

Borough of Alburdis
Meeting Minutes
February 26th, 2025

The February 26th, 2025, meeting of Borough Council was called to order by Council President at 7:00 p.m. in the Borough Hall, 260 Franklin Street, Alburdis, PA. The meeting was also live streamed on Zoom.

Council members in attendance:

Ron DeIaco, Steve Hill, Ashlynn Rivera, John Aleszczyk, Mehmet Birtek

Associates of Alburdis in attendance:

Stephen Nemeth- Manager, Kathleen Palmer- Mayor, Jeff Ott- Engineer, East Penn Press

Associates of Alburdis in attendance via zoom:

David Knerr- Solicitor

Visitors in attendance:

Gary DeRoner, Mike Gerhart, Ray Ricketts, Emily Brosky, Hayden Rinde, Leisel Gross

Visitors in attendance via zoom:

Nicole Steiner, Tom, Brooke, Fire tablet, Mary N

PUBLIC COMMENT

MAYOR'S REPORT

Kathy Palmer mentioned I do have 2 things I spoke with Dr. Scalzo regarding. There were a lot of comments that were on the community page regarding our walkers that go to school and that there's people racing around and everything else. Well, Dr. Scalzo said to me that those are the parents that are racing up to the school to get the kids there, and these are only the walkers that this is happening with. So, everybody drives west on third street from main. It's the same residents all the time we had talked about, maybe trying to do the school crossing guards that would come at a cost to the borough. We don't know how much that would be, that's not on the school district. So, what she did, put a post out asking the parents to please. Slow down, watch out for the young ones when they are walking to school. You've got an officer up at that school every single day. You also have a custodial person that is out there every single day to make sure that these kids can cross safely wherever they are. She didn't see a problem. She didn't know of any problem. I told her to check the community page, and with that she did put out a message to all the school. There are 385 kids in our school right now and like, she said, she wants to make sure every single one of them goes home and comes in safely. I also spoke with the President for the East Penn School district, and he is going to put together a meeting regarding us, changing the emergency shelter the school. She was not aware that the rec center does not have any generators and emergency shelter there would be of no use to us. The school is equipped with that so I'm going to be attending the meeting as soon as they put this together. I'll update you after I have that meeting. But we're going to try and move forward, make that our emergency shelter. They do have generators, they have the space and is equipped with medical supplies, and I did not know that she did inform me that with them, thinking they had to go to the Rec. Hall. If there's an emergency, there is a huge bag that they would be taking with them. That will be remaining at the school, of course.

Approval of Meeting Minutes of February 12th, 2025

Mehmet Birtek made a motion to approve the Minutes of February 12th, 2025, Ashlynn Rivera 2nd the motion, and a unanimous vote followed. Motion passes 5-0.

DeIaco- yay	Hill- yay	Rivera- yay	Birtek- yay	Aleszczyk- yay
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BILLS FOR PAYMENT – February 26th, 2025

Mehmet Birtek made a motion to pay the bills of February 26th, Ashlynn Rivera 2nd the motion, and a unanimous vote followed, motion passes with a 5-0 vote.

DeIaco- yay	Hill- yay	Rivera- yay	Birtek- yay	Aleszczyk- yay
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FISCAL CONSULTANT’S REPORT

Ashlynn Rivera made a motion to approve the Fiscal Consultant’s Report of January, Mehmet Birtek 2nd the motion, and a unanimous vote followed. Motion passes 5-0.

DeIaco- yay	Hill- yay	Rivera- yay	Birtek- yay	Aleszczyk- yay
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New Business

East Penn Chamber of Commerce- Hayden Rinde and Emily Brosky

Hayden Rinde mentioned just to remind you of who we are and what we're doing in the community. So, for those who aren't aware, the East Penn Chamber of Commerce is one of 30 Chambers and councils that make up the greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce. We are one of the largest chambers within the country, and the largest chamber in Pennsylvania, so we are covering Carbon County, Lehigh County, Northampton County, Monroe, and a little bit of so you know, we have the opportunity to connect your businesses and your community members with that greater Lehigh Valley. The borough of Alburts is an amazing chamber member. We love having Steve attend our monthly meetings every month. He keeps us up to date as to what's going on with the events in Alburts and the decisions that the Council is making on a monthly basis. This past year we've loved collaborating on the Christmas event, the tree lighting event. So, thank you so much for having us involved in that we're excited. For that partnership to continue to grow. And then we're very grateful for the opportunity to partner on the hometown heroes' banners right now as well, which we just extended with great suggestion from Steve to include police, fire, and emts. So those 1st responders as well. So that is open through the end of this month. We've gotten a couple of applications in. So, thank you for your partnership, we just really enjoy working with Alburts, and we're excited this year. Kathy Palmer mentioned They are awesome girls to work with. We go well, you know, this is what we're thinking. But well, you know, what do you think? And they just run with it. They, like you, give them a vision. They make that vision become a reality. It's absolutely awesome. Emily mentioned Yeah, absolutely as Hayden mentioned, our goal at the Chamber is to stimulate the economy and group our communities that we live within, and we do that in many ways like the initiatives Hayden has already spoken about. And another great example of how we work to impact the economy and community is East Penn restaurant week that is actually happening from now until Saturday, March first. So, if you want to join in on the fun. Go ahead. We have it on our landing page, of which restaurants are participating. So, one of the largest in the Lehigh Valley, 21 participating restaurants this year. So very excited. This event highlights special. One week only deals with the participating restaurants that you'll see on the landing page, and they choose to offer. Additionally, we host many luncheon tours, networking events and community festivals for businesses and the community alike to be able to connect with one another, and we are here as a resource to both of you, as local municipal leaders, as well as the businesses that call Alburts home. So please feel free to continue to reach out to us. If there are any initiatives that we can help the Borough plan, or any way we can help the community. Mehmet Birtek asked how many businesses do you have in your chamber? Hayden mentioned that we'll start at the top and kind of work our way down greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, anywhere between 3,000 and 4,000 throughout the valley. East Penn Chamber specifically, which is Alburts, Lower Macungie, Macungie, Upper Milford and Emmaus. We hover around 300 businesses. At any time, a lot of those are. I think we're about 85% small business. Mehmet Birtek asked, do we have any big companies in the East Penn? Hayden responded that Air Products is a huge organization within the footprint. A lot of the manufacturing organizations are part as well. So, we've done a tour there. So, a lot of those manufacturing facilities, and that's what we often host luncheons at those organizations. While we are primarily small business focus, we do have a lot of those larger relationships St. Luke's, LVHN, Olympus, air products. As I mentioned, Capital Blue Cross. So, a lot of those organizations are amazing partners of the Chamber as well. They are amazing partners. They help us bring a lot of our programming to life from community festivals like our tree, lighting all the way up to our snowball event, our snowball gala, which just happened this past weekend this year's beneficiary, was the Main Street Foundation, which is who Alburts received a grant for the veterans. Banners? So that program held their fundraiser. This past weekend it raised \$34,000. For that program this year. So absolutely, it's the largest snowball fundraiser that they've had for mainstream. So, we're excited to see that money kind of disseminates back to the community.

LCA update on the regional sewer plan- Liesel Gross

Liesel Gross presented a power point presentation about the Kline’s Island Sewer System

Lower Macungie Township Fire Department Volunteer Tax Credit Certificates

Ashlynn Rivera made the motion to approve Tax Credit Certificates for Lower Macungie Township Fire Department, motion 2nd by Mehmet Birtek and a unanimous vote followed. Motion passes 5-0.

DeIaco- yay	Hill- yay	Rivera- yay	Birtek- yay	Aleszczyk- yay
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Recommendation to Pay Construction Masters Services pay app 6

Jeff Ott mentioned that we would like to move construction assets into the 18-month maintenance period. So, 18 months as 18 months pass, that's the time paving were mostly complete. 18 months from that time we'll go out and do another inspection with the contract or the borough. We'll walk through. Check everything if something needs to be repaired, replaced, adjusted. They're on the hook to do that. We won't release payment until we have the email. So based on the payment. We're going to receive a bond, and we're going to have that bond for the 18 months it'll be. But we have to make a payment first. The bond is 100% of the contract cost.

John Aleszczyk asked about change order number 3 is we pay \$565 per mail 18,000 that's what it costs us. Steve Nemeth mentioned It's the installation, everything. Originally the contract had 15,000 offered the mailbox, so the change order should have really been written as 3,000 mailboxes.

Steve Hill made the motion to approve pay app 6 to Construction Masters Services, motion 2nd by Ashlynn Rivera and nonunanimous vote followed. Motion passes 4-1.

DeIaco- yay	Hill- yay	Rivera- yay	Birtek- yay	Aleszczyk- nay
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Recommendation to Pay Construction Masters Services pay app 7 and move into maintenance period

Mehmet Birtek made the motion to approve pay app 7 to Construction Masters Services and move them into maintenance period on yearly maintenance, motion 2nd by Steve Hill and a nonunanimous vote followed. Motion passes 4-1.

DeIaco- yay	Hill- yay	Rivera- yay	Birtek- yay	Aleszczyk- nay
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It doesn't look like much, but so much thought and discussion with Ron and our meetings a lot of thought and discussion around that project and I'm glad it's done. It was a typical challenging project that still has some work, probably. Ron DeIaco mentioned so to give you an example of the difference. new construction. If you're driving down the 222 bypass you get up on that. Okay, if you look on your right-hand side, you'll see all that construction going on. They're putting up new condos, or whatever they're building over there, but they're building a lot of. The 1st thing they did was put the roads in the curbs in. Jeff Ott mentioned What we did here was the reverse of that. The houses were already there. The road was already there, and we had to make it compliant, ADA compliant and still get all of the angles correct. So that was quite a challenge. And there was a lot of planning before any constructions. Yeah, I can tell you about this, people in my firm will never forget that project. We spent hours and hours in my office, just looking at it from different angles, and you described it perfectly. He wants to go on the point. Do a subdivision. What we did is the opposite of what we have holding points. You're holding driveways. You're holding door sills now you're working backwards. And now you have an existing road that isn't quite efficient. So, we did centerline profiles and up and down and test big firms. I'm just pleased with the final product. So, I'm glad everyone's happy. It was one of our crowning achievements. It was something that we've never done in reverse. Kathy Palmer mentioned Let's go for that grant There was a lot of work to put in just to get that kind of grant. You're not going to see 1.4 million dollars. Grant again, had we turned that away. The state, the county, and everything in between would have said, Albertas! I don't need it. We tried to give them 1.4 million. They didn't want to take it right, and that's exactly the mark we would have had. I could not see turning that away when it was for the betterment of this borough for the residents and for the people that lived down there. Everybody complained about how rough it was down there. They couldn't walk on the sidewalks.

Electronic recycling and shredding event request

Steve Nemeth requested to host an electronic recycling and shredding event like this past fall. It was a successful event; we would like to hold it at the fire station again on November 8th.

Mehmet Birtek made the motion to approve the officers partaking in the event. Ashlynn Rivera seconded the motion, and a unanimous vote followed. Motion passes 5-0.

DeIaco- yay	Hill- yay	Rivera- yay	Birtek- yay	Aleszczyk- yay
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America 250 Celebration

Stephen Nemeth mentioned letting everybody know that over the next 2 years the country, and pretty much the whole country, is looking for ideas for every municipality to take part in this whole celebration for its 250th anniversary. So, the county is really looking for ideas. What our community can actually do to partake in the celebration. They're hoping to get responses back by March 28th, I do know Emmaus is going to be holding something big around July 4th next year. So just something to look and think about. You can select what you want to do and name the type of name, the celebration. Kathy Palmer asked, "Do you think that we could ask the county if they're doing anything?" Stephen Nemeth responded "That's what I was thinking, too?" Steve Hill asked if we could add this to the next agenda

Ron Asked if there was anything additional for the group; Jeff Ott mentioned as you're aware, we had a grant to do close circuit television inspections and lateral repairs. We're talking about the sources on all of the lateral offers' services inspection. But we found that the latter wasn't. They weren't in decent shape. There were a number of laterals that had to be rehabilitated, either lined or it's going to be of some value. So long short story, there's money left in this grant, and we didn't want to just take it and give it back. So, we contacted DCED, they are allowing us to take the remaining funds for that lateral project which we have, and we can use that on manhole rehabilitation which we'd like to do on Church Street, right? We have 5 or 8 manholes there. We want to seal but we can use that money that way. We can do borough wide smoke testing. We were considering just doing smoke testing in the sewer shed to the pump station, but Donnie told us to the entire borough system, and I think it's a great idea, because when you do smoke testing. smoke into the sewer system, and it comes out of broken laterals may come out of people's bounce belts into their gutters. What that means is, smoke is coming out. Water is getting in. So, our goal is to smoke test the borough. Let's call with a list of items that need to be repaired, etc. The other items we wanted to do were, those are those things we're going to be doing manhole inspections throughout the borough. We did it years ago. It's time to update that inspection and put a list of work that needs to be done. The remaining Grant money will take funding based upon our estimate. We'll take care of the manhole inspection for a wise. We'll take care of the smoke testing for a while. There may be some money in there to do the manhole. See how much we think there is and once we do all that work, there's a grant due in April. What we'd like to do is take the items that need to be addressed come forward as a result of manhole inspections in the smoke testing. Put that into a grant application and submit that by the end of April as well. It's not difficult to do. It just takes time. It takes full public education. We need to let the residents know what we're going to be doing, because you may have smoke coming out of your sink in your kitchen. Dave Knerr mentioned that we should hold off on any motion on this matter until the next meeting since it was not on the agenda. Liesel Gross mentioned that first of all, on the Lehigh County authority website. We do have a video of smoke. We could certainly link that onto the borough website. But we can coordinate with you on that and in our experience. Public outreach is really important for these programs. As you know the other point, I wanted to make is that the April deadline for the next round of the County authority would be very happy to write a letter of support. That kind of details, how Alburdis fits into the greater scheme, if that would be helpful.

Ron DeIaco stated thank you for sharing that with us, then asked for a motion to adjourn at 8:06 p.m. was made by Ashlynn Rivera 2nd by Mehmet Birtek and a unanimous vote followed.

Meeting minutes were taken and submitted by:

Stephen Nemeth

Stephen Nemeth, Borough Manager.