The regular monthly meeting of the Borough Council of Lewisburg, Union County, Pennsylvania, was held at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, June 19, 2018 in the Council Chambers, 55 South Fifth Street, Lewisburg. President: Council President Morris; Councillmembers Dorman, Frederick, Hayn, Mahon, Medina and Yohn; Mayor Wagner, Solicitor Lyons, Manager Lowthert, Secretary Garrison, Police Chief Yost, and Junior Councilmember Ezra Buonopane. Absent: Councilmember Comas. Also present: Teri Provost, Tony Mike, Valerie Mike, Matt Farand, Don Steckel, Carol Steckel, Tom Egan, Kevin Gardner, Dan Clark, Lisa Clark, Nancy Steckel, Alf Siewers, Steve Buonopane, Richard Owen, Carolyn Conner, Martha Barrick, Connie Moore, Rev. Randy D’Angelo, Jordan Fetzer, Keith Fetzer, Jacob Feverstein and Barbara Kalin.

Manager Lowthert announced that the Non-Discrimination Ordinance is not on the agenda and Council is not planning on discussing or taking questions on this tonight. We will post on the Borough’s website and the Borough’s Facebook page when Council will hold a meeting to discuss the Non-Discrimination Ordinance (NDO). Everyone is welcome to stay for this meeting, but we will not be offended if you choose to leave to enjoy this beautiful day. A member of the public suggested there can be public comment on any non-agenda items. Manager Lowthert explained that we have been telling everyone since the last meeting that we will announce when Council is going to discuss this. It wouldn’t be fair to those that did not have the opportunity to be here tonight to allow discussions now. A member of the public said everyone had the opportunity to be here tonight and anyone from the public has the right to comment on any non-agenda items. Solicitor Lyons indicated anyone from the public has the right to comment on any non-agenda items, but Council has the ability to limit the discussion time. Council President Morris commented everyone should be comfortable when we get to that point in the meeting as she may be looking at this differently than the Manager. Manager Lowthert stated that we have already told peoplethis, so it would only be fair that everyone knows when it will be talked about, but you are the Council President and are welcome to run the meeting as you wish.

CALL TO ORDER: Council President Morris called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM, followed by the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion was made by Councilmember Yohn, seconded by Councilmember Mahon, to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2018 regular monthly meeting. Motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARING/SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (SALDO) AMENDMENT: Council President Morris adjourned the regular order of business to conduct the public hearing on the proposed Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). She called the public hearing to order at 6:35 PM. Solicitor Lyons asked if anyone had any comments.

Tom Egan, Chairperson of the Planning Commission, indicated at their June meeting the Planning Commission decided to recommend adoption of the SALDO. It is felt this is a good framework for moving forward as it addresses the issues of development in the coming years. As a resident, he would like to make some comments on the SALDO. This SALDO is modern, up-to-date, separates a lot of things that should be in the Zoning Ordinance from the SALDO, which is a good thing, but most of this is boiler plate. He has concerns about some of these things because there hasn’t been a legal review. With that said, this should be ok, but he asks that Council consider having legal review of this as soon as possible realizing that if changes are needed the same procedures of advertisement, public hearing, etc. will be required again.

Council President Morris said Council is aware of the concerns Mr. Egan expressed. Solicitor Lyons said he has looked at this, is not an expert in subdivision and land development, and agrees legal review is needed and changes be needed, Council will take the appropriate action(s).

Council President Morris asked if there is anyone else that would like to speak at this time. No one wished to speak. Council President Morris declared the public hearing closed at 6:40 PM. She reconvened to the regular order of business.

COUNCIL PRESENTATION(S): Teri Provost, SEDA-COG, reported that Union County, Lewisburg Borough and Kelly Township were all monitored for the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). Kimberly Palm from the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) arrived June 4th and there were no findings for 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015. She is also present tonight to hear Council’s recommendation for the use of CDBG funding. Based upon previous discussions she believes we are looking to put 82% of the CDBG allocation to the South Sixth Street Reconstruction Project, with 18% going toward the administration. Manager Lowthert said this is the Borough’s Floodplain Restoration Project. Ms. Provost said we will continue to call this the South Sixth Street Reconstruction Project for continuity.

PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY AGENDA ITEM: Dan Clark, an East Buffalo Township (EBT) resident, asked if the Buffalo Valley Recreation Authority (BVR) is on the agenda tonight. Manager Lowthert said yes, but there are no action items. Mr. Clark asked if there were any funding commitments to BVR because it looks like EBT will have a funding commitment to BVR by June 30th. Manager Lowthert stressed Council’s commitment/support to fund BVR has never wavered. We are waiting to hear from BVR on what they are looking for from the Borough and based upon what EBT is going to give them and what is needed to allow BVR to run efficiently.

PUBLIC WORKS/POLICE COMMITTEE: Council received the Buffalo Valley Regional Police Department’s (BVRP) monthly report. Chief Yost reported the Fourth of July celebration will be June 30th and he expects the BVRPD to be very busy that day.
Councilmember Mahon made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Derman, to request that Union County, on behalf of the Lewisburg Borough, submit an application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for the Borough's FFY 2018 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement funds for the following activity: South Sixth Street Reconstruction Project North of St. Louis Street (Borough's Flood Restoration Project); with the required 18% going toward administrative fees, as recommended by the Public Works/Police Committee. Motion was unanimously approved.

Councilmember Mahon made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Derman, to accept the proposal from Larson Design Group (LDG), in the amount of $17,750.00 for the engineering services associated with the South Sixth Street Floodplain Restoration Project North of St. Louis Street. Motion was unanimously approved.

Manager Lowthert indicated discussions were held at the committee meeting regarding spending an additional $215.00 to include another Ash tree, a street tree, in the 2018 Ash Tree Treatment Program. This program, initiated by the STC, has been occurring every other year for the past several years. There are 29 trees still around that have received treatment this year and they are looking healthy and responding well to the treatment. The hope is by the time the treatment wears off in two years, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) will have left the area because all untreated Ash trees will be dead and there will be nothing for the EAB to live on. The arborist identified an additional Ash tree at St. Anthony and North Front Streets that was not in the program and asked if the committee feels we should try to save this mature street tree realizing if we don’t treat it and it dies the property owner will have to spend money to remove the tree and plant a new tree. He was told by the Chairperson of the STC that they voted unanimously this tree should not be put into the treatment program to be saved. He asked for Council direction and noted there is money to put this tree into the treatment program. Council President Morris asked the reason for the STC decision. Manager Lowthert said he wasn’t given one. There was much discussion. Keith Fetzer, resident and taxpayer, asked if the homeowner had an opinion. Manager Lowthert said the property owner hasn’t been contacted yet because he wouldn’t know what to say—we might or might not save your tree? The STC Chairperson, Barbara Kalin, just arrived so the Manager asked why the STC did not want to include the Ash tree at St. Anthony and North Front Streets in the treatment program. Ms. Kalin said the why was not addressed. A motion was made and there was no discussion. Manager Lowthert stated going back to the STC isn’t going to help, so does Council want to save this tree or not?

Councilmember Mahon made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Mahon, to approve the expenditure of $215.00 to include the Ash tree, which is a street tree, located at St. Anthony and North Front Street in the treatment program as recommended by the arborist. ON THE QUESTION: Ms. Kalin asked if it is an option to ask the property owner to pay the cost to have this treatment. Manager Lowthert said we can talk to the property owner, but if we want to save the tree and the property owner isn’t interested in paying to save it, let’s try to save the tree. Councilmember Heayn asked if Ms. Kalin is suggesting the property owner pay. Ms. Kalin said it is an option. Councilmember Derman said we haven’t made other property owners pay, we want to have a canopy of trees in the right of way, so he disagrees with that option. Ms. Kalin said it is not a given that this treatment will save a tree. Manager Lowthert said treatment does not revitalize any dead portion of a tree. Councilmember Heayn commented but not treating it will almost certainly result in it dying. Motion was unanimously approved.

Councilmember Yohn made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Derman, to approve HARB items a through d, as submitted and recommended by HARB per their minutes dated June 19, 2018. ON THE QUESTION: Councilmember Heayn indicated all of these were extremely reasonable requests. Motion was unanimously approved.

a. Marjorie Priceman/111 South Fifth Street/Front Portico. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for a front portico. Motion was made by Kim Walter, seconded by Elaine Winjtjen, to recommend approval of an addition of an entryway portico, as described in the project description of the HARB application, and as shown in the drawings attached to the HARB application. Motion was unanimously approved.

b. Meg Eipler-Peter Brooksblank/202 North Fourth Street/Fence. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for a fence. Motion was made by David Heayn, seconded by Ann Hilliard, to recommend approval of this fence, as described in the project description of the HARB application and as shown in the drawings/photos attached to the HARB application, said fence to be painted and/or stained within one year. Motion was unanimously approved.

c. Erin Zimmerman/238 Market Street/Sign. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for a sign. Motion was made by Ted Sinisser, seconded by David Heayn, to recommend approval of this wall sign, as described in the project description of the HARB application. Motion was unanimously approved.

d. Jesse-Lori Hayhurst/24 St. John Street/Stoop-Fence-Pavilion. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for a front stoop, fence and pavilion. Motion was made by Kim Walter, seconded by Elaine Winjtjen, to recommend approval of this stoop, fence and pavilion, as described in the project description of the HARB application and as shown in the photos attached to the HARB application, said fence and pavilion to be painted and/or stained within one year. Motion was unanimously approved.

Councilmember Yohn made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Heayn, to accept the resignation of Steve Snook from the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB), with regret. Motion was unanimously approved.
Manager Lowthert reminded Council that there is a vacancy on the Planning Commission, as well as on HARB.

PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY NON-AGENDA ITEMS: Councilmember Derman suggested a time limit be set for public comment. Council President Morris said Council would appreciate anyone in the public wishing to speak to hold your comments to a few minutes.

Carolyn Connor, Union County Republican Committee Chairperson, said she attends many municipal meetings each year and at the May meeting she observed something she has never seen before. Constituents were discouraged from entering the Borough building. As elected officials and their staff you should never limit citizen participation at public meetings. Conversely, the goal should be to encourage and involve more individuals to participate. You work for the residents and taxpayers of the Borough. She fielded calls from community members who did not feel welcome into Council Chambers and she is certain Council wants to make sure this doesn’t happen again. Council President Morris stated we appreciate your comments and this has already been discussed.

Alf Siewers, a resident and clergyman of Lewisburg said he would like to share his views, which he did in detail, specifically noting religion and public life are part of his area of professional research. He shared his dismay and concern over what he believes to be a pattern of anti-religious bias and related anti-cultural bias shown by members of Council and supporters of the proposed non-discrimination ordinance (NDO). He shared concerns as he felt two elected officials from his ward publicly support and espouse statements dehumanizing religious constituents. He noted that Taylor Lightman and his group, Active Millennials for Progress (AMP), posted someone tossing a Book of Mormon into a recycling bin and when a local Mormon posted a comment objecting to this, they deleted her comment but kept the photo up with no apology. This is the pattern of religious bias that the Supreme Court found to render a non-discrimination law similar to the one proposed here in Lewisburg as unconstitutional. Silence regarding these hateful statements express agreement with them. He asked the Borough to disavow these statements of bias by Councilpersons Comas and Mahon and AMP.

Councilmember Mahon said what she remembers is only making a comment about fear being created here when there shouldn’t be anything to fear; we are trying to be an inclusive community.

Junior Councilmember Buonopane, also a member of AMP, said he would like to clarify that AMP found a Book of Mormon in one of the recycling bins and the picture was only taken to show what they found in the recycling bins that shouldn’t be in them. The picture wasn’t taken to offend anyone and they are sorry if it did. Councilmember Medina said obviously this picture was totally misunderstood and he is sure AMP didn’t mean any harm. There was confusion as members of the public were talking while Councilmembers were talking.

Councilmember Heayn stressed that everyone has to wait until it is their turn to speak. He understands there are things you want to say and we want to hear what you say, but we would appreciate if you would not speak over us or interrupt us when we are talking. He has been open to discussing the non-discrimination ordinance, of which he has no part, with various members of the community and others outside the Borough. He is frustrated, as we do not have a currently proposed ordinance and being on Council he would know if it exists. What everyone saw was a preliminary draft presented at the only time there was discussion and there were problems with that preliminary draft. It should not be taken up as it was and that is the consensus of most Councilmembers he’s talked with. For individuals to repeatedly refer to that draft, both in the public forum of the local media and this meeting, is unhelpful. You are debating something that doesn’t exist. If you would like to participate in the development of an ordinance or its demise, you should only discuss what is actually relevant to the process and not a draft that has been rejected. Problematic components were to be eliminated and we do not know what the next draft will look like as most of us are not involved in the drafting as we did not sponsor this. It’s unfortunate that Councilmember Comas isn’t here tonight, because he is the only person that has any idea of what is going on with this. He respects what Mr. Siewers is saying in principal about the issues with religious minorities; however, the level of hyperbole Mr. Siewers is bringing to this discussion is not helpful. He wants an honest and upfront discussion where we go forward with the ordinance as best as it can be or we get rid of it and then figure out what we can do. Please hear what is actually being said as we are not trying to deceive anyone, but simply trying our best to represent our community and those in this room who may or may not live in this Borough. We ask for patience during this process, which will not be happening today.

Dan Clark, an EBT resident, said the Community Development Committee posted one meeting where this was discussed and proposed, and then Council had a work session where about 25 minutes was afforded to an EBT resident to present a proposed ordinance. A discussion ensued. So to say this is not Borough business at this moment is not accurate. Councilmember Derman said we did not say this is not Borough business. That draft is not the draft that will be voted upon as a whole new draft will be created and presented based upon changes that have been suggested. Mr. Clark said so you have a draft you are working on. Councilmember Derman said we do not. Councilmember Heayn said Councilmember Comas is preparing a draft to present to Council and no one here has seen it.

Council President Morris said we need to move on with our agenda, but there has been a suggestion this be a resolution vs. an ordinance. A member of the public asked if there is a resolution draft circulating amongst Councilmembers. Council President Morris stated she drafted a resolution for Council review.
A member of the public commented he heard Councilmembers question why the public is getting so excited. Anyone that has been in an airport in this day and age know if you see something suspicious you don’t say let’s wait for the airport authorities to handle this, but report it immediately. So people of the religious community see something questionable and are reacting.

Connie Moore, a Borough resident, said she knows this is a still being proposed/still being drafted document, but if we don’t make our positions clear while you are working on it, we will be left out of the process. One of her concerns is, for example, our church rents our facilities to schools, to athletic groups, and individuals for weddings. As she reads the draft document that was given out, our church would have to rent the facility to the Ku Klux Klan if they wanted to rent it. She clarified the concern she has is unintended consequences.

Nancy Steckel, an EBT resident, said some of her issues have been addressed tonight, but all we have is the initial draft and that is what people are reacting to. We need to come to you with our thoughts now, prior to a final draft. Since the public presentation of this, people have taken sides on this issue and maybe it is unnecessary, but this should show you how it has impacted those of us that are reacting and that are here. It’s not a personal issue between any of us, but it is an issue that is important to most of us personally and that is how it is going to impact our faith.

Tom Egan, a Borough resident, said he has written six pages of comments for tonight, but he will eliminate half of it. He explained that February of this year there was a large control box erected on the northeast corner of Route 15 and St. Mary Street. This intersection was not ideal for pedestrians due to missing sidewalks between Fifth Street and Route 15 along St. Mary Street and poor visibility at the intersection of Seventh and St. Mary Streets. But now with the shopping center on the old factory site, this intersection has become the safest intersection for pedestrians to cross from the Borough to the shopping center. However, the control box blocks access to the pedestrian signal request and although reported several times to the Borough Office and PennDOT, this still has not been fixed. He announced he has nineteen recommendations for the Borough and Council to review and that he will provide them in writing.

MAYOR: Mayor Wagner thanked Sara Mahoney, who was working to achieve her Gold Scout Award, for the good job she did on the rededication ceremony of the Veterans Memorial that was moved from St. Louis Street in back of the former high school building to the new high school. She stated that she, along with Council President Morris, are available to meet with anyone interested in discussing any community issues as they feel it is important to hear community input.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Council President Morris asked how many people here tonight reside or have business issues in the Borough. She noted that the majority of those present do and she thanked everyone for coming.

Richard Owen, a St. Paul Street resident and business owner downtown, said he knows the history of the NDO in this Commonwealth and the unintended consequences that will happen here. He is concerned about the money the Borough will have to spend to enforce this. Council President Morris suggested Mr. Owen forward his concerns and any information he would like to share to the Borough Manager for distribution to Council. This Council does understand the financial burden if there would be a commission created and if that commission were sued, as the Borough could end up in front of the Supreme Court.

Jacob Feverstein, an EBT resident, reiterated that a lot of what was in the proposal circulated during the work session mirrors the State law, and it is what we are living with now. Any future ordinance drafts would likely be very similar.

MANAGER: No report.

BOROUGH SOLICITOR: The first item is the proposed amendment to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, Ordinance No. 1052. This has been duly advertised, a public hearing was held this evening, and it is being presented to Council for consideration.

Councilmember Derman made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Mahon, to enact Ordinance No. 1052, an ordinance amendment to the Borough’s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). ON THE QUESTION: Councilmember Derman indicated this has not been legally reviewed. Solicitor Lyons said he looked at this, but it is beyond his expertise. We do have someone that has agreed to perform a legal review of this and if changes are needed, we will address them. He commented it is not necessarily his recommendation to enact this ordinance, but if Council wants to enact it now, for whatever reason(s), you certainly can as he is satisfied that, in general, it covers everything. Motion was unanimously approved.

Council President Morris and Mayor Wagner thanked Tom Egan, Chairman of the Planning Commission, as well as all the others that worked so hard on this for so very long.

The second item is consideration of a proposed ordinance that would increase the indebtedness of the Borough in the amount of $200,000.00 through a loan with Jersey Shore State Bank. This has been duly advertised and it is, again, being presented to Council for consideration.
Councilmember Derman made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Mahon, to enact Ordinance No. 1053, an ordinance increasing the indebtedness of the Borough by issue of a General Obligation Note in the amount of $200,000.00 for sundry purposes. ON THE QUESTION: Councilmember Derman said this is for street money. Manager Lowthert said this is for public infrastructure primarily going to be used for streets. Motion was unanimously approved.

JUNIOR COUNCILMEMBER: No report.

OTHER COMMITTEES: Councilmember Frederick commented the BVRA is doing an outstanding job; there is a lot of activity.

Council President Morris said the LDP is working on their move and by the end of this month they should be operating out of the Borough Office.

Councilmember Derman said the LNC held their River Road Holiday and had a Picnic in the Park this past month; the turnouts weren’t as big as they have been due to weather. As a result of the recent grant award, there will be a lot of work on the Kidsburg Initiative Project.

Barbara Kalin, Shade Tree Commission (STC) Chairperson, said the property owner of the empty lot at Routes 15 and 45 asked that the one tree on that property be removed; this will be before the STC in July. Does Council have a position on this? Manager Lowthert said the property owner asked the Borough for emergency permission to remove, but there is not imminent danger of the tree falling. There was a question of the PennDOT right of way and whether this tree is under the jurisdiction of the STC; he believes it is. Ms. Kalin questioned if the STC can ask a property owner if there is a development plan. The owners are willing to plant another tree, which is somewhat contradictory. She isn’t sure how far the STC should go with this because of questions like, could this be a park setting or is the Borough involved with signage or anything on this property? Mayor Wagner commented she would hope the property owners would be amenable to having some type of Welcome to Lewisburg sign there. Council President Morris stated that isn’t a STC issue. Kevin Gardner suggested speaking to the owners about signage that would direct people to downtown Lewisburg. There was much discussion. Manager Lowthert said the STC’s decision should be focused on approval/disapproval of tree removal.

Manager Lowthert said he has no report regarding the CK-COG.

Manager Lowthert said he has no report regarding the Community Garden Committee.

Councilmember Derman reported the MACAC hasn’t met since last month’s meeting; the next meeting is June 28th. We are awaiting information on the transfer of assets from William Cameron Engine Company to the Central Susquehanna Fire Emergency Services Board and information regarding loans, agreements, etc.

ANY ADDITIONAL BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL: Council President Morris announced that comments from the public are important and welcome. If there is anything you feel is important to be considered, she asked that it be mailed or emailed to the Borough Manager as he will circulate it to all members of Council.

WRITTEN REPORTS: Councilmember Derman made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Heayn, to acknowledge receipt of the Budget Index, the monthly parking report, the monthly Code Enforcement Officer’s report, the monthly Zoning Officer’s report, and the annual Planning Commission report. Motion was unanimously approved.

WORK SESSION: Manager Lowthert suggested no work session be held July 10th as the EIP Consultants will be here that day and the 11th to conduct interviews. It would be good to have that evening open for potential interviews. Manager Lowthert explained EIP stands for Early Intervention Program. There was a DCED grant offered to EBT when consolidation with the Borough was being discussed. EBT backed out and DCED offered it to the Borough. The consultants will be looking at the long term financials of the Borough to develop a five year financial plan that we will be able to use for the budgeting process going forward.

Council President Morris called for a five minute recess at 7:50 PM.

Councilmember Derman made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Mahon, to hold an executive session on legal and personnel matters. Motion was unanimously approved.

Council entered executive session at 7:55 PM. Council returned at 8:50 PM.

There being no further business, Councilmember Derman made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Frederick, to adjourn the meeting. Motion was unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Garrison, Borough Secretary