

Borough of Alburtis

Meeting Minutes

September 26, 2018

The September 26, 2018 meeting of Borough Council was called to order by Council President Ron DeIaco at 7:00 p.m. in the Borough Hall, 260 Franklin Street, Alburtis, PA.

Council members in attendance:

Ron DeIaco

Steve Hill

Sherryann Oels

Kathleen Raines

Stephen Kaufman

Vanessa Taggart

Hector Vazquez

Associates of Alburtis in attendance:

Dave Knerr, Solicitor

Sharon Trexler, Borough Manager

Kathleen Palmer, Mayor

Robert Palmer, Police Chief

Visitors in attendance:

Gary DeRoner

Cheryl Scalzo, Principal, Alburtis Elementary

Tanya Miller

Dawn Gerhart

Mike Gerhart

Melanie Penkauskas

MAYOR'S REPORT – No Report

POLICE REPORT – Police Chief, Robert Palmer was present to inform Council that early next year, the County will form a consortium to create a Countywide testing system for the use of hiring new full time police officers. This excludes, the Cities of Allentown and Bethlehem. We will no longer have to do the written or physical agility tests. This will allow for one list for everyone to use. Once someone is hired, they are removed from the list for at least a year. The initial cost for the Borough is about \$412. This will be easier on the municipalities and the applicants since they will not need to take multiple tests. This will also expedite the hiring process. This is only for full time positions. Dave Knerr will need to review this when ready. We should have our new full time officer hired prior to this being in place. Background checks are currently being completed.

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2018 – Steve Hill made a motion to approve the Minutes of September 12, 2018, with a date correction, Vanessa Taggart 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

BILLS FOR PAYMENT – SEPTEMBER 26, 2018 – Vanessa Taggart made a motion to pay the bills of September 26, 2018, Kathleen Raines 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

FISCAL CONSULTANT'S REPORT – Vanessa Taggart made a motion to accept the Fiscal Consultant's Report, Kathleen Raines 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

ADMINISTRATION

Public Comments – None

Alburtis Elementary School – Dismissal Procedures – Alburtis Elementary School Principal, Cheryl Scalzo, was present to review the dismissal procedure they are currently trying. There are more buses this year and currently, the cars that pickup students drive behind the buses to exit. She has not been in favor of this routine since she started at the elementary school three years ago. There is a danger to children getting on the buses and a site issue. Mrs. Scalzo lost a student a few years ago while at Jefferson. She is very sensitive to the safety of the children coming to and from school. She also has students that have one on one aides and they are all bussed. Mrs. Scalzo met with Chief Palmer and they came up with a solution that would be more effective and eliminate the situation where children walk between the buses.

Alburtis Elementary School – Dismissal Procedures (cont.) - They came up with a solution to have the cars exit the parking lot the same way they enter. As they leave the lot, they would be able to go straight onto Third Street, make a left onto Walnut or make a right onto Walnut. Data has been collected and there are about 40-45 cars that exit the parking lot every day. On the 20th, there were 16 that went straight onto Third Street, on the 21st there were 13 cars and on the 24th there were 16 cars and today there were 19 cars. This process takes anywhere from 5-7 minutes. There is always a teacher or herself outside to make sure things are going properly.

Ron DeIaco asked if the parents need to enter the parking lot and maybe park on the Street. Sherryann Oels noted that the street is already parked full. Mrs. Scalzo has considered this option, but determine it would not work whenever it snows. Chief Palmer said that the danger of going behind the buses has been eliminated. Hector Vazquez asked what she would like Council to do and was told they would like to continue since it is working. Chief Palmer would like the Do Not Enter sign on Third Street to have a one hour time limit for the morning only. Per Dave Knerr, the current signs were a test and can be removed at any time. Steve Hill was on Council when the school was built and the school told Council that they would look into crossing guards. Borough Council has no issue with the change if the Chief agrees that it is working. Ron DeIaco entertained a motion to have a larger sign stating Do Not Enter from 8 to 9. Hector Vazquez made a motion, but resident, Tanya Miller, wanted to speak. Mrs. Miller stated that if this was not ever put into an Ordinance, it should be one. She suggested to Mrs. Scalzo that the traffic goes out of the lot and turn right onto Walnut Street. This way Third Street would remain safe. She noted that there are not always teachers out watching for the safety of the children. She also has special needs children and they can get distracted very easily. The actual problem is the parents who pick up their children. Cars on Third Street have been damaged and the cars speed up the road. The drivers are distracted and are on their cell phones and not paying attention.

Resident, Dawn Gerhart, also lives on Third Street and had sent an email to Mrs. Scalzo with her concerns. She has been watching since the notice of the change went out. Since this has started, traffic has picked up on Third Street. There is an issue with cars being parked on both sides of the street and it makes it hard for two cars to go in between them. There is a safety concern for the children. Once the police officer is out of sight, the cars fly down the street. Some of these cars are the teachers from the school. Sherryann Oels mentioned that this is the current situation on School Street. Mrs. Gerhart witnessed some boys fooling around and one of them could have gotten hit. Kathleen Raines said during the winter, kids play in snow piles and could fall into the street and get hurt. Kathleen Palmer replied that this could happen on any Borough Street.

Steve Hill mentioned that 13 years ago, Borough Council was against having the school built, but they were blasted by the residents. Now residents don't want the students or the cars, which was the original concern. The School District was supposed to provide crossing guards, but have never done so. Sherryann Oels agrees that Crossing Guards would help, but it is a big commitment for someone. Dave Knerr asked if Third Street was narrower than other roads and Chief Palmer replied that it is probably one of the widest roads. Resident, Michael Gerhart, is under the understanding that a formal traffic study must be done prior to changing signs. Counting cars is not a traffic study. He does suggest that a stop sign is placed on Third Street at Chestnut Street. Steve Hill replied, that unfortunately, we cannot put up stop signs wherever we want. Chief Palmer had his speed sign on Third Street a few years ago and only one car was over the speed limit and that was at two in the morning. If Council wants him to do this again, he will. Sherryann Oels doesn't see an issue with traffic going in either direction on Walnut Street and the Chief can do that, but feels we may have people from Walnut Street coming in. Third Street is not a one way street, but Kathleen Raines was told it was by Council and this caused her to have an accident on W. Second Street.

Resident, Melanie Penkauskas, also lives on Third Street and saw the boys, who are brothers, fooling around. She told them to stop, watch out for cars and go home. She has no preference either way as to how the traffic is directed since the students live in all directions of the school. Per Sherryann Oels, those that live below Third Street go up Walnut and shoot down Chestnut. There is an issue throughout the Borough with narrow streets.

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Vanessa Taggart does not live by the school, but the same situation exists with kids in the street in her neighborhood. After further discussion, Mayor Palmer suggested that the Chief and the Principal continue what

they have started. Borough Council agrees and asked the Chief to come back with what works best. Cheryl Scalzo will send a notice to the parents and teachers about safe driving. She will share this with Sharon and she would put it online and add it to the newsletter. Kathleen Raines asked Chief Palmer if one of the rolling stop signs can be placed at Chestnut and Third. Sharon will have maintenance do this.

Borough of Macungie – Fire Police Request – Hector Vazquez made a motion to allow the Borough Special Fire Police to assist the Borough of Macungie at the Halloween Parade on October 27, 2018, Vanessa Taggart 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

PA Bulletin Reg Update – Safe Drinking Water – Information has been received from DEP regarding changes recently made. The Borough will be assessed a fee of \$4,000. This is based on our population. Additional training for water suppliers is also involved. Russell Kressley and Kyle Dietrich will both attend.

Borough Crime Bond Rates – Sharon was asked by the insurance carrier if we would prefer to pay the Bond Insurance Premiums every year or every three years. The savings would be about \$20.00 per year. Stephen Kaufman is afraid we will forget to budget for them every three years. Council agrees and we will continue as we have been doing every year.

PA Small Water and Sewer Grant – We were recently notified from Pat Browne's Office that we were awarded \$100,000 from DCED.

Pension State Aid – Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) – A letter was reviewed from Dave Knerr regarding the Pension State Aid. Steve Hill made a motion to make the deposits as recommended in Dave Knerr's letter dated September 26, 2018, Stephen Kaufman 2nd and a unanimous vote followed. As required, the MMO was presented to Borough Council and will be attached to the minutes.

2018 Fire Relief – \$12,002.46 was received from the Auditor General's Office for Fire Relief. This will be given to the Fire Department.

2019 Liquid Fuels Estimate – Based on mileage and population, the Liquid Fuels Estimate for 2019 is \$66,071.28. This will be added to the Budget.

Liquor Control Board – \$400 was received from the Liquor Control Board from beverage license fees.

Audit of Magisterial District Court #31-2-03 – District Court #31-2-03 was audited and the results were reviewed by Borough Council. This is not the District Court that the Borough receives funds from.

Front Street – The Maintenance Department is hoping to reschedule the pipe repair along Front Street to Tuesday, October 9th. There are Penn Dot requirements that need to be met prior to the work being done.

Lower Macungie Library – Ron asked if a decision was made regarding the Library addition. Council has put \$3,000 into next year's budget.

Juvenile Probation Luncheon – Mayor Palmer informed Council that she will be attending the Juvenile Probation Luncheon. Maintenance Employee, Gary Hartman, will also attend.

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission – The 5th Annual Lehigh Valley Gala & Awards will be held on October 10th. Council approved Sherryann Oels and Sharon's attendance.

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MS4 Stormwater Fees – Dave Knerr looked into Council's interest in assessing a Stormwater Fee. In order to do this, all properties would need to be analyzed to figure out how much impervious coverage there is. This would be similar to what Allentown put into place. Sharon will contact Lehigh County to see if they have information for us to start with. If the Borough had a GIS System, we would have most of this information.

Historic District – Mayor Palmer asked what the status is of the Historic District. Sharon has reached out to Preservation PA to, hopefully, assist with the paperwork. What is needed is extensive and Sharon has not had the time to research it. We are not able to submit the same materials as we did to get the recommendation.

A motion to adjourn at 8:37 was made by Kathleen Raines, 2nd by Vanessa Taggart and a unanimous vote followed. Meeting minutes were taken and submitted by Sharon Trexler, Borough Manager.