

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING NOVEMBER 12, 2024 OF THE MT. LEBANON COMMISSION

The Commission of Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania, held a Regular Meeting at 8 P.M., on Tuesday, November 12, 2024. Commission President Swager Wilson called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Manager McGill called the roll. Present were Anne Swager Wilson, Steve Silverman, Craig Grella, Jeff Siegler (remote) and Andrew Flynn. Also, present were Assistant Manager/Municipal Planner Ian McMeans, Finance Director McCreery, acting Fire Chief Daniels, and Police Chief Haberman. Also present were Phil Weis of the solicitor's office and Josh Scanlon of the engineer's office.

COMMISSION/MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Manager McGill summarized the information that was reviewed during the discussion session, including a presentation on the proposed traffic calming improvement plan for Scrubgrass Road. There was a presentation on the new Municipality 5 permitting software that's being implemented by the inspection office. Time ran out so at the next meeting we will hear a review of the various municipal contracts and projects that will be put out to bid, A few updates were given on the various boards from their commission liaisons.

Manager McGill stated that prior to this meeting, the Commission met in executive session to receive legal advice from the solicitor on a variety of topics. The next regular meeting of the Commission will be held on Tuesday, November 26th at 8 pm in Commission Chambers. There are also a number of budget workshops. They will be from 6-9 pm in Room C on November 13th, November 25th and December 4th.

Mr. Grella said now that the clocks have changed and it's darker earlier, this is a reminder to make sure all drivers watch for pedestrians and cyclists ... and a reminder for pedestrians and cyclists to make themselves visible with bright clothing and lighting while out and about. Let's work together to keep each other safe.

Mr. Grella announced that due to the drought, you are being asked to reduce nonessential water usage. Details are available on our website at mtlebanon.org under the newsflash item on the homepage

Mr. Grella announced that Mt. Lebanon is getting ready for the holidays, and we want you to be aware of two fun events. Beverly Brite Nite will be at 7 p.m. on Thursday, December 5. Hang out with Santa, see the tree lighting, shop, dine and sing! On Saturday, December 7, it's Washington Road's turn with the Winter Market and Holiday Celebration, from noon to 5. Shop food and crafts vendors, visit the Uptown Shops, meet Santa, play games with the kids, hear music and watch model train displays. Cap it off with the Clearview Common tree lighting at 5.

Mr. Grella stated that spots are going fast at the Mt. Lebanon Residents Academy, a free 9-week program sponsored by the Mt. Lebanon Civic Engagement Advisory Board, starting January 9. Program information and applications are available on our website, at mtlebanon.org/ResidentAcademy.

Finally, Mr. Grella said as you're setting up your holiday decorations ... and you find that one infuriating strand of lights that decides to call it quits this year, know that you can recycle that

strand for a good cause. Michael Brothers has a collection bin in the lobby of the Municipal Building, 710 Washington Road. They will collect the lights and donate the proceeds from the recycling to Project Bundle Up. The lobby is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**RECOGNITION OF THE PROMOTION OF
MATTHEW BRADBURN, DANIEL MCBRIDE,
GRANT NAGY, AND JACOB ELK TO THE RANK OF CORPORAL**

Police Chief Jason Haberman recognized the officers for their accomplishments, service to the community and congratulated them on their promotion to the rank of Corporal.

JUNIOR COMMISSIONER CLARA SUN COMMENTS

Clara said that the last two weeks have been incredibly active. The talent show will be on December 4th. Veterans Day was celebrated November 11th. The junior class council launched their annual food drive. The National Honor Society is sponsoring a blanket drive. The social studies blue book exams take place November 13th. Fall athletes will be recognized on November 14th at the sports recognition ceremony. Sign ups for the Lebo legacy games have begun. An exciting new change is the upcoming integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the curriculum. A Google chat bot called Google Gemini should be available for students in December or January.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

John Ragan of 777 Shady Drive East #201 thanked Mr. Grella for bringing up the issue of final inspections that aren't done during the discussion session. He said that walking and biking aren't just for exercise, but many residents use it as an economical form of transportation.

Justus Roloff of 254 Academy Avenue commented on the driving speed of fire and police during non-emergencies. Mr. Flynn acknowledged the concern.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES FROM
THE ADJOURNED MEETING HELD OCTOBER 22, 2024**

Mr. Grella moved, and Mr. Silverman seconded to approve the minutes. The vote was called. The motion carried 5-0.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2025 MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET AND
THE PROPOSED TAX RATE FOR THE YEAR 2025**

The Manager's 2025 Recommended Budget, prepared pursuant to the Home Rule Charter, was submitted to the Commission November 1, 2024. Residents may inspect the budget during normal business hours at 710 Washington Road (Municipal Building) and at the library. The Recommended Budget is also available on Mt. Lebanon's website at www.mtlebanon.org.

Tonight, citizens have the opportunity to provide written and oral comments and suggestions regarding the budget and tax rate for 2025. The tax rate is proposed at 4.5 mills. The public will

also have an opportunity on December 10, 2024, to comment on the Commission's proposed adjustments to the Manager's Recommended Budget.

Mr. Siegler moved to conduct a public hearing.

Ms. Swager Wilson conducted the public hearing.

Elaine Kramer of 783 Ella Street spoke representing The Mt. Lebanon Nature Conservancy. She said that they wanted to thank manager McGill, assistant manager McMeans, Mr. Sukal and Mr. Avolio for including this \$5,000 earmarked for the purchase of plant material and related supplies.

Beth McCabe of 104 Shady Drive West spoke about safer streets, sidewalks and crosswalks and what is budgeted for them. Mr. McGill responded that the Active Transportation Plan is still in the early stages. Also, the sidewalk expansion policy will go out to bid early in 2025 for Woodland and others won't make it because of timing until the 2026 construction cycle. Finally, crosswalks are part of the Active Transportation Plan, and traffic calming falls under the mobility board. Mr. Grella emphasized there are more budget meetings and there will be changes. to the Manager's proposed budget.

Adam Flango of 723 North Meadowcroft Avenue requested that there be a community survey asking three questions: 1. Who feels welcome? 2. Who doesn't? 3. Why? Mr. McGill asked Mr. Flango to explain the difference between the Welcoming Community designation that \$5,000 has already been approved for and this survey and if a survey would be beneficial in receiving this designation. Mr. Flango responded that a survey will poll the community, while the designation requires the municipality to have certain services to obtain it. He added that the survey would be beneficial in achieving the goals to receive such a designation. Mr. Grella asked if the CEB had a list of priorities for the commission. Ms. Swager Wilson responded that they had a top three and that this survey was at the top of the list of priorities.

Kirill Tropin of 945 Margaretta Avenue was very glad to see a zoning study, sidewalk assessment, and Activate Uptown in the proposed budget. He suggested making it safer for people to walk or bike to the recreation center to exercise and have bicycle parking. He also has concerns with people speeding and going through red lights in Uptown. He has suggested more traffic patrols. He'd like to see some parking spaces designated for bicycle parking. Also, he'd like to prioritize sidewalk safety.

Bob Abraham of 944 Academy Place spoke about the need for a tennis professional.

Mendel Rosenblum of 821 Ridgefield Avenue requested that the Jewish community be represented in holiday celebrations.

John Ragan of 777 Shady Drive East #201 spoke about prevention vs. cure regarding road safety. He gave the example of Scrubgrass Road being far too wide which encourages speeding. He commented on the speed of public safety vehicles during non-emergencies. He also questioned the policing of double parking food delivery services not being addressed. Ms. Swager Wilson responded that the amount of work the police and fire departments do is astonishing. That a lot of their work is in prevention. Emergency Management is not something that lends itself to a perfect aggregate of efficiency because you never know how many you're going to need if

there's a big emergency. She added the police and fire are a very valuable part of the community and very much a part of why it's a great place to live. Mr. Silverman stated that the municipality isn't allowed to use red light cameras or radar. Ms. Swager Wilson added that the manager has been lobbying for these things at the state level. Mr. Grella emphasized this by saying that a couple weeks ago the municipality sent letters to the State Representative and State Senator asking them to advocate for the ability for local municipalities to do have red light cameras.

Mr. McGill read emails sent regarding the public hearing for the budget from the following residents:

Alejandro Sanchez from 913 Miami Avenue wrote an email emphasizing making safe sidewalks a priority.

Beth and the Move Lebo Team wrote a responsive email to Mr. Sanchez in agreement and thanking him.

The last email was from Greg Boris at 900 Washington Road. He asked for safe streets and crossings. His suggestions are as follows: 1. Better posting of speed limits on Washington Road. 2. Installing a railing on Alfred between Washington Road and the transit tracks. 3. Use portable speed bumps between Vernon and Castle Shannon Boulevard. 4. A lane diverter could be used to reduce illegal left turns from Hazel Drive onto Washington Road. 5. Alter the area near Howard Hanna where the sidewalk dips and slopes to be more ADA friendly. It is in compliance, but difficult to navigate for people with mobility issues.

Ms. Swager Wilson closed the public hearing.

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE (BILL NO. 4-24) AMENDING
THE 2024 BUDGET FOR REVENUE AND
EXPENDITURES NOT ANTICIPATED IN THE 2024 BUDGET**

The following adjustments are proposed:

General Fund

Revenue:	Justification:	
Use of Fund Balance	Commission Authorization	\$177,210
Intergovernmental Finance Cooperative	Commission Authorization	64,000
Tennis Center Operational Changes	Commission Authorization	271,000
Insurance Proceeds – Ice Rink Chiller	Emergency Repairs	315,230
Investment Earnings	Actual Received	<u>50,000</u>
	Total	<u>\$877,440</u>

Expenditures:	Justification:	
Police Chief Vehicle	Purchase as opposed to lease	36,180
Intergovernmental Finance Cooperative	Commission Authorization	42,000
Tennis Center Operational Changes	Commission Authorization	315,480
Social Services Coordinator	Commission Authorization	25,620
Timbercreek Stairs	Commission Authorization	67,000
Rink-Ice Chiller	Emergency Repair	<u>391,160</u>
	Total	<u>\$877,440</u>

Mr. Silverman introduced Bill No. 4-24.

Ms. Swager Wilson set the public hearing for November 26, 2024.

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE (BILL NO. 5-24)
CONCERNING THE MUNICIPALITY'S 2025 BUDGET**

The Commission held a scheduled budget work session to review the budget on Wednesday, November 6. Additional budget work sessions will be held on Wednesday, November 13, Monday, November 25, and if needed, on Wednesday, December 4. A public hearing was just held to comment on the Manager's 2025 recommended budget. A second public hearing is scheduled on December 10, regarding any Commission revisions to the manager's recommended budget. The 2025 budget ordinance is scheduled for consideration at the December 10, 2024, meeting.

Mr. Flynn introduced Bill No.5-24.

Ms. Swager Wilson set the public hearing for December 10, 2024.

INTRODUCTION OF (BILL NO. 6-24) FIXING THE TAX RATE FOR THE YEAR 2025

The municipality will be fixing its tax rate in accordance with the adopted budget. The tax rate for general purposes is currently 4.50 mills. The tax shall be fixed at the rate of 4.50 mills for the year 2025 and continue in force for each successive calendar year without annual reenactment unless the tax is subsequently changed.

Mr. Grella introduced Bill No. 6-24.

Ms. Swager Wilson set the public hearing for November 26, 2024.

**CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. R-14-24 AUTHORIZING THE
PARTICIPATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY IN
ALLEGHENY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT'S ACTIVE ALLEGHENY
GRANT PROGRAM**

The municipality, for the benefit of its citizens, wishes to submit a grant application to the grant program in conjunction with the Borough of Dormont, which provides financial assistance to municipalities to develop community plans and design transportation projects that will, when implemented, provide bicycle and pedestrian connections to critical local destinations and transportation systems and increase residents' opportunities for physical activity.

The Municipality is requesting \$50,000 in funds for the Multi-Municipal Active Transportation Plan. The Plan aims to enhance pedestrian safety, especially for students, as both communities are walking school districts. Furthermore, the Plan will target the creation of safe multi-modal transportation routes to economic development hubs as well as decreasing reliance on fossil fuel-reliant transportation.

This grant application requires a 20% local match from the Municipality.

Mr. Siegler moved and Mr. Grella seconded to adopt Resolution No. R-14-24. The vote was called. The motion carried 5-0.

**CONSIDERATION TO PURCHASE AND INSTALL THE
DRAGER SWEDE SURVIVAL PHASE II TRAINING SYSTEM
THROUGH PA COSTARS CONTRACT 012-162**

The fire department has identified the need for a dedicated fire training facility to serve the municipality and other area fire departments. This facility will be used to train existing personnel, new recruits and will serve as a primary training site for the South Hills Area Council of Governments Essentials of Firefighting recruit program.

As a member of PA COSTARS, the Municipality of Mt Lebanon is permitted to purchase goods and services through any active COSTARS contract. Howell Rescue Systems, Inc. has submitted pricing totaling \$701,312.35 to purchase and install the Drager Swede Survival Phase II training system through PA COSTARS Contract 012-162. The 2024 Capital Budget includes \$621,300.00 to fund the fire department training facility project. On October 22, 2024, the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Financing Authority Board met and awarded an Allegheny County Gaming Economic Development Tourism Fund Grant to the municipality in the amount of \$621,300 for this initiative.

Mr. Silverman moved, and Mr. Flynn seconded to authorize the purchase and installation of the Drager Swede Survival Phase II training system through the Pennsylvania State Purchasing COSTARS Program from Howell Rescue Systems, Incorporated at a total cost of \$701,312.35. vote was called. Ms. Swager Wilson said thank you to state representative Dan Miller and state senator Wayne Fontana for making sure that we received the grant for this. The motion carried 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 pm.