the history on this particular piece of equipment.
- ◆ Jeff Sanders, 510 N. Market Street, spoke again in support of the Fire Department and requested that Borough Council consider increasing funding to these departments, so they did not have the need to do excessive amounts of fund raising, and have more time for training and fire fighting. Councilman Winchell asked Mr. Sanders if he would support a fire tax. Mr. Sanders said he would need more information, but he supports anything that assists the fire departments with their costs.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- ◆ Councilman McDermott asked if there is anything Borough Council can do about Comcast rate increases. Vice President Eichelberger noted that under the law, the Council has no input on the selection of channels or the cable rates. The only thing Comcast is required to report to the Borough is an increase in the basic rate. They can raise tier rates without notifying the municipality.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to come before Council, Vice President Eichelberger adjourned the Council Committee meeting at 9:00 p.m., with an Executive Session on a personnel issue to follow with no action to be taken.



Jonathan S. Stough
Borough Manager

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