

BOROUGH OF SLATINGTON

The **Finance Planning/Zoning, Public Safety and Human/Community Services Committee Workshop Meetings** were held on **July 23, 2018** in Council Room, 125 South Walnut Street, Slatington, PA 18080.

The meeting was called to order by President Stevens at 6:30 PM with the following in attendance:

PRESENT

Daniel Stevens
Jason Ruff
Thomas Bartholomew
David Schnaars

ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

VISITORS

Joe Wechsler Ed Ziegler
Jeffrey Hausman Robert Stettner
Tony Lopsonzski Mike Kukitz

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ed Ziegler – Signed in and was recognized to speak. He spoke concerning the flooding in certain areas due to the heavy rains in the borough. He also complained concerning a house that has been empty for years and is in disarray and there wasn't a follow up inspection. The light pole in front of the high rise, the curbing is rotted out and he is concerned the light will eventually fall over. Councilor Schnaars stated we would inform PPL of this problem.

FINANCE/PLANNING/ZONING

Thomas Bartholomew – Chairman; Members: David Schnaars, Jason Ruff

1. Tony Lopsonzski presented the committee with an ordinance from Catasauqua concerning inspections, licensing and permit system. Tony highlighted some of the problems with the borough's current inspection ordinance. He feels the inspection program is effective. However, the problem is time to get them completed correctly. The inspections take approximately 25 minutes, if there are no issues. The committee discussed a specific location that is dangerous. Tony stated the other thing is the properties with maintenance issues. Tony said that he can only address these issues at a certain amount of speed due to the laws. He has to record all the backup paperwork and it must be completed in a time line. President Stevens asked what the average cost is for inspections in other municipalities. Tony feels the cost of our inspections are high and stated the cost should be between \$20.00-\$35.00. Tony feels that when the inspection fee has been paid and he finds a minor violation, he will give them approximately 1 week to have the problem and the cost is in the original fee. If during the second inspection and find some of the issues were not completed, then the third inspection should be charged. President Stevens said the current policy for tenant reinspection is to charge the landlord each time. Tony feels that if a landlord loses a tenant after a short occupancy, roughly 3 months, there should not be a charge for the reinspection. After 3 months the cost should be graduated to 1-year cost, i.e, 6, 9, 12 months. Councilor Ruff reiterated the idea of having the inspections done on a regular basis, i.e, every 2-5 years, regardless of how often tenants move in or out. One suggestion Tony has is to have the landlord inform the tenant that a moving permit is required before they can move in, which would start the process for an inspection. At this time Tony is inundated with inspections that had been paid prior to being hired. Councilor Ruff's point is that landlords who have tenants for many years, their place is not inspected, even though the standard of living has gone down and feels this is not fair. Tony is working with Chief Rachman with calls that are made. Chief Rachman will inform Tony of any code violations and Tony will follow up. Councilor Schnaars suggested the committee focus on modifying the ordinance on what kind of cycle is best, i.e., 3-year cycle, and how does the borough handle the transition of

tenants. The other thing would be to pass a resolution immediately to lower the cost of the inspection. President Stevens suggested the resolution should also address the cost of a reinspection fee, length of time for inspection. Councilor Ruff suggested an example the hybrid system relies more on the regularly scheduled inspection and it doesn't matter how many tenants move in during a 2-3-year inspection period. The committee discussed changes in frequency of inspections to the inspection ordinance. Some of the committee members feel that an inspection for a property that is being sold is not necessary, due to the property being inspected by other inspection agencies prior to sale. Tony suggested an end date be placed on the certificate of occupancy for apartments. Councilor Bartholomew will work with Tony to write key points for changes to the ordinance. Further discussion will be on the next committee meeting.

2. President Stevens informed the committee the investments for water and sewer were discussed at the Water/Sewer/Highway committee meeting and President Stevens had suggested to stagger the CD's if we invest in them. The water and sewer committee suggested investing \$200,000 from sewer and \$100,000 from water in CDs. President Stevens stated this will be taken to the regular council meeting for approval.
3. President Stevens informed the committee that \$2,806 is being refunded to the borough after paying off the bond.

There were no questions from the committee members; the Finance Committee Meeting was adjourned.

PUBLIC SAFETY

David Schnaars-Chairman; Members: Thomas Bartholomew, Jason Ruff

1. Councilor Schnaars informed the committee the council had been invited to the Core Program on Thursday, August 16th, at 5:30 PM at Iron Lakes Country Club on Shankweiler Road.

There were no questions from the committee members; the Public Safety Committee Meeting was adjourned.

HUMAN/COMMUNITY SERVICES

Jason Ruff – Chairman; Members: David Schnaars, Thomas Bartholomew

1. Letter dated July 2, 2018 from Senator Patrick Browne concerning Round 1 of the Keystone Communities Program – applications from July 2 through August 31, 2018 – informational only. Councilor Ruff will talk with Mike Kukitz.
2. The committee reviewed Resolution R-22-18 – trail friendly commitment. This will be placed on the regular council meeting for approval.
3. Mike Kukitz discussed parks and recreation maintenance. Mike specifically spoke about the Walnut Street Playground sign. He also commented on the condition of the playground, i.e, weeds, shattered glass, cracks. Councilor Ruff feels that if something is old and broken, the borough should look into updating it. Councilor Ruff recommends taking the Walnut Street Playground sign down and spend the \$250 out of the extra money that was put into the recreation line item to purchase a new sign. Councilor Ruff has completed a work order to have the weeds taken care of. Councilor Ruff's goal is to have the maintenance crew spray the weeds on a routine maintenance schedule.

President Stevens and Councilor Reed plan to setup a meeting with the maintenance crew to review jobs that would be work order related or just routine. Robert Stettner informed the committee that he would spray for weeds in the playground, but the weeds have gotten out of hand. To repair the cracks, President Stevens mentioned borrowing Walnutport's sealer. Councilor Schnaars suggested researching a grant in order to re-surface the playground.

4. Mike Kukitz informed the committee the NRLA had 5 consultants come in for an interview. The NRLA steering committee voted to hire Kimmel Bogrette Architecture and Ballard King to conduct a feasibility study for the community center.

Mike Kukitz informed the committee he has obtained a blueprint from LEA for the layout for the amphitheater. The committee will review the blueprint.

5. The committee approved the Lions Club car show banner to be placed at Victory Park on August 1st, as long as the banner is not going across Main Street.

There were no questions from the committee members; the Human Community Services Committee Meeting was adjourned.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by, Councilor Ruff to adjourn. Being no further business, President Stevens made a motion to adjourn at 8:15 P.M.

Colleen Bresnak
Assistant Borough Secretary