

April 7, 2021

ANNOUNCEMENT

Borough Manager Keller explained the format for this evening's meeting, advising that the meeting is a GoTo Meeting and available on-line. Public comments are being accepted through email and chat prior to 7:00 p.m. and will be announced to all. Comments are limited to 300 words to be in compliance with Council's three-minute rule and participants shall be identified accordingly.

CONDITIONAL USE HEARING, Karmjit Singh, d/b/a The Smoke Shop

Solicitor Hovey opened a Conditional Use hearing and entered several items into evidence.

Mr. Singh was sworn and testified that his intention is to open a convenience store at the property located at 223 Shoemaker Road to sell tobacco products and lottery tickets. He also confirmed that he has a license from his previous store for the electronic lottery machines.

Brian Hydiar testified on behalf of Mr. Singh and commented that the Walmart store, in close proximity, is not considered a convenience store and no other convenience store is located within 1,200 feet of the proposed store.

The hearing closed at 6:48 p.m.

CONDITIONAL USE HEARING, AMANDA EMRICK, 80 North Hanover Street

Solicitor Hovey opened a Conditional Use hearing at 6:49p.m. and entered several items into evidence.

Amanda Emrick were sworn in and testified that her intention is to open a real estate office at the property located at 80 North Hanover Street, owned by her former husband, Gregory Emrick. She stated that a traffic study was completed by Mr. Emrick and she expected no impact as she would be the only employee in the location. She also stated she submitted a permit request for a sign on the building.

Sheila Dugan, 71 North Hanover Street – questioned the procedure if more employees are added. She also commended the applicant for coming to Council and noted that an area half-way house did not and the neighbors received no notification regarding the half-way house.

Solicitor Hovey noted that if the request is granted, it would still have to comply with zoning ordinances.

Tom Hylton, 222 Chestnut Street – commended the meticulous work done on the property and welcomed the business in that area, with no foreseen parking issues.

The hearing closed at 7:07 p.m.

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

The April 7, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by President Weand.

ATTENDANCE

Councilors present were Ryan Procsal, Lisa Vanni, Donald Lebedynsky, Trenita Lindsay, Dan Weand, Michael Paules and Joseph Kirkland. Also present were Borough Manager Justin Keller, Mayor Stephanie Henrick, Assistant Solicitor Matthey Hovey and Borough Secretary Virginia Takach.

INVOCATION

President Weand requested a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATION – Retiree Randy A. Neiman

Manager Keller read a resolution honoring Retiree Randy A. Neiman for his 24 years of service to the Borough.

Resolution No. 2021-9

RECOGNIZING RANDY A. NEIMAN FOR 24 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE BOROUGH OF POTTSTOWN

WHEREAS, Randy A. Neiman has served the Borough of Pottstown as a dedicated employee since 1996; and

WHEREAS, during his career with the Borough he served in several different capacities including Utilities Department Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator I and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator II; and

WHEREAS, for the past ten years Randy has worked in the position of Treatment Plant Mechanic/Operator in the Utilities Department and during that time he has assisted in the daily maintenance of all the operational equipment at both the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Water Treatment Plant by maintaining equipment to the highest of DEP standards; and

WHEREAS, Randy's presence at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Water Treatment Plant will be truly missed by the people that have worked with him.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Mayor and Town Council that Randy A. Neiman is officially recognized for the outstanding service he has provided the Borough of Pottstown through 24 years of employment; and further that he is extended best wishes for a happy and well-deserved retirement.

Adopted at Pottstown Borough Hall, 100 East High Street, this 7th day of April 2021.

Mr. Neiman was present at the virtual meeting.

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SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Infrastructure – Councilor Lebedynsky noted that a report was in the packets.
- b. Economic Development – Ms. Lee-Clark provided an update on federal funding to become available to allow economic development to continue for investment infrastructure and archways, technologies and transportation for future endeavors.
- c. Transportation – There was no meeting.
- d. Ordinance Review Committee – Councilor Procsal noted that the committee will be meeting in April.
- e. Efficient Methods – Mr. Keller provided an updated on the 6Sigma training, which will be a self-based training from 4 hours to 100 hours of training for Council and management.

BOARDS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Emergency Services Report – Chief Hand provided the statistics for March, with 336 EMS calls, resulting in 1,100 for the year and 72 fires responses in March, with 270 year to date. Chief Hand reported on the department’s assistance during the water main break and the electrical shut down, distributing over 5,000 cases of water to effected homes.
- b. Human Relations Commission – A report was in the packets.
- c. Land Bank – There was no report.
- d. Library – Board President Frances Hylton reported that a book sale will take place on the Library steps, April 10th, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. She also provided information on the May 22nd Art Chair auction at the Carousel. She added that the Library is celebrating its 100 - year anniversary.
- d. Ricketts Community Center – Councilor Kirkland highlighted events noted in the report distributed in the packets.
- f. Pottstown School District – Councilor Lindsay reminded all that the Crossing Guards have returned and school is open. She referred to the School’s website and highlighted the upcoming High School and Middle School plays.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor Henrick requested a moment of silence for recently deceased Supervisor Jason Kulp.

The Mayor also highlighted upcoming Borough events and programs. She referred to the pinwheels at the Pottstown Hospital in honor of National Child Abuse month. In addition, she read a proclamation honoring National Animal Therapy Day, April 30th. The Mayor provided

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information on the PowWow, the fishing derby and Edgewood Cemetery/Art Clean up events. She also announced a vaccine clinic scheduled at the Bethel Church, former Synagogue on Keim Street.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Keller commended all involved with the recent watermain break and the two electrical underground fires, which impacted 10,000 to 15,000 residents. He reported that Staff is considering an updated notification system for the near future and upgrades to the phone system. Mr. Keller noted that street sweeping will begin on April 8th, including bike lanes. He also encouraged any groups to hold clean-up events if requested. He also noted that the Finance Director list remains at candidates to be considered. Mr. Keller advised that due to the increased availability for vaccines, the hope is to reopen Borough Hall approximately the week of July 4th.

ZONING – PERMABOND, LLC, 14 ROBINSON STREET

Attorney Hovey explained the zoning variance request of Permabond, 14 Robinson Street, to construct an accessory building and a modular storage structure.

President Weand noted this will be listed for consideration of the regular agenda.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Mr. Keller reviewed the upcoming grant applications and requested Council's approval of the following:

Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program - \$250,000 for Memorial Park Bridge Restoration
DCED Grant – Blight Technical Assistance Grant
CDBG - \$200,000 for stormwater improvements
Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program - \$500,000 for stormwater arch collapse, 1200 High Street

President Weand advised that these would be listed for approval on Monday's agenda

HOBART'S RUN – LIGHTING PROJECT

Mr. Keller explained the request of Hobart's Run to install lights on Beech Street within the Borough's right of way. He added that a maintenance agreement is forthcoming.

ROAD CLOSURE EVENTS

Manager Keller provided an outline of the requests for applicants to ensure the COVID-19 Safety Plans required and noted that during some events, certain restrictions and capacity requirements may not be possible. He reviewed the requests for upcoming events throughout the Borough as follows:

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Hill School Commencement – May 29, 2021, Beech Street
Memorial Day Parade – May 31, 2021, High Street
Comedy Series - alcoholic beverages, June 23, July 28, August 28, and September 22, 2021 –
Memorial Park
Independence Day Parade – July 4, 2021, High Street
GoFourth Festival – July 4, 2021, High Street
Pottstown Rumble, Beer Garden, - June 25, 26, 27, 2021, Memorial Park

President Weand advised that these will be listed on Monday's agenda.

AL'S HEART WARMING CENTER

Attorney Hovey provided background on the Warming Center located in the former Saint Aloysius School, 214 North Hanover Street. He explained that this was allowed as a temporary site under the COVID-19 regulations. He advised that an approval for an extension may not come under the COVID pandemic regulations and could possibly need zoning variance relief.

Tom Niarhos, LIFT Executive Director, advised that the LIFT is requesting an extension to May 2022 in order to not have to reapply to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. LIFT does plan to close on April 30, 2021 and reopen in November 2021. He added that there is a plan to seek a permanent location.

George Bell, President LIFT, also suggested allowing an extension if possible and reviewed the success and impact the Center has made with this program.

President Weand suggested closing the Center in April and coming back in October and review the status of the Pandemic at that time.

Councilor Vanni commented that Council could possibly grant the request prior to knowing the status of the COVID pandemic.

Solicitor Hovey noted this could be a possibility with conditions.

This will be listed for further discussion at the regular meeting.

FEE RESOLUTION -ZONING AND PERMIT FEES

Solicitor Hovey will provide a resolution for Monday evening related to the proposed ordinance regarding SALDO and Zoning amendments.

BOARD VACANCIES

President Weand advised that one term exists on the HARB board and two upcoming vacancies on the Land Bank.

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PRESENTATION – TRISH ARNONE

Ms. Arnone provided a brief outline of her initiative to provide crafts and projects for interested individuals working with metal materials and knives. The mission statement can be viewed under Forge of Ephesians, LLC.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS PRESENT

a. Tom Winterbottom, King Street – stated that Al’s Heart Warming Center should be open year-round.

COUNCILORS’ GENERAL DISCUSSION

Councilor Lindsay provided an update on events in which she attended, including participation with the Meals on Wheels and the Art Auction at Sunnybrook. She questioned the status of Oak Street becoming one-way.

Chief Markovich commented that the Borough is working with PennDOT on the street lights.

Councilor Vanni also participated in the Meals on Wheels event and commended this program. She added that there were some glitches during the recent emergencies and appreciated the updates provided by the Manager Keller. She also questioned why street sweeping does not occur on a Monday, when most businesses are closed.

Mr. Keller noted this was the consensus of a poll of the businesses. He also noted there are regular meeting of the Downtown Pioneers.

Councilor Vanni requested information on the polls taken.

Councilor Procsal commended the volunteers and first responders during the recent events and commented that he appreciated that Juan Carlos is still open.

ADJOURNMENT

President Weand adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.